

*THE RULES OF THE* OXFORD STUDENTS  
**LIBERAL ASSOCIATION**



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Collegium Magnum Aulae Universitatis  
*Michaelmas Term 15.11.24*

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## SECTION 1

### Preamble

The Oxford University Liberal Club was first founded in 1913, and for over a century has been a key feature of Oxford political life. The Association stands today as an important force in student politics, keeping the flame of Liberalism burning bright in this greatest of universities. These rules serve to enable the noble mission on which we endeavour; to be a space that is welcoming for all, to celebrate free speech and to uphold an unwavering commitment to the cause of liberty.

The burden of our history and our values is great - but one that all Officers and members shall seek to rise to. And they shall succeed, for so long as they place liberty first and foremost in their actions.

### The Structure of the Rules

The Association is governed primarily by the 'Standard Constitution', 'Complaints Procedure' and 'Code of Conduct', which is the adapted version of the documents set forward by the University Proctors. The Standard Constitution appears first, with the Complaints Procedure and Code of Conduct appearing at the end. The Standard Constitution is followed by the Association Standing Orders, as established under *Paragraph 28* of the Standard Constitution. These documents shall collectively be known as the 'Rules' of the Association.

The Proctors' Documents have ultimate authority save for the following clarifications:

- I. Elections and General Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Standing Orders.
- II. Where the Standard Constitution refers to 'The Committee', this is taken to mean only the President, Vice President (Secretary), Treasurer and Senior Member. All other Office Holders as defined in the Standing Orders are established in accordance with Paragraph 28.
- III. Therefore, no binding Motion of No Confidence may be called in a member of the Executive (as defined in the Standing Orders) without consultation with the Senior Member.
- IV. Where the Complaints Procedure refers to 'The Committee' or 'The Disciplinary Committee', this is taken to mean the Emeritus Committee.
- V. Where the Standard Constitution refers to the 'Secretary', this is taken to mean The Vice President (Secretary).
- VI. The Executive may not exclusively make by-laws as outlined in *Paragraph 28*, Standing Orders may only be made, removed and amended following the procedure outlined in the Standing Orders.

## SECTION 2

### **The Standard Constitution**

#### **Name and Objects**

1. The Club is called the Oxford Students Liberal Association (hereafter referred to as “the Club”). The Club’s objects are the support, development, improvement and promotion of liberalism, the Liberal Democrats and cross-party political engagement in the University of Oxford insofar as such objects are charitable; and the income and property of the Club shall be applied solely to those objects.

#### **Compliance**

2.
  - (a) The Club shall be administered in accordance with the University’s Regulations for the Activities and Conduct of Student Members.
  - (b) The activities of the Club will at all times be conducted in accordance with the University’s procedures, codes of practice and policies in force from time to time on equality, harassment, freedom of speech and safeguarding (which are available via the University Student Handbook on the University’s webpages), and the Club’s Code of Conduct
  - (c) If there is a national governing body for the Club’s activities with which the Club is eligible to register, the Club shall effect and maintain such registration: purchase any insurance cover which the national body makes available (unless the Insurance Section of University Administration and Services agrees to or prescribes other arrangements); and make every effort to comply with all safety procedures which the national body prescribes, or recommends as good practice. If there is no such national governing body, or if the national governing body does not make insurance available, the Club must obtain alternative insurance as agreed by the Insurance Section of University Administration and Services.
  - (d) The Club shall maintain and observe the Club’s Safety Policy, ensure compliance with the Policy by the members of the Club, and follow an appropriate procedure

for risk assessment. Both the Safety Policy and the procedure for risk assessment must be acceptable to and approved by the University's Safety Office.

- (e) No member of the Club shall participate in any activity overseas organised by the Club, whether during term-time or vacation, unless the plans for such activity have been notified at least one calendar month in advance of the date of departure from the United Kingdom to the University's Safety Office or the University Marshal and approved by the Proctors. Each member participating in such activities overseas shall observe any conditions imposed by the Proctors on the recommendation of University's Safety Officer or the University Marshal, e.g. relating to the deposit of contact addresses, fulfilment of health, safety and insurance requirements, and stipulation of coaches, trainers or Senior Members to accompany the trip.
- (f) The Club shall maintain a dedicated website and shall supply details of its web address to the Clubs Office for listing on the University's clubs and societies webpage. The Club may apply to the University's IT Services to use information technology ('IT') facilities in the name of the Club. Where relevant facilities are allocated by IT Services it is the responsibility of the Club:
  - (i) to designate a member of the Club entitled to a University e-mail account (as defined by IT Services rules) to act as its IT Officer, whose duties shall include liaising with IT Services about the use of facilities allocated and passing on to the successor in office all records relating to the use of the facilities allocated;
  - (ii) to designate one of its members (who may be, but need not necessarily be, the same as its IT Officer) or, exceptionally, a member of Congregation, to act as its principal Webmaster, whose duties shall include maintaining an awareness of the University guidelines on web and social media publishing, and co-ordinating and regulating access to the web facilities used by the Club;
  - (iii) to comply with regulations and guidelines relating to the use of IT facilities published from time to time by IT Services;

- (iv) to ensure that everyone responsible under (i)-(iii) is competent to deal with the requirements, where necessary undertaking training under the guidance of IT Services.

## **Membership**

3. The members of the Club shall be those who are eligible and apply for membership of the Club, who are admitted to and maintained in membership by the Committee, and who have paid the relevant Club subscription.
4. Subject to paragraph 5, all student members of the University, and all persons whose names are on the University's Register of Visiting Students, shall be eligible to become members of the Club. A member shall continue to be eligible until given permission to supplicate for a degree, diploma or certificate, regardless of any continuing liability to pay fees to the University.
5. If the Club's objects relate directly to a protected characteristic as defined in section 4 of the Equality Act 2010, the Club may be entitled to restrict membership to members sharing that protected characteristic, provided that the Proctors shall first approve any such restriction.
6. The Committee may also, at its discretion, admit to membership:
  - (a) students registered to read for diplomas and certificates in the University;
  - (b) student members of Permanent Private Halls who are not student members of the University;
  - (c) members of Ruskin College and Ripon College, Cuddesdon;
  - (d) members of Oxford Brookes University, provided that such members shall not constitute more than one-fifth of the total membership; and
  - (e) other persons not falling within paragraph 4 above or paragraphs 6(a) to (d) above, provided that such members shall not constitute more than one-fifth of the total membership.
7. The Committee, having specific regard to the Senior Member's advice in relation to the relevant matter, may remove a person from membership if removal of such person from

membership is deemed to be in the best interests of the Club. If the person concerned is an Oxford University student (i.e. within paragraphs 6(a), (b) or (c) above), that person has a right to ask the Proctors to review the Committee's decision.

### **Meetings of the Members**

8. There shall be an Annual General Meeting for all the members of the Club in Hilary Full Term, convened by the Secretary on not less than fourteen days' notice.
9. The Annual General Meeting will:
  - (a) receive the annual report of the Committee for the previous year and the annual accounts of the Club for the previous year, the report and accounts having been approved by the Committee;
  - (b) receive a report from the Committee on the Club's compliance with paragraph 2 above;
  - (c) receive a report from the Committee on the number of complaints received, if applicable, the category of such complaints (e.g., harassment, funding disputes or service issues), and any Committee recommendations arising from them;
  - (d) elect Members of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 24 below: the Committee's nominations for the Officers and the Senior Member shall be contained in the notice of the Meeting; any alternative nominations must be seconded and have the consent of the nominee, and must be received in writing by the Secretary not less than seven days before the date of the Meeting; nominations for the other Committee Members may be taken from the floor of the meeting;
  - (e) consider any motions of which due notice has been given, and any other relevant business.
10. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called in any Full Term; by the President, the Secretary or the Treasurer on not less than seven days' notice; or on a written requisition by seven or more members, stating the reason for which the meeting is to be called, and delivered to the Secretary not less than fourteen days before the date of the Meeting.



