



The Constitution of the William Petre Society

EXETER COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The William Petre Society is an association affiliated with Exeter College that aims to facilitate fruitful interaction between its members, promote the academic interests and the welfare and wellbeing of its members, represent the interests of Exeter graduate students to the Governing Body of the College, and adhere to the principles of democracy, transparency and non-discrimination in its functioning.

Ratified by the Governing Body on 1 November 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

Article 1 DEFINITIONS

1.1 In this Constitution, unless the context indicates otherwise:

- (a) “University” means the University of Oxford.
- (b) “College” means Exeter College, Oxford;
- (c) “Society” means the William Petre Society;
- (d) “MCR” means the middle common room of Exeter College;
- (e) “Committee” means the full body of all officers of the Society;
- (f) “Executive Committee” means the officers in leadership of the Society;
- (g) “Returning officer” means the person responsible for overseeing elections of the Officers of the Society;
- (h) “Member” includes ordinary, honorary and associate members of the Society;
- (i) “Full term” means the eight weeks comprising first to eighth week of any term;
- (j) “AGM” means annual general meeting;
- (k) “Hustings” means a forum at which candidates for election to the Committee may explain their manifestos to members of the Society;
- (l) “NUS” means National Union of Students;
- (m) “Oxford SU” means Oxford University Students Union;

2. MEMBERSHIP

Article 2 ORDINARY MEMBERS

- 2.1 The William Petre Society exists primarily for the benefit of its ordinary members, the graduate students of Exeter College, Oxford.
- 2.2 The following members of the College are qualified to be Ordinary Members of the Society:
 - (a) Persons reading for a higher degree, diploma, certificate or second BA;
 - (b) Graduates of the University reading for a further degree at the University;
 - (c) Persons reading for a first degree at the University having Senior Student status as defined in the Examination Decrees and Regulations;
 - (d) Visiting students who are graduates of another university or are certified by the Sub-Rector as of equivalent standing.
- 2.3 All persons who qualify for Ordinary Membership of the Society may withdraw from membership by writing to the Sub-Rector. Withdrawal shall take effect from the beginning of Michaelmas term, except if notice of withdrawal is received by the Sub-Rector by Saturday of the second week of Michaelmas term, in which case it shall take effect immediately.
- 2.4 Any person who withdraws from Ordinary Membership of the Society cannot exercise any right that attaches to an ordinary member, including the rights to stand for office, vote at elections or attend meetings.
- 2.5 The Education Act (1994) provides that those persons who exercise the right of withdrawal from membership “should not be unfairly disadvantaged, with regard to the provision of services and otherwise, by reason of their having done so.”

Article 3 HONORARY MEMBERS

- 3.1 Honorary members may be elected to the society in recognition of their position or achievements related to the College or its academic aims.
- 3.2 Honorary members shall have no rights or responsibilities other than those outlined in this constitution, including nomination of associate members and invitation to events in the College. They may not vote in meetings or participate in the governance of the Society.
- 3.3 The Rector, Fellows and Lecturers of the College shall be honorary members of the Society so long as they remain affiliated to the College.
- 3.4 Other persons may be elected to honorary membership for a period not exceeding three years, after which they may be eligible for re-election.

