



## Constitution

Middle Combination Room  
Girton College, University of Cambridge

2019-2020

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**This document in its entirety sets out the constitution of the Girton College MCR, University of Cambridge. It defines the functions and the membership of the MCR, the conduct of the MCR Committee meetings, elections, and duties of the MCR Committee members.**

## 1. Name

The name of the society shall be the “Girton College Middle Combination Room Society,” hereafter referred to as the MCR, or society.

## 2. Aims

The aims of the MCR shall be:

- (1) To organise social, cultural, sporting, and other activities for its members.
- (2) To maintain the good relations of its members with the College’s junior and senior membership, and its staff.
- (3) To represent the views of its members within the College and the university as a whole.

## 3. Membership

- 3.1. The MCR shall be the constituent body of the postgraduate and affiliated students of Girton College.
- 3.2. All postgraduate, affiliated, and mature students of the College shall automatically be members of the MCR.
- 3.3. The French lecturer/lectrice shall be considered by the society as a member of the MCR.
- 3.4. Any member that wishes to resign from the MCR or serve notice of the fact that they do not wish to be a member of the society may do so as outlined in the Constitution.

## 4. Affiliations

- 4.1. The MCR shall be affiliated to the Cambridge University Students Union (CUSU) and the Graduate Union (GU). When the CUSU and GU merge as decided in the November 2019 referendum, the MCR shall be affiliated with the new student union, instead of CUSU and GU.

## 5. The MCR Committee

- 5.1. The MCR Committee shall be responsible for the day to day running of the society.  
 5.2. The MCR Committee shall consist of a maximum of nine (9) established positions as follows:

### Executive Committee Members

- (i) President;
- (ii) Vice-President;
- (iii) Treasurer; and
- (iv) General Secretary.

### Non-Executive Committee Members

- (v) Two Social Secretaries
- (vi) Dining Officer
- (vii) Academic Officer
- (viii) Welfare Officer.

There may also be up to six Open Portfolio Officers at the discretion of the President, as outlined at 5.5.8.

- 5.3. All Committee Members will hold office for one year or until their period of study is completed (whichever is the shorter), except the Executive Committee Members that are expected to hold office for a full whole year including Summer Term.
- 5.4. Upon completion of their term, each Committee Member shall provide to the General Secretary a written report summarising their duties and activities along with a report on any constitutional issues during their term of office. The compilation of these reports will be used to create a Handbook accessible to the Committee's successors in the following year. The handbook should also be added to the MCR archive.
- 5.5. The description for the various roles within the committee is as follows.

#### 5.5.1. The President

- (i) The President shall be the public and executive head of the MCR.
- (ii) The President shall formulate the MCR's initial policies at the beginning of his/her term, consistent with any Presidential election manifesto, and propose further policy during his/her term.
- (iii) The President shall aim to create and build a good relationship with the Fellows, staff, postgraduates, and undergraduates at Girton College, along with the JCRs and MCRs of other colleges.
- (iv) The President shall chair all MCR Committee Meetings.
- (v) It is the duty of the President to provide advice and support to the junior committee members, when they require it.
- (vi) It is the duty of the President to ensure that the other committee members carry out their assigned roles to a satisfactory extent.
- (vii) It is the duty of the President to ensure that the MCR Fresher's Week is organised, to welcome the new MCR members to the college.
- (viii) In the absence of a full committee, it shall be the responsibility of the President to delegate the duties of the vacant posts among its existing members, keeping in mind that a decimated committee will be unable to carry out the same workload as a full one.
- (ix) Subject to the provisions of the College Statutes, the President is ex-officio a member of College Council. The President is bound by the confidentiality of Council and its trustees and may not pass on to the Committee details of how s/he or her proxy may have voted on any particular issue, unless s/he wishes. As a trustee of the College, the President is personally liable for their decision made on Council and is not a delegate of the Committee, though s/he may make known the views of the Committee.
- (x) Except as already provided for in article 5.5.2 Clause (vi), the President shall organise MCR representation on all other relevant Girton College Committees.
- (xi) The President shall be responsible for representing the MCR within university student unions to which the MCR is affiliated. S/he will have a seat on the Councils of both unions. The President will represent the MCR at these two institutions in a manner consistent with MCR policy. If no MCR policy exists on any subject of debate at these two bodies, the President shall reserve the right to vote at his/her discretion. Any proxy sent to vote will do so in accordance with MCR policy. If no MCR policy exists on any subject of debate at these two bodies, the proxy will vote as directed by the President. If the Vice-President is able to, then they shall be the proxy of the President.
- (xii) The President shall present to the College Council in Michaelmas Term each year an Annual Report on the MCR's activities in the previous financial year (ending 30

June), combined into a single document with the Treasurer's annual accounts for the previous financial year (ending 30 June).