11. Prior to all General Meetings notice of the agenda shall be sent out with the notice of the Meeting.
12. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be ten members present in person or by proxy, of whom three must be members of the Committee. When any financial business is to be transacted there must be present the Treasurer, or a member of the Committee deputed by the Treasurer to represent the Treasurer's views to the Meeting (provided that where it is a case of a deputy, the only financial business transacted shall be that which was set out in the agenda accompanying the notice of the Meeting).
13. Every matter, except where this Constitution provides otherwise, shall be determined by a majority of members present and voting. In the case of equal votes, the President of the Club shall have a casting vote.
14. Minutes of all meetings shall be kept and formally adopted. Copies of the minutes and the Committee's reports shall be made available to members and, upon request, to the Proctors.

### **The Committee**

15. The affairs of the Club shall be administered by a Committee consisting of not more than eight persons, which shall determine the subscriptions payable by the members of the Club, and have ultimate responsibility for the activities of the Club. Members of the University shall at all times make up the majority of the members of the Committee. The Committee shall consider the diversity of the Club and the benefits of increased representation for minority groups in its operations, including in the structuring of the Committee. The Committee shall have control of the funds and property of the Club, and of its administration.
16. No member of the Committee (or the Club) shall enter into or purport to enter into any arrangement, contract or transaction on behalf of the Club with a value exceeding £1,000 unless the Committee has resolved to approve the relevant arrangement, contract or transaction at a Committee meeting.
17. The quorum for a Committee meeting shall be four members present in person. When any financial business is to be transacted, there must be present either the Treasurer or a

member of the Committee deputed by the Treasurer to represent the Treasurer's views to the meeting.

18. The Committee shall be made up of the President, the Secretary, the Treasurer (together, the "Office Holders"; and their offices are referred to as "the Offices"), the Senior Member and no other persons. The President, the Secretary and the Treasurer shall each be either a member of the Club whose eligibility stems from paragraph 4 above or paragraphs 6(a) to (c) above, or (with the approval of the Proctors) a member of Congregation. Where eligibility stems from paragraphs 6(a) to (c) above, the President, the Secretary and the Treasurer must each, on election to office, sign an undertaking to abide by relevant provisions of the University Student Handbook, as directed by the Proctors from time to time, and other relevant University policies, and to accept the authority of the Proctors on Club matters.
19. The President shall have the right to preside at all meetings of the members of the Club and at all meetings of the Committee. Should the President be absent, or decline to take the chair, the Committee shall elect another member of the Committee to chair the meeting.
20. Minutes of all meetings, including Committee meetings, shall be kept and formally adopted. Copies of the minutes shall be made available to members and, upon request, to the Proctors.
21. The Secretary shall:
  - (a) maintain a register of the members of the Club, which shall be available for inspection by the Proctors on request;
  - (b) give notice of meetings of the members and the Committee;
  - (c) draw up the agendas for and minutes of those meetings;
  - (d) notify the Proctors (through the Clubs Office) promptly following the appointment and resignation or removal of Office Holders and other members of the Committee;
  - (e) take responsibility for the operation and updating of the Club's website displaying (as a minimum) information about the Committee, the Club's Constitution, Code

of Conduct, Complaint Procedure and any safety procedures approved by the University's Safety Office under paragraph 2(e);

- (f) provide the Insurance Section with full details of any insurance cover purchased from or through a national governing body pursuant to paragraph 2(c) above; and
- (g) inform the Proctors through the Clubs Office if the Club ceases to operate, or is to be dissolved, and in doing so present a final statement of accounts (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe).

22. The Treasurer shall:

- (a) keep proper records of the Club's financial transactions in accordance with current accepted accounting rules and practices;
- (b) develop and implement control procedures to minimise the risk of financial exposure, such procedures to be reviewed regularly with the University's Internal Audit Section ("Internal Audit");
- (c) ensure that bills are paid and cash is banked in accordance with the procedures developed under (b);
- (d) prepare an annual budget for the Club and regularly inform the Committee of progress against that budget;
- (e) ensure that all statutory returns are made including VAT, income tax and corporation tax if appropriate;
- (f) seek advice as necessary on tax matters from the University's Finance Division;
- (g) develop and maintain a manual of written procedures for all aspects of the Treasurer's responsibilities;
- (h) make all records, procedures and accounts available on request to the Senior Member, the Proctors and Internal Audit;
- (i) forward to the Proctors (through the Clubs Office) at the end of week 9 of Trinity Term a copy of annual accounts for the financial year to which they relate (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe) signed by the Senior Member, for retention on the Proctors' files (subject to the condition that during the first year of

registration, a club may be required by the Proctors to submit termly accounts);  
and

- (j) if the Club has a turnover in excess of £25,000 in the preceding year, or if owing to a change in the nature or scale of its activities, it may confidently be expected to have such a turnover in the current year, submit its accounts (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe) for independent professional inspection and report by a reporting accountant approved in advance by the Proctors. Accounts are to be ready for inspection within four months of the end of the Club's financial year and the costs of the inspection and report shall be borne by the Club. If requested by the reporting accountant, the Club shall submit accounts and related material as a basis for a review of accounting procedures, the cost likewise to be borne by the Club.

23. The Senior Member shall:

- (a) keep abreast of the actions and activities of the Club;
- (b) provide information relating to the Club to the Proctors on request;
- (c) seek to settle any preliminary disputes between the Committee and the members;
- (d) support the Club's welfare officer in their role to seek to prevent incidents of harassment and support those involved in such incidents;
- (e) following paragraph 22(i) above, consider whether the accounts of the Club are in order and, if so, sign them;
- (f) ensure that adequate advice and assistance is available to the Secretary and the Treasurer in the performance of their responsibilities under paragraphs 21 and 22 above; and
- (g) be available to represent and speak for the Club in the public forum, and before the University authorities.

24. The members of the Committee shall be elected by the members of the Club annually, and shall be eligible for re-election. The members of the Club shall not appoint several individuals jointly to hold any of the Offices, nor allow any individual to hold more than one Office at a time. The members of the Club shall appoint a member of Congregation

as the Senior Member when electing other members of the Committee each year provided that a Senior Member who has previously held office as Senior Member for more than five consecutive years shall not be eligible for re-appointment. The Senior Member shall be a member of the Committee *ex officio*.

25. If during the period between the annual elections to offices any vacancies occur amongst the members of Committee, the Committee shall have the power of filling the vacancy or vacancies up to the next Annual General Meeting by co-optation.
26. Each Office Holder must, and shall procure that other Office Holders shall, at the end of any term of Office, promptly hand to the relevant successor in Office (or to another member of the Club nominated by the Committee) all official documents and records belonging to the Club, together with (on request from the Committee) any other property of the Club which may be in the outgoing Office Holder's possession; and must complete any requirements to transfer authority relating to control of the Club's bank accounts, building society accounts, or other financial affairs.
27. Without derogating from its primary responsibility, the Committee may delegate its functions to finance and general purposes and other subcommittees which are made up exclusively of members of the Committee.
28. The Committee shall have power to make regulations and by-laws in order to implement the paragraphs of this Constitution, and to settle any disputed points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution.
29. No member of the Committee shall be removed from office except by a majority vote of a disciplinary committee of three members of the Club who are not members of the Committee appointed by the Senior Member for that purpose and acting in consultation with the Senior Member (or the Proctors if the member of the Committee to be removed is the Senior Member or if the Senior Member is otherwise conflicted).