Article 4 ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- 4.1 For the benefit of the community of the Society, members may vote to welcome associates to their ranks. Associate membership is extended as a privilege to individuals who have some connection to the Society, but do not otherwise hold a right to ordinary membership.
- 4.2 Associate members may participate in the social life of the Society, serve in non-executive Officer positions on the committee, and be treated similar to ordinary members, unless otherwise specified by this Constitution.
- 4.3 The following persons may be elected to associate membership of the Society:
- (a) Graduate research workers in the University, who are not members of any other college of the University;
 - (b) Recognised students who are not qualified for ordinary membership of any other MCR of the University;
 - (c) Spouses and long-term partners of ordinary members;
 - (d) Undergraduate students at Exeter College who are in the final year of an integrated Masters degree course;
 - (e) Undergraduate students at Exeter College who, being aged 21 or over at the start of their course, are classified as ‘mature undergraduate students’;
 - (f) Employees of the College or persons certified by the Sub-Rector as having a substantive connection to the college;
 - (g) Former ordinary members of the William Petre Society;
 - (h) Members of the Middle Common Room of Emmanuel College, Cambridge;
 - (i) Residents of Exeter House or Cohen Quad, for more than one month, who do not fit the above criteria. However, this does not include Undergraduates who do not fulfil (d) or (e) or are members of another MCR within Oxford University.
- 4.4 The College shall provide card access to Turl St. and the Common Room as a courtesy to associate members, although associate members have no formal relationship to the College.
- 4.4.1 The Sub-Rector may require new associate members to sign a statement recognizing this relationship and agreeing to relevant college policies, as a precondition for this access.
- 4.4.2 If the College deems it necessary, it may revoke this access at any time. In this case, the Sub-Rector may advise the President and Vice-President whether further action (e.g. dismissal) is warranted.
- 4.5 Associate members are to pay an annual fee, determined by the Executive Committee, during the term of election and every year thereafter while their membership remains valid. Half year payments can also be taken.

- 4.6 In the case of full members who complete their course in June, associate member status is granted free of charge from the completion of their course until Week 0 of the following Michaelmas term.
- 4.7 Associate members may voluntarily choose to withdraw from the Society at any point by writing to the Vice-President.
- 4.8 Associate members who withdraw or are dismissed shall forfeit any right to membership fees already paid for the remainder of the academic year.

Article 5 ELECTION OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- 5.1 Associate members may be elected for a period of up to three years, to be reviewed annually, after which they may be re-elected if they remain eligible under the criteria in 4.3.
- 5.2 An individual seeking associate membership must be nominated by at least one current member of the Society. Such nominations must be submitted to the Vice President, in writing, at least one week prior to a general meeting of any term.
 - 5.2.1 As honorary members, the Rector, Sub-Rector, and Fellows of the College may also nominate eligible individuals for associate membership.
 - 5.2.2 Members of Emmanuel College, Cambridge applying under 4.3(h) may be nominated by the President, Vice President, or appointed Officer of the Emmanuel College Middle Common Room.
 - 5.2.3 The President or Vice-President may waive this requirement and allow self-nominations only in cases where the candidate is either:
 - (a) An undergraduate student member of the College eligible under 4.3(d) or 4.3(e);
 - (b) An ordinary member during at least one academic term of the prior three years;
 - (c) A resident of College accommodation as specified in 4.3(i).
- 5.3 Elections for such membership shall take place at the general meeting of any term, and shall be determined by a simple majority of those present, via a secret ballot. In the case of short-term visiting students or researchers, an online vote may be held in lieu of an election at a general meeting.
- 5.4 There shall be an interview between the applicant and members of the Society prior to the election at the general meeting. Where the applicant is unable to attend, a written statement of motivation from the applicant may replace the interview, to be read out by the member presenting their nomination or the Vice-President.
 - 5.4.1 Any statement read out in lieu of an interview must be accepted by unanimous consent. Any ordinary member may request the candidate be tabled for a future meeting which the candidate can attend.

Article 6 DISMISSAL OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- 6.1 Associate Members shall be held to the same general standards of good conduct expected of ordinary members of the Society, including any applicable rules in the College Red Book.
- 6.2 The Society reserves the right to dismiss associate members at the discretion of the Executive Committee. When an associate member is dismissed, all rights and privileges of membership shall be revoked.
- 6.3 If an associate member is subject to College disciplinary procedures, these shall be conducted separately from any dismissal action by the Society. Associate members who are not members of the College will not be subject to the College's procedures for student members, including disciplinary actions, laid out in the College Bylaws.
- 6.4 Associate members who have been dismissed are ineligible for future nomination for membership to the Society.
- 6.5 Members with concerns about the conduct of an associate member may raise complaints to any member of the Executive Committee, the Sub-Rector, or another College official. The Executive Committee, in consultation with the Sub-Rector, will treat all complaints confidentially.
- 6.6 The Executive Committee shall evaluate any complaints and may choose to issue a written warning or dismiss the associate member by a majority vote. Such decisions may be made on the basis of risk, without needing to reach a formal conclusion on whether or not any misconduct occurred.
 - 6.6.1 If the alleged violation severe in nature, the Executive Committee may consult with the Sub-Rector and vote to immediately dismiss the associate member without a warning.
- 6.7 If the Executive Committee's action does not satisfactorily resolve the complaint, ordinary members may appeal to the Sub-Rector as per the procedure in 40.5.

