

# The Constitution of the Queens' College Junior Combination Room

This document was last updated on the 22nd November 2015. It is due for review by the Governing Body no later than the 22nd November 2020.

## Preamble

1. In this Constitution the expression 'Governing Body' shall mean the Governing Body of the College, and the expression "affiliation to an external organization" shall include any form of membership of, or formal association with, an organization whose purposes are not confined to purposes connected with the College.
2.
  - a. No alteration shall be made to any part of this constitution without the approval of the Governing Body.
  - b. No alteration shall be made to any part of the Constitution or the Appendix without the approval of the Council of the College Union.
  - c. No alteration shall be made to any part of the Constitution or the Appendix without it first passing an Open JCR Meeting.
  - d. No alteration shall be made to this constitution except in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1994.
3. This Constitution shall be submitted to the Governing Body for review, in accordance with the provision of the Education Act 1994, at intervals of not more than five years.
4. The JCR shall operate in a fair and democratic manner in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act, 1994 and the Charities Act, 1960.

## Aims and Objectives

5. There shall be a Junior Combination Room (JCR) in Queens' College:
  - a. to collate and express the opinions of its members in relation to their participation in college life.
  - b. to cooperate with any similar association or organization of students in accordance with the interests of its own members, subject to the provision below under "Affiliation to Organisations".
  - c. to provide social entertainments for its members.
6. In fulfilling its Aims and Objectives the JCR must act within the law, in particular within the provisions of the Charities Act, 1960 and the Education Act, 1994.

## Membership

7. Membership of the JCR body is as per the Constitution of the College Union.
8. Notwithstanding any provisions in this Constitution as to automatic membership of the JCR any person who would by virtue of those provisions be a member of the JCR may in any academic year by written notice declare that he or she does not wish to be a member, and in that case such a person shall not be a member of the JCR for that academic year. Such written notice shall be served on the President of the JCR by the division of the Michaelmas Term.
9. Anyone who qualifies for membership of the JCR, who exercises the right not to be a member of the JCR shall not be unfairly disadvantaged with regard to the provision of services or otherwise.

## The JCR Committee

10. All members and representatives of the JCR Committee and any subcommittees shall be members of the JCR. These shall be named and defined in the Appendix.
11. No member shall hold more than one post of the JCR Committee at any one time.
12. The JCR Committee shall consist of an Executive of Senior Officers comprising the President, Treasurer and Secretary. All positions and their duties for the central committee and any subcommittees are named and defined in the Appendix, which may be revised to reflect the changing needs of the Committee and the undergraduate body, after consultation with the College Union.
13. Each Committee member shall also represent the JCR on the College Union.
14. There shall be no sabbatical or paid office in the JCR.
15. The JCR Committee will also provide members for suitable College Committees. These shall be named and defined in the Appendix.
16. Members of the JCR Committee may, by mutual agreement, for a specified period and with the approval of the JCR Committee, delegate responsibilities to each other.
17. The members of the JCR Committee shall assist the President in ascertaining and representing the interests of the membership of the JCR.
18. In addition, each member of the JCR Committee shall fulfil any other functions as laid down by the Constitution or by the decisions of a JCR Open Meeting.

# Elections

19. The members of the JCR Committee shall be elected by secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote, and at which a member of the Governing Body shall act as a Returning Officer. Elections shall be held in Lent term, except for the First Year Representatives, in accordance with clause 22.
20. The members of the JCR Committee shall take office in the second division of the full Lent term following their election and shall serve for no fewer than eleven months and no more than twelve months, except in accordance with clause 22).
21. By-elections may be held as necessary during the year, posts being held until the following full committee handover, in the second division of the full Lent term.
22. First year undergraduate members shall, in the fifth week of the Michaelmas term, elect the two First Year Representatives, the posts being held until the following fifth week of the Michaelmas Term.
23. The eligibility of members of the JCR to stand for and vote for JCR Committee positions shall be defined in the Appendix.
24. Three Returning Officers shall administer the election, and the President shall be responsible for their appointment. One of the Returning Officers shall be a member of the JCR Committee. One of the Returning Officers shall be a member of the JCR, but not of the JCR Committee. One of the Returning Officers shall be a Fellow of the College.
25. A Returning Officer may not be a candidate in the election, propose or second any candidate standing in the election, actively campaign for any candidate or issue during the time of his/her appointment or disclose the way any individual JCR member voted.
26. The Returning Officers are responsible for the interpretation of the election regulations but a JCR Open Meeting may overturn their rulings.
27. There shall be two elections taking place one week apart from each other during Lent term.
28. Elections shall be divided into the Executive Election and the General Election with the former taking place one week before the latter. The committee positions elected in these elections shall be named in the Appendix.