- (xiii) The President shall inform the Committee of any way s/he, or his/her proxy, may have voted on particular issues at any of the College Committee meetings that he/she, or his/her proxy, has attended.
- (xiv) Each year, the President shall be required to write and give a speech at the College Feast, subject to invitation, and write a report on MCR activities during the year, which becomes part of the College annual review.
- (xv) Only members of the society who expect to remain members of the College for the full term of office may stand for this position, unless there are no other candidates at the close of nominations.

#### 5.5.2. The Vice President

- (i) The Vice-President shall support the President in his/her duties as the public and executive head of the MCR. The Vice-President shall also assist the President in the formation of the MCR policy and its subsequent execution.
- (ii) This includes, but is not restricted to, advising and supporting junior committee members to carry out their roles and ensuring that the MCR freshers' events are organised.
- (iii) In the event of the resignation of the President, the Vice-President shall become President, for the remainder of the term the President was elected to.
- (iv) The Vice-President shall be responsible for maintaining the MCR common rooms, unless the President decides to delegate the responsibility to another committee member.
- (v) Subject to the provisions of the College Statutes, the Vice-President is a member of College Council. The Vice-President is bound by the confidentiality of Council and its trustees and may not pass on to the Committee details of how s/he or her proxy may have voted on any particular issue, unless s/he wishes. As a trustee of the College, the President is personally liable for their decision made on Council and is not a delegate of the Committee, though s/he may make known the views of the Committee.
- (vi) The Vice-President shall represent the MCR on any College Committee convened for the discussion of postgraduate matters where Council has approved such representation.
- (vii) The Vice-President shall substitute for the President at all functions, Committees, and Councils requiring the latter's presence, if she/he is unable to attend.
- (viii) Only members of the society who expect to remain members of the College for the full term of office may stand for this position, unless there are no other candidates at the

close of nominations.

#### 5.5.3. The Treasurer

- (i) The Treasurer shall be responsible for the day-to-day running of the finances of the MCR.
- (ii) The Treasurer will be responsible for representing the MCR end of the year accounts and the budget of proposed expenditure for the forthcoming academic year to Committee during Easter term. The exact date shall be determined first by the President and, in the absence of any such directive, by the Treasurer.
- (iii) The Treasurer shall present each term's MCR accounts to the committee, at the beginning of the following term.
- (iv) At the end of the financial year (ending 30 June), the Treasurer is expected to produce a financial report, which is submitted to the College Council along with the Annual Report of the MCR during the Michaelmas Term following).
- (v) In Lent Term, the Treasurer will submit to the College Council MCRs proposed budget for the following financial year (1 July to 30 June), subject to Council's approval.
- (vi) In the absence of a Treasurer, the General Secretary shall become acting Treasurer, until such time as a by-election can be held in order to obtain a new member to take the post.
- (vii) Only members of the society who expect to remain members of College for the full term of office may stand for this position, unless there are no other candidates at the close of nominations.

#### 5.5.4. The General Secretary

- (i) The General Secretary shall be responsible for the procedure of the MCR, by ensuring that the conduct of the President and the Committee as a whole adheres to the Constitution.
- (ii) The General Secretary shall not have the power to nullify any decision taken by the President and/or the Committee that s/he feels may run contrary to the Constitution. However, it shall be his/her responsibility to advise the President and the Committee if s/he feels there is a danger of this occurring. In the event of the General Secretary believing unconstitutional behaviour has taken place, s/he shall have the responsibility of informing the MCR membership so that the mechanisms prescribed in the Constitution against unconstitutional conduct by the President and/or the Committee may be exercised.
- (iii) The General Secretary shall take the chair at all MCR open meetings.

- (iv) The General Secretary shall be responsible for the organisation and promotion of MCR Committee meetings, open meetings, referenda, and elections.
- (v) In the absence of a Communications Officer, the General Secretary shall be responsible for the distribution of promotional materials relating to MCR Events. Where promotional material is received for distribution, it must be issued within 48 hours to the MCR. Such material includes, but is not limited to, electronic mail, web content, and posters. MCR Committee members seeking to distribute promotional material themselves may do so without the permission of the General Secretary.
- (vi) The General Secretary shall ensure that the MCR membership at large is kept informed of events that took place at MCR Committee meetings. Minutes of meetings should be made available to all MCR members within two (2) weeks of each meeting.
- (vii) In the absence of a General Secretary, the Treasurer will become acting General Secretary, until such time a by-election can be held in order to obtain a new person to take the post.
- (viii) Only members of the society who expect to remain members of College for the full term of office may stand for this position, unless there are no other candidates at the close of nominations.
- (ix) The General Secretary shall be responsible for all aspects of MCR recordkeeping. This includes ensuring that all appropriate documents are acquired, created and filed correctly; that they are easily accessible and that they are handed over to the next committee in good order. The General Secretary shall liaise with the College Archivist over the transfer of non-current records of historic interest to the College Archives, as determined by the College Archivist.