3. SOCIETY RESOURCES

Article 7 SOCIETY FINANCES

- 7.1 The College shall allocate from the fee income received from all those qualified for ordinary membership (whether they are members or not) a termly sum, which shall be paid into the account of the Society.
- 7.2 The Society shall act as an agent of the Governing Body in the management of the money for the corporate benefit of all junior members of the college who are qualified for ordinary membership (whether they are members or not) and all associate members.
- 7.3 The Society may levy a subscription on its members, but not on any person who has withdrawn from membership, for any purpose promoting the welfare, interests and social activities of its members.
- 7.4 The use, maintenance, disposition and replacement of facilities available in the MCR shall be subject to agreement between the Domestic Bursar and the Society.
- 7.5 The Executive Committee shall propose an annual budget at the beginning of Michaelmas Term to be passed by a two-thirds majority.
- 7.6 The Treasurer must seek the approval of the Society for the Executive Committee to spend more than 1% of the total annual expenditure budget on any one item or more than 3% of the the same budget on any event, unless such expenditure has been pre-approved by a meeting of the Society.

Article 8 SOCIAL MEDIA

- 8.1 The MCR social media pages will be jointly administrated by the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Social Secretaries and Freshers' Representative.
- 8.2 Posts must follow the Data Protection act of 1998, and all photographs must be uploaded with permission of those included. The MCR should not be brought into disrepute by the posting of copyrighted material.
- 8.3 Members of social media groups must treat each other with respect, professionalism and courtesy. All views are those of the individual posting, and not of the MCR itself. This should be made clear in sensitive posts.
- 8.4 Any material which is intended to, or does, harass other members is a breach of University Harassment policy and will be communicated to the Sub-Rector.
- 8.5 The moderators may remove any material that infringes on the above, including posts reported by other members or that could make members of the MCR uncomfortable. Posts should adhere to the University Social Media Guidelines.

- 8.6 Media groups should be for exclusive use by members of the MCR and relevant parties, such as Catering. As such, measures should be taken to ensure the group is secure.

4. OFFICERS

Article 9 THE COMMITTEE OFFICERS

- 9.1 The officers of the Society shall be the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Social Secretaries, Welfare Officers, Exeter House President, Sports Officer, IT Officer, Equalities Officer, Domestic Officer, Oxford SU Representative, College Events Officer, Environment and Ethics Officer, Appliance Officer, Library Representative, Communications Officer, and Access and Outreach Officer.
- 9.2 All officers shall fulfill their duties, so as to further the aims and interests of the Society and its members.
- 9.3 All officers are responsible for working together so as to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of all members.
- 9.4 All officers are accountable and responsible to the Society in relation to the fulfillment of their duties.
- 9.5 All officers shall regularly attend meetings called by the President and shall have the power to vote on any issues that arise within committee meetings.
- 9.6 The Executive Committee shall have the power to propose the creation of additional offices, as may be necessary for the business of the Society. Such additional officers may be elected by the terms of this Constitution, or nominated by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may also abolish additional offices.

Article 10 THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 10.1 The Executive Committee is composed of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, one Social Secretary, and one Welfare Officer, who will each be selected by their peers in their roles. Only ordinary members will be eligible to sit on the Executive Committee.
- 10.2 The Executive Committee shall be empowered to meet on short notice and vote on matters deemed too urgent, confidential, or otherwise impractical for discussion at a committee meeting of the Society.
- 10.3 The President, Vice-President and Treasurer shall be listed on the bank account of the Executive Committee. The Treasurer's signature, together with the signature of one of these officers, shall be required for withdrawals and other financial transactions.
- 10.4 The Executive Committee is responsible for liaising with College offices. To this end, the President shall nominate the officers who shall attend relevant meetings in the interest of the Society, subject to the provisions made in the College statutes and bylaws.