## **Indemnity**

30. So far as may be permitted by law, every member of the Committee and every officer of the Club (each a "relevant officer") shall be entitled to be indemnified out of the Club's assets against all costs, charges, losses, expenses and liabilities incurred by the relevant officer in the execution or discharge of duties as a relevant officer or the exercise of powers

as a relevant officer, or otherwise properly in relation to or in connection with the relevant officer's duties. This indemnity extends to any liability incurred by a relevant officer in defending any proceedings, civil or criminal, which relate to anything done or omitted or alleged to have been done or omitted by the relevant officer in that capacity and in which judgement is given in the relevant officer's favour (or the proceedings are otherwise disposed of without any finding or admission of any material breach of duty on the relevant officer's part), or in which the relevant officer is acquitted, or in connection with any application under any statute for relief from liability in respect of any such act or omission in which relief is granted to the relevant officer by the Court.

31. So far as may be permitted by law, the Club may purchase and maintain for the benefit of any relevant officer insurance cover against any liability which by virtue of any rule of law may attach to the relevant officer in respect of any negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust of which the relevant officer may be guilty in relation to the Club and against all costs, charges, losses and expenses and liabilities incurred by the relevant officer and for which the relevant officer is entitled to be indemnified by the Club by virtue of paragraph 30.

## **Dissolution**

32. The Club may be dissolved at any time by the approving votes of two thirds of those present in person or by proxy at a General Meeting. The Club may also be dissolved (without the need for any resolution of the members) by means of not less than thirty days' notice from the Proctors to the Secretary of the Club if at any time the Club ceases to be registered with the Proctors.
33. In the event of the Club being dissolved, its assets shall not be distributed amongst the members, but shall be paid to or at the direction of the University.

## **Changes to the Constitution**

34. In accordance with University regulations, if the Club wishes to remain a registered University Club, the Club must seek approval in writing from the Proctors for any changes to this Constitution that deviate from the University's Standard Non-Sports Club Constitution, as amended from time to time. Such approval will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

35. Changes to this Constitution must be ratified at a General Meeting with the approval of two-thirds of present, eligible and voting members. As such the University recommends that the Proctors' approval is sought prior to seeking to change the Constitution at a General Meeting.

### **Interpretation**

- 36. Any question about the interpretation of this Constitution shall be settled by the Proctors.
- 37. This Constitution shall be binding on all members of the Club. No regulation, by-law or policy of the Club shall be inconsistent with, or shall affect or repeal anything contained in, this Constitution.

## SECTION 3

### **The Standing Orders**

#### **Standing Order 1: The Role of the Standing Orders**

- I. As established under Paragraph 28 of the Standard Constitution, these Standing Orders provide the rules for the functioning of the Association with regards to matters not covered by the Constitution and in order to provide more detail. Save the exemptions listed in Section 1, they are never to be considered superior to the Standard Constitution.

#### **Standing Order 2: Further Objectives**

The Association shall have these objectives further to those set out in the Standard Constitution.

- I. To stimulate among Members of Oxford University a greater interest in, and understanding of, the Liberal Democrat Party and its principles;
- II. to extend the influence of Liberal ideology among Members of Oxford University;
- III. to work towards the benefit of the local community in Oxford, by encouraging members of the Association to volunteer for charitable activity;
- IV. to encourage, promote and facilitate political education, participation and cross party cooperation among Members of Oxford University.

#### **Standing Order 3: Membership of the Association**

- I. Ordinary Membership shall be open to those people listed in the Standard Constitution.
- II. Both life and academic year membership shall be available.
- III. The Executive must decide the membership fee before the beginning of Week 0 of each term, determining the price membership will be set at for both life and one year for the duration of that academic term. This may only be discounted by up to 50% during that term.
- IV. Membership entitles members to vote in elections, stand for election and propose Rules amendments.

#### **Standing Order 4: Position Holders**

A. The Position Holders are as follows:

The President

The Vice President (Secretary)

The Treasurer

The Access and Welfare Officer

The Social Secretary

The Director of Communications

The Appointed Officials (as outlined in *Standing Order 4D*)

The Senior Member



The Returning Officer

The Officers Emeritus

## B. The Executive

- I. The President, Vice President (Secretary) and the Treasurer shall constitute the Executive of the Association ('Office Holders' as outlined in *Paragraph 18* of the Standard Constitution).
- II. Members of the Executive may not hold any other position in the Association.
- III. Members of the Executive may only be removed if consultation is first sought from the Senior Member.
- IV. There may be additional requirements to stand for election to an Executive position, as outlined in *Standing Order 5*.

## C. Responsibilities of Position Holders

In addition to any requirements set out in the Standard Constitution, Position Holders shall have the following duties. Failure to meet these duties are to be considered grounds for a Motion of No Confidence:

- I. The President:
  - a) Overall management of the Association and the coordination of all Position Holders.
  - b) The production of the termcard.
  - c) Attend Executive meetings.
- II. The Vice President (Secretary):
  - a) Be responsible for the administration of the Association, including the distribution of meetings, copies of the Standing Orders etc.
  - b) Communicate with organisations such as the SU and the University when necessary.
  - c) Deputise for the President when requested, and assist the President in the preparation of the term card.
  - d) Attend Executive meetings.
- III. The Treasurer:
  - a) Manage the budget, and advise on what money is available.
  - b) Help maintain the membership lists and drive memberships.
  - c) Take payment on the door at events when required.
  - d) Attend Executive meetings.
- IV. The Access and Welfare Officer shall have the following responsibilities:
  - a) Advocate for underrepresented groups in the Association.
  - b) Help to make events as accessible as possible.
  - c) Be available to be the designated sober Welfare Officer (with no alcohol to be consumed) for an event where necessary, or inform the Position Holder in charge of the event in advance so that they may nominate a deputy.
  - d) Be available for the welfare requirements of members, and aid them to bring complaints when necessary.
- V. The Social Secretary shall have the following responsibilities:
  - a) Helping the Executive organise socials, in particular Liquor and Liberalism.
  - b) Collaborating with the Executive to ensure we have a space to host events.

- c) To help publicise events.
- VI. The Director of Communications shall have the following responsibilities:
  - a) Running Social Media: advertising events and raising awareness about the Association.
  - b) Occasionally sending emails (this will mostly remain with the VP).
  - c) Assisting with the creation and distribution of any Association paper material we produce.
- VII. The Returning Officer shall have the following responsibilities:
  - a) Ensure that candidates correctly nominate for election.
  - b) Maintain the Rules and provide impartial advice to members on its contents.
  - c) Run any elections that take place (with the exception of elections run by the Emeritus Committee), and take overall responsibility for their smooth process and the results.
  - d) Remain generally independent on any Constitution and Standing Order matters, and not seek to advantage any individual member.
  - e) To ensure that candidates for The Executive have completed their canvassing requirements, and choose whether to exercise their power to waive canvassing requirements.
  - f) Where they are informed or gain the knowledge that a Position Holder may be in breach of their duties, or of the rules of the Association - they should raise this to the Position Holder. If there is no resolution, they should bring a Motion of No Confidence.

#### D. Appointed Positions

- I. The President shall have the authority to appoint up to four Members to roles, with whatever remit they see fit, so long as it does not strongly overlap with the remit of another member (though deputies may be appointed to any position) outlined in these Standing Orders.
- II. They can be removed from office at any time by the President.
- III. On the resignation or removal from office of the President, these Officers must be ratified by the incoming President in order to continue in their roles. The incoming President is entitled to not keep them on.

#### E. Temporary Succession

- I. If any vacates their position for whatever reason, their position shall be fulfilled by the person below them in the Table of Seniority until such time as a replacement can be elected. They shall become the *Acting Insert Vacant Position* (e.g. if the President resigns, the Vice President becomes 'The Acting President and Vice President (Secretary)').
- II. If the person who is next in line doesn't wish to take the role, it shall be offered to the next person in line. If they also don't wish to serve, then the role will fall to the President - who may choose to delegate the Acting Role to any other member of the Committee or to an Officer Emeritus.
- III. Acting Officers shall have the powers, duties and responsibilities of the Office, but not the long term privileges such as membership of the Emeritus Committee, the ability to appoint a lifetime member or the relevant Seniority.