#### 5.5.5. The Social Secretaries

- (i) There shall be two Social Secretaries, who shall be non-executive committee members.
- (ii) The Social Secretaries shall have responsibility for the delivery of a series of events over the year, as approved by the Committee: that is, the organisation and promotion of the social activities of the MCR (with the exception of those organised by the Academic Officer), in addition to that of organising special events; and shall divide the work between them.
- (iii) The social secretaries should try and ensure that there is variation in the events delivered, so to appeal to as large part of the society as possible. This includes organising both alcoholic and non-alcoholic events.
- (iv) Some of the responsibilities of the Social Secretaries may be re-allocated to other non-executive committee members with portfolios defined by the President,



rather than the Constitution, as prescribed in article 5.5.1 (viii), in order to assist him/her.

#### 5.5.6. The Dining Officer

- (i) The Dining Officer shall be a non-executive committee member.
- (ii) It is the task of the Dining Officer to coordinate and organise swaps with other colleges.
- (iii) It is the duty of the Dining Officer to assist the relevant Social Secretary in organising the MCR Superformal.
- (iv) The Dining Officer may assist the Social Secretaries in organising social events for the MCR, where appropriate.
- (v) If there are not enough committee members to fill the Dining Officer role, then one of the Social Secretaries shall assume the role.

#### 5.5.7 The Academic Officer

- (i) The Academic Officer shall be a non-executive committee member.
- (ii) It is the task of the Academic Officer to organise events promoting academic exchange within the society, and to organise once a term a Pecha Kucha event, which shall be held before a formal dinner.
- (iii) The Academic Officer should ensure that the MCR Committee supports its members in their academic pursuits and concerns, including collaboration with the Official Fellow for Postdoctoral Affairs for the enhancement of the research community in the College.
- (iv) The Academic Officer may represent the MCR Committee on College Committees regarding education-related issues, and the library.
- (v) It is the duty of the Academic Officer to, where eligible, represent the MCR on any university student committees related to education-related issues.

#### 5.5.7. The Welfare Officer

- (i) The Welfare Officer shall be a non-executive committee member.
- (ii) The Welfare Officer shall have responsibility for the organisation of the welfare activities of the MCR.

- (iii) The Welfare Officer shall address issues concerning housing, security, funding, grants, students with families, etc. within the College at the College's appropriate meetings.
- (iv) The Welfare Officer is expected to be aware of all aspects of welfare support within the College.
- (v) The Welfare Officer shall provide a link to the welfare support offered by university student unions and within the university as a whole.
- (vi) The Welfare Officer shall, where eligible, represent the MCR on any university student committees related to welfare.
- (vii) The Welfare Officer shall support the other members of the welfare team (The Women's Officer, the LGBT+ Officer, and the BME officer) as they carry out their roles.
- (viii) Some of the responsibilities of the Welfare Officer may be re-allocated to other non-executive committee members, with portfolios defined by the President, rather than the Constitutions, as prescribed in article 5.5.1 (viii), in order to assist him/her.
- (ix) It is not the task of the Welfare Officer to provide help to individual students in specific cases, as this should be done by professionals as designated by the university (graduate tutors, university councillors, etc.). Rather, it is the role of the Welfare Officer to try and prevent issues in the first place, and to make the college and committee aware of potential risks to the welfare of MCR members.
- (x) If there are not enough committee members to fill the Welfare Officer role, then the President shall assume the role of the Welfare Officer.

#### 5.5.8. Open Portfolio Officers

- (i) To enable flexibility within the committee the President may declare up to six (6) Open Portfolio Officers for any election. The President, with the advice of the committee, decides the role description of these officers.
- (ii) The President is not required to designate all, or indeed any, Open Portfolio Officers. However, s/he is able to do so if he/she sees a need for it.
- (iii) It is the task of the Open Portfolio Officer to carry out the tasks assigned to them in their role description.
- (iv) Open Portfolio officers shall be non-executive committee members once elected and may include:
  - a. An International Officer
  - b. A Communications Officer
  - c. An IT Officer
  - d. A Women's Officer
  - e. A BME Officer

- f. A LGBT+ Officer.

## 6. Appointment of Committee Members and Elections

### 6.1.1. Candidate Eligibility

In addition to the criteria included in the “Description of the Committee Member Roles,” all candidates for election to the MCR Committee must be ordinary members of the MCR. A candidate who have served at least two terms as an executive committee member shall not be eligible to stand for election for an executive committee member position.