Article 11 THE PRESIDENT

- 11.1 The President shall take the chair at all meetings of the Society. They shall call meetings as and when necessary or at the written request of six or more ordinary members. In addition the President shall call a general meeting before the end of the Sixth Week of each term, which shall include an AGM before the end of the Sixth Week of each Trinity Term.
- 11.2 The President shall have the power to delegate and reallocate duties in the interest of the Society to other members of the Committee.
- 11.3 The President shall make an annual report listing affiliations and fees paid during the current academic year to external organizations, including Oxford SU and NUS, and shall submit it to the AGM and the Home Bursar before the end of the Sixth Week of Trinity Term for the approval of the governing body. The President shall arrange for the Society to determine affiliation to external organizations for the following year at the AGM.
- 11.4 At the start of Michaelmas term, recommend any candidates for the Quarrell-Read (final year) and Peter Street prizes to the Sub-Rector for the previous academic year.
- 11.5 Endeavour to set up termly meetings with the JCR president to ensure relevant events and issues are communicated.

Article 12 THE VICE-PRESIDENT

- 12.1 The Vice-President shall assume the President's responsibilities if the President is indisposed or absent.
- 12.2 The incumbent Vice-President shall be the returning officer for the elections to the Committee. In the event of their absence or their standing for election, they shall appoint a deputy.
- 12.3 The Vice-President shall keep appropriate records of the Society, including the minutes of Committee meetings and general meetings, and shall pass them to their successor.
- 12.4 The Vice-President is responsible for maintaining communication between the Committee and the Society via e-mail, pigeon post and the Society website.
- 12.5 The Vice-President is responsible for maintaining and updating electronic and paper lists for all members of the Society including the associate and honorary members. Each term the Vice-President shall report to the Domestic Bursar the names and addresses of all those who have become or remain associate members of the Society during that term.
- 12.6 The Vice-President shall acquaint themselves with the Constitution and shall ensure that it is adhered to in the running of the Society and the Committee.

Article 13 THE TREASURER

- 13.1 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the apportionment of funds at the disposal of the Society.

- 13.2 The Treasurer shall give a written financial statement, including a list of donations made and the external organisations benefiting from those donations, in November to both the members of the Society and the Domestic Bursar.
- 13.3 The Treasurer shall give a provisional yearly account of the Society's income and expenditure at the AGM. They shall place a typed copy of this account on the MCR notice board, and shall submit a copy of it to the Home Bursar before the end of the Sixth Week of Trinity Term, for the approval of the Finance and Estates Committee.
- 13.4 The Treasurer, along with the Treasurer-Elect, shall present a draft budget for the forthcoming financial year, which shall run from the 1st August to 31st July, to the Finance and Estates Committee in June of each year.
- 13.5 The Treasurer's term shall run according to the college financial year, 1st August to 31 July. The Treasurer-Elect shall take over responsibility for the funds of the Society on 1st August. The incumbent Treasurer shall relinquish this responsibility, and conclude their term by reconciling the Account for the previous college financial year, no later than 30th September. During the interim period between the election and the change of power, the incumbent Treasurer and the Treasurer-Elect will work congruently to facilitate a fluid handover.

Article 14 THE SOCIAL SECRETARIES

- 14.1 There shall be three Social Secretaries.
- 14.2 The Social Secretaries shall organise social events and activities for members of the Society throughout the year.
- 14.3 The Social Secretaries shall produce and distribute a term card at the beginning of each term to notify members of the Society's events.
- 14.4 The Social Secretaries shall have the assistance of other members of the Committee, as well as other members of the Society, in carrying out events.
- 14.5 The Social Secretaries shall liaise with the Welfare Officers to ensure that appropriate events are organised to further the aims of the Society.

Article 15 THE WELFARE OFFICERS

- 15.1 The Welfare Officers shall represent the general concerns of all members of the Society, particularly in the areas of accommodation, academic needs, welfare and personal security.
- 15.2 If appropriate training is available, the Welfare Officers shall complete such training, so as to ensure that they are able to carry out their duties effectively.
- 15.3 The Welfare Officers shall work to ensure an environment free of all forms of discrimination and harassment, on grounds such as race, age, religion, gender and sexual orientation, and shall represent the Society on any College committees that seek to address these issues.

