

Constitution of the Jesus College Middle Combination Room

January 2014

1 Name and Trustees

- 1.1 The Society shall be called the Jesus College Cambridge Middle Combination Room (abbreviated “MCR”).
- 1.2 The Trustees of the MCR shall be the Council of Jesus College, Cambridge

2 Aims

The aims of the MCR include:

- 2.1 to act as the primary representative body of Jesus College graduate students;
- 2.2 to administer and allocate funds made available to its members in their capacity as students or as required by the MCR on behalf of its members in accordance with the objectives of the MCR;
- 2.3 to provide information, assistance and support to MCR members;
- 2.4 to provide amenities and to conduct functions and events for the benefit of the members of the MCR;
- 2.5 to provide a channel of communication between the MCR members and the College Council and other relevant bodies;
- 2.6 to assist and promote the academic, social and welfare interests (being charitable interests) of all members of the MCR; and
- 2.7 to promote any other aims which the Executive Committee consider to be of value to its members.

3 Membership

The membership of the MCR shall be as follows:

- 3.1 (a) Subject to sub-clause (b), the ordinary members of the MCR shall comprise all graduate members of the College in statu pupillari whose tutor is the Tutor for Graduates. All ordinary members will be voting members of the MCR.
- (b) Any graduate member of the College may, in any academic year by written notice declare that he or she does not wish to be a member of the MCR for that academic year. This written notice shall be provided to the Secretary of the MCR within one week of the commencement of the Michaelmas Full Term.
- (c) Any graduate 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 by reason of having done so, but this shall not entitle him or her to make use of any services or facilities which have been paid for out of the funds of the MCR.

3.2 Honorary members of the MCR shall include the following:

- (a) any undergraduate member of the College in statu pupillari, aged twenty-one or more when he or she matriculated, who has given written notice to the Secretary of the MCR electing to be an honorary member of the MCR.
- (b) spouses and partners of ordinary members of the MCR and spouses of honorary members under sub-clause (a); and
- (c) any other person as determined by the Executive from time to time.

Only those honorary members under sub-clause (a) shall be voting members of the MCR.

4 Operation

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

5 Executive

5.1 The affairs of the MCR shall be managed by an Executive Committee. All members of the Executive shall be ordinary members of the MCR within the meaning of Article 3.1(a) above. The officers of the Executive Committee to be elected by the voting members in accordance with Article 6 (“election of officers”) shall be as follows:

- 5.1.1 **The President**, who shall chair all meetings of the MCR and the Executive.
- 5.1.2 **The Vice-President**, who shall deputise for the President as required, act as chair in the absence of the President, and oversee all MCR computing and communications matters.
- 5.1.3 **The Treasurer**, who shall be responsible for the MCR accounts, maintain a bank account or accounts for the MCR and prepare the end-of-year accounts for approval by the Executive.
- 5.1.4 **The Secretary**, who shall prepare an agenda for all meetings, keep a record of all decisions taken and all resolutions passed and keep minutes. He or she shall be responsible for overseeing upkeep of the Graduates’ Room.
- 5.1.5 **The Academic Officer**, who shall promote the academic interests of MCR members.
- 5.1.6 **The Male Welfare Officer**, who shall provide for and advise upon the welfare needs of all MCR members, including those MCR members with disabilities. Shall promote the academic, social and welfare needs of the male members of the MCR.
- 5.1.7 **The Female Welfare Officer**, who shall provide for and advise upon the welfare needs of all MCR members, including those MCR members with disabilities. Shall promote the academic, social and welfare needs of the female members of the MCR.
- 5.1.8 **The LBGT** (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) Welfare Officer, who shall provide for and advise upon the needs of LBGT MCR members.