### 6.1.2. Date of Elections for Committee Members and Lengths of their Terms of Office

- (i) The elections for the Executive Committee (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, General Secretary) shall place take at the end of Easter term. In addition, any remaining role vacant, or left vacant by a retiring committee member shall be open for election. The Executive Committee plus any additional members elected shall take office at midnight on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Their terms shall end at midnight on June 30th the following year. To be eligible to stand for election in the Easter election a member must expect to be able to stay in the role until the last day of the following Easter term.
- (ii) The elections for the remaining positions shall take place during Michaelmas term; specifically, by the fourth week of Michaelmas full term. They shall take office at midnight on the day after the election is held. To be eligible to stand for election in the Michaelmas election a member must expect to be able to stay on the role until the last day of the following Easter term. However, if they are able to, they are expected to stay until the completion of the next Michaelmas election.

### 6.1.3. Electoral Procedure – Prior to Ballot

- (i) It is the task of the General Secretary to carry out the election.
- (ii) If the General Secretary is standing for election, or if at least two member of the MCR requests it, a Returning Officer shall be selected to manage the election.
- (iii) Any member of the MCR may send a request to the General Secretary that a Returning Officer shall be elected. The latest day to do so is five (5) days after the General Secretary has posted a notice about the election.
- (iv) In case of major disagreements within the MCR, where it is impossible to designate someone to manage the election, a request shall be made to the JCR, for them manage the election.

- (v) The General Secretary and the Treasurer shall choose the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be a member of the MCR, but not a candidate, nor the Incumbent President or Vice-President.
- (vi) If the General Secretary and/or the Treasurer are themselves standing for re-election to their positions, then two incumbent non-executive members of the Committee not standing for election shall choose the Returning Officer, as outlined in article 5.2 (v-viii).
- (vii) Notice of elections shall be posted by the General Secretary. A minimum of five (5) days must be allowed for receiving nominations.
- (viii) The nominations list will be announced to the MCR within 24 hours of the nomination being closed.
- (ix) Each candidate shall have been proposed and seconded by two different members of the MCR. A candidate may not nominate or second him/herself.
- (x) If there are no candidates for the Executive Committee, then the nominations for these positions shall be held open for a further 48 hours from the initial close.
- (xi) If, after an extended nomination period, no candidates stand for the position of President or Vice-President the course of action is outlined in article 7.3 and shall be the same as when the President and Vice-President resign.
- (xii) If there are no candidates for a non-executive committee position during an Easter election, the position is to be left vacant until the next Michaelmas election. If an appropriate candidate is found before the start of Michaelmas term, the General Secretary may organise a by-election for the position.
- (xiii) If there are no candidates for non-executive committee positions during a Michaelmas election, positions may be appointed by the President by mutual agreement with the appointee. Such an appointment would also require the approval of a majority of the current MCR Committee (including newly elected members).
- (xiv) The election shall take place no more than five days after the nominations for all positions have closed.

#### 6.1.4. Electoral Procedure – During Ballot

- (i) All elections shall be by a secret ballot among the society's members.
- (ii) There shall be no proxy votes.

- (iii) On all ballot options in all MCR elections, an additional candidate “Re-Open Nominations” (RON) is to be included. RON shall be treated as a candidate when votes are being counted. However, in the vote for non-executive committee membership, RON will only be recognised if it is the candidate with the greatest number of votes.
- (iv) Online ballot should remain closed by the General Secretary (or Returning Officer) before voting commences and after voting completes.
- (v) In all elections, if there are only two candidates then the one with the majority of votes cast shall be deemed to be elected. If there are more than two candidates, all MCR members shall be asked to vote for all in order of preference. All candidates will be numbered with the first preference labelled with the number one, second preference number two, etc. However, if RON is not selected as the last choice, then no less preferable candidates may be chosen after. If a candidate obtains an absolute majority (i.e. more than 50%) of first choice votes cast, then they will be deemed to have been elected. If no candidate has an absolute majority after one round of counting the first-choice votes, then the two candidates with the greatest number of first choice votes shall go forward to the second count. In the second count the first-choice votes of both qualifying candidates shall be carried over. The ballot slips that did not place the two qualifying candidates indicated as their first choices, shall then have their highest ranked qualifying pair counted as their vote. These votes will then be added to their first-round totals. The candidate after this process with the greatest number of votes shall be deemed to be elected. The rules for choosing candidates for the election must be clearly displayed on the ballot sheets.
- (vi) The General Secretary (or Returning Officer) shall take overall responsibility for the conduct of the ballot itself.
- (vii) Where the election takes place online it must comply with the Constitution.

#### 6.1.5. Electoral Procedure – Post Ballot

- (i) The General Secretary (or Returning Officer) and a person of their choosing who is a member of the MCR, but not a candidate, nor the incumbent President or Vice-President shall be responsible for counting the votes. Any interested member of the MCR may witness votes being counted. Votes shall be counted, and results posted electronically by the Returning Officer within 24 hours of the closing of the ballot. Voting figures shall be available for inspection on demand.
- (ii) In the event of a draw in any elections, a second election shall be held within 72 hours. Only the drawing candidates will be allowed to stand in the second election.