- 15.4 The Welfare Officers shall raise any concerns of members of the Society at Committee meetings and where necessary liaise with the Domestic Bursar or relevant responsible authority to resolve these concerns. They shall represent the Society's concerns and interests at College meetings, along with liaising with the Welfare Dean, Chaplain and Junior Deans.
- 15.5 The Welfare Officers shall work with the Social Secretaries to organise events to ensure the well-being of members of the Society and to ensure that all new members become involved and feel welcome in the Society.

Article 16 THE EXETER HOUSE PRESIDENT

- 16.1 The Exeter House President shall represent the interests of graduates resident at Exeter House to the College and MCR.
- 16.2 They shall liaise with the Domestic Bursar, Steward, Warden and other college staff in pursuit of the same.
- 16.3 Their term of office shall run from September to September and as such the election for this position shall take place by the end of Trinity Term of any academic year.
- 16.4 Use their allocated budget to organise a termly social event for all residents, this can be used as an opportunity to gather any issues held by residents to relay to College.

Article 17 THE FRESHERS' WEEK REPRESENTATIVES

- 17.1 There shall be two Freshers' Week Representatives to welcome each new cohort of ordinary members into the Society.
- 17.2 The Freshers' Week Representatives will be elected in Trinity Term of each academic year for a term enduring until the end of Freshers' Week in the following Michaelmas Term.
- 17.3 The Freshers' Week Representatives shall liaise with the college, members of the Society, and the rest of the MCR committee, in particular the Social Secretaries, to plan and carry out social events for incoming students during Freshers' Week.

Article 18 THE OXFORD SU REPRESENTATIVE

- 18.1 The Oxford SU Representative shall liaise between the MCR and Oxford SU, attending Oxford SU meetings and MCR meetings. In so doing, the Oxford SU Representative will represent MCR interest to the Oxford SU and facilitate greater communication between Oxford SU and the MCR.

Article 19 THE EQUALITIES REPRESENTATIVES

- 19.1 The Equalities Officers, in addition to those duties set out in Article 9, shall promote equality within the MCR for all aspects of identity, including but not restricted to age, disability, gender, marital status, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 19.2 There shall be two Equalities Officers:
- 19.2.1 An Equality Officer for sexuality and gender identity, and
- 19.2.2 An Equality Officer for ethnic minorities.

- 19.3 The Equalities Officers shall support the Welfare Officers in their duties, yet act as an independent body who can be approached with member concerns.
- 19.4 The Equalities Officers shall liaise with relevant officials in an out of College (including their counterparts in the JCR), to lobby for equality and the correction of discriminatory practices within the College.
- 19.5 Each Equality Officer shall organize regular social events for members of the Society who identify with the groups they represent, as well as open events that promote their aspect of diversity within the Society.
- 19.6 Each Equality Officer should be an individual who identifies as a member of the group they represent, or as a strong ally or supporter of that group.

Article 20 THE DOMESTIC OFFICER

- 20.1 The Domestic Officer shall ensure the facilities in the MCR are maintained. This includes ensuring damaged items are logged in the College Maintenance Book, propose items that would benefit the MCR and overseeing the MCR art and photograph collection.
- 20.2 The Domestic Officer shall oversee the provision and upkeep of the locker storage.

Article 21 THE SPORTS REPRESENTATIVE

- 21.1 The Sports Representative shall liaise with the JCR to promote the College Sporting activities.
- 21.2 The Sports Representative shall maintain MCR held sports equipment.

Article 22 THE LIBRARY OFFICER

- 22.1 The Library officer shall attend the meetings of the Library committee, supporting the concerns of the Graduate Students.

Article 23 THE IT OFFICER

- 23.1 The IT Officer shall act as the Webmaster for the MCR Website.
- 23.2 The IT Officer will ensure the MCR email lists are kept up to date.
- 23.3 The IT Officer shall assist the Returning Officer in the running of elections.

Article 24 THE ENVIRONMENT AND ETHICS OFFICER

- 24.1 The Environment and Ethics officer has responsibility for assessing and managing MCR waste and shall liaise with college to improve sustainability and ethical responsibility.
- 24.2 The Environment and Ethics Officer shall raise awareness of environmental issues where relevant to the MCR.

