

AGENDA

GENERAL MEETING

ST. EDMUND HALL MCR

8th Week, Michaelmas

Reports from MCR Committee Members

Motion to Allow Blackfriars Students to Use the College Bar

Simon Chelley, a former member of the JCR, has approached the College about allowing students from Blackfriars College access to the College Bar. The College is in favour of this proposal, but has asked the JCR and MCR to discuss the issue before proceeding.

Simon Chelley will be invited to the General Meeting to speak in favour of the motion. **simon.chelley@bfriars.ox.ac.uk**

Nominations for Guest Membership

The following individuals have been put forward as nominees for Guest Membership of the St. Edmund Hall MCR:

- Amadeo Agosti (nominated by Pip Coore)
 - Ian J. Harvey (nominated by William J. Harvey)
 - Alexandra Reza (nominated by Jessica Davidson)
 - Nadescha Trudel (nominated by Tom Cosnahan)
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Motion to Amend the MCR Constitution

After a thorough perusal of the MCR Constitution ('Constitution'), the MCR Committee have noted that the Constitution contains technical or grammatical errors/language, redundant provisions and does not provide for certain Ancillary Committee Positions.

Thus, in the last General Meeting, a Draft Amended Constitution was put before the MCR. The document was passed without objection, after a few minor suggestions were made regarding provisions.

The Draft Amended Constitution is now put before the MCR for approval, including the suggestions that were made at the last General Meeting.

A copy of the Draft Amended Constitution is attached for the perusal of the MCR.

Motion to Adopt Governing Document for the MCR Ultra Vires Charity Fund

It is proposed that the MCR adopt a Governing Document for the St. Edmund Hall MCR Ultra Vires Charity Fund (hereinafter 'the Governing Document' or 'GD'). The GD has been modeled after the existing "St. Edmund Hall Ultra Vires Charity Fund" document, used by the JCR. The object of the GD shall be to organize the management of the MCR Ultra Vires Fund.

A copy of the document is attached for the perusal of the MCR, as **Appendix I**.

Motion to Support Scholarships for Refugees

The MCR has been contacted by the Oxford Students Refugees Council to put a motion before the General Meeting of the MCR supporting scholarships for refugees.

The following documents have been attached, as **Appendix II and Appendix III**, respectively:

- Motion as drafted by the Oxford Students Refugees Council
 - Statement in favour of the Motion
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Motion to Introduce Priority booking for Ordinary Members at Christmas and Trinity Dinners

Tom Verbiest and Benjamin Reed have put forward the following:

"Ideally there would be enough places so that all MCR Ordinary members, MCR Guest members and additional guests of members could attend the MCR Christmas and Trinity dinners. This year the committee did an excellent job increasing the number of places. However, there has been a consistent over-subscription to these events over the years, resulting in a lot of disappointment for Teddy Hall students who missed out.

We propose a new system for booking these events: Firstly, the event is opened up to MCR Ordinary members, without the option to book a guest; then, after a period of at least 24 hours, an option to book on guests is opened.

The advantage of this system is that it gives first booking priority to MCR students at St. Edmund Hall, whilst allowing the option of guests to attend providing there are remaining spaces. In previous years, due to over-

subscription, non-student guests have taken places away from students (some of whom may only have one opportunity to attend the particular event).

It has been argued that MCR guest members should have equal priority to these events, as they pay an annual fee of £30 to the MCR. MCR guest members are able to attend all MCR provided events, and have access to the MCR. However, the Christmas and Trinity dinners are different from the usual MCR events because they are principally provided by college and the college catering facilities. Students pay (directly or via scholarships) thousands of pounds in college fees for use of college facilities. Prices for college dinners are kept low through massive college subsidisation (tens of thousands of pounds per annum). We would therefore argue that the comparatively nominal fee paid to the MCR by guest members does not provide a strong enough case for the same priority as St Edmund Hall students to these college-provided dinners”

Motion to Restrict Christmas Dinner and Trinity dinner to MCR members, including MCR guest members.

The following Motion has been put on the Agenda by Linde Wester:

Christmas and Trinity dinner have been oversubscribed for the last few years. I propose a no-guest policy, to ensure that in the future there is enough space for all MCR members who want to attend the dinner. From the e-mails I have received, it appears that a significant part of the MCR finds it important to be able to bring their partner to these dinners. To accommodate this, these people can nominate their partner to be an MCR guest member.