- (iii) In the event of a second draw in any of the elections, an emergency open meeting shall be convened 24 hours after the announcement of the second ballot. The emergency open meeting shall elect the officers by issuing a directive as outlined in section 6. Under such circumstances a quorum majority shall not be required.
- (iv) If RON is elected to a post it shall be deemed unfilled and nominations re-opened and another election held within two weeks.
- (v) Where the election takes place online it must comply with the Constitution.

## 7. Leaving the MCR Committee: Resignation and Dismissal

### 7.1. Resignation of the President

- (i) If the President wishes to resign, s/he must inform the Vice President and the MCR Committee in writing.
- (ii) In the event of the President resigning, the Vice-President will immediately assume the role of President, and shall appoint a new Vice-President from the membership of the society. These roles may be held by their incumbents until Easter term's Executive Committee elections.

### 7.2. Resignation of the Vice-President

- (i) If the Vice President wishes to resign, s/se must inform the president and the MCR Committee.
- (ii) In the event of the Vice-President resigning, the President shall appoint a new Vice-President from the membership of the society. These roles may be held by their incumbents until Easter term's Executive Committee elections.

### 7.3. Resignation of the President and Vice-President at the same time

- (i) In the event of the President and Vice-President resigning at the same time, they shall both inform the General Secretary as outlined in articles 7.1 and 7.2.
- (ii) The General Secretary shall call for a committee meeting within 1 week in order to appoint an acting President on a one member one vote basis, who will then, in turn, appoint an acting Vice-President from the committee membership.
- (iii) The acting President and acting Vice-President shall have the same powers as the permanent positions, for the period they are in office, although they will not be able to amend the MCR policy at the beginning of their terms.

- (iv) The Treasurer and General Secretary shall take up the roles of acting President and Vice-President during the period between the resignation and the appointment of other existing committee members to these roles.
- (v) A by-election must be held within two weeks of the President and Vice-President resigning, under the positions' election rules. Any candidate elected as President or Vice-President must remain in office until the Easter term's Executive Committee elections.
- (vi) If after two weeks no candidates are forthcoming for the President and Vice-President by-election, then the acting President and acting Vice-President, shall if they wish to assume the permanent roles. If the acting President does not want to take the permanent role, then the acting Vice-President shall be invited to become President. If neither wishes to continue, the committee shall appoint a new President and Vice-President on a one member one-vote basis from its membership.

#### 7.3.1. Resignation of the Treasurer

- (i) If the Treasurer wishes to resign, he/she must inform the President and the General Secretary.
- (ii) In the event of the Treasurer resigning, the President shall appoint a new Treasurer from the membership of the society. The new incumbent may hold this role until the Easter term's Executive Committee elections.
- (iii) During any period between resignation of the outgoing Treasurer and appointment of a new Treasurer, the General Secretary shall take responsibility for the Treasurer's role.

#### 7.3.2. Resignation of the General Secretary

- (i) If the General Secretary wishes to resign, he/she must inform the President, the Vice-President, and the Treasurer.
- (ii) During any period between resignation of the outgoing General Secretary and appointment of a new General Secretary, the Treasurer shall take responsibility for the General Secretary's role. These roles may be held by their incumbents until Easter term's Executive Committee elections.

#### 7.3.3. Resignation of Non-executive Committee Members

- (i) Any non-executive committee member wishing to resign shall inform the President.

- (ii) The President may reshuffle the remaining non-executive committee members in accordance with article 5.5.1 (viii).
- (iii) A new committee member may be appointed, as if the position were left vacant after an election.

#### 7.3.4. Resignation of the Entire Committee

- (i) The resigning General Secretary shall inform the society membership and the College Council that the committee intends to resign.
- (ii) After such a resignation, an emergency meeting of a minimum of ten (10) society members shall be called for an acting committee to be elected.
- (iii) The acting committee will then call a by-election for all the committee positions to be held within two weeks of the initial announcement.
- (iv) If any positions on the acting committee are unopposed before the by-election deadline, the acting members shall be able to keep their roles until the next scheduled elections if they so desire.

7.3.5. The absence of any member for three consecutive meetings, without submitting their apologies to the General Secretary will be understood as a resignation from the Committee.

#### 7.3.6. Dismissal of the President and Vice-President

The President and Vice-President shall be dismissed from their position under the following circumstances:

- (i) On expulsion from the College.
- (ii) In the case of an Open Meeting votes for the President's and/or Vice-President's dismissal, which should hold the two-thirds majority with an attendance of at least forty (40) members.
- (iii) If the President is dismissed, the Vice-President shall take over as outlined in article 7.1.
- (iv) The Vice-President may be dismissed by a two-thirds majority vote by the members of the MCR Committee, as structured in article 5.2. The Vice-President can appeal against such a vote with an Open Meeting called within three days of his/her removal. If the Vice-President receives support by two-thirds majority with an attendance of at least forty (40) members attending the Open Meeting s/he may keep his/her position.