24.3 The Environment and Ethics Officer shall liaise with city- and campus-wide sustainability initiatives where appropriate.

Article 25 THE COLLEGE EVENTS OFFICER

25.1 The College Events Officer shall be in charge of organising the three minute thesis competition, regular SCR/MCR events, other events linked with college alumni engagement and other academic events within the MCR with the appropriate college group.

25.2 The College Events Officer shall liaise with the Development Committee for alumni engagement events and facilitate the involvement of graduate students.

Article 26 THE APPLIANCE OFFICER

26.1 The Appliance Officer shall be responsible for the upkeep and cleaning of the coffee machine and for instructing MCR members on how to use the machine where necessary.

26.2 In the event that the position of Appliance Officer is unfilled, the MCR coffee machine under their remit will be out of use to avoid damage to the machine.

Article 27 COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

27.1 The Communications Officer shall maintain the Society's social media accounts and calendars, to apprise members and others of news and updates.

27.2 The Communications Officer shall fulfill their duties according to guidelines set out in Article 8.

Article 28 ACCESS AND OUTREACH OFFICER

28.1 The Access and Outreach Officer shall be involved in matters of widening access to higher education and to College.

28.2 The Access and Outreach Officer shall liaise with Access and Outreach offices of College, University, and Oxford SU to facilitate the involvement of members in relevant initiatives.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Article 29 ELECTIONS

- 29.1 Subject to Article 9.6, appointment of all officers shall be by free and fair election in a secret ballot in which only ordinary members shall be eligible to stand for ordinary office or vote and ordinary and associated members shall be eligible to stand for additional offices.
- 29.2 Subject to Article 12.2, the Vice-President shall be the Returning Officer for elections, a position that they shall hold until all positions available for election have been validly filled.

Article 30 TIMING OF ELECTIONS

- 30.1 Election of all officers, excluding the Exeter House President (see Article 16.3) shall take place each year by the end of Michaelmas Term, on a day to be determined by the Returning Officer. Officers elected on this date shall have a term of office starting on the first day of the next Hilary Term, running for one year until the start of the following Hilary term.
- 30.2 Elections to fill casual vacancies shall take place in full term not more than fourteen days after the Executive Committee has declared an office vacant by way of notice in the MCR, counting only days of full term.

Article 31 PRE-ELECTION PROCEDURES

- 31.1 The Returning Officer shall give at least seven days' notice of forthcoming elections, by e-mail. The Sub-Rector shall be notified by letter.
- 31.2 The Returning Officer shall satisfy the Sub-Rector that the ballot shall be conducted at a place that has been reasonably publicised and is reasonably accessible to all those eligible to vote, and that the count shall be conducted in a fair and efficient manner.
- 31.3 Any person wishing to stand as a candidate shall so inform the Returning Officer or their deputy in writing no later than three days prior to the election date.
- 31.4 Having verified the status of a candidate as an ordinary member for ordinary offices and status as ordinary or associated member for additional offices, the Returning Officer shall place the candidate's name and the office for which they are standing on the notice board in the MCR once the nomination period has ended.
- 31.5 All candidates' names, juxtaposed with the offices for which they are standing, must be placed on the notice board in the MCR at least two days prior to the opening of the poll until the end of the day of election.
- 31.6 The Returning Officer shall communicate the candidates' names and the offices for which they are standing to all ordinary members via e-mail at least two days prior to the opening of the poll. If the role is not filled, nominations can be reopened for a further 24 hours.

- 31.7 Hustings shall be held on the afternoon prior to the election in the MCR at a time and date notified by the Returning Officer at least two days prior to the opening of the poll.

