

St Mary's College Middle Common Room Temporary Standing Orders

Section 1: Definitions

1. Hereinafter:

- a) The Middle Common Room of St Mary's College in the University of Durham shall be referred to as 'the MCR'.
- b) The Durham Student's Union will be referred to as 'the DSU'
- c) Unless otherwise stated, the instruction 'in writing' will refer to both physical and electronic communication including, but not limited to, email communication and instant messaging services.

2. A member of St Mary's College:

An undergraduate or postgraduate member of St Mary's College (alternatively referred to as 'the College' in these standing orders) registered for a full or part-time course in accordance with the General Regulations of the University.

3. A mature student:

A member of St Mary's College who is an undergraduate and of at least 21 years of age on starting their course and/or is in their final year of an Integrated Master's degree.

4. Property of the MCR:

All physical resources owned, rented by, or loaned to the MCR and all financial assets, which shall include all monies owed to the MCR and in MCR accounts.

5. The MCR's facilities:

Include the common room located opposite the College's gym and the resources therein.

Section 2: Mission, Vision, and Values

1. Mission

To create an inclusive, welcoming, and engaged community where our members can thrive in all aspects of their time at Durham, whether that be academically, pastorally, or socially.

2. Vision

Create a sustainable, inclusive and engaged common room with proud traditions and a progressive outlook.

3. Values

Inclusivity, openminded-ness, compassion, kindness, respectfulness, honesty, integrity, humility, and achievement.

Section 3: Code of Conduct

Being a member of the MCR, St Mary's College and Durham University as a whole, is a great privilege out of which comes some commensurate responsibilities. As such, members of the MCR must strive to act in accordance with the obligations arising from the history and tradition of the MCR, the College and the University.

The MCR expects members to:

- a) Engage positively with each-other with open-mindedness and without prejudice.
- b) Strive to build friendships and partnerships and support and learn from each other.
- c) Treat each other with respect regardless of age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation
- d) Endeavour to undertake all that they do with good humour and a positive mindset.
- e) Conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates integrity beyond reproach.
- f) Respect and value debate, democracy, and democratic processes.
- g) Repudiate and actively oppose discrimination, harassment. or bullying in any form.
- h) Uphold the rules as set out in these, or subsequent, Standing Orders, whichever is the latest version

Section 4: Membership and Privileges

1. Ordinary Membership

All postgraduate and mature members of St Mary's College who have paid the annual MCR membership fee for the current academic year shall be deemed Ordinary Members of the MCR. In the case of mature students, this can be substituted by membership of the MCR. Henceforth, as of June 2023, all members of St Mary's College who have paid the annual JCR membership fee for the current academic year and who fulfil the following criteria shall be deemed Ordinary Members of the MCR: students in their 4th year at St Mary's having taken a 'year in industry', 'placement year', 'year abroad', or similar adjacencies; students in Easter Term of 3rd year who have will be eligible for Ordinary MCR Membership and are confirmed to be a member of St Mary's College for the following academic year.

Ordinary members of the MCR shall be entitled to:

- a) Attend, speak, and vote at all full meetings of the MCR.
- b) Book out MCR facilities.
- c) Attend MCR events.
- d) Vote in all MCR elections
- e) Hold office in the MCR.

2. Membership Privileges and Fees

All membership privileges are conditional on full payment of the applicable membership fees of the MCR. Memberships fees are to be set by the Executive Committee in consultation with the College. Those having paid JCR membership fees for Integrated Masters and Placement/Industry/Abroad years are equally privileged to such. (Such conditions are to be annually agreed upon by JCR President and MCR President for each academic year during meeting concerning the financial relationship of the two Common Rooms.)

3. Opting-In to Membership

- a) All postgraduate and mature members of the College will have the opportunity to opt into MCR membership at the beginning of the term in which they are registered at the University. Students will be asked to opt into the MCR membership charges as part of the registration and enrolment process.
- b) All postgraduate and mature members of the College that choose not to opt into the MCR will retain all privileges and rights afforded to members of the college, however, will forfeit all privileges exclusively afforded to ordinary members of the MCR.

4. Honorary Life Membership

Those who receive honorary life membership from the JCR and who do not hold ordinary membership of the MCR will have all privileges of an ordinary member of the MCR except for holding office in the MCR. Ordinary members of the MCR are eligible for Honorary Life Membership of the JCR but this decision is taken by the 'Colours Committee' formed by the JCR President.

Section 5: Executive Officers

1. Term Limits

No MCR member shall serve more than three consecutive years in any combination of executive positions, without a one-year break; however, exceptions may be made in the event that no nominations for a position are received after two rounds of calls for nominations.

2. Handover Documents

All executive officers must ensure that their handover booklets are kept up to date.

3. List of Executive Officers

The following is a list of the executive offices of the MCR, i.e. the Executive Committee of the MCR who shall be elected or selected from amongst ordinary members of the MCR:

- a) The President of the MCR.
- b) The Vice-President of the MCR.
- c) The Treasurer of the MCR.
- d) The Chair of the MCR.
- e) The Social Chair of the MCR.

- f) The Head Frep of the MCR (This role will be fulfilled by Vice-President and/or Social Chair. Should the role wish to be filled separately this is to the discretion of the acting President of the MCR to allow/disallow.)
- g) The Internationals Representative of the MCR.
- h) The Brackenbury Representative of the MCR.
- i) The Postgraduate (Research) Representative
- j) The Postgraduate (Taught) Representative
- k) The Fourth Year Representative

4. Continuity of the President

The position of President must always be filled. If the position should become vacant, a College Officer may appoint themselves, or an ordinary member of the MCR on their behalf, to hold an election to elect the position. In rare circumstances, a College Officer may appoint someone to the role of President directly, but must communicate their reasoning in writing to all ordinary members of the MCR with good explanation for why an election cannot be held.

5. Meetings of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a term and use the following agenda for meetings:

- a) Apologies for absence.
- b) Acceptance of the agenda.
- c) Acceptance of any matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.
- d) Reports of officers
- e) Matters to be discussed
- f) Motions
- g) Any other business
- h) Close of the meeting

6. Quorum for the Executive Committee

The quorum for the Executive Committee shall be three members.

7. Individual Responsibilities and Duties of Executive Officers

The individual responsibilities and duties of executive officers shall be as follows:

- a) **President of the MCR:**
 - i) Takes overall responsibility for the satisfactory conduct of all MCR affairs and execution of MCR decisions.
 - ii) Represents the MCR, or its individual members when relevant, to college officers, the JCR and SCR and any University body.
 - iii) Liaises with college offices and the JCR and SCR in the best interest of members of the MCR.
 - iv) Presents those views and decisions by college officers, which are relevant, to the MCR.

- v) Where reasonably possible, attends all MCR Committee meetings, MCR meetings, meetings of college council and all college committees which are deemed relevant by college officers and the JCR.
- vi) Actively promotes the values and vision of the MCR.

b) Vice-President of the MCR:

- i) Stands in for the President in their absence.
- ii) Represents the MCR, or its individual members when relevant, to college officers, the JCR and SCR and any University body.
- iii) Runs sign-up for formal dinners, including inter-MCR formals, in a fair and accessible way.
- iv) Actively promotes the values and vision of the MCR.
- v) In addition see (F.)

c) The Treasurer of the MCR:

- i) Takes responsibility for the correct administration of finances, in consultation, where appropriate with MCR President.
- ii) Supervises the MCR bank account(s).
- iii) Controls the payment of cheques, petty cash, quarterly V.A.T. claims and the transferring and recording of transactions.
- iv) Attends any MCR committee meeting or full MCR meeting at which the expenditure of MCR funds is being discussed.

d) The Chair of the MCR:

- i) Responsible for chairing all full MCR meetings.
- ii) Responsible for ensuring minutes are taken at all Executive Committee and full MCR meetings.
- iii) Maintains, updates, and upholds the standing orders of the MCR.
- iv) Acts as a fair and impartial aid in any disagreement between the Executive committee and its members.

e) The Social Chair of the MCR:

- i) Responsible working with the Vice President to organise at least one Inter-MCR formal within each academic year.
- ii) Responsible for liaising with the President and SCR to organise at least one joint MCR-SCR formal per year.
- iii) Promotes inclusivity at events, including ensuring the provision of non-alcoholic alternatives.
- iv) In addition see (f.)

f) MCR Head Frep:

- i) Responsible for liaising with the President and the JCR Frep committee to plan events for postgraduate and mature students during Induction Week.
- ii) Liaise with the Social Chair to ensure the continuity of events from the end of Induction Week.
- iii) Responsible for liaising with the President and the JCR Frep committee to plan events for postgraduate and mature students during Induction Week.
- iv) Liaise with the Social Chair to ensure the continuity of events from the end of Induction Week.

g) MCR International Rep:

- i) Responsible for working with President and MCR exec to ensure and support in the engagement of the MCR Internationals community.
- ii) Promotes inclusivity at events, including ensuring the provision of non-alcoholic alternatives.
- iii) Responsible for liaising with the President and the JCR Frep committee to plan events for postgraduate and mature students during Induction Week
- iv) Responsible for liaising with the President and Social Chair to organise at least one MCR Internationals event per year.

h) MCR Brackenbury Rep:

- i) Responsible for working with President and MCR exec to ensure and support in the engagement of the MCR community living in external accommodation to St Mary's College grounds
- ii) Responsible for liaising with the President and the JCR Frep committee to plan events for postgraduate and mature students during Induction Week.
- iii) Promotes inclusivity at events, including ensuring the provision of non-alcoholic alternatives.

i) MCR PGR Rep:

- i) Responsible for working with the President and MCR exec to ensure and support in the engagement of the Research postgraduate members of the MCR
- ii) Responsible for liaising with the President and the JCR Frep committee to plan events for postgraduate and mature students during Induction Week
- iii) Promotes inclusivity at events, including ensuring the provision of non-alcoholic alternatives.

j) MCR PGT Rep:

- i) Responsible for working with the President and MCR exec to ensure and support in the engagement of the taught postgraduate members of the MCR
- ii) Responsible for liaising with the President and the JCR Frep committee to plan events for postgraduate and mature students during Induction Week
- iii) Promotes inclusivity at events, including ensuring the provision of non-alcoholic alternatives

k) MCR 4th year Rep:

- i) Responsible for working with the President and MCR exec to ensure and support in the engagement of the fourth-year members of the MCR
- ii) Responsible for liaising with the President and the JCR Frep committee to plan events for postgraduate and mature students during Induction Week
- iii) Promotes inclusivity at events, including ensuring the provision of non-alcoholic alternatives

Section 6: Meetings of the MCR

1. Arrangements for MCR Meetings

The Executive Committee, in consultant with ordinary members of the MCR, shall decide the time and place of all MCR meetings subject to any conditions laid out in this section. The meetings shall be chaired by the MCR Chair, who is also responsible for ensuring minutes of the meeting are taken and documented.

2. Advertisement of Meetings

Meetings shall be advertised not less than one week in advance, with the exception of emergency meetings as shall be clarified in this section.

3. Quorum for a Meeting

The quorum for a meeting shall be five per cent of the total number of full-time ordinary members of the MCR.

4. Conditions on the MCR Chair

The MCR chair shall have a casting vote only when votes are equally numerically divided in balloted votes.