The following are put forward as points in support of this motion:

- In my opinion the MCR Christmas dinner and Trinity dinner should be special events for MCR members to spend with each other, in contrast to normal dinners that are always open to guests.
 - Many guest members are active members of the MCR, they are all brought in by MCR members who value their presence at events, and the MCR has voted for them to be part of our community. Guest members pay the same fees to the MCR as ordinary members.
 - It is possible to bring other guests to any formal hall, and even to high table, so there are plenty of alternatives to take guests who are not part of the MCR to college dinners.
 - It is not possible to police a partner-only guest policy.
 - It will clarify the status of the MCR guest membership. At the moment anyone can come to most MCR and college events. That means that there is not much incentive to become a guest member and pay MCR fees.
 - In case that this increases the number of MCR guest members, that means that there will be more money paid into the MCR account.
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Motion(s) to Support the following Charities/Organizations through monies in the MCR Ultra Vires Charity Fund

1. Age UK (nominated by Alice Bloch)
 2. Type1 International (nominated by Rebecca Smith)
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Motion to consult the MCR regarding steps that may be taken to promote an atmosphere of Academic dedication in the Hall

Following discussions with the Academic Committee, the MCR Academic Representative has been asked to consult the MCR regarding initiatives that may be adopted by junior and/or senior members of College, in order to encourage a more vibrant atmosphere of academics in the Hall.

The Academic Representative asks the MCR to suggest such initiatives/measures.

Motion to Provide Financial Assistance to the Teddy Hall Ball

The St. Edmund Hall Ball Committee has asked both the MCR and the JCR for financial assistance in organizing the Teddy Hall Ball, as their initial capital, before the sale of tickets, is minimal and they require additional funds in order to begin hiring vendors.

Paigan Aspinall, the Ball President, has asked for the MCR to provide either a loan or a donation towards the costs of the Ball, in the amount of 500 GBP.

The MCR is thus asked to vote on the motion of providing a donation of 500 GBP to the Teddy Hall Ball Committee – Alternatively the MCR is asked to vote on a loan, payable after the receipt of ticket sales, of the same amount.

APPENDIX – I

CONSTITUTION OF THE ST. EDMUND HALL MCR ULTRA VIRES CHARITY FUND

SECTION I: NAME & OBJECT

1. There shall be an association within St. Edmund Hall, University of Oxford (hereinafter, “the Hall”), known as the MCR Ultra Vires Charity Fund (hereinafter, “the Charity Fund”)
2. The Charity Fund shall exist to collect a termly levy from the Members of the MCR and donate such funds to a registered charity, or organization whose objectives are deemed by the MCR to be charitable, or any other organization/association that the MCR deems eligible of monetary support.
3. Membership of the Charity Fund shall comprise all Ordinary Members of the St. Edmund Hall MCR, unless they opt out of membership.
4. Members shall subscribe to the Charity Fund by paying a termly levy. This levy shall be an imposed on an opt-out basis. Any person who opts not to pay the levy shall not be a member of the Charity Fund.

SECTION II: MANAGEMENT & ACCOUNTS

5. The Treasurer of the St. Edmund Hall MCR shall be responsible for managing the Charity Fund Bank Account, cheques for which shall require his/her signature.
6. The Bank Account shall be financed by a voluntary opt-out termly levy of a £5, which shall be made present on the Battels of all Members of the Charity Fund.
7. Motions for the disposal of funds from the Charity Fund shall be sent to the Vice-President of the MCR to be put on the Agenda for the final General Meeting of each Term, in accordance with the procedure for submitting Motions, as outlined in the Constitution of the MCR.

8. A Motion to dispose of funds may be raised in any other General Meeting if the MCR agrees, by a simple majority vote, that a Motion has substantial time pressure and/or is considered urgent, and should be considered in a Meeting other than the final General Meeting of each Term.
9. A motion to dispose of funds from the Charity Fund shall require a simple majority at a General Meeting of the MCR. Funds authorised through such a motion shall be disposed of accordingly by the Treasurer, unless there is a deficit in the termly budget of the Charity Fund.
10. The Maximum amounts for donations to any one organisation/charity shall be as follows:
 - i. £500 for charities in which an Ordinary Member of the MCR is directly involved or which involves MCR participation
 - ii. £250 for charities in which an Ordinary Member of the MCR is not directly involved or which does not involve MCR participation
11. In case there is a surplus in the termly budget, the Treasurer, in coordination with the Welfare Officer(s), will nominate 3 charities for the disposal of the surplus funds. The surplus will be divided amongst the nominated charities in accordance with a proportion of votes of the Members of the Charity Fund, taken by an online vote.
12. In the case of a deficit in the termly budget, the budget will be divided between the charities/organisations, which have been approved by a Motion of the MCR, proportionally to their popularity, as surveyed by an online vote.
13. The Treasurer shall prepare an Annual Report of how funds have been spent, which shall be presented to the MCR President and Vice-President.
14. The Annual Report prepared by the Treasurer shall be made available on the MCR website.