Article 32 ELECTION DAY PROCEDURES

- 32.1 The ballot box shall be kept open for a minimum of ten hours on the day of the election. These hours shall be determined and advertised by the Returning Officer.
- 32.2 On the day of the election, the Returning Officer, as well as members of the incumbent executive committee and additional officers who are not themselves standing as candidates, shall facilitate the free and fair conduct of the election by:
- 32.2.1 verifying that all persons who proceed to vote are ordinary members;
 - 32.2.2 keeping a tally of all voters;
 - 32.2.3 ensuring that counting is conducted a fair and efficient manner; and
 - 32.2.4 notifying members of the results of the election as soon as possible.
- 32.3 Ordinary members wishing to assist in the electoral process may do so provided that they are not standing in the election and have received permission from the Returning Officer.
- 32.4 The Returning Officer, and at least two other persons participating in the electoral process, shall conduct the counting of votes.
- 32.5 The Returning Officer shall declare invalid any vote that is blank, illegible or spoiled.

Article 33 THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

- 33.1 The ballot shall be conducted in terms of the Single Transferable Vote electoral system.
- 33.2 Each voter shall rank the candidates in preferential order, denoting with “1” their first choice, “2” their second choice, “3” their third choice, and so on. If a candidate scores more than 50% with a first-choice vote, they immediately win the election.
- 33.3 In the event of no candidate winning more than 50% of first choice votes, the candidate with the least number of first choice votes shall be eliminated, and their votes reallocated to the candidate chosen second on each ballot.
- 33.4 The elimination of candidates and distribution of ballot preferences will continue until either one candidate wins 50% of the vote plus one, or until all but two candidates have been eliminated, in which case the candidate with a plurality of the vote shall be deemed elected.
- 33.5 The election of multi-seat offices (i.e. The Social Secretaries) shall be conducted by the same logic as specified in 33.3 and 33.4, except:
- 33.5.1 The number of first-choice votes required for election is instead determined by the formula $(t/n + 1) + 1$, where n is the number of open seats and t is the total number of votes cast.
 - 33.5.2 Once a candidate in a multi-seat election has passed the quota, any remaining votes above this number should be reallocated to each ballot’s second choice.

- 33.6 The ballot paper shall include an option to “re-open nominations” (RON). In the event of RON winning 50% of the vote, the Returning Officer shall, within seven days of the election, re-open nominations for that position, and a new election shall be convened in accordance with the provisions of Part V of this Constitution.

Article 34 VALIDITY OF ELECTIONS

- 34.1 For an election to be valid at least 10% of ordinary members must vote.
- 34.2 Where fewer than 10% of members vote the Returning Officer shall immediately, and by reasonable notice to the Society, declare the election invalid and proclaim that a new election shall be held within seven days, subject to the provisions of Part V of this Constitution.
- 34.3 Where no person submits a candidacy for a given office the Returning Officer shall declare that election to that office is postponed, until no fewer than seven days after the election, at which point a new election for that office shall be held, subject to the provisions of Part V of this Constitution.

Article 35 ELECTION APPEALS

- 35.1 Appeals against any aspect of the elections shall be lodged with the Sub-Rector in person no more than 24 hours after the official closing of the poll.
- 35.2 All appeals shall be jointly investigated by the Sub-Rector and the Returning Officer.
- 35.3 If the Sub-Rector finds that any appeal lodged concerns the returning officer’s performance of their duties, the Sub-Rector shall have the power to bar the Returning Officer from participating in the investigation process. In such event, the Sub-Rector acting on their own shall investigate those appeals that have been lodged.
- 35.4 The findings of the investigation shall be publicised by notice in the MCR.

Article 36 TERMS OF OFFICE

- 36.1 Each officer’s term of office shall run from the day following their election, or their nomination if appointed under Article 9.6, until the day of the next election.
- 36.2 No person shall hold the president’s office for more than one year.
- 36.3 Any member of the Executive who misses two consecutive scheduled meetings of the MCR, be they general or extraordinary, without good cause will have been deemed to have resigned their post. This includes meetings that have failed to reach quorum, or have been unable to convene for any other reason.

6. MEETINGS

Article 37 NOTICE OF MEETINGS

- 37.1 The President shall give notice of meetings via e-mail.
- 37.2 The notice shall include date, time and place of the meeting.
- 37.3 Notice of any meeting shall be given at least one week prior to the meeting. Notice of any motions shall be given no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting. Any resolution relating to a matter not included in the notice shall be void unless the all members present unanimously approve such resolution.
- 37.4 Notice of any proposed amendment to the constitution shall be given at least seven days prior to the meeting.