- IV. Temporary Succession shall have no bearing on Permanent Succession as outlined in *Standing Order 17*.

**F. Officers Emeritus**

- I. Upon leaving office, the most recent President, Vice President, Treasurer and Returning Officer shall assume the titles of President Emeritus, Vice President Emeritus, Treasurer Emeritus and Returning Officer Emeritus respectively.
- II. They shall hold this title until such a time as there is someone else who has more recently left their respective office.
- III. Officers Emeritus shall have no specific power save for anything related to their role on the Emeritus Committee or as otherwise specified in these Rules.

**G. The Senior Member**

- I. The Senior Member is to be appointed at the Hilary General Meeting.
- II. The Senior Member must meet any eligibility requirements as set out in the Standard Constitution.
- III. The Senior Member has duties as outlined in the Standard Constitution.
- IV. The President shall put forward one nominee, to be ratified by the General Meeting.

**H. The Refounding Committee**

- I. The members of the refounding Committee of Hilary and Trinity Term 2024, shall hold the relevant Seniority as if they were elected to their respective offices.

**Standing Order 5: Elections**

**A. The Date and Management of Elections**

- I. A 'Bi-Annual Election' shall be held in the Termly General Meetings in Michaelmas and Trinity.
- II. Bi-Annual Elections shall be for the offices of President, Vice President (Secretary), Treasurer, Access and Welfare Officer, Social Secretary and Director of Communications.
- III. The above positions shall be known as the 'Generally Elected Officers'.
- IV. Therefore, those elected in the Trinity General Meeting shall hold office until the end of Michaelmas Term and those elected in the Michaelmas General Meeting shall hold office until the end of Trinity Term.
- V. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the management of the elections and the nominations process.

**B. Eligibility**

- I. Candidates for the Executive must have completed at least 1 campaigning session of at least 2 hours in the 12 months preceding the Close of Nominations, before being allowed to stand, or 2 if it is a General or Local Election year. They must send evidence of campaigning to the Returning Officer. The

Returning Officer may choose to waive this requirement for all candidates or none - but cannot do so only for specific candidates. They must also be students of the University of Oxford - and a member of the Liberal Democrats, or a member of a party in an international alliance which the Liberal Democrats or Young Liberals recognise as affiliated with themselves.

- II. All candidates must be full members of the Association.
- III. Honorary Members may not stand for election to any Office of the Association.
- IV. Candidates are also ineligible if they have held any elected office in either the Oxford University Labour Club, Oxford University Conservative Association or the Oxford Student Greens, within 10 calendar weeks (i.e 70 days) of the closing of nominations.
- V. Completed nomination forms must be submitted to the Returning Officer by at least 1800 hrs on Thursday of 5th Week, with a full list of candidates standing to be published by Saturday of 5th Week.
- VI. The Senior Member and Returning Officer may not run in the Bi-Annual Elections, or by-elections for Generally Elected Positions.
- VII. Candidates may not have won an election for the position they are standing for more than once previously.

#### C. By-Elections

- I. In the event of the vacation of a Membership-Elected Office, a by-election should be held in the next meeting of the Open Council.
- II. Nominations should be open for at least 48 hours, and should close within 24 hours of the election.
- III. If this means the election cannot take place at the next meeting of Open Council, an Extraordinary Meeting shall be called instead, or the Returning Officer may choose to have the election at the next Ordinary Meeting.
- IV. Members elected via by- election shall hold office until such time that the original term of office comes to an end, or they resign or are removed.
- V. Committee members may announce the date of their resignation in advance, so as to allow time for an election to take place before they withdraw from office.
- VI. The winner of any by-election should take office immediately after the count, unless an agreement is reached with the outgoing Committee member to have a set handover period (both parties must be in full agreement). In such a case, the date of power transfer must be submitted to the Returning Officer in writing within one hour of the results announcement.

#### D. The Running of Elections

- I. Elections are to be conducted via paper-ballot Single Transferable Vote of all members present at the meeting.
- II. Each ballot paper shall have each position listed with candidates in alphabetical order by surname.
- III. 'None of the Above' shall appear as the last candidate on each ballot, and shall be treated as if they are any other candidate for the purposes of the count and election. If 'None of the Above' wins the election, it shall be re-run following the by-election procedure as outlined in *Standing Order 5*.

- IV. Voters shall rank each candidate they wish to express a preference for with numbers only.
- V. Upon the completion of the voting period, those involved in the count should retire to a separate room to conduct the count.
- VI. If any candidate meets the quota of 50% of valid votes cast + 1 on first preferences alone, they shall automatically be elected.
- VII. If nobody meets the quota on first preferences, the candidate with the least amount of first preferences shall be eliminated, and their preferences redistributed (with the quota changing each time to acknowledge any changes in the total number of votes cast due to a lack of further preferences). This process shall continue until a candidate has met the required quota, and they shall be declared duly elected.
- VIII. Members may nominate another person to vote on their behalf in elections on the basis of accessibility, with the permission of the Returning Officer gained in advance of the election. The member must get in contact with the Returning Officer themselves, and name their proxy.

#### E. In the event of no candidates nominating

- I. If no candidates nominate for a position, the Returning Officer may extend nominations for that role by up to 24 hours- and should encourage members to nominate.
- II. If after those further 24 hours, there are still no nominations, Bi-Annual elections shall continue as normal without an election for the position in question.
- III. The President-Elect may, after the announcement of the results, appoint a member to the position with no nominations, and they shall have the same term of office and all the rights, responsibilities, duties and privileges as if they were elected by the membership.
- IV. This appointment must be ratified by a simple majority vote of the Closed Council.
- V. If this is a by-election, then the President should follow the procedure outlined in Clauses III and IV above.
- VI. If no one is willing to take on the role via appointment, the President should fulfil the obligations of that role, or delegate it to another Position Holder. If the role is delegated, the member taking on the role is entitled to the appropriate privileges and seniority.
- VII. If no candidates nominate for the Office of President in a Bi-Annual election, the winner of the election to the office next in line on the Table of Seniority (which had candidates) shall become the President-Elect.
- VIII. If no candidates nominate for the Office of President in a by-election, the holder of the office that is filled and is next in line on the Table of Seniority shall assume the full office of the President.

#### F. The Count and Slates

- I. The Returning Officer may appoint up to five temporary Deputies to aid with the counting of the ballots. If any outgoing members of the Executive, The Senior Member or Officers Emeritus are not seeking election in that meeting, they may also assist with the count.
- II. Deputy Returning Officers may not be candidates in the election.

- III. Results shall be made public to all members by the Returning Officer within one hour of the count being completed. They must also be announced in person at the room designated for the count.
- IV. Slates are allowed, and each slate (and independent candidates) may provide a Count Representative to scrutinise the count- but this must be a member who is not running in that election or someone participating in the count. Slates should be declared to the Returning Officer at time of nomination.
- V. At no time shall candidates in the election be in the count room.

#### G. Handover

- I. Election winners shall immediately take on the title of their Position-Elect (e.g. Treasurer-Elect) from the announcement of the results.
- II. At the beginning of Sunday 9th Week, they shall assume their full title and all the roles and responsibilities that come with it.

### **Standing Order 6: Table of Seniority and Forms of Address**

#### A. Table of Seniority

- I. This table delineates the Order of Seniority within the Association:

The President,  
 The Vice President (Secretary),  
 The Treasurer,  
 The President Emeritus,  
 The Access and Welfare Officer,  
 The Social Secretary,  
 The Director of Communications,  
 Any other Officers,  
 The Vice President Emeritus,  
 The Treasurer Emeritus,  
 The Returning Officer Emeritus,  
 Other Ex-Presidents *in statu pupillari*,  
 Other Ex Vice Presidents *in statu pupillari*,  
 Other Ex Treasurers *in statu pupillari*,  
 Other Ex Returning Officers *in statu pupillari*,  
 Ex Senior Members,  
 Any other Ex Officers *in statu pupillari*,  
 Other Ex-Presidents,  
 Other Ex Vice Presidents,  
 Ex Secretaries,  
 Other Ex Treasurers,  
 Other Ex Returning Officers,  
 Any other Ex Officers,

Ordinary Members.

