

AGENDA

GENERAL MEETING

ST. EDMUND HALL MCR

MCR, 7 pm 01 March 2017

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Confirm the Minutes from the Previous GM

No objections

Reports from MCR Committee Members

President

- Attended meetings; GPBC, Governing Body, Prescom
- Updated mailinglist – reduction of number of e-mails
- College statutes are being updated. We have submitted several suggestions
- College Ball

Vice-President

- Picture rotation will happen after term
- Attended welfare committee meeting
 - There are baby changing facilities, a disabled toilet near the pontigny room and unisex toilets there as well
 - Doctor will be on maternity leave for 1 year, during this time she will be replaced by Dr Abigail Davis
 - A harrasement flow chart will be circulated and posted on public toilets
- Library Committee Meeting 8 February 2017
 - The old library refurbishment will last one year.
 - Hard copy Law journals cancelled as part of a college process of moving toward digital copies. Hard copies can still be obtained from the relevant faculties.
 - Library staff are re-evaluating the way in which visitors to the library are managed
 - MCR members should consider approaching the library with material requests.
- HSE meeting 26-01-2017
 - AI was well in the last termly audit for Health and Safety by a company called Peninsula.
 - Area lighting in NSE has been replaced with LED; for example around the mirrors in rooms and bathrooms; Recycling bin signage has been replaced to make it clearer which are recycling and which are not recycling bins.
 - College is asking that everyone should be made aware of the careworks online system for reporting faults in college owned property.
 - Jayne has organised with the kitchen a waste monitoring project; includes mornitoring pre-production, post-production waste from the kitchen and food waste by students.
 - College has new boilers which will improve energy efficiency by 25%. They were installed during the December period.
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Treasurer

All our accounts are up to date and we have successfully formalized the procedure for payment of the MCR membership contribution, ad hoc charges and additional charges by college to the MCR account.

Stewards

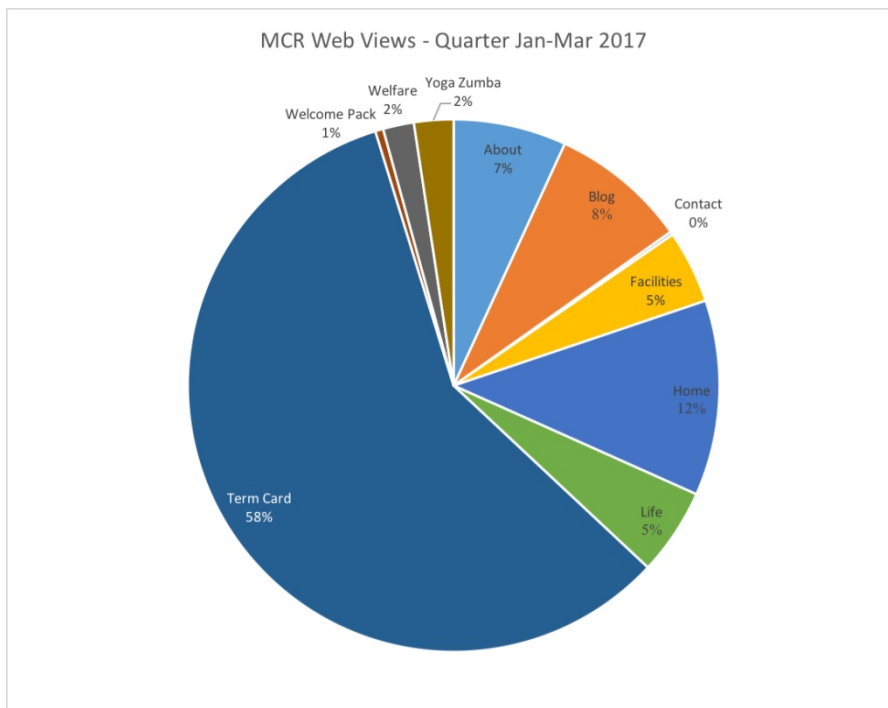
Everything is going well. There will be a party in week 8 and one out of term time in week 10. There will be snacks and drinks provided for supporters at Torpids, and there will be an afterparty.

Welfare

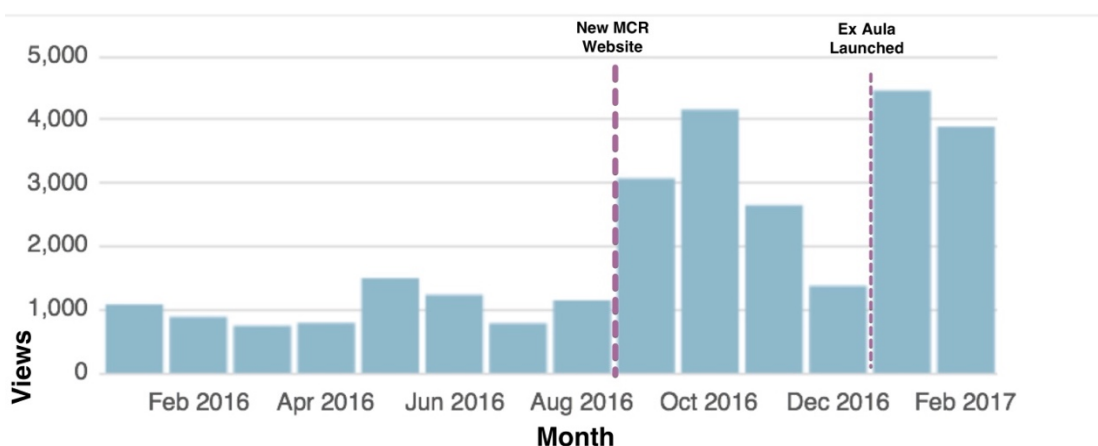
Victoria Ma has stepped down from her role as welfare officer and we would like to thank her for her work. The tea tasting was a success, yoga and Zumba are going well. This weekend there is a high tea, next week a sexual health workshop.

IT

- Ex Aula Blog has had 800 page views so far.
- February had a 439% increase web traffic for MCR website compared to last year.



MCR Website Sessions Jan 2016 - End of Feb 2017



Academic rep

- The graduate seminar happened on Tuesday.
- The research expo happened on Saturday, with MCR participation in most areas
- Guidance is being re-issued to Tutors for collections to make clear that these should be one-on-one, and that ten minute time slots are only a guide, with more time available at another date if needed.
- The issue of adding students from the Culham Fusion Centre for Doctoral Training to the MCR as guest members has been raised and is under discussion
- Applications for the MCR 50th anniversary grant have opened today (Wednesday), applications should come to me as will be detailed in the relevant email.

Sports rep

Everything is going well. Attendance at Torpids is encouraged.

NSE rep

Quiet term. Radiators have been leaking, please report if you see anything.

No brunch on Sunday because of High Tea.

Nominations for Guest Membership

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

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Nominated member</u>
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4th year visiting PhD student in the Chemistry department. Not affiliated to any college, heard great stories about Teddy Hall, wants to be part of the community.

No objections

Motion to move the charity fund nominations vote to an online vote.

[This motions involves amending the Charity Fund Constitution]

Brought forward by: MCR committee

Presented by: Linde Wester

Until now the MCR charity funds collected by the MCR have been distributed based on a vote at the GM. However, it was raised that this may not be fair to those who have opted in to the charity fund because:

- There is no easy way to monitor who at the GM has opted in and who has opted out
- Turn out at the General Meetings does not reflect the number of people who have opted-in to the Charity Fund

By moving the vote to an online systems we hope to achieve:

- Increased participation by members of the MCR charity fund
- Better control over the voting influence of MCR members who are not members of the Charity Fund
- A more efficient system for voting and disseminating information of voting results

The following changes have been proposed:

- Specifying that the treasurer is to maintain a list of current Charity Fund members
- Introduce the online poll as the means to vote on the nominated charities
- Specify the timing: Call for nominations in week 6 with 7 days to nominate, 3-7 days for voting, release of results soon after that.
- Charity Fund members may nominate as often as they like but only one award will be granted to a single Charity Fund member's nominations in one year.
- A guide is introduced for the Charity Fund officer to use for scoring the online votes.
- Funds are allocated based on the proportion of votes obtained in the voting; the maximum limits have not changed.

Discussion

The new system will not accommodate for early assessment of time sensitive proposals. However, the current system does not either. There will be a minimum number of votes to prevent donations of insignificant amounts of money. The committee will look into creating an online record of supported charities. The MCR may want to keep to opportunity to discuss the proposals in the GM in advance of the voting. This topic will be discussed further in the next GM.

Vote on the motion as it stands here:

In favour: 21

Against: 2

Abstention: 1

Motion to supports the JCR in asking the kitchen for more vegetarian options at lunch and dinner.

Brought forward by: Maren Fitcher

Presented by: Maren Fitcher

The JCR wants to trigger a referendum on offering more vegetarian options for lunch and dinner, and they have asked for the MCR's support. The proposal is to ask the kitchen for two vegetarian options and one meat option (instead of two meat and one veggie) at lunch and dinner for three days a week. The other four days a week will still have the usual system (2 meat, 1 veggie). This system would offer the vegetarians in hall more choice in meals available to them, while also being more environment-friendly.

Statement:

The JCR has already voted on this. Domestic bursar stated that this can only happen after a referendum in both common rooms. The current motion will only determine whether the referendum takes place or not and does not. The referendum will not be binding.

Discussion:

Other measures to increase options for vegetarians that do not cut down on the number of meat options are more favourable, however this is unlikely to happen given recent and expected rises in food costs and limits to staff capacity. If this measure will be implemented, it should be on preselected days and a number of factors could be considered, including the ecological footprint, and meat free protein substitutes.

Votes:

In favour: 20

Against: 2

Abstentions: 3

Motion to Donate from the MCR Charity Fund to Support Crisis

Brought forward by: Hannah Behrens

Presented by: Hannah Behrens

I would like to suggest "Crisis" as a charity. They fight homelessness by providing housing, education, work, health and mental support and they organise Christmas celebrations for people cut off from their family and homes. I find it devastating to see homeless people on my way to work every morning, knowing that my small change donation will not bring them the structural support and change they need in their lives. I hope that through Crisis this help can be provided.

In their own words "Crisis' [employment coaches](#) help people find their own route towards a new job or career. Eighty per cent of homeless people say they want to get back into work. Crisis helps people with that journey, from confidence building and CV workshops, to mock interviews and help buying smart work clothes.

Many Crisis clients say their formal education was incomplete. [...] Crisis' classes break the cycle of homelessness. They provide routine and purpose and equip people with skills for work and life.

We have developed a housing service that breaks down the barriers homeless people face when finding a rented home. Renting Ready training helps prospective tenants learn about budgeting and bills, finding flatmates or DIY.

Crisis Skylight, our award winning and accredited education, training and employment centres, offer practical and creative workshops in a supportive and inