



**St Catherine's College
University of Oxford
Middle Common Room**

**CONSTITUTION
Trinity 2015**

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ARTICLE I: THE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM

- a) The society shall call itself *St Catherine's College Middle Common Room*, abbreviated as *Catz MCR* or *the MCR*.
- b) The purpose of the Middle Common Room (hereinafter MCR) shall be:
- i. To provide separate facilities and activities for its members to those of the Junior Common Room (hereinafter JCR), though this shall not disbar joint facilities or activities (with the JCR or SCR) should this be the wish of the majority of MCR members.
 - ii. To maintain a level of activity within both the College and the wider world decided on by its members in order to promote its interests.
 - iii. To represent itself on relevant committees and decision-making bodies.
 - iv. To promote student involvement in the College.
- c) The MCR has a responsibility to inform the College of its activities through the person of the Tutor for Graduates. The Tutor for Graduates will:
- i. Be sent copies of minutes of all official meetings and be notified of amendments to the present constitution, and any important decisions taken by the MCR such as changes to the membership list.
 - ii. Be available for MCR members to consult on any matter relating to the MCR and/or the College. Complaints relating to the functioning of the Committee may be brought to the Tutor for Graduates, but only after exhausting all other methods provided within the current constitution.
 - iii. Be the first returning officer for the elections described in subsequent articles. The Tutor for Graduates may delegate this responsibility to another Fellow of the College if this Fellow is willing to accept the role.
- d) The MCR Common Area and attached facilities will be regulated by a series of bye-laws as described in Article VI (b).
- e) In accordance with Section 22 2 (c) of the Education Act 1994 and the Code of Practice relating to the operation of the Junior and Middle Common Rooms made under it by the Governing Body, a student has the right not to be a member of the MCR and to signify that he/she does not wish to be represented by it. Any student who exercises this right should not be unfairly disadvantaged with regard to the provision of services or otherwise, by reason of their having done so. Accordingly, a student exercising the right not to be a member of the MCR shall continue to have access to the physical Middle Common Room, but shall not be entitled to participate in events organised by the MCR for MCR members, participate in the decision-making and election processes of the MCR or be represented by the officers of the MCR.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP OF THE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM

a) The MCR shall comprise Ordinary Members, Associate Members and Honorary Members.

b) Ordinary Members shall be:

i. All matriculated student members of St Catherine's College reading for any postgraduate degree, diploma, or certificate as defined in the University Statutes.

ii. All student members of the College with the status of a Senior Student as defined in the University Examination Regulations.

iii. All student members of the College who have passed Part I of their degree and are reading for Part II of their degree.

iv. All student members of the College reading for an honours degree whose course requires them to take a year abroad and who have completed the said year.

v. The JCR President during the year of his/her term of office in recognition of the role which the JCR President plays in representing the interests of MCR members as well as JCR members.

vi. Any member of the JCR whose application for membership is approved by a majority of members at an MCR Open Meeting, provided that he/she transfers their subscription to the MCR account.

vii. All student members of the College who have attained the age of 21 years prior to matriculation.

c) Associate Members shall be:

i. Former Ordinary Members who are approved for associate membership by the MCR Committee.

ii. Persons other than students of the University of Oxford who are:

1. Engaged in study or research in Oxford, typically but not exclusively at an institution associated with the University of Oxford;

2. Considered to have equivalent status to that of a Senior Student as defined in the Examination Regulations; and

3. Approved for associate membership by a majority of members at an Open Meeting voting on a written recommendation by the MCR Committee. Such a recommendation must have been made in consultation with the Tutor for Graduates in the period since the last Open Meeting.

iii. Persons holding the position of Lector within the College.

In the case of i. and ii., the membership of an Associate Member shall be from the date of approval until the end of that academic year and shall be renewable each year thereafter for a total period of not more than four years.

In the case of iii., the membership of an Associate Member shall be from the date of appointment until the end of that academic year and shall be renewable each year thereafter during which the person continues to hold the position of Lector for a total period of not more than four years.

d) Honorary Members shall be:

i. The spouse or long term partner of any Ordinary or Associate Member of the MCR upon application in writing to the MCR Committee and subject to its approval.

ii. Members of the SCR and College Officers.

iii. Any other persons deemed worthy of MCR membership for their achievements in life or their service to the MCR Executive Committee. Such persons may be proposed by any Ordinary Member of the MCR at an Open Meeting. No more than two such persons may become Honorary Members of the MCR in any calendar year.

The Secretary will be responsible for keeping a list of Honorary Members and will be required to write to them informing them of their membership within one month of it having been voted on. The duration of the membership of an Honorary Member shall be defined at the time it commences.

e) All Ordinary Members of the MCR as defined in (b) shall pay subscriptions to be collected via the College, unless a member decides to opt out of MCR membership. In that case, he/she will write to the Co-Presidents before the end of the first week of Michaelmas term of the year in which he/she wishes to opt out. He/she shall then cease to be a member of the MCR and will no longer be entitled to vote or stand in MCR elections or to participate in MCR meetings.

f) Lectors do not pay subscription fees. Any other Associate Member whose period of membership in a given year is six months or less shall pay half a year's subscription fee for that year. All other Members shall pay a full year's subscription fee for each year of their membership. Subscription fees shall be payable directly to the MCR at the start of each membership (including renewed membership) period. Any Member who fails to pay the subscription fees due for his/her membership in a particular year within four weeks of the due date will automatically cease to be a Member.

g) A full review of the membership lists is to be conducted each academic year. The MCR Secretary will liaise with the Academic Registrar after the College List has been produced to finalise the MCR membership by the start of 0th week of Michaelmas Term. The MCR Secretary is required to keep the MCR membership list up-to-date using the College List amendments sent by the Academic Registrar to the Co-Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary.

h) No persons shall be granted MCR membership, or any of the privileges thereof, without an interval of at least two days between (a) their application for, election to, or achievement of the status or qualification needed for membership of the MCR in any category and (b) their admission to membership of the MCR in any category.

ARTICLE III: THE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM COMMITTEE

a) The affairs of the MCR shall be managed by a committee consisting of nine elected Executive Officers, called Executive Officers of the Committee, and a number of additional officers, called Regular Officers of the Committee, who shall be elected or co-opted to fill such vacancies as occur where interest is expressed. Executive and Regular Officers of the MCR Committee shall be Ordinary Members of the MCR as defined in Article II (b).

b) The responsibilities of the MCR Committee shall include:

i. Implementing all of the MCR resolutions.

ii. The management of MCR finances.

iii. Liaising with other members of the College, its officers and employees for the provision of social activities both in and out of term.

iv. Representing the interests of MCR members to the College and on College Committees.

v. Having a duty to encourage maximum safety and cleanliness in the MCR, although the ultimate responsibility for safety and cleanliness in the MCR resides with the College.

c) When decisions are made by College Officers and employees which affect MCR members, the MCR Committee are required to support and advise those officers and employees in their decisions. In so doing, the MCR Committee shall represent the opinions of the MCR members, adopting the necessary means to ensure that they are representing MCR members' opinions to the best of their knowledge.

d) The Committee shall meet at least once per term as specified by the Co-Presidents or any three Executive Officers requesting such a meeting. The Secretary shall notify the Committee at least one week before the meeting is scheduled to take place and request items for the agenda. If no items are forthcoming, the Co-Presidents may determine whether to cancel the meeting. A meeting shall not proceed or continue in the absence of at least four MCR members, including three Executive Officers. Any Ordinary Member of the MCR may attend Committee meetings. If it is considered that an Ordinary Member is disrupting the meeting, the member may be asked to leave the meeting area if such a decision is approved by at least half of the Executive Committee present at the meeting.

e) All officers of the Committee are answerable to the members of the MCR whom they shall keep informed of the progress of their tasks at regular intervals.

f) At least one Executive Officer shall be resident in Oxford throughout each vacation, excluding College Closure. If no member of the Executive Committee volunteers to be resident for the summer period, a Co-President will reside in Oxford for at least half of the Summer Vacation when no other member of the Executive Committee is resident.

g) If other members of the Committee contest the ruling of the Chair a vote shall be taken with a simple majority deciding the matter. In case of a draw, the decision of the Chair is final. No member of the MCR, unless elected or co-opted, may vote at a Committee Meeting.

h) Each Officer of the Committee shall personally attend and make a report at each MCR Open Meeting. If due to exceptional circumstances an Officer is unable to attend, he/she shall provide a written report to be presented at the meeting.

ARTICLE IV: THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE MCR COMMITTEE

The nine Executive Officers of the Committee shall be: (a) the two Co-Presidents, (b) the Secretary, (c) the Treasurer, (d) the three Social Secretaries, (e) the IT and Publicity Officer and (f) the Bar Manager. These constitute the Executive Committee. The term of office for each of these officers shall commence after the Guest Dinner on the Friday of 8th week of Hilary and cease on the Friday of 8th week of the following Hilary term. Each Executive Officer shall be elected by the Ordinary Members of the MCR.

a) The office of the President shall be held by two Co-Presidents. The Co-Presidents shall uphold the Constitution and rule on its interpretation at and between Open Meetings. They shall chair all Open Meetings and Committee Meetings and ensure that all MCR resolutions are implemented. They shall also be responsible for representing the views of the MCR at the requisite College committees and within the University. In the event of a tied vote on any issue, they shall cast the deciding vote as their consciences dictate. The Co-Presidents are responsible for delegating such tasks as they see fit to the rest of the Committee. They are also required to maintain good relations with the rest of the College, in particular the Junior and Senior Common Rooms and the College staff. The Co-Presidents shall be responsible for the smooth running of the weekly Guest Table, which includes delegating tasks such as making the seating plan, name-cards and menus. They shall liaise with the relevant Social Secretary to ensure sign-up for the Guest Table is run smoothly and have ultimate responsibility for updating the Guest Table sign-up rules. They shall be responsible for overseeing the continuous running of the MCR facilities related to food and drinks (including the Guest Table, the Drinks Fridge and the Wine Cellar). The Co-Presidents are responsible for the issues of welfare, health and safety in the MCR.

b) The Secretary shall be responsible for notifying members of the MCR via email of any Open Meeting or election. He/she shall ensure that agendas and minutes for both Open and Committee Meetings are kept and emailed to all members. The Secretary shall also email a list of motions passed or defeated at an MCR meeting and ensure a copy is included in the minutes. He/she must work with College to keep an up-to-date list of all MCR members and furnish the library with a copy of all constitutional amendments. The Secretary shall annually compile, from the minutes of MCR Committee and Open Meetings, a list of all external affiliations of the MCR and a list of all organisations to which money has been donated. He/she shall email this list to members before the end of the second week of Michaelmas Term. The Secretary shall liaise with the Co-Presidents to ensure that all MCR correspondence is answered promptly and that the MCR records are kept in good order. He/she is responsible for maintaining the MCR notice boards. He/she must also ensure that MCR email lists are kept up-to-date and is responsible for the publication of the MCR handbook to be posted on the website during the summer vacation.

c) The Treasurer shall keep the accounts of the MCR, including all receipts and invoices, in an up-to-date and clear manner. Any Ordinary Member may make a written request to be shown the accounts, but only once during any one term of office by any one Ordinary Member. The Treasurer shall liaise with the Accounts Office and the Finance Bursar when necessary. He/she must be one of the signatories, in conjunction with another authorised individual, on the MCR cheque-book which he/she shall retain. It is his/her responsibility to ensure that the MCR is always in

good standing with its bank and to inform the MCR Committee immediately if there is a problem. The Treasurer may authorise any reasonable amount of expenditure provided he/she believes it is in keeping with the wishes of the other MCR Executive Officers and the members of the MCR. At no time may the Treasurer permit more than two-thirds of the amount of the MCR liquid assets to be spent in any one calendar month. The Treasurer shall present full accounts to the College authorities annually for audit purposes. Each Treasurer's report shall contain a list of the external organisations to which the MCR has made donations in the period to which the report relates and details of these donations. He/she shall also present an overview of the accounts at each Open Meeting.

d) The office of the Social Secretary shall be held by three persons. Social secretaries are responsible for:

- i. Providing and publicising the social and cultural activities of the MCR such as BOPs, the garden party, guest dinner, and other weekly events.
- ii. Liaising with college authorities.
- iii. Organising events with members of other colleges.
- iv. Assisting the Bar Manager in running the MCR bar at least one Friday per term after Friday guest dinners.

They will be assisted in their duties by the other Officers of the Committee. They shall ensure that events are also organised out of term time and that events will be attractive to the whole MCR community.

e) The IT and Publicity Officer shall publicise events externally and be responsible for the maintenance of the MCR website. The IT and Publicity Officer shall be a member of the College Computer Committee and represent the MCR views at this committee. He/she is also responsible for the MCR careers affairs by liaising with the University Careers Service and by ensuring that MCR members have access to relevant careers information.

g) The Bar Manager shall be responsible for managing the bar. This shall include managing stock and prices and chairing the Bar Committee. The Bar Manager shall liaise with the College Bar Manager on licensing issues and the training of the Bar Committee. The Bar Manager will also work closely with the Social Secretaries to ensure that there is adequate provision for MCR social events.

h) The procedure for the election of each of these positions is outlined in Article VIII of the present document.

i) If two-thirds of an Open Meeting vote in support of a motion to remove an Officer of the Committee, the officer must tender his/her resignation immediately. At any other time the resignation of a post shall be made in writing to the Co-Presidents who shall accept or reject it.

j) No two Executive Offices may be held by the same person during any one term of office. Should one of the nine Executive Officers' posts remain unoccupied, the other eight Executive Officers shall distribute the duties of the post fairly amongst themselves.

k) No arrangements may be made for any Executive Officer or Committee member to receive any personal pecuniary benefit from the supply of alcohol to members or guests.

1) The Executive Committee shall have the power to dismiss any Executive Officer. The procedure for such dismissal shall be as set down in Article V (f), with references to “Regular Officer” to be read as references to “Executive Officer” and references to the “Executive Committee” to be read as references to the “Executive Committee excluding the Executive Officer whose membership is in question”.

ARTICLE V: THE REGULAR OFFICERS OF THE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM COMMITTEE

Regular Members of the Committee shall in the first instance be elected and shall include the positions of the (a) OUSU Graduate Committee Officer, (b) the Environmental Officer, (c) the Men's and Women's Welfare Officers, (d) the Academic Officer and other such roles as the Committee deems necessary from time to time. If the above positions have not been filled voluntarily by Sunday of fourth week of Michaelmas Term, elections shall be held during that week according to section (e) of the present article.

a) The OUSU Graduate Committee Officer shall be responsible for explaining and publicising OUSU activities to the members of the MCR. The OUSU Graduate Committee Officer must attend the OUSU Graduate Assembly Committee and shall attend other OUSU committees where deemed necessary. He/she shall also attend the College Graduate Committee. He/she shall represent the views of the MCR at these meetings.

It is the responsibility of the Co-Presidents to ensure the MCR is effectively linked with OUSU and the College. If no member of the MCR is elected as OUSU Graduate Committee Officer, it is the responsibility of the Co-Presidents to co-opt an Ordinary Member of the MCR to fill this position. If no Ordinary Member of the MCR is willing to take this position, the Co-Presidents are responsible for the affairs of this position.

b) The Environmental Officer shall be responsible for promoting awareness of environmental issues in the MCR and in conjunction with the JCR Environmental Representative in the College as a whole. In conjunction with College staff, he/she shall be responsible for organising the recycling of waste in the MCR including recycling newspapers, cans and glass.

It is the responsibility of the Co-Presidents to ensure the MCR has an effective environmental policy. If no Ordinary Member of the MCR is elected as Environmental Officer, it is the responsibility of the Co-Presidents to co-opt an Ordinary Member of the MCR to fill this position. If no MCR member is willing to take this position, the Co-Presidents are responsible for the affairs of this position.

c) The Men's and Women's Welfare Officers shall be responsible for affairs connected with the welfare and well-being of MCR members and for the publicity and distribution of material relating to members' welfare including OUSU welfare material. They shall be responsible for liaising with College and University authorities on the behalf of members and on representing members' welfare interests and concerns.

The Women's Welfare Officer shall be responsible for upholding and representing the interests of women in the MCR. He/she must be approachable in a welfare capacity as a port of call specifically for students with female issues. He/she shall attend the Women's Committee at OUSU and other student union conferences on women's affairs when possible. In coordination with the MCR Secretary, he/she shall also publicise and distribute materials relating to women and women's activities and events in Oxford, including via email and the MCR notice boards as appropriate.

The Co-Presidents shall ensure that the MCR has an effective welfare system. If no Ordinary Member is elected as Men's or Women's Welfare Officer, the Co-Presidents shall co-opt an Ordinary Member to fill the relevant vacant position(s). If no MCR member is willing to fill the position(s), the Co-Presidents shall fill it/them.

d) The Academic Officer shall be responsible for the extracurricular academic interests of the MCR. He/she shall be responsible for organising and promoting seminars in the MCR, liaising with the SCR in an effort to organise seminars with college academics and addressing any other extracurricular academic interests of the MCR.