5. Types of Meeting and Their Requirements

There shall be three types of meetings:

a) Ordinary:

- i)** There shall be a minimum of one ordinary meeting each University Term.
- ii)** All members of the Executive Committee are expected to attend and shall submit apologies for absence in writing to at least one of the MCR Chair or the MCR President in advance of the meeting.
- iii)** The normal order of business on the agenda shall be:
 - (1)** Apologies for absence.
 - (2)** Acceptance of and matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.
 - (3)** Ratifications.
 - (4)** Elections.
 - (5)** Motions.
 - (6)** Any other business.
 - (7)** Close of meeting

b) Extraordinary:

- i)** Extraordinary meetings may be called by the Executive Committee to conduct business between ordinary meetings, when required by circumstances.

c) Emergency:

- i) An emergency meeting may be called by any ordinary member of the MCR on presentation to the MCR President or MCR Chair of a petition bearing at least ten per cent of ordinary members of the MCR calling for a specific item to be discussed.
- ii) An emergency meeting shall be held within one week of the presentation of such a petition as in i).
- iii) Publicity for the emergency meeting shall be e-mailed immediately to all members of the MCR.
- iv) The order of the meeting shall be governed by the agenda for that particular emergency meeting.

6. Motions

- a) Ordinary members of the MCR can bring forward private motions. Any motion must have a proposer and a seconder, both of whom are ordinary members of the MCR. Ordinary members wishing to table motions must submit any motion to the MCR Chair with no less than 48 hours until an ordinary meeting, with exception to the discretion of the MCR Chair.
- b) The proposer of any motion may withdraw that motion at any point up until the discussion of that motion at the meeting.
- c) All motions may be voted on by secret ballot or by show of hands which can be decided at the discretion of the MCR Chair. Should a secret ballot take place this will be done using the DSU online voting system after the meeting to enable members who were unable to attend the meeting to vote.
- d) No financial motions may be brought to the MCR after the expense has been incurred except in well-grounded circumstances. If the MCR does not reasonably field any financial motion, an ordinary member of the MCR should put their motion in writing to a College Officer to make a decision.
- e) Motions that are passed by the MCR shall have immediate effect.

Section 7: Elections

1. Election of MCR Executive Officers

The means by which Executive Officers of the MCR are to take up their roles is by election. In the exceptional event that an election cannot take place, a College Officer may make appointments until such point as an election may take place. Any of the following shall be eligible to stand for the role of an Executive Officer for the MCR:

- a) All current ordinary members of the MCR.
- b) All members of the college in the third term of their third year of their Integrated Masters/Year abroad/Placement degree or all members of the University in possession of the offer of a place to read for a higher degree in St Mary's College during the relevant academic year.

2. Conduct of MCR Executive Officers in Elections

Executive Officers shall not seek to influence the vote in any way, at the risk of having the vote declared null and void.

3. MCR Chair and Fairness

In all elections, the MCR Chair shall have jurisdiction over the conduct of all members concerning the election, including candidates' election campaigns. Breach of any rules pertaining to election campaigns in these standing orders, or any malicious misconduct as so deemed by the MCR Chair shall result in the candidate being declared ineligible to stand for election by the Executive Committee, upon recommendation of the MCR Chair.

4. Re-open Nominations option

In all elections an option to re-open nominations shall be available.

5. Electoral Procedure

- a) Nominations shall open during the periods as laid out in §7.7.
- b) All candidates must provide evidence to the MCR Chair of successful completion of the 'Consent Matters' qualification.
- c) All candidates shall be allowed to canvas in public domains, as deemed appropriate by the MCR Chair, from the close of nominations until the close of the election.
- d) Candidates may have a bogsheet sent to the MCR e-mailing list, posted on the MCR Facebook group and put up in the Middle Common Room from the close of nominations until the close of the election. Bogsheets must conform to the following rules:
 - i) They must be on a single A4 page.
 - ii) Other candidates must not be mentioned or referred to.
- e) Elections shall take place in an ordinary meeting of the MCR.
- f) Voting shall be done by single transferable voting.
- g) Voting shall be open for 5 days from the close of the meeting using the online system hosted by the DSU. Voting shall be advertised to all members once open, to allow those not able to be present at the meeting to vote.
- h) The result shall be announced as soon as the count is complete. The MCR President in communication with the MCR chair shall circulate an e-mail of the results of the election at the earliest opportunity.
- i) Should the vote result in a tie another vote shall be held. Should the vote again result in a tie, the election shall be decided by the MCR Chair exercising their casting vote. If the role of MCR Chair is vacant then the MCR President may provide the casting vote.