- 5.1.9 The **Sports Officer**, who shall facilitate the participation of MCR members in sports and other athletic activities.
- 5.1.10 Two **Social Secretaries**, who shall plan and manage all organised social events of the MCR. They shall also represent the MCR in coordinating all external social events in which the MCR participates.
- 5.1.11 The **Racial Equality and International Officer**, who shall provide for and advise upon the welfare needs of international MCR members. He or she shall also be responsible for advising upon any matter concerning racial affairs.
- 5.1.12 The **Green Officer**, who shall advise upon the ethical and environmental concerns of MCR members.
- 5.2 If the Graduate Representative on College Council is a member of the MCR but is not currently a member of the Executive, he or she shall be co-opted as an officer of the MCR by the elected officers.
- 5.3 In addition to the Graduate Representative on College Council, up to **two** voting members of the MCR may be co-opted by the elected officers from time to time as vacancies occur and interest is expressed. In the event that none of the elected officers is a graduate student who is either pursuing a one year course or in the first year of research leading to a Ph.D (“first year graduate student”), **at least one** co-opted officer shall be a first year graduate student.
- 5.4 The Welfare Officer shall meet once each term with representatives from the Jesus College Student Union (JCSU) Welfare Committee.
- 5.5 Prior to the elections of new officers, the President shall ensure that each committee member prepares a short document detailing the activities and responsibilities associated with his or her position, to be made available to the incoming officers.
- 5.6 The Jesus College Council will be responsible for appointing a **Senior Treasurer** to the MCR. The Senior Treasurer shall be a Fellow of Jesus College.

6 Election of Officers

The election of officers to serve on the Executive as specified in Article 5.1 shall be annual and occur during Easter Full Term on a date set by the Executive. The following procedure will be adopted:

- (a) Notice of the date of election and a call for nominations shall be circulated to all voting members no later than fourteen days before the date of election; it shall also be published on the notice board of the Graduate Room.
- (b) Nominations will be opened from the time of the announcement until midnight seven full days before the day of the election. Nominations may only be for one post. Nominations must be signed and counter-signed by two voting members in addition to the subscription of the candidate, and should be addressed to the Returning Officer. They will be published on the notice board of the Graduate Room once nominations have closed.
- (c) The election itself shall be held by secret ballot on the single transferable vote system. In electing each officer, a voting member shall therefore indicate his or her order of preference for the candidates until s/he is indifferent. The Secretary and one other

voting member appointed by the Executive shall be tellers for the election, and the count will be supervised by the Returning Officer.

- (d) The results of the election shall be published on the notice board of the Graduate Room and circulated to all voting members within seven days of the election.
- (e) If only one nomination has been received by the close of nominations for any Executive post, nominations shall be reopened for forty-eight hours. If no further nomination is received, the nominee shall be elected instantly and election of other officers will proceed as above five full days later.
- (f) If there is no nomination for a post, it shall be filled at the discretion of the new Executive.

7 Tenure and Resignation of Executive members

- 7.1 The new Executive shall take office for a year on the last day of the Easter Full Term in which it was elected. All of the co-opted members of the previous Executive will stand down once the new Executive takes office, though they may be co-opted onto the new Executive.
- 7.2 An Executive member who delivers notice in writing of his or her resignation from the Executive to the Secretary, or in the absence of the Secretary, to any other Executive member ceases to be a member of the Executive upon the closure of the meeting of the Executive to which that resignation is communicated.
- 7.3 A casual vacancy occurs in the Executive if any member of the Executive:
 - (a) dies;
 - (b) resigns by notice in writing in accordance with Article 7.2;
 - (c) is permanently incapacitated by mental or physical ill health;
 - (d) is absent from more than three consecutive meetings of the Executive of which he or she has received notice without tendering an apology to the Secretary or the President of the MCR; or
 - (e) ceases to be a member of the MCR.
- 7.4 When a casual vacancy within the meaning of Article 7.3 occurs in the membership of the Executive, the Executive may appoint a member to fill that vacancy. A member so appointed shall remain in that position until the new Executive takes office in accordance with Article 7.1.