It is the responsibility of the Co-Presidents to ensure the MCR has an interesting academic programme. If no Ordinary Member of the MCR is elected as Academic Officer, it is the responsibility of the Co-Presidents to co-opt an Ordinary Member to fill this position. If no MCR member is willing to take this position, the Co-Presidents are responsible for the affairs of this position.

e) Ordinary MCR members may be co-opted onto the Committee provided that there are no more than five co-opted members and provided that these positions are advertised at Open Meetings. If two or more applications are received for any such regular position, then an election shall be held in the ordinary manner as for the Executive Officers of the MCR, at an Open Meeting by a show of hands or by a poll to be conducted through the official MCR email list. Votes cast by email shall be sent to both the Secretary and the Co-Presidents and shall be received no later than midnight on the seventh day after the announcement of the election by email.

f) The Executive Officers of the Committee shall have the power to dismiss any Regular Officer of the Committee. The procedure for dismissal shall be as follows:

i. The Regular Officer concerned shall receive a written warning bearing either the signatures of the Co-Presidents or at least of three other members of the Executive Committee. The warning letter shall contain a reminder of the duties of the Regular Officer as well as where the Executive estimate that the Regular Officer has failed in his/her duties. A copy of the letter shall be sent to all members of the Executive Committee.

ii. If no improvement is noticed within two weeks of the letter being dispatched, the senders may convene a meeting of the Executive Committee to which the Regular Officer shall be summoned with at least one week's notice. The meeting shall have as its sole aim to determine whether or not the Regular Officer should be dismissed from office. The Regular Officer shall have the opportunity to present a short written response to the grievances of the senders of the letter after one of the Co-Presidents or their deputy has presented these grievances to the said Regular Officer. Once the Regular Officer has presented his/her response, the Executive Committee shall leave the room to vote on whether or not to dismiss the officer. The quorum for such a vote shall be four members and a qualified majority of not less than 60 per cent shall be necessary for dismissal. If the outcome of the vote is to dismiss the Regular Officer, the MCR Secretary shall post the reasons for the dismissal on the notice board and via the official email list. The vacant position shall then be publicised and is to be considered open for election campaigning at the same time as the dismissal is published as outlined in section (e) of this paragraph. The Regular Officer's dismissal is effective as soon as the conditions above

are fulfilled. Any member thus dismissed may still stand for election for all positions in the MCR and may not be dismissed again from the same position by the same Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI: USE OF THE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM

a) Subject to the provisions of Article I (e), the use of all MCR facilities shall be restricted to its members only. If the facilities are not required by MCR members, the facilities may also be used by guests of MCR members but only accompanied by their MCR host. The host must pay for all facilities used by the guest if the facilities require payment.

b) Subject to the provisions of Article I (d), the use of all MCR facilities is regulated by a number of bye-laws. New bye-laws can only be introduced by the Executive Committee as a motion at an Open Meeting. Some bye-laws may require the approval of College Officers and in this case the Executive Committee shall ensure the presented bye-laws are countersigned by the appropriate College Officer or Fellow. Amendments to the bye-laws will be made in the form of a motion at an Open Meeting and can be put forward by any Ordinary Member of the MCR. Any Ordinary Member of the MCR can request the Executive Committee draft a bye-law to regulate the use of a specific MCR facility by passing a motion to that effect at an Open Meeting. The list of bye-laws shall be kept by the MCR Secretary and a copy shall be sent to any MCR member who may request one from the Secretary.

b) Ordinary Members have priority in the use of all MCR facilities.

c) The use of MCR facilities may on occasion be limited by the MCR Committee if there is a prior and greater need. Open Meetings are an automatic example of this.

d) Associate and Honorary members of the MCR may use its facilities within the limits set by the MCR Committee and defined at the commencement of their membership.

e) There shall always be an email list containing all members of the MCR available for use by the Committee. The list shall be primarily for official MCR Committee announcements. The Co-Presidents, the Secretary and the IT and Publicity Officer shall be the only members with access to this mailing list. Information to be distributed on this mailing list includes:

- Announcements relating to Open Meetings.
- Announcements relating to the Constitution.
- Information considered necessary to all MCR members.
- College notices.

All MCR members must be signed up to this email list at the beginning of the year by the IT and Publicity Officer and must remain on the list whilst they are members of St Catherine's College MCR. The creation of this email list does not preclude the creation of other complementary email lists.

f) The cleanliness of the MCR Common Room is the responsibility of each and every member of the MCR. In particular, each member is asked to clean any cutlery and crockery they may use in the MCR and any mess made whilst using MCR facilities. The Committee having a particular responsibility for encouraging the cleanliness of the MCR Common Room are required to take appropriate measures to ensure members clear up after themselves.

g) As for all MCR matters, any MCR member has the right to complain at an Open Meeting should he/she feel that limits set by the Committee are unnecessary or oppressive.

ARTICLE VII: MIDDLE COMMON ROOM OPEN MEETINGS

- a) The purpose of MCR Open Meetings shall be to:
- i. Change the current MCR policy.
 - ii. Inform the College about the opinions of its members.
 - iii. Keep MCR members informed of the actions of the Committee.
 - iv. Suggest items of capital expenditure.
 - v. Change the constitution.
- b) There shall be at least one Open Meeting every term, not earlier than the Monday of 0th week, and not later than the Friday of 9th week.
- c) The MCR Secretary shall receive motions in writing, including via email, no later than 48 hours prior to an Open Meeting.
- d) The agenda shall be sent to MCR members by email no later than midday on the day of the Open Meeting by the Secretary who shall also ensure that sufficient copies are available for any member who requests one.
- e) All motions shall be proposed and seconded by any Ordinary Members of the MCR using their usual signatures. Any amendment to a motion shall require a different member to propose the amendment and another to second it. Any motions that do not comply with this procedure shall be removed from the agenda.
- f) All members of the MCR are entitled to attend its Open Meetings and speak from the floor but only the Ordinary Members shall have voting rights.
- g) The procedure for an Open Meeting shall be as follows:
- i. Call to order by the Chair (the Chair being a Co-President or their deputy).
 - ii. Minutes of the last Open Meeting.
 - iii. Matters arising from the minutes.
 - iii. Reports from the Executive Officers and afterwards, if requested by the floor, the reports of the Regular Officers of the MCR Committee.
 - iv. Questions from the floor on the reports.
 - v. Motions noted in the agenda which shall be debated in the order in which they appear and votes thereon as outlined in Article VII (h).
 - vi. Any Other Business. Motions under this heading must be written and handed to the Secretary before the meeting is called to order. No motions of no confidence, motions seeking to amend the Constitution or motions requesting money may be submitted in this way. The Chair may disallow any motion brought under this heading, but it shall then automatically be included in the agenda for the next Open Meeting.
- h) If a member who has proposed a motion is not present, the motion shall be struck off the agenda. Once the member who has proposed the motion has spoken, the Chair shall call for anyone opposing it to make his/her case. The motion shall then be opened to debate from the floor. Any member shall be entitled to speak once recognised by the Chair. The Chair must recognise any member of the Committee

who wishes to speak before the motion is put to the vote. Once constructive debate has ended, the Chair shall call for a vote either through an open vote by show of hands or a secret vote by ballot. The type of vote shall be decided on by the Co-Presidents and the Secretary prior to the meeting. A secret ballot shall constitute a written “yes” or “no” to the question: “Shall the motion be passed?”. A motion shall be deemed passed if the Chair decides there is a clear majority in favour of or against the motion under debate. If there is no clear outcome, the meeting shall proceed to a second vote using the same method. This vote shall be counted by an MCR Executive Officer other than the Chair and a member of the floor. If there is still no clear outcome, the Chair shall have the casting vote. A member may assign his/her vote on an individual motion to another MCR member by writing to the Secretary either by post or email. The member to whom a vote is assigned may only hold the vote of one other member. The Secretary shall have the list of assigned votes and which motions they apply to at the Open Meeting and apply this during the count of hands. The Co-Presidents or Secretary may hold the vote of more than one person, but must be able to produce written proof of the assignment of votes at the Open Meeting if asked to do so by any attending member.

i) The quorum for an MCR Open Meeting Motion shall be thirty including the transferred votes. Any member may request a quorum count, but such a count may be made only once during the lifetime of a motion.

j) A maximum of £50 donation to an external organisation may be proposed at any one open meeting.

k) The Executive Committee shall have the power to veto any motion by unanimous decision of Executive Officers present at the Open Meeting, except motions pertaining to the removal of a member of the Executive Committee as outlined in Article IV (1). In the event of a veto, the member who proposed the motion is entitled to call for a secret ballot on the motion being passed at the Open Meeting by presenting the Co-Presidents with twenty correct signatures of Ordinary Members in favour of a referendum. In addition, any Ordinary Member may call for a referendum on a motion or a part thereof by presenting the Co-Presidents with twenty correct signatures of Ordinary Members requesting the same within 48 hours of a motion being voted on at any MCR Open Meeting. A referendum in either case shall be held by secret ballot within two weeks receipt of the petition. This referendum shall be conducted as outlined in the relevant parts of Article VII. The decision of a referendum is final and binding.

l) Subject to all the conditions laid out in Article VII, a decision of an Open Meeting shall be binding upon the MCR Committee if it has been published in the agenda of the meeting and has received a majority of votes cast. Any motion passed at a quorate MCR meeting shall only count as a resolution of the MCR 48 hours after being passed.