29. Notice of the election and of the date by which nominations must be received shall be posted on the JCR website and circulated electronically by the Returning Officers at least ten days before the election.
30. Elections may be by electronic or paper means, to be decided by the JCR Committee.
31. All nominations for the election shall be in writing with the signature of the proposer and seconder and written consent of the nominee.
32. The proposer and seconder must be members of the JCR, eligible to vote for the post, but not members of the current JCR Committee.
33. All nominations must reach the Returning Officers at least seven days before the election.
34. A list of candidates for election shall be posted by the Returning Officers on the JCR website and circulated electronically at least five days before the election.
35. Canvassing will be allowed.
36. Each candidate may send in a manifesto, of no more than one side of A4, at least four days in advance of the election, which shall be sent to all voting members of the JCR by the Secretary.
37. The Returning Officers may rule any published material out of order if it contains offensive or false material or material attacking the character of an opponent.
38. JCR election hustings will take place on the same day that voting begins.
39. Voting in elections will be by the system of Single Transferable Vote as published by the Electoral Reform Society.
40. Voting will be by a secret ballot.
41. If the election is to be by paper, each ballot paper must bear the JCR stamp and must be placed in a sealed box provided for that purpose. If by electronic means, the method used must be considered acceptable by the JCR Committee.
42. A null candidate shall appear on the ballot paper for each post specified as 'Re-Open Nominations'.
43. Each member of the JCR entitled to vote in an election shall have only one vote for each post for which he/she is eligible to vote.

44. Anyone, who for a reason acceptable to the Returning Officers, cannot vote in person at the election may apply to the Returning Officers for a ballot paper. This paper must be handed to the Returning Officers between the closing of nominations and the closing of voting and be counted with the other ballot papers.
45. The Returning Officers shall conduct the count immediately after voting closes and publish the results within 24 hours.
46. If the null candidate is elected then a new election for that post shall take place according to the rules for by-elections as defined by clause 52.
47. The vote shall be recounted if:
  - a. a recount is requested by a candidate within 24 hours of the announcement of the results.
  - b. the result is a tie.
48. If an election results in a tie, the first preferences under the STV system will then be counted for the candidates involved in the tie. The candidates with the most first preferences will be elected.
49. If the result is still a tie, i.e. two candidates have the same number of first preferences, a re-ballot between the candidates involved in the tie will take place 48 hours after the original ballot.
50. Complaints or allegations of electoral misconduct must be made to the Returning Officers within 48 hours of the close of voting, and investigated by the Returning Officers.
51. If the investigators of clause 50 believe an irregularity has occurred, such new elections shall take place as considered necessary by them.

## By-elections

52. If any position on the JCR Committee falls vacant, a by-election must be held and shall be conducted in accordance with the rules for elections except that:
  - a. if any position which is filled by election falls vacant, a by-election shall be held within ten to fourteen days, but, if the vacancy occurs within ten days of the end of full term, the election shall be held between the tenth and fourteenth day of the next full term.
  - b. for elections under this rule the nominations must reach the Returning Officers at least five days before the election, and the list of candidates shall appear four days before the election.
  - c. members elected at a by-election shall take office immediately after the result of the by-election is declared.

- d. an existing member of the JCR Committee may, under this rule, stand for election to another office, but if elected shall be deemed to have resigned the previous office and the JCR Committee shall be deemed to have accepted that resignation.