8 Meetings of the Executive

- 8.1 The Executive shall meet at least twice during each Full Term upon three days notice being given by the Secretary.
- 8.2 The Secretary shall in any case call a meeting at the request of two other members of the Executive.
- 8.3 The President (or in his or her absence the Vice-President) shall chair the meetings of the Executive. In the absence of both, the Treasurer or Secretary will chair meetings of the Executive.
- 8.4 Only elected or co-opted members of the Executive may vote at Executive meetings.

- 8.5 Each member of the Executive shall have one vote.
- 8.6 The quorum shall be a majority of the Executive.
- 8.7 In the event of a tied vote, the Chair may at his or her discretion exercise a casting vote or abstain.
- 8.8 Any voting member of the MCR may observe meetings of the Executive, though they will only be permitted to speak at the discretion of the Chair. If the ruling of the Chair is contested by any other member of the Executive present, a vote will be taken to decide the matter.
- 8.9 The Secretary shall provide all members of the Executive with a copy of the minutes of every meeting no more than three days after each meeting. A copy of the minutes will also be made available to members on the MCR website.
- 8.10 The names of the members of the Executive shall be displayed at all times on the notice board in the Graduate Room.

9 General Meetings

- 9.1 General Meetings of the MCR voting members shall include:
 - (a) The Annual General Meeting, which will take place between the division of the Lent Full Term and the close of nominations for the annual election of officers in the Easter Full Term, at a date decided upon by the Executive;
 - (b) Open Meetings of the voting MCR members, to be convened by the President whenever he or she considers that one is required; and
 - (c) Extraordinary General Meetings, to be convened by the Secretary within seven days of receipt of a written request signed by not fewer than ten per cent of the voting members, stating their reasons for requesting him or her to do so.
- 9.2 The Secretary will notify all voting members of the date of any General Meeting provided for in Article 9.1 no less than seven full days in advance, and must also display the circular on the notice board of the Graduate Room.
- 9.3 The agenda of each meeting must be published on the notice board of the Graduate Room and electronic copies made available to members no later than twenty-four hours before the time set for the meeting by the Executive. Copies of the agenda will also be made available by the Secretary to those attending the meeting.
- 9.4 Once a meeting has been called in accordance with the requirements of Article 9.1, the Secretary shall solicit written motions for discussion from the voting members. The deadline for submission of these motions shall be not more than seventy-two, and not less than forty-eight, hours before the meeting is to take place. All motions must bear the name and signature of the proposer and seconder who shall be voting members of the MCR.
- 9.5 All motions received by the Secretary in accordance with Article 9.4 shall be published in full, exactly as submitted by the proposer, in the agenda pursuant to Article 9.3.

9.6 Any motion passed in contravention of the requirements of this Article shall be void.

10 Procedure of General Meeting

10.1 A quorum shall be ten per cent of the voting membership of the MCR.

10.2 All members of the MCR are entitled to attend its General Meetings and speak from the floor but only the voting members shall be entitled to vote. Each voting member shall have one vote.

10.3 An ordinary motion shall pass if a majority of voting members present at the meeting vote in favour of the motion. Amendments to the Constitution will require the approval of a General Meeting in which two-thirds of the voting members present vote for the amendment.

10.4 The President shall act as chair of all General Meetings. In his or her absence, the meeting shall be chaired by the Vice-President. Otherwise the first business of the meeting shall be to elect a Chair. If the President is the proposer of a motion, he or she will relinquish the Chair to the next most senior member of the Executive for the duration of consideration of that motion.

10.5 Motions will be debated in the order they appear on the agenda. The Chair must give procedural motions immediate precedence over motions listed on the agenda. Procedural motions shall be put to the meeting in the same manner as ordinary motions of business. If passed they shall be binding upon the Chair.

10.6 The following procedural motions may be put:

- (a) “that X be heard”;
- (b) “that this matter be adjourned until the next General Meeting”;
- (c) “that this matter be referred to the Executive Committee”;
- (d) “that this motion be amended”;
- (e) “that this motion shall not be put to a vote”;
- (f) “that this motion shall immediately be put to a vote”;
- (g) “that this motion shall be voted on by secret ballot”;
- (h) “that this meeting shall immediately be closed”; and
- (i) “that the Chair should step down”.