- II. Members must hold an office for at least 28 days in order to hold the relevant Seniority, except in cases where they leave the office for serious illness or death.
- III. In circumstances where more than one person holds a certain title (i.e. where there are a number of ex holders of a position), the person who was elected/appointed most recently shall be considered the most senior and so on, with the person elected/appointed the longest ago considered the least senior.
- IV. A member who has more than one claim with regards the above table, shall be considered to have Seniority as relates to their highest possible position on the table.
- V. The Returning Officer and Senior Member exist outside the Table of Seniority. This means that they may not be considered for succession, and their authority is reserved for certain matters as defined elsewhere in these Standing Orders.

## **B. Forms of Address**

Wherever possible in the business of the Association, members should refer to Officers, ex-Officers and Other Members by their position title and college; e.g. The President, University College.

## **Standing Order 7: Emeritus Committee**

### **A. The Formation**

- I. The Emeritus Committee shall be the body composed of all ex-Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Treasurers and Returning Officers (as well as the current President, Senior Member and Returning Officer) *in statu pupillari*.
- II. Exceptions may be made for Senior Officers, or equivalent roles, of other fairly constituted organisations that can be considered predecessors of the Association- at the discretion of a simple majority vote of Closed Council.
- III. Each *in statu pupillari* Ex Senior Officer is automatically considered a member.
- IV. The Chair of the Committee shall be the President Emeritus, so long as they are *in statu pupillari*.
- V. If they are unwilling or unable to do the role (including because they have graduated), the position shall fall to the Returning Officer Emeritus until such time as there is a new President Emeritus.
- VI. If the President Emeritus or Returning Officer Emeritus are not willing or able, the role of Chair shall default to the Returning Officer until such time as the Emeritus Committee can meet to elect a new Chair. The elected individual shall serve as Chair until such time as there is a new President Emeritus.
- VII. Refusal to attend two consecutive Sessions whilst *in statu pupillari*, not including Sessions in terms where the individual has public exams, shall result in the removal of all Seniority associated with being an ex holder of the relevant position, for the duration of that particular individual's degree. This may be overridden by a simple majority vote of the Emeritus Committee, where the individual has exceptional reasoning.

## **B. Sessions**

- I. Each time the Emeritus Committee meets, it is known as a Session. Sessions should generally be called to deal with one specific item. Sessions may encompass multiple meetings.
- II. All members on the Emeritus Committee list shall be invited to join each Session, and then a sublist should be created for those willing to serve in a particular Session.
- III. If the role of Chair is filled, but the Chair is unable to make a certain Session, members of that Session should elect an Acting Chair.
- IV. Quorum for the Emeritus Committee shall be three. If three cannot be reached, then the current Vice President (Secretary) and Treasurer may fill the remaining spaces.
- V. In the event of tied votes, the Chair shall have a second, deciding vote.
- VI. If a member of the Emeritus Committee is the accuser or accused in a matter of a disciplinary or electoral complaint, they are automatically barred from sitting in that Session.
- VII. If any member of the Emeritus Committee feels that they are heavily personally involved in the matter at hand, but not the accuser or accused, they are expected to recuse themselves. If they refuse, other members of the Session may recuse them via a two-thirds majority vote.
- VIII. Sessions and meetings may be called by any member of the Emeritus Committee with 72 hours notice, and the time and date of the meeting must be made available to as many members of the Emeritus Committee as can be reasonably expected.
- IX. Sessions may also be called in accordance with the Complaints Procedure.

### C. The Responsibilities

The Emeritus Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- I. Election of the Returning Officer (at least every 12 calendar months).
- II. Dealing with Disciplinary Matters (however, any matter regarding sexual misconduct must immediately be referred to the Proctors).
- III. Dealing with allegations of Electoral Malpractice.

## **Standing Order 8: Meetings**

### A. The Types of Meeting

- I. The Association shall have a number of bodies that will meet at various times. Minutes of meetings that are open to all Association members shall be made available to those who request them within 24 hours.
- II. No member of Committee or Ordinary Member is ever to exercise two separate votes, regardless of whether they hold multiple positions, in an Acting capacity or otherwise- save for when ties must be broken as outlined elsewhere in these Standing Orders.
- III. The Emeritus Committee shall be called in accordance with *Standing Order 7*.
- IV. There shall be a body known as Council. This is to be the primary governing body of the Association, and is open to all members.
- V. There shall also be Termly General Meetings.



- VI. Extraordinary Meetings of Council may also take place at the behest of any member of Closed Council or by three total members (members or non members of Closed Council) of the Association, with 24 hours notice.
- VII. Extraordinary Termly General Meetings may also take place at the behest of two members of Closed Council or five total members (members or non members of Closed Council) of the Association, with 48 hours notice (these will not constitute Extraordinary General Meetings as outlined in *Paragraph 8* of the Standard Constitution- to call one of these such meetings, it must be specified that it is an Extraordinary Annual General Meeting that is being requested).

## B. Council

- I. There shall be a subdivision of this body into Open Council and Closed Council. Meetings of Council should be held weekly during full academic term and the time and date should be emailed to the membership by the Vice President (Secretary). Minutes should also be made available to members after the meeting.
- II. Meetings of the Open Council can be attended by any member of the Association. The following business may be conducted in Open Council:
  - a) Questions to the Committee and in particular the Executive.
  - b) Proposition of Standing Order amendments (see *Standing Order 12*).
  - c) Motions of No Confidence (see *Standing Order 14*).
  - d) Requests for events and speakers from the general membership.
  - e) Elections for positions that are not to be elected in a full termly meeting, and by-elections.
  - f) For ordinary members to challenge any action of any Position Holder or Ordinary Member which they feel has violated the Constitution or Standing Orders.
  - g) Any other businesses not reserved for Closed Council.
- III. Meetings of Closed Council may take place immediately before or after meetings of Open Council. Meetings should be conducted behind closed doors, with only members of Closed Council and those granted access in attendance.
- IV. The following shall be voting members of Closed Council:
  - The President
  - The Vice President
  - The Treasurer
  - The President Emeritus
  - The Access and Welfare Officer
  - The Returning Officer
  - The Senior Member
- V. Closed Council is the only body (excluding The Emeritus Committee) that may deal with the following matters:
  - a) Sensitive financial matters.
  - b) Any business members of Closed Council wish not to bring to Open Council.

- c) The ratification of certain appointments.
- VI. Any other Association member may be granted the right to enter Closed Council meetings and additionally to speak via a simple majority vote of those voting members present. The person granted entry may not vote.
- VII. Any Position Holder of the Association (with the exemption of Honorary Officers, The Senior Member, Officers Emeritus and the Returning Officer) are expected to attend all meetings of Council for which they are eligible . Failure to attend 3 Ordinary Meetings of Council in one academic term shall result in auto-resignation from office, and the removal of all seniority and privileges.
- VIII. Council may choose to pass absences (and thus they won't count as failure to attend) in exceptional circumstances via a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote at the meeting in question or the following meeting.

### C. Termly General Meeting

- I. There shall be a Termly General Meeting of the Association in 6th Week of each academic term. The date is to be decided in Michaelmas and Trinity by the incumbent President by at least Wednesday of 5th Week. In Hilary, the Vice President (Secretary) should provide 14 days notice of the date of the Meeting.
- II. The Hilary Termly General Meeting shall constitute the Annual General Meeting in accordance with the Standard Constitution.
- III. At all General Meetings, The Treasurer shall present a financial report and each Position Holder shall be required to present a report on their work during the term so far.
- IV. In Michaelmas and Trinity Terms, elections shall take place in accordance with *Standing Order 5*.
- V. In Hilary Term, business should be conducted in accordance with *Paragraph 9* of the Standard Constitution. Therefore the Quorum for a Hilary General Meeting shall be 10.
- VI. The only exception to (V) above is *Paragraph 9(d)*. Elections for almost all Position Holders shall take place in accordance with *Standing Order 5*. However, the election to the Office of Senior Member should take place in the Hilary General Meeting.
- VII. Honorary Officers can only be created by a Termly General Meeting.
- VIII. Any business that can be brought in Open Council may also be brought in a Termly General Meeting.

### D. Quorum

- I. If a meeting doesn't reach quorum, as defined in various places in these Rules, any business conducted within it is declared invalid.
- II. Unless otherwise defined, quorum shall be three for any meeting.
- III. Objections to the quorate nature of the meeting must be raised in the meeting, at which point a count will take place. Retrospective challenges to quorum are not allowed.
- IV. The exception to (III) above being that any business conducted in any meeting with just one member present shall be deemed invalid, with no necessity for a challenge to the quorum.

### **Standing Order 9: Definitions and Interpretations**

- I. The Returning Officer is responsible for interpreting the Rules, though they can be overruled in exceptional circumstances by a simple majority vote of the Emeritus Committee.
- II. A simple majority vote, as referenced in these Standing Orders, is defined as more people voting for than against, or vice-versa of those who are present and eligible to vote, who choose to vote. Abstentions and spoilt ballots should be counted separately, and don't count as votes for or against.
- III. A two-thirds vote, as referenced in these Standing Orders, is defined as 66.67% of those who are present and eligible to vote, who choose to vote. Abstentions and spoilt ballots should be counted separately, and don't count as votes for or against.
- IV. Ties may be split by the highest present person as according to the Table of Seniority, unless specified differently elsewhere in these Standing Orders.
- V. Where the words 'in writing' or similar are used in these Standing Orders, this is taken to mean via letter or email unless explicitly stated otherwise.
- VI. Whenever a member requests, they shall be able to join a meeting via an online method (in so far as is technologically possible). They shall be considered as if they are fully present at the meeting, and afforded all the relevant rights as such. No member shall be punished or denied right in the event of the failure of technology to allow them to join a meeting. This clause does not apply to voting in elections.
- VII. Meetings may also be fully online where necessary, for example over the vacation.
- VIII. '*In statu pupillari*' is defined as being in possession of a valid University of Oxford or Oxford Brookes University student card, and being a current undergraduate or postgraduate student (or in possession of evidence of one's status as a suspended student).

### **Standing Order 10: Endorsements and Patronage**

- I. The Association may vote to endorse another organisation or to donate funds to another organisation. This can only be approved by a simple majority vote of the Closed Council.
- II. The Association supports the Liberal Democrats and no other political party in Great Britain.

### **Standing Order 11: Honorary Membership**

- I. Any member of the Association may offer honorary membership to any person they deem fit, which must be confirmed by a simple majority vote at the next meeting of Open Council.
- II. Total annual Honorary Membership of the Association may not exceed seven people.
- III. Honorary Members must be ratified at each Hilary Termly Meeting by a simple majority vote - if unratified the individual shall cease to be an honorary member.
- IV. Each President may appoint one person to lifetime membership of the Association, who can only be removed by a simple majority vote of the Emeritus Committee. This member will not require annual ratification.

## **Standing Order 12: Standing Order Amendments**

- I. Any member may propose a Standing Order amendment in a meeting of the Open Council or in a Termly General Meeting. Each amendment requires another Association member to second.
- II. They should submit a document to the Returning Officer detailing each Standing Order element that they wish to edit. Members shall be given the opportunity to debate the amendment, where at least two speeches should be given in both proposition and opposition (though it can be moved immediately to a vote via a simple majority decision of those present, or if no one wants to speak).
- III. Amendments require a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote of members present in order to pass.
- IV. If an amendment is passed, the Returning Officer should make the necessary edits to the Standing Orders as well as adding the amendment to a separate document that is available to the membership, clearly stating each piece of wording that has been edited, for historical accuracy.
- V. The Returning Officer and Vice President (Secretary) are responsible for keeping the Constitution and Standing Orders and the History of Standing Order Amendments document up to date.
- VI. These documents must be provided to any member within 24 hours of asking.

## **Standing Order 13: Offences**

### **A. Electoral Offences**

- I. Allegations of electoral malpractice must be made within 48 hours of the announcement of the result.
- II. Committing any criminal or University offence, or any College offence within the jurisdiction of the relevant College, in connection with the elections.
- III. Breaking any Rule of the Association judged to be appertaining to either the conduct or result of elections.
- IV. Influencing or attempting to influence a voter by means of bribery, intimidation or treating.
- V. Disrupting the conduct of the elections or the count.
- VI. Deliberately including any factual error in a candidate's electoral publicity or hustings address.
- VII. Paying for someone else to join the Association.
- VIII. Misusing one's position as a Position Holder in the Association to hinder or promote any candidate.
- IX. Stealing, intercepting or defacing any mail or publicity relating to the election.
- X. Aiding, abetting or conspiring to perform any form of electoral malpractice.
- XI. Filing a baseless or malicious allegation.

### **B. General Offences**

- I. Conduct or actions that could damage the reputation of the Association or hinder its stated objectives.
- II. Significant failure by a Position Holder to perform the responsibilities associated with their position.
- III. Actions during any Association meeting that violate the University's Integrated Equality and Diversity Policy or any other University policies concerning racial, ethnic, religious, or

sexual equality applicable to University societies, staff, or students. This applies to all Association members, regardless of their affiliation with the University.

- IV. Any behaviour that is verbally or physically abusive towards an officeholder while they are executing their duties or enforcing the Association's rules. This includes threats, intimidation, and other forms of abuse.
- V. Filing a baseless or malicious accusation.

### C. Disciplinary Procedure

- I. Any member may raise an appeal to the Emeritus Committee by writing in the first instance to either the President, Returning Officer, the Access and Welfare Officer or the President Emeritus. This should detail the nature of the allegation, and all persons involved.
- II. Those Officers must then call a meeting of the Emeritus Committee as outlined in *Standing Order 7*. Meetings of the Emeritus Committee dealing with such matters shall be known as Extraordinary Sessions.
- III. Members named in the allegation should be given a chance to defend themselves or provide evidence either in writing or in person. Members may call another individual to act as their representative in the Emeritus Committee.
- IV. The Sitting Members of the The Emeritus Committee should have the opportunity to ask questions and the Chair should set the agenda and general structure of the Session.
- V. At the conclusion of the Session, Sitting Members of The Emeritus Committee shall have 48 hours to deliberate and decide before reaching a verdict on the matter at hand. Failing unanimous agreement, decisions can be reached by simple majority, with the Chair breaking ties.
- VI. The verdict shall be published no more than 72 hours after the conclusion of the session via email, or if specifically requested, in writing. It should contain a detailed summary of proceedings, the way each member voted, and any actions to be taken thereafter.
- VII. The Emeritus Committee may in extraordinary circumstances choose to restrict the details of the verdict and who has access to it; and only in circumstances in which this would have a significant long-term detrimental impact on the life or future of a party or parties involved in the case. Wherever possible, the work of The Emeritus Committee shall be open and transparent to the general membership.
- VIII. Extraordinary Sessions of Emeritus Committee shall have the power to do the following:
  - a) Suspend membership by up to two academic terms.
  - b) Expel members from the Association.
  - c) Impose fines on members of no more than £30, which if not paid will result in suspension for two academic terms.
  - d) Choose to re-run an election, only following allegations of electoral malpractice.
  - e) Call an Extraordinary Meeting of Open Council to host a Vote of No Confidence in any Position Holder, where the threshold for removal will only be 50% + 1 of those present and voting. In the event

of a tie, they shall stay in office. This shall only apply to members of the Executive when the Senior Member has been consulted.