Article 38 ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 38.1 The order of business at general meetings shall be:
- (a) Minutes of the previous meeting;
 - (b) Officers' reports;
 - (c) Matters arising;
 - (d) Constitutional motions;
 - (e) Financial motions;
 - (f) Ordinary motions;
 - (g) Any other business (AOB).

- 38.2 Constitutional motions may not be discussed under AOB.

Article 39 QUORUM AND VOTING REQUIREMENTS

- 39.1 Subject to the provisions of section 37, a quorum at any meeting of the Society shall require the presence of at least 10% of the Society's members, or at least 20 ordinary members. If a quorum is not obtained, the meeting shall be adjourned. The President shall set a date on which the adjourned meeting shall be held, which shall be in full term, and not more than fourteen days later, counting only days of full term.
- 39.2 Subject to the requirements of Article 37, the affirmative vote of a simple majority of those present and voting shall be required to approve a motion.
- 39.3 The Chairperson shall, subject to Articles 9.1 and 11.1, be a member of the Executive Committee, and shall remain impartial in debate and not vote except in the case of a tie. They shall then have the casting vote.

- 39.4 Honorary members and associate members shall vote only on matters concerning the day-to-day running of the Society.
- 39.5 Any meeting at which a proposed amendment to the Constitution is to be discussed shall require a quorum of at least 15% of the Society's members, or at least 30 ordinary members. The affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and voting shall be required to approve a proposed amendment.

Article 40 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- 40.1 Any members dissatisfied with the administration of the Society may propose a motion at any meeting of the Society.
- 40.2 If the complaint concerns alleges that any officer of the Executive Committee misused their authority, power or funds, or acted in a manner that was negligent, then the procedure for raising such a complaint, and for the adoption of any motion concerning the same, including removal of such officers, shall be the procedure required for a constitutional amendment outlined in 39.5.
- 40.3 Complaints concerning the conduct of any ordinary member should be brought through the procedures outlined in the College Red Book.
- 40.4 Complaints concerning the conduct of any associate member should be brought to an officer of the Executive Committee and resolved using the procedures outlined in Article 6 of this Constitution. Student members are also always welcome to raise complaints to the Sub-Rector or relevant College official.
- 40.5 Any member whose complaint is not upheld, or is upheld but not effectively remedied, may appeal to the Sub-Rector, who may require the Society to provide a remedy.

Article 41 REGULATIONS

- 41.1 The Executive Committee shall be competent to propose regulations for running the Society. Such regulations shall be placed as a motion before a meeting of the Society.

Article 42 GENERAL

- 42.1 A copy of this Constitution shall be made available to each ordinary and associate member at the time of their joining the Society and shall also be posted on the MCR website. A copy shall be held by the Vice-President, and shall be open to inspection by any member, and by anyone qualified for ordinary membership. Another copy shall be deposited with the Sub-Rector.
- 42.2 Under the provisions of the Education Act (1994), the Governing Body shall review this Constitution not later than 2005, and at intervals of not more than five years thereafter.
- 42.3 Amendments made to the Constitution shall be subject to the consent of the Governing Body.

Appendix A. AMENDMENTS

Amendment 1 HILARY TERM 2023

- 1.1 Improves stylistic consistency, capitalization, spelling, and grammar throughout.
- 1.2 Converts fixed currency figures to percentages of the annual budget.
- 1.3 Adjusts associate member self-nomination procedures and creates a more confidential process for resolving complaints about associate members and issuing warnings or dismissal.
- 1.4 Redefines Executive Committee as a smaller subset of the Full Committee to attend to confidential or urgent matters.

Approved in a General Meeting of the Society on 3 March 2023.
Ratified by the Governing Body of the College on 8 March 2023.

Amendment 2 MICHAELMAS TERM 2023

- 2.1 Allows members of Emmanuel College, Cambridge to apply for associate membership by nomination of the President, Vice-President, or appointed Officer of the Emmanuel College Middle Common Room.

Approved in a General Meeting of the Society on 13 October 2023.
Ratified by the Governing Body of the College on 1 November 2023.