- (v) If the Vice-President is dismissed the course of action should be followed as outlined in article 7.2.
- (vi) If both the President and Vice-President are dismissed, then the course of action is outlined in article 7.3.

#### 7.3.7. Dismissal of the Treasurer and General Secretary

The Treasurer and General Secretary shall be dismissed from their position under the following circumstances:

- (i) On expulsion from the College.
- (ii) In the case of an Open Meeting votes for the Treasurer's and/or General Secretary's dismissal, which should hold the two-thirds majority with an attendance of at least forty (40) members.
- (iii) By a two-thirds majority vote by the members of the MCR Committee, as structured in article 5.2. The dismissed can appeal against such a vote with an Open Meeting called within three days of his/her removal. If the dismissed receives support by two-thirds majority with an attendance of at least forty (40) members attending the Open Meeting s/he may keep his/her position.
- (iv) In the event of either being dismissed the course of action is outlined in articles 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 respectively.

#### 7.3.8. Votes of No-Confidence in Non-executive Committee Members

The non-executive committee member shall be dismissed from their position under the following circumstances:

- (i) On expulsion from the College.
- (ii) Any non-executive committee member may be dismissed by a two-thirds majority vote by the members of the MCR Committee, as structured in article 5.2. The non-executive committee member can appeal against such a vote with an Open Meeting called within three days of his/her removal. If the Vice-President receives support by two-thirds majority with an attendance of at least sixty (60) members attending the Open Meeting s/he may keep his/her position.
- (iii) If a non-executive committee member is dismissed, the course of action is outlined in article 7.3.3.

## 8. Heavily diminished MCR Committee

- 8.1 If the MCR committee, due to lack of nominations, low election turnout, or committee resignation, remains with very few numbers for an extended period of time, it is recognised that it may be unable to carry out its full duties.
- 8.2 If this is the case, the remaining members of the committee shall, independently of their roles and to their capacity, carry out the core tasks of the committee.
- 8.3 The core tasks of the committee shall be to:
- (i) Seek to replace missing committee positions with new members, with especial importance given to the executive committee positions.
  - (ii) During the beginning of Michaelmas term, organise freshers' events for the new students. This is important since these are a main source of new possible committee members.
- 8.4 If the entire committee remains vacant without anyone to organise an election, the JCR may organise an election for a new MCR Executive Committee (which then may organise the election of a new full committee).

## 9. MCR Committee Meetings

- 9.1. Committee meetings shall be at least three times during Michaelmas and Lent terms, and a minimum of two meetings should be held during Easter term. In addition, there should be at least one meeting between Easter and Lent term.
- (i) The President and/or General Secretary shall call committee meetings with at least 72 hours' notice.
  - (ii) A Committee Meeting to be considered valid shall have a quorum of the majority (50% plus 1) of the MCR Committee in attendance, including at least two of the Executive Committee members.
  - (iii) All agenda items shall be sent to the General Secretary. The General Secretary shall provide each committee meeting with access to a copy of the agenda at each meeting. In addition, he/she shall be responsible for informing the MCR Committee as a whole, via the email list, of the date, time and the agenda of the meeting.
  - (iv) The minutes of a Committee Meeting shall be approved as an item on the Agenda at the subsequent Committee Meeting.

- (v) The President shall chair all MCR meetings. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall chair the meetings, and if neither is present, the General Secretary shall chair the meetings.
- (vi) All of the Committee's decisions must be recorded in the minutes.
- (vii) Any Committee Member unable to attend an MCR Meeting should notify the General Secretary in advance.

9.2. All committee members shall be expected to attend all committee meetings.

9.3. The General Secretary may decide to have a committee meeting open to non-committee members. In such a case, no member of the MCR may be excluded. Either everyone is invited, or none at all.

9.4. Only Committee Members may vote during MCR committee Meetings.

- (i) The voting structure within the Committee for non-financial decisions shall be one vote per position. There must be a quorum of over 50%. In the event of a drawn vote, the President (or acting Chair) shall have an extra casting vote.
- (ii) Any Committee Member, including the President, wishing to spend more than 50GBP on any purchase from the MCR reserves, not specified in the society's budget, must have the majority of votes from the MCR Committee with a quorum of over 50%.
- (iii) Any Committee Member, including the President, wishing to spend more than 1000GBP on any purchase from the MCR reserves, not specified in the society's budget, must have the majority of votes from the MCR Committee with a quorum of over 50%. Following this, a referendum must be held.

#### 8.4 Voting Procedure

- (i) Voting can occur by hands raising or a secret ballot. Unless otherwise requested, the voting manner and counting of the votes shall be left to the chair's discretion.
- (ii) The General Secretary shall count and record the votes, the decision made, and the proposed alternatives. In the case of a secret ballot, counting shall occur among the General Secretary and another member of the MCR Committee.