- IX. The Emeritus Committee may not suspend a sitting Position Holder, they may only expel them in extreme circumstances.
- X. The Emeritus Committee must reconvene after a Motion of No Confidence is passed, if they wish to suspend a then Ex-Position Holder.

#### **Standing Order 14: Motions of No Confidence**

##### **A. Non-Executive Position Holders**

- I. Any member may bring a vote of no confidence to a meeting of Open Council against any non-Executive Position Holder, excluding the Senior Member.
- II. They should present the allegations, and the accused member shall have the opportunity to defend themselves in writing or in person.
- III. All members shall have the right to ask questions, though total proceedings should last no longer than thirty minutes. If the accused or the one accusing is Chairing the meeting, they should recuse themselves for the next person in line in the Table of Seniority who is present and not involved.
- IV. Members shall then vote by paper secret ballot either 'Confidence' or 'No Confidence'. This requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority in order to remove the Committee member, which then triggers succession and by-election proceedings as outlined in *Standing Order 5*.
- V. If the motion fails, Motions of No Confidence may not be then brought against that Position Holder for another four calendar weeks, unless it is for a different reason.

##### **B. Executive Position Holders and the Senior Member**

- I. Motions of No Confidence in Executive Members may follow the above procedure, but may not be conducted without first consulting with the Senior Member.
- II. Members may bring non-binding Motions of No Confidence in an Executive Officer or the Senior Member, which can be taken as an indication that the Officer in question should resign, but cannot compel them to do so.
- III. Any Senior Officer removed from office is barred from being Chair of the Emeritus Committee.

#### **Standing Order 15: Honorary Officers**

- I. Termly General Meetings shall have the power to create Honorary Officers of the Association, subject to a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote.
- II. Motions to create Honorary Officers must specify how long they will serve for, this may be anywhere from one academic term to life.
- III. There shall be no more than ten Honorary Officers at any one time. If there are already ten, the Association may not create anymore.

- IV. Honorary Officers may only be removed before their term expires by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote of the Emeritus Committee and a subsequent  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote at a meeting of the Open Council. The Senior Member must first be consulted before any motion is brought to remove an Honorary Officer.
- V. The names and titles of Honorary Officers must be available to all members.

### **Standing Order 16: Handover**

- I. All Position Holders are expected to meet with their successors before the transfer of power, and to produce a handover document.
- II. They should transfer all Association assets and documents in their possession.
- III. Failure to do any of this within one week of power being transferred shall compel the Returning Officer to act in accordance with Standing Order 4C(f).

### **Standing Order 17: Permanent Succession**

#### **A. For Membership-Elected Offices**

- I. In the event of the vacation of a Junior Office (Access and Welfare Officer, Social Secretary and Communications Director), the President shall appoint a member to fulfil the role until the end of the original term of office. The appointment must be ratified by Closed Council. The appointed person shall hold the powers, duties and relevant Seniority as if they were elected normally.
- II. In the event of the vacation of a Senior Office (President, Vice President (Secretary) or Treasurer), a by-election shall be called in accordance with *Standing Order 5*.
- III. Any member is free to stand, so long as they meet the relevant eligibility requirements. No sitting Membership-Elected Officer may run in a by-election for an Office junior on the Table of Seniority to the one they currently hold.
- IV. If the winner of the by-election is a sitting Senior Officer, then other Officers shall automatically be raised as follows to fill the vacancy created by the successful candidate:
  - a) If the role of Vice President becomes vacant, the Treasurer shall become the Vice President and the Access and Welfare Officer shall become the Treasurer.
  - b) If the role of Treasurer becomes vacant, the Access and Welfare Officer shall become the Treasurer.
- V. All Position Holders have the right to refuse an automatic promotion, at which point it shall be offered to the person next in line in accordance with the Table of Seniority, and so on if more people refuse - until such time as a position is filled or there are no more available Membership-Elected Officers.
- VI. If this results in a vacancy for any Junior Office, then the President (or in circumstances where there is now a President-Elect due to the by-election, the President-Elect) shall appoint someone as in Clause (I) above.
- VII. If Clause (V) above results in a further vacancy for a Senior Office, due to all those eligible refusing a promotion, then a by-election must be called for that Office in accordance with *Standing Order 5*.
- VIII. Once the above procedures are concluded, this shall override temporary succession as outlined in Standing Order 4.

B. For non Membership-Elected Offices

- I. If the Office of Returning Officer becomes vacant, the Emeritus Committee shall meet as soon as possible to elect a new Returning Officer.
- II. The new Returning Officer shall serve their full term of up to one year.
- III. Until such time as the new Returning Officer is elected , the position shall be offered to the following people in order until one accepts:  
The Returning Officer Emeritus,  
Other Ex Returning Officers *in statu pupillari*,  
The most senior Deputy Returning Officer from the last election,  
Other Deputy Returning Officers from the last election,  
The President Emeritus,  
Other Ex Presidents *in statu pupillari*.
- IV. If an Emeritus Office becomes vacant, it shall pass to the previous holder of that Office. If they are unwilling or unavailable then it shall pass to other Ex Holders of the relevant office *in statu pupillari*. If no one is available or willing then the office shall remain vacant. Any powers and duties shall fall to the Returning Officer.
- V. If the office of Senior Member becomes vacant, the Emeritus Committee shall meet as soon as possible to elect a new Senior Member. Until such time as a replacement is elected, any powers and duties shall be exercised by the President Emeritus, Returning Officer and Returning Officer Emeritus in conjunction.
- VI. The new Senior Member shall serve their full term of up to two years.



## SECTION 4

### **Returning Officer's Interpretations**

#### **Returning Officer's Interpretation 1: Elections in the Vacation**

Elections in the vacation may be conducted using online forms as opposed to paper ballots, in accordance with Standing Order 9 (VII).

Julian Wang, *University College* - 09/09/2024.

## SECTION 5

### **Complaints Procedure**

This document sets out the procedure for complaints (“Complaints”) against a member or members of the Oxford Students Liberal Association (the “Club”) including for breach of the Club’s Code of Conduct or the University of Oxford’s Policy and Procedure on Harassment.

#### **1. Applicability of the procedure**

This procedure applies where a person believes that a Club member or members have failed to act in accordance with the Club’s Code of Conduct, the University of Oxford’s Policy and Procedure on Harassment, or have acted in breach of their obligations under the Club Constitution, during or in connection with Club activities.

#### **2. Definition of the “Committee”**

- a) If the person or persons being complained about (the “Subject(s)”) is one or more member(s) of the Committee, then the references to the “Committee” in this procedure are to the members of the Committee excluding the Subject(s).
- b) If the identity of the Subjects is such that it is impossible for a quorate Committee to consider the Complaint, the Complaint should be referred for consideration to the Senior Member, or, if the Senior Member is the Subject or otherwise conflicted, to the Proctors (casework@proctors.ox.ac.uk).

#### **3. General**

- a) Time limits in this procedure should usually be met by all parties. Time limits may only be extended by the relevant decision-maker(s) where it is necessary to do so in order to ensure a fair outcome (for example, where more time is needed because of a party’s illness, the timing of examinations or during the holidays).
- b) Complaints will be dealt with confidentially by all parties involved, except where it is necessary to disclose information to carry out a fair investigation.
- c) Complaints can be made anonymously and can lead to informal action but the extent to which an investigation can be carried out is likely to be limited where the person making the report does not want to be identifiable because of the need to follow a fair process for all. For example, it is very unlikely that a complaint could remain anonymous if it is likely that penalties will be imposed.
- d) The Committee may decline to consider malicious, vexatious or frivolous complaints.