m) Upon receipt of a petition signed by at least 20 members of the MCR, the Co-Presidents shall call a referendum by secret ballot on affiliation to any named external organisation. The referendum shall take place within two weeks of receipt of the petition.

n) The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all MCR Open Meetings, copies of which shall be posted on the MCR notice board and sent to the official email list. Any

member may request a hard copy of the minutes and request their amendment at the next Open Meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: ELECTION OF THE MCR COMMITTEE

a) The election of the nine Executive Officers, namely the two Co-Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the three Social Secretaries, the IT and Publicity Officer and the Bar Manager, shall be held annually on the Sunday of 5th week in Hilary Term. The newly elected Officers will use the time between their election and start of office to learn the requirements of the position from the outgoing Officers. After the end of their term in office, the outgoing Officers have the responsibility to respond to advice sought from the incoming Officers.

b) The Second Returning Officer for all elections shall be one of the outgoing Co-Presidents, the First Returning Officer being defined in Article I (c). In the case of a Co-President standing for re-election, he/she may not count the votes for the position of Co-President. In this event, the other Co-President shall count, or if he/she is also standing, the first returning officer shall make the count alone. Executive Officers may be appointed as deputy returning officers by the Co-Presidents providing they are not candidates in the election.

c) Only Ordinary Members of the MCR may stand as officers. In the event of an Ordinary Member who is in the fourth year of their degree standing for office or election to the Committee, he/she must prove to the satisfaction of the current Executive Officers that he/she will stay for the duration of office.

d) The following procedure for nomination shall be adopted:

i. Notice of the date of the election and a call for nominations shall be placed on the MCR notice boards by the Secretary not later than the Sunday of second week in Hilary Term. The Secretary shall be responsible for the regulation and verification of signatures on the lists. He/she must also ensure adequate publicity in the form of posters and emails.

ii. No nomination shall be valid unless the proposed member agrees to stand.

iii. Nominations shall open from the time the list is posted for at least seven full days until ten o'clock on the Sunday of third week in Hilary Term. Nominations may only be for one post and must be seconded by two Ordinary, Non-Executive Members of the MCR with their regular signature as authenticated by the Secretary. Members shall only be permitted to second one individual for any given position. The nominations will be published on the MCR notice boards and the homepage of the MCR once nominations have closed.

iv. If a nomination is uncontested, the Co-Presidents shall declare the nominee elected. However, if there is only one nomination received for Co-President, nominations shall be re-opened for a further 48 hours. If no further nomination is received, the nominee shall be declared elected without further hindrance.

v. If there is no nomination for one of the nine Executive Officers, the new Committee shall distribute the duties of the office amongst themselves.

vi. For those positions that are contested, hustings shall be held on or before the Sunday of fourth week in Hilary Term. The time shall be publicised by the Secretary. Each candidate shall be allowed one A4 sheet upon which to state his/her policies. These shall be placed on the MCR notice board in equally

prominent positions and on the MCR homepage. At hustings, each candidate will be allowed not more than five minutes to state his/her case. After all the nominees have spoken, questions from the floor may be put to any candidate. A Co-President shall chair hustings except where he/she is a candidate in which event the next uninvolved Executive Officer in order of precedence shall take the chair.

vii. Any candidate who does not turn up to hustings, for whatever reason excepting serious illness validated by a doctor's note, shall be deemed to have withdrawn from the election.

e) There shall be no electioneering likely to bring the MCR into disrepute. No posters may be allowed on MCR notice boards other than the official statements and a list of candidates. A candidate must not canvass votes in the MCR lounge to the annoyance of other members, nor may he/she use the MCR email list or homepage to publicise his/her candidacy. In the event of such abuses, the Co-Presidents may impeach a candidate at the next Open Meeting following the procedure set out in f.(iii) below.

f) The procedure for election shall be as follows:

i. The election shall be by secret ballot using the alternative vote electoral system for the positions of Co-Presidents (who shall run on a joint platform), Secretary, Treasurer, IT and Publicity Officer and Bar Manager. This shall involve members rank ordering candidates and the candidate that receives a majority of votes – either through first preference votes alone or through the distribution of eliminated candidates' votes in the case where no candidate receives a majority in the first count – shall be deemed elected. The three Social Secretary positions shall be elected using the proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote electoral system. This shall involve members rank ordering candidates and the three candidates that reach the necessary quota – following the distribution of surplus votes and/or those of eliminated candidates – shall be deemed elected. Voting forms shall be made available in the MCR and placed in the ballot box which shall be supervised at all times by at least two MCR Committee members, provided they are not candidates in the election. Proxy and postal votes shall be lodged in a place allocated by the Committee not less than 24 hours before voting commences. The Ordinary Member voting must sign his/her proxy or postal vote. No candidate may request forms for proxy or postal votes, but he/she may direct members to the Co-Presidents or Secretary. If a proxy or postal vote is disallowed, the Co-Presidents must give written reasons to both the candidate in whose favour the proxy was cast and the member whose proxy or postal vote has been disallowed. Either the candidate or the voter may appeal to the First Returning Officer who may reinstate the vote if he/she believes the reasons for disallowing it were invalid.