## 10. MCR Open Meetings

10.1. The Open Meeting (OM) shall be the highest policy forming and legislative body of the society for all decisions not reserved to the Presidential prerogative or requiring referenda.

- 10.2. The President and the Committee shall be compelled to act in accordance with any OM directive pertaining to MCR policy.
- 10.3. The OM may issue directives authorising referenda and shall be asked to ratify decisions by the Committee
- 10.4. The OM shall not issue directives on the following areas, although it shall be entitled to debate and assert an opinion on them.
- (i) The additional positions referred to in article 5.5.8.
  - (ii) Appointments of non-executive committee members to particular positions on that body by the President.
  - (iii) The appointment of a new Vice-President after the resignation or dismissal of the previous one.
  - (iv) The dissolution of the entire MCR Committee.
  - (v) The overturning of election and referendum results.
  - (vi) The amendment of the Constitution without a referendum.
  - (vii) The budget and the accounts, although its assent will be required for their ratification.
- 10.5. The General Secretary must call an opening meeting if requested by the MCR Committee, or in writing or by email by any ten members of the society.
- 10.6. The General Secretary shall cause notices, via email or otherwise, advertising the OM to be displayed at least five (5) days prior to it, along with a provisional agenda.
- 10.7. All motions must be in the hands of the General Secretary at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. Each motion must have a proposer and a second who are members of the society. The final agenda shall be made available at least 48 hours in advance of the OM.
- 10.8. Any member present at the OM may bring up a matter for discussion; however, emergency motions can only be accepted at the sole discretion of the chair of the meeting.
- 10.9. The General Secretary shall chair the OM, and if he/she is not present the Treasurer shall be the chair. A new chair may be elected by a majority vote of members present at the OM.
- 10.10. The quorum for motions to be passed as OM directives shall be twenty-one (21) members. There shall be no quorum required for the ratification of accounts, budgets, and reports by the OM.
- 10.11. The minutes must be circulated by email within 72 hours of the OM.
- 10.12. If hustings are held for the Michaelmas elections, these might be held in combination with an open meeting.

## 11. Referenda

- 11.1. A referendum may be called to address issues relating to proposals to amend the Constitution:
- (i) By the President.
  - (ii) By the MCR Committee as a whole.
  - (iii) When directed by an OM.
  - (iv) At the request of College Council.
  - (v) When a petition calling for an amendment containing a minimum of twenty (20) society members is received by the General Secretary.
- 11.2. The General Secretary shall be responsible for the organisation of referenda in accordance with the election procedure as outlined in Paragraph 6.
- 11.3. Any proposed amendment of the Constitution decided by a referendum shall only be passed with at least two-thirds of votes cast in favour of the amendments.

## 12. Formation of MCR Policy

- 12.1. Financial Policy
- 12.1.1. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the day to day running of the finances of the MCR, as instructed by the OM or at an MCR Committee Meeting, always subject to the conditions laid down by the College.
- 12.1.2. The Treasurer shall keep an account book and perform regular reconciliations to the nominal ledger maintained by or on behalf of the College Bursar and shall produce annual accounts made up to 30<sup>th</sup> June (end of Financial Year) each year.
- 12.1.3. The MCR Committee shall decide the spending for each term at the end of the previous one from the accounts produced by the Treasurer at the last OM or the MCR Committee Meeting.
- 12.1.4. The Treasurer shall present to the MCR Committee and Senior Treasurer the MCR accounts for the previous term at the beginning of the next.
- 12.1.5. The Treasurer shall submit all accounts made through the end of the Financial Year at the scheduled Council meeting in the Michaelmas Term following. The Treasurer and the President may implement a moratorium on spending one week before the end of the Financial Year to ensure that the accounts are in order and are presented relevant Council meeting. In the event that the Treasurer is not in residence at the time of the Council meeting, it is the duty of the Treasurer to familiarize the Vice-President with the accounts

prior to their departure and the duty of the Vice-President to prepare and present the accounts at the Council meeting.

12.1.6. The annual accounts shall be audited internally by College in the Michaelmas term following the year period being accounted for and prior to their presentation to Council.

## 12.2. Non-Financial Policy

12.2.1. All policy must be consistent with the Constitution, and any policy that runs contrary to the Constitution shall be abandoned.

12.2.2. All policy must be proposed by the President at Committee meetings and ratified by the MCR Committee.

12.2.3. A review of any policy may be instigated by a member of the MCR Committee at any committee meeting.

12.2.4. The MCR Committee can add to, remove, or amend MCR policy by a majority of votes among committee members.

12.2.5. An OM may add to, remove, or amend MCR policy by a majority of votes cast (excluding abstentions) in support of a motion with a quorum attendance, as long as it is within the limits set out in article 10 of this Constitution. The MCR Committee and/or the President will not be able to rescind any MCR policy formed by an OM directive. Only a further OM directive at a later open meeting shall be able to do this.