## Resignations

53. The resignation of a Committee member shall be effective at its acceptance by the JCR Committee except under clauses 60 or 61.
54. Any Committee member who fails to attend three successive Ordinary Committee Meetings and fails before each of these meetings, or within five days after each of these meetings, to give an apology accepted by the Committee, shall be required to resign, subject to the right of appeal to the next Ordinary Open Meeting.
55. Any Committee member who resigns must also resign from the Council of the College Union.
56. A post shall be deemed vacant if the holder ceases to be entitled to membership of the JCR.
57. Any member of the JCR may call for the resignation of any member or representative of the JCR Committee by presenting a petition of thirty-one or more members of the JCR who are entitled to vote for the position in question to the President or Secretary of the JCR Committee.
58. A motion of no-confidence in the member or representative of the JCR Committee named in the petition of clause 57 shall be submitted to be debated at the next JCR Open Meeting, to be held more than 73 hours and less than seven days after the submission of the petition.
59. If the motion of clause 58 is passed by a majority of those entitled to vote for the position, the member or representative of the JCR Committee named in the petition of clause 57 shall be required to resign with effect from ten days after the Open Meeting.
60. The member or representative of the JCR Committee required to resign under clause 59 may call for a referendum on the motion in accordance with the rules in clauses 89-98 (with the referendum applying to those entitled to vote for the position).
61. If the motion of clause 58 is upheld by the referendum of clause 60 then the member or representative of the JCR Committee named in the petition of clause 57 shall be required to resign with immediate effect.

# Meetings

62. Meetings of the JCR shall be of two types: Committee Meetings and Open Meetings. At all meetings, the President or a member of the JCR Committee nominated by that Committee shall take the chair and shall only have a casting vote.
63. Drafts of the minutes of all JCR meetings must be posted on the JCR website not more than three days after the meeting. They must be accompanied by the statement "These are draft minutes which are subject to confirmation or correction by the JCR Committee".
64. Any member of the JCR may attend any JCR meeting, with rights to speak but not vote.
65. There shall be two types of Committee Meetings: Ordinary Committee Meetings and Emergency Committee Meetings. Each shall have a quorum of half the total number of JCR Committee members at that time, applicable to decisions for which a vote is considered necessary by those Committee members present.
66. Ordinary Committee Meetings shall be held at least four times a term and at least two days' notice must be given.
67. Emergency Committee Meetings may be called in a manner specified by the JCR Committee, by any two JCR Committee members, provided at least two days' notice is given.
68. The JCR Committee may call Open Meetings and any member of the JCR may require the JCR Committee to call such a meeting.
69. No Open Meetings shall be called outside full term.
70. All JCR Open Meetings shall take place in a room large enough to accommodate all members of the JCR who wish to attend.
71. Notice of any Open Meeting must be posted on the JCR website and circulated electronically at least five days before the meeting.
72. The agenda containing the wording of all motions must be posted at least 36 hours before the meeting.
73. All motions of a JCR Open Meeting must be proposed and seconded by members of the JCR.

74. All motions must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the JCR Committee at least 72 hours before the meeting.
75. The Chair shall endeavour to ensure a balanced debate free from intimidation and personal abuse.
76. Thirty members of the JCR shall constitute a quorum at an Open Meeting.
77. Any motion passed by a quorate meeting shall, subject to clause 103 become JCR policy and be binding on the JCR Committee unless a referendum of all members of the JCR votes against it.
78. Amendments to a motion may be put at any time during the discussion of a motion.
79. Amendments may be proposed prior to an Open Meeting in writing to the Secretary if the JCR Committee.
80. Amendments may be proposed by any individual member of the JCR.
81. There shall be a guillotine on motions of ten minutes, after which the motion shall be put to a vote, unless the guillotine is overturned, as in clause 83.
82. The guillotine may be overturned for a specified period if a motion to do so is supported by a two-thirds majority.
83. Every motion and amendment shall be voted on immediately following the last speech on the motion or amendment, or when the guillotine fails.
84. All voting shall be by a show of hands, unless a secret ballot is requested by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.
85. If a recount is taken, only those present at the time of the vote in dispute shall be entitled to participate in the recount.
86. The passage of any motion shall require the support of a simple majority of those present and voting except in accordance with clause 85.
87. Open Meeting shall be subject to any standing orders adopted by the JCR Committee provided they are not in conflict with the Constitution of the JCR.
88. Policy that will lapse at an Open Meeting must be displayed on the JCR website and circulated electronically at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