ii. All ballot papers must be signed in the presence of one of the MCR Committee members supervising the ballot box. The Secretary shall ensure that the list is complete and up-to-date and that any proxy and postal voting members' names are so marked. This list shall be kept and given to the Returning Officers for checking before counting takes place.

iii. There shall be no canvassing in any part of the MCR lounge or the foyer of the Bernard Sunley building from 07:30 on the day of voting. Candidates may

not put pressure on any Ordinary Member by his/her presence within the confines of the MCR. The Co-Presidents may ask a candidate to leave the MCR for the duration of the vote if he/she feels either the spirit or the letter of this rule is being broken.

iv. In the event of a tie for any office or post, there shall be a vote at an extraordinary Open Meeting held within one week of the election. This shall take place in the absence of the candidates and a show of hands shall decide the issue.

v. Every Ordinary Member of the MCR except the Returning Officers and their deputies, if any, shall be entitled to vote at any poll. A voter is not obliged to use all the votes at his/her disposal.

g) The results of the elections shall be posted on the MCR notice boards and the homepage within 24 hours of them becoming known.

h) The Returning Officers shall keep all ballot papers, the ballot list and all proxy votes for one month following the election. They may be scrutinised by any Ordinary Member, except for the proxies who will remain secret. Any complaints shall be directed in the first instance to the Second Returning Officer and then to the First Returning Officer.

i) In the event of any Executive Officer of the MCR Committee resigning, a by-election shall be held as soon as possible during Full Term. Such a vacancy shall be advertised on the MCR email list. Candidates shall inform the Secretary via email of their decision to contest the position no later than 36 hours before the election. They shall also ensure that two Ordinary, non-Executive members of the MCR have formally seconded them by emailing the Secretary by this time. In the event that no one puts themselves forward, nominations may be re-opened and remain open until the election itself which will immediately follow hustings. Due to the short notice in which a by-election is called, any ordinary MCR member that cannot attend the hustings due to a valid prior commitment – as determined by the Co-Presidents - may still contest by emailing the Secretary beforehand with a short speech to be read out on their behalf. All other rules and procedures regarding campaigning, hustings and election rules for by-elections shall remain the same as for the annual election. A successful candidate at such election shall serve out only the remaining period of office of his/her predecessor.

ARTICLE IX: CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

- a) A proposal for constitutional change must be in the manner of a motion moved at either an Open or Extraordinary Open Meeting. The procedure shall be exactly the same as Article VII (h) except that the quorum must be twenty and it shall only be passed by a two-thirds qualified majority.
- b) The Co-Presidents shall define constitutional motions and rule on the interpretation of the Constitution. Any Ordinary Member of the MCR may challenge their ruling. If the challenge is made at an Open Meeting, there shall be a vote for which the quorum shall be fifteen. Otherwise an Extraordinary Open Meeting shall be called by the challenger at the next practical date to be determined in co-operation with the Secretary.
- c) The final authority on the interpretation of this Constitution shall rest with St Catherine's College Governing Body.
- d) Amendments proposed by an Open Meeting shall be submitted for approval by the Governing Body. After Governing Body approval has been given, amendments shall be appended to the Constitution by the Secretary and a copy sent to the Academic Registrar to be lodged in the Academic Office.

ARTICLE X: DEFENCE OF THE CONSTITUTION

- a) A copy of this constitution shall be kept in the MCR, the College library and the Academic Office. All amendments shall be placed in each copy. An electronic copy should also be kept on the MCR homepage.
- b) This constitution shall displace and invalidate all other existing MCR constitutions.
- c) Under the terms of Section 22 of the Education Act 1994 this constitution shall be subject to approval by Governing Body every five years, commencing Hilary Term 1997. In exercise of its duties under Section 22 of the Education Act 1994 the Governing Body shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that the Middle Common Room operates in a fair and democratic manner and is accountable for its finances. Consequently, the Governing Body may overrule any *ultra vires* parts of the constitution, and refer them back to the MCR for reconsideration.