12.2.6. In the event of a member of the MCR wishing to prevent a particular policy that he/she/they feel(s) runs contrary to the Constitution, then the said member(s) may appeal to the senior membership of the College in accordance to Appendix I.

## 13. Indemnity

The MCR shall not be held responsible for any loss, injury, or liability to any of the members of the society, or guests, however sustained and whether or not incurred in the execution of the duties of a Committee Member during a function organised by the society.

## 14. The Constitution

The constitution shall be available to all members upon their request. It shall be available on MCR resources, such as webpages.

Changes to the MCR Constitution can only be approved by the college Council. A change to the constitution can only be proposed to the college Council on the occasion of:

- (i) A two thirds majority vote by the MCR Committee.
- (ii) By an Open Meeting decision.
- (iii) Due to a successful referendum to amend the constitution.

- (iv) A proposed change must be made available to the MCR at least seven (7) days before it is submitted to the college council. Any MCR members may submit their opinion about such a change to the college council, so the college council may take those into account.

The college Council may request an MCR referendum to decide on a constitution change.

## 15. The Archive

The MCR archive shall include the collected documents produced by the MCR and the committee over the years. Its purpose is to maintain the institutional memory of the MCR. The General Secretary is responsible for maintaining the archive in a tidy state, to enable it being easily navigated.

The following documents shall be added to the archive:

- (i) The MCR budgets and accounts
- (ii) All Committee Meeting and OM protocols.
- (iii) All annual reports handed in by committee members on finishing their term.
- (iv) A report on any event organised, which cost at least £2,000.
- (v) Committee members may request to have any other documents added to the archive. They shall be added if the secretary finds the request reasonable (or if a single majority committee vote declares it reasonable).

The archive may be kept online but have to be backed up in such a way that there is no real risk of it being lost.

At the end of their term, the General Secretary should contact the college archivist, asking if there is any year for which the college archive does not have a copy of the MCR archive. The General Secretary should also offer to send a copy of all documents in the MCR archive, for any year for which the college archivist requests, so that the documents may be added to the college archive.

## Appendix I – Permanent Appendix to the Constitution of Girton 11.

In this Constitution, the expression 'Council' shall mean the Council of the College, and the expression 'affiliation to an external organisation' shall include any form of membership of or formal association with, an organisation whose purposes are not confined to purposes connected with the College.

No alteration shall be made to any part of this Constitution without the approval of the Council.

No alteration shall be made to this part of this Constitution except in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1994.

In the event of any conflict between any provision of this Constitution and any provision of this Part of the Constitution, the Provision of this Part shall prevail.

This Constitution shall be submitted to the Council for approval, in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1994, on 1st October 1995 and at intervals of five years thereafter.

The MCR shall operate in a fair and democratic manner in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1994.

Any person who would, by virtue of the provisions of this constitution, automatically be a member of the MCR may, in any academical year, by written notice, declare that he or she does not wish to be a member of the MCR for that academical year. Such written notice must be given to the President of the MCR within one week of the commencement of the Michaelmas Term.

A postgraduate student member of the College who exercises the right not to be a member of the MCR shall not be unfairly disadvantaged with regard to the provision of services or otherwise.

Appointment to major MCR offices shall be by election in a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote, and at which a Fellow of the College shall act as returning officer if so requested by a candidate.

There shall be no sabbatical or paid elected office in the MCR contrary to the provisions of S.22 (2)(f) of the Education Act 1994.

#### Affiliation to Organisations

If the MCR decides to become affiliated to any external organisation, it shall publish to all postgraduate student members of the College, and to the Council, a notice of this decision stating the name of the organisation and the details of any subscription or similar fee paid or proposed to be paid, and of any donation made or proposed to be made, to the organisation.

The MCR shall upon the request of a postgraduate student member of the College, or of the Council, provide a report stating the names of all external organisations to which it is affiliated and the details of any subscriptions or similar fee paid, and of any donation made or proposed to be made, to the organisations within the year covered by the report.

Upon request of at least three per cent of its members, the MCR shall submit for the approval of its members a list of the organisations to which the MCR is affiliated. If at least five per cent of the members so require, the question of continued affiliation to any particular organisation shall be decided upon by a secret ballot at which all members are entitled to vote. No such ballot shall be held less than four calendar months after the previous ballot.

Grievances



All postgraduate student members of the College or groups of such members who are dissatisfied in their dealings with the MCR, or who claim to be unfairly disadvantaged by reason of having exercised the right not to be a member of the MCR, may prefer a complaint to the President of the MCR. An appeal shall lie from the President of the MCR to a person appointed by the Council to serve for such a period as the Council may determine, who may not delegate his or her responsibility for hearing the appeal. The Council shall have the power to provide such effective remedy if any as it considers appropriate when a complaint is upheld.