## Referenda

89. A referendum to challenge a decision of an Open Meeting may be called by the JCR Committee or by a petition of thirty-one or more members of the JCR.
90. Such a petition must be handed to the President or the Secretary of the JCR within ten days of the Open Meeting at which the decision it challenges was made unless that Open Meeting falls within the last ten days of full term, in which case the petition must be handed in within the first seven days of the next full term.
91. A referendum must be held within ten days of receiving such a petition unless the petition is received within the last ten days of full term, in which case the referendum must be held within the first seven days of the next full term. Notice of such a referendum must be posted on the JCR Screens at least three days before the referendum.
92. The President of the JCR shall be responsible for the appointment of three Returning Officers before notice of the referendum is given.
93. The Returning Officers shall accept the votes of any member who, for any reason acceptable to the Returning Officers, is unable to vote at the time of the referendum, as in clause 44.
94. Any alleged irregularities shall be investigated by the Returning Officers, as in clauses 50-51 together with the JCR Committee.
95. Referenda shall be by secret ballot, as in clauses 39-42.
96. The ballot paper shall contain only the wording of the motion as passed, or the original wording of the motion if rejected, with the question "Are you in favour of the above motion?" and the words "Yes", "No" and "Abstain", against one of which the voter shall be required to place a cross.
97. At least one hundred valid voting papers must be received to validate a referendum.
98. A motion passed by the referendum shall become JCR policy and be binding on the JCR Committee.

## Policy

99. The policy of the JCR shall be determined by Open Meetings or referenda and shall lapse at the end of the ninth term after its adoption unless a quorate decision of a JCR Open Meeting decides to retain the policy, or in accordance with clause 102.

100. Policy shall be taken to be any quorate decision of a JCR Open Meeting or referendum of all members of the JCR taken after the beginning of the Easter term 1987.
101. A policy file shall be kept which will detail all current policy of the JCR and shall be available to any member of the JCR.
102. Financial policy will lapse at the beginning of the Michaelmas term each year.
103. The JCR Committee shall not be bound to undertake any policy which involves action which is unlawful or contrary to the provisions of the Education Act 1994.

## Affiliation to Organisations

104. If the JCR independently of the College Union, decides to become affiliated to any external organisation, it shall publish to all Junior Members of the College, and to the Governing Body, a notice of this decision stating the name of the organisation and the details of any subscription or similar fee paid or proposed to be paid, and of any donation made or proposed to be made, to the organisation.
105. The JCR shall publish annually to all Junior Members of the College, and to the Governing Body, the names of all external organisations to which it is affiliated independently of the College Union and the details of any subscriptions or similar fee paid, and of any donation made or proposed to be made, to the organisations within the year covered by the accounts.
106. Upon the request of at least three percent of its members, the JCR shall submit for the approval of its members a list of the organisation to which the JCR is affiliated independently of the College Union. If at least five percent of the members so require, the question of continued affiliation to any particular organization shall be decided by a secret ballot at which all members are entitled to vote.

## Relationship with the College Union

107. At the end of each term, the accounts of the JCR shall be audited by the Senior Treasurer of the College Union.

## Grievances

108. Any person who would normally qualify for automatic membership of the JCR who is dissatisfied in their dealings with the JCR committee, or who claims to be unfairly disadvantaged by reason of having exercised the right not to be a member of the JCR, may complain to the Senior Treasurer of the Union. Any appeal against the decision of the Senior Treasurer of the Union may be made to the Governing Body,

who shall have absolute power to provide such effective remedy if any as they consider appropriate.

## Changes to the Constitution

109. Proposed changes to this Constitution must be approved by a JCR Open Meeting, a Special General Meeting of the College Union (in the same manner as changes to the Constitution of the College Union) and by the Governing Body.
  
110. No changes may be made to this Constitution so as to bring it into conflict with the Constitution of the College Union, or with the provisions of the Education Act 1994.