SECTION III: AMENDMENTS

15. The provisions of this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority at a General Meeting of the MCR and shall be, unless stated otherwise, effective immediately.
16. Amendments shall be subject to the subsequent approval of the Governing body.

Appendix II

Motion to Support Scholarships for Refugees (as drafted by the Oxford Students Refugee Council)

This MCR notes:

1. The ongoing refugee crisis has displaced many thousands of students worldwide.
2. That these students have been deprived of the chance to pursue higher education courses in their native countries.
3. That the University of Oxford has yet to provide organized, clear and comprehensive financial and welfare support for refugee and asylum-seeking students.
4. That the University of Oxford has a tradition of aiding students seeking asylum, as proven by the efforts of the Bureau of Information for Refugee Scholars in the 1930s.
5. Several other UK Universities have committed to funding scholarship places, such as Warwick University, York University, SOAS University of London, London School of Economics, and the University of East London.
6. The existence of the Oxford Students Refugee Campaign, which aims at coordinating the efforts of student, academic and administrative members of the Oxford University to work with refugee assistance organisations (e.g. CitizensUK, Article 26, Kiron University, ISNUK, Just Love, Asylum Welcome, Oxford City of Sanctuary, amongst others) to develop well-round financial and welfare support for displaced students, whose studies have been disrupted, to pursue their higher education at the Oxford University
7. That 1st week OUSU Council passed a motion mandating the OUSU sabbatical officers to support the work of the Campaign.
8. If every student at Oxford contributes £1 a month, the living costs of 20 refugee and asylum seeking students could be funded.
9. That asylum seekers already living in the UK are counted as foreign nationals, and are not eligible to receive a student loan or domestic tuition fee status.

This MCR believes:

1. That access to higher education should be based on merit, and not nationality, immigration status, race or financial situation.
2. That the University of Oxford has a duty to support refugee students.

3. Given that the University of Oxford is one of the leading universities in the world, by supporting this cause, it has the potential to influence the policy pertaining to student refugees at an international level.
4. Such a scheme would not only change the lives of the scholars, but also enrich the Oxford community, as well as demonstrate the students' commitment to sharing the excellent educational opportunities the University has to offer with those students whose studies have been disrupted due to war and persecution.
5. That creating these student funded scholarships would help put pressure on the University to provide long-term and sustainable financial support to refugee and asylum seeking students.

This MCR resolves to:

1. Commit to implementing an opt-out levy of £4 per term, in the form of a battels charge, for two years, subject to the successful implementation of the campaign. This will go towards the Oxford Students Refugee Scholarships fund that would provide expected refugee and asylum seeking students with a stipend.
2. Mandate the MCR President to send oxrcampaign@gmail.com an email with the header 'St. Edmund Hall' MCR supports Oxford Students Refugee Scholarships'.
3. Mandate the MCR President to inform College Officers and Governing Body that this motion has been passed and ask they support the campaign as individuals and as a college body.
4. Mandate the President and OUSU Rep to support all OUSU council motions consistent with the beliefs set out in this motion.
5. Mandate the [JCR/MCR] OXSRC representative to keep the common room up to date with the Oxford Students Refugee Campaign.

Appendix III

Statement in Favour of a Motion to Support Scholarship Schemes for Refugees

Forwarded to the Vice-President by Johan Greve Petersen

The Oxford Students Refugee Committee are aiming to contact all the JCR and MCR's at the different colleges, in order to pass motions supporting scholarship schemes for refugees.

The aim of their campaign is to get Oxford to offer scholarship places to refugee students. The University authorities have been very receptive to our ideas so far, and seem willing to back our scheme administratively. Our plan is to get every student (and hopefully every staff member too) at Oxford University to pledge to contribute just £1 a month to fund such a scholarship, by passing motions through every common room. This is a small payment individually, but if every student in Oxford did this, we could in theory cover the living expenses of 20 refugee students annually.

We're limiting the payment to 2 years: We want to get this scheme off the ground, show the university that this is an initiative that the student body feels is important and wants to promote, and prove that if the scholarship is there, then refugees will apply for it. But ultimately we want to send the message that this is something that the wealthy university and alumni should be funding, not people living on a student budget. We'll get the ball rolling, but we don't want the university to feel that it isn't their problem.

As well as passing these motions, the campaign is looking to get word out to potential applicants for these scholarships, and compile the much-needed evidence that the demand is there. In order to do this, we are working with a number of local, national, and international organisations, such as citizensUK, article 26, STAR, universities UK, Kiron, International Students Network UK, NUS, OUSU, Refugee Studies Centre, Asylum Seekers Network, refugee support network, Oxford City of Sanctuary, etc.