10.7 If the proposer of a motion is not present at the meeting it will be struck off the agenda. Once the proposer has spoken, the Chair shall call for anyone opposing the motion to make their case; and then any member may take the floor upon being recognised by the Chair. The Chair must recognise any member of the Executive indicating a desire to speak before he or she calls for a vote. The Chair shall have discretion to limit the length of all speeches, questions and answers. Once constructive debate has ended, the Chair will call for a vote.

10.8 The vote shall normally be by a show of hands, but the vote shall instead be by a secret ballot if requested as a procedural motion. If voting on the motion is by secret ballot votes must be counted and announced at the meeting. The Chair and a second voting member appointed by the Chair will be responsible for counting the votes.

- 10.9 A decision of a General Meeting will be binding upon the Executive of the MCR if it has been published on the agenda of the meeting and received a majority of the votes cast. If any member of the Executive feels unable to act according to such a mandate, he or she shall tender his or her resignation to the Secretary, or in the case of the Secretary, to the President.
- 10.10 Minutes of General Meetings will be taken by the Secretary and circulated to all voting members within seven days of the meeting.

11 Finance

- 11.1 **Income:** All monies allocated by the College for the use of graduate students shall comprise the income of the MCR. This money will be received by the MCR directly from the College.
- 11.2 The property and income of the MCR shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the aims of the MCR (as defined in Article 2) and no part of that property or income may be paid or otherwise distributed, directly or indirectly, to members of the MCR, except in good faith in the promotion of those aims.
- 11.3 The MCR Treasurer will submit an annual budget, ratified by the Executive, to the Jesus College Bursar in time for the July Jesus College Council meeting. Following ratification of this budget at the College Council meeting, the College will deposit the agreed amounts into the MCR current account for the forthcoming academic year.
- 11.4 **Internal Controls:** The MCR will open and maintain both a current account, and an interest-bearing deposit account. The signatories to the accounts shall be the Senior Treasurer and the Treasurer of the MCR. All monies received from the College shall be paid into the current account. The balance of the current and deposit accounts should be maintained so as to make good use of the interest rates available, bearing in mind the costs incurred transferring money between accounts. Transfer of funds between current and deposit accounts may only be authorised by the signatories of the accounts,
- 11.5 The Treasurer must obtain written authorisation from the Senior Treasurer before making any form of disbursement from either account for sums in excess of 100 pounds. Should the Treasurer or any other officer require reimbursement of expenses they have borne personally on behalf of the MCR, in a sum which exceeds 100 pounds, the Treasurer must always bring the matter to the attention of the Senior Treasurer, whose written authorisation must be obtained for any payment of this nature. Should the Treasurer fail to do so he or she shall be in breach of this constitution and disqualified from holding office within the terms of Article 7 above. If the Senior Treasurer is unavailable, the Bursar may authorise such disbursements as would otherwise have been the responsibility of the Senior Treasurer. The Senior Treasurer will be informed of such payments.
- 11.6 The Treasurer will hold a Payments Book, in which he or she will record every payment made from the MCR accounts, and every deposit received. This Payment Book will be submitted to the Senior Treasurer monthly for oversight.
- 11.7 No contract may be entered into by or on behalf of the MCR without the written authority of the Executive.
- 11.8 With the exception of the Senior Treasurer, only the Treasurer shall be authorised to

draw money from the bank accounts of the MCR, always being bound by and subject to the appropriate regulations of the University concerning the supervision by senior members of the financial administration of the clubs and societies of junior members of the University, including graduate students. The Treasurer will retain the chequebook of the MCR. The Treasurer will maintain the accounting records of the MCR, including the bank statements, invoices paid and cashbook.