- e) If the complaint relates to conduct which could constitute a serious criminal offence the Club should seek advice from the Proctors' Office (casework@proctors.ox.ac.uk).
- f) Nobody who has a conflict of interest should be involved in decision-making under this procedure. If there is a doubt as to whether a conflict exists, advice should be sought from the Senior Member.

#### **4. Informal resolution**

- a) The person making the complaint should consider taking steps to resolve the matter informally before making a formal complaint. This might include discussing the matter with the Subject, and/or seeking advice from the Welfare Officer, the Senior Member or contacting the Clubs Office. The University's Student Welfare and Support Services provide an informal mediation service which is also available to student clubs.

#### **5. Referring a Complaint**

- a) A formal complaint should be made to the Committee by being given to any member of the Committee, in writing, as soon as possible after the conduct complained of (the "Complaint"). To ensure the complaint can be investigated appropriately, this should be within 1 month of when matters complained about occurred. The committee may accept later complaints if they think it is fair and appropriate to do so (having regard to relevant factors which may include the impact on those involved in the complaint, the interests of the Club and the reasons for the delay).
- b) The Complaint should be in writing and should include:
  - i) A detailed description of the event(s) complained of;
  - i) The outcome that is sought;
  - ii) Statements by any people who witnessed the event(s) or were affected by them; and
  - iii) Any other documents or evidence relied upon in support of the Complaint.
- c) If the Complaint includes an anonymous statement from a witness or refers to an individual without disclosing their identity, it must include the reasons why anonymity is requested in each case.

#### **6. Interim Measures**

- a) If it is necessary to do so to protect either or both parties and/or other club members from a risk of harm and/or distress, the Committee may suspend the Subject's Club membership and/or access to Club activities and/or facilities for up to 2 months pending proceedings under this procedure.

## **7. Response to the Complaint**

- a) Within 5 working days of receipt of the Complaint, the Committee will:
  - i) send the person making the Complaint an acknowledgment of receipt; and
  - ii) write to the Subject attaching the Complaint, all of the accompanying evidence and a copy of this procedure and stating that the Subject has 10 working days to provide written representations and any evidence in response to the Complaint (the "Response").
- b) If the Response includes an anonymous statement from a witness or refers to an individual without disclosing their identity, it must include the reasons why anonymity is requested in each case.

## **8. Further Enquiries**

- a) Upon receipt of the Response, the Committee may make any further enquiries of any person that they consider necessary or desirable.
- b) If the Complaint is likely to result in removal of membership, the discussions of the Committee must involve consultation with the Senior Member under Paragraph 7 of the Club's constitution (the "Constitution").

## **9. Decision: Complaints against Club members who are not Committee members**

- a) The Committee shall record its decision and the reasons for it in writing and shall send a copy of the reasoned decision to the parties within 10 working days of the deadline for the Response.

## **10. Decision: Complaints against Committee members**

- a) If the Complaint is against one or more Committee members, the Committee shall send:
  - iii) a copy of the Complaint file; and

- iv) a list of five Club members who are not Committee members and who are not the subject(s) of the complaint suitable to consider the matter and determine the appropriate penalty, together with their email addresses, to the Senior Member within 5 working days of the deadline for the Response.
- b) The Senior Member shall contact the five club members selected under 10(a)(ii) and ask them to confirm if they have any conflicts of interest and their availability and shall then select three members to form a disciplinary committee (the “Disciplinary Committee”) within 3 working days of receipt of the complaint file. If it is not possible to identify three members able to form a Disciplinary Committee (for example, because of conflicts or lack of availability) the Senior Member may appoint other members of the Club and/or ask the Committee members who are not the subject(s) of the complaint for further suggestions.
- c) The Disciplinary Committee shall consider the matter in consultation with the Senior Member and determine the appropriate outcome. When arriving at its decision the Disciplinary Committee shall have full discretion to arrive at any decision they deem appropriate and to make any further enquiries of any person that they consider necessary or desirable.
- d) If the identity of the Subject(s) and/or any conflicts of interest are such that it is not possible for a quorate Committee to consider the matter under paragraphs 5-8 above, the Committee shall, on receipt of a Complaint under paragraph 5, send it to the Senior Member and the Senior Member shall select a Disciplinary Committee to consider the matter in place of the Committee in accordance with this procedure and without input from the Committee and without receipt of recommendations from them.
- e) The Disciplinary Committee shall record its decision and the reasons for it in writing and shall send a copy of the reasoned decision to the parties within 10 working days of formation of the Disciplinary Committee under 10 (b).

## **11. Sanctions**

- a) The sanctions that may be imposed under this procedure include:
  - i) Suspension of, access to or use of all or some of the Club’s activities or facilities for a fixed period;
  - ii) Suspension of membership of the Club for a fixed period;
  - iii) Removal from office;
  - iv) A permanent or time-limited ban from standing for any Club Committee position;

- v) Removal of membership of the Club.

## **12. Review**

a) An Oxford University student (including students in the categories set out in Paragraphs 4, 6(a) to (c) of the Constitution) whose membership of the Club is removed under this procedure has a right to ask the Proctors to review the Committee's decision, under Paragraph 7 of the Constitution. The Proctors' review will consider whether the appropriate procedure has been followed and whether there has been any procedural irregularity or error. Such a review request should be made within 10 working days of notification of the decision of the Committee or Disciplinary Committee.

## **13. Promoting good practice**

- a) The Committee will keep a record of all Complaints received and prepare an annual report that, in anonymised form, will set out:
  - i) the category of such Complaints (e.g. harassment, funding disputes or service issues);
  - ii) an overview of how Complaints were resolved; and
  - iii) any Committee recommendations arising from them (for example, what further steps, including training, the Club may wish to consider to deal with incidents of harassment).
- b) Non-anonymised records should be held securely and destroyed when they are no longer needed, in accordance with data protection legislation.

## **Code of Conduct**

1. The Oxford Liberal Association ("the Club") does not tolerate any form of harassment or victimisation and expects all of its members, employees, and visitors to treat each other with respect, courtesy and consideration.

2. All members of the Club are expected to read and agree to act in accordance with this Code of Conduct and the University of Oxford's [Policy and Procedure on Harassment](#). Oxford students are also required to act in accordance with the Code of Conduct set out in [Statute XI](#). Membership may be removed or suspended for failing to do so, and opportunities for members to take part in activities within and on behalf of the Club may be restricted.

3. All members of the Club are expected to:

- treat other members with dignity and respect
- discourage any form of harassment by making it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable
- support other members who feel that they have been subject to harassment
- attend any mandatory Club training put in place by the Committee

4. “Harassment” includes in particular the following conduct, however carried out (including online):

- verbal or physical bullying or threats
- sexual harassment including unwanted physical conduct, sexually explicit remarks or sexual assault
- racist behaviour or comments
- homophobic or transphobic behaviour or comments
- victimisation
- religiously motivated abuse

5. The Club should designate one or more member of their Committee as ‘welfare officer(s)’ who will act as a source of advice and support for Club members in relation to welfare issues and during harassment complaints.

6. The Club’s designated Welfare Officer, Heather Judge, can be contacted for informal advice, including in relation to how you make a formal complaint, at [accessandwelfare@oxuniliberals.com](mailto:accessandwelfare@oxuniliberals.com). Support and advice is also available from the Clubs Office.

7. The Club Complaints Procedure provides steps for dealing with internal complaints. Clubs are required to have this in place and to follow these steps when they receive a complaint.

8. University of Oxford students can also seek support from:

- one of the University’s harassment advisors;
- college harassment advisors (for members of Oxford colleges);
- their college deans or other officers with pastoral responsibilities, the Common Room welfare or equal opportunities officer or a student peer supporter;
- Oxford SU’s Student Advice Service
- Student Welfare and Support Services including:
  - o the University Counselling Service
  - o the University’s Sexual Harassment and Violence Support Service

9. More information is available on the Oxford Students Harassment Pages, including a flow chart explaining the steps within the University's complaints procedures (e.g., for complaints against staff and students).