6. Hustings

- a) All nominees shall be required to hust in one of the following forms:
 - i) In-person
 - ii) By live video link
 - iii) By submitting a video to be played during in the meeting.
 - iv) By submitting a written hust to be read out by the MCR chair during the meeting.
- b) Husts shall last no longer than three minutes except when husting for MCR President when husts shall last no longer than 5 minutes.
- c) Nominees for individual positions shall hust according to the alphabetical order of their surname.

- d) There shall follow questions of the nominees that shall be directed at all and not at specific candidates. The MCR Chair shall have the discretion to disallow inappropriate questions.
- e) The nominees shall reply to questions in order as follows: the nominee who first husted shall reply first to the first question, and the second shall reply second, and so forth until all nominees have replied; the second question shall be answered first by the second nominee and so forth until all nominees have replied to all of the questions asked of them.
- f) A candidate shall not return to answer a question to which they have already addressed, either once another candidate has begun to answer or another question has been put.

7. Dates of Election and Office

Dates of elections for roles will be decided by the Executive Committee at the start of Michaelmas term in consultation with ordinary members of the MCR. They must ensure that no-one holds a position for more than one full academic year without an election taking place for their role.

Section 8: MCR Finances

Due to the current stage of the standing orders, a code of practice policy document will be created pertaining to MCR finances made by the MCR President and MCR Treasurer in consultation with the College as soon as is reasonably possible. Once this document has been created it will be put forward for ratification to be in the standing orders.

Section 9: Sanctions and Resignations

1. Removal of Membership

Any Ordinary or Honorary Life Member of the MCR may have their membership removed and entitlements withdrawn, either temporarily (for a period no longer than one academic term) subject to a majority decision by the Executive Committee, or permanently subject to majority decision by the Executive Committee and agreement of a College Officer. Any member under consideration for permanent removal must be informed in writing and allowed to present a case in their defence before the Executive Committee decides the matter. In either case, any member subject to this action must be informed in writing of the outcome at the earliest opportunity. The member also has the right to appeal any decision with the Principal or any College Officer who has not been involved in any part of the case.

2. Removal of Executive Officers

The Executive Committee reserves the right to suspend from duty, or compel to resign, any Executive Committee member who is, in its judgement, negligent or in breach of their duties or the trust of the MCR, subject to a vote of the Executive Committee and agreement of a College Officer.

3. Motions of No Confidence

The ordinary members of the MCR may bring a motion of no confidence in any Executive Office of the MCR at any meeting of the MCR. The motion shall be voted on and must be passed by a two-thirds majority of those voting in order to be effective. If successful, the post shall be put up for election as soon as possible by the appropriate method outlined above.

4. Resignation of Executive Officers

Officers may at any time during their term of office tender their resignation in writing to the President of the MCR, or to the remaining members of the Executive Committee and a College Officer should the President of the MCR be resigning.

Section 10: Standing Orders Arrangements

1. Changes to the Standing Orders

Changes to these standing orders may be made only by the way of previously submitted motions at meetings of the MCR. Any changes shall take immediate effect after ratification and MCR Chair will be responsible for updating the standing orders. If there is no MCR Chair then this is the President's responsibility.

2. Maintenance of the Standing Orders

The MCR Chair (or the President in the case of there being no MCR Chair) will make that all cross-referencing in this document remains consistent and accurate after implementation of any amendments to the standing orders.

3. Availability of the Standing Orders

The most up-to-date edition of the standing orders will be sent to all members of the MCR via e-mail by either the MCR Chair or the MCR President:

- a) At the start of each Michaelmas term.
- b) Whenever any amendments are made to the standing orders.

In addition, the most recent copy must be available on the MCR website