- 11.9 The Treasurer will be entitled to issue any single disbursement not exceeding three hundred pounds without recourse to the Executive: if however he or she has reason to believe the Executive would not approve any such expenditure, he or she may not issue the disbursement on his or her own authority and must instead call a meeting of the Executive. He or she does not need the support of another member of the Executive to call a meeting for such purposes.
- 11.10 The Treasurer must submit a written summary of the accounts to the Executive and the Senior Treasurer at the conclusion of Michaelmas and Lent Full Terms. The Treasurer will prepare accounts annually and publish them on the notice board of the Graduate Room at least 48 hours before the Annual General Meeting in Easter Full Term. If members of the MCR are not content to accept the accounts as published in Easter Full Term they should seek satisfaction from the Treasurer in the first instance and may then call a general meeting in accordance with the provisions of Article 9.1(c).
- 11.11 At the end of the financial year, the Treasurer will prepare the annual accounts for ratification by the Executive, and submit them for approval to the Senior Treasurer. The Treasurer will then send a copy signed by the Senior Treasurer to the Bursar for submission to College Council and independent auditing.
- 11.12 The Senior Treasurer:
- (a) shall be entitled to: examine the accounting records of the MCR, including any of the Treasurer's working papers, in order to form an opinion on the accounts, and the Treasurer must make the accounting records of the MCR available to the Senior Treasurer upon receiving reasonable notice of his or her request;
 - (b) shall be entitled: to require such explanations as he or she thinks necessary from officers of the MCR in forming an opinion of the accounts;
 - (c) shall be entitled to: attend and speak at any meeting of the Executive MCR on any subject that directly concerns him or her as Senior Treasurer;
 - (d) will signify his or her approval of the accounts in writing to the Executive. Should he or she form the opinion that the accounts are untrue or misleading he or she shall signify this disapproval to the Executive and call an extraordinary general meeting of the MCR. He or she will not need the agreement of the Executive or any other voting member to call a meeting in such circumstances.

12 Affiliation, Subscriptions and Donations to External Organisations

- 12.1 The MCR may affiliate, or pay a subscription, fee or donation, to an external organisation only if it publishes to all members, and to the College Council notice of its intention to do so, stating the name of the organisation, and the details of any subscription, fee or donation paid or proposed to be paid to it; and annually at the AGM a report stating the names of all the external organisations to which it is

affiliated, or to which any subscription, fee or donation has been paid within the year covered by the report.

- 12.2 Upon the written request to the President of at least three per cent of its voting members, the MCR shall submit for the approval of the MCR a list of the organisations to which the MCR is affiliated, and if, at the next General Meeting, at least five per cent of the total number of voting members so require, the question of continued affiliation to a particular organisation shall be decided upon by a vote, provided that no more than one such vote shall be held in any academic year.

13 Interpretation

- 13.1 In this Constitution, unless the contrary be provided “the College” means the
- 13.2 College of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint John the Evangelist and the Glorious Virgin Saint Radegund within the Town and the University of Cambridge, commonly called Jesus College in the University of Cambridge.
- 13.3 A person in “statu pupillari” means a matriculated member of the College who is actively pursuing a course of study leading to a degree, diploma or certificate conferred by the University of Cambridge.
- 13.4 Where appropriate, the singular may be substituted for the plural and vice versa.
- 13.5 The final authority in the interpretation of this constitution will be College Council.

14 Constitution

- 14.1 A copy of the constitution will at all times be available in the Graduate Room and in the Quincentenary Library. Any member of the MCR may request a copy of the constitution from any member of the Executive for their own information.
- 14.2 This constitution shall be reviewed by the College Council in every fifth year subsequent to its adoption, and shall, unless the Council renews its approval, cease to have effect at the end of those academic years.
- 14.3 Amendments to the Constitution will require the approval of a General Meeting of the MCR in accordance with Article 10.3. Amendments will then be appended to the Constitution and copies of the amendment will be sent by the Tutor for Graduates. No amendment to this Constitution shall take effect until it has been approved by College Council.

Note to the Constitution

Where the College Regulations make provision for the conduct of any MCR election, those Regulations have priority over any provisions in this Constitution which are inconsistent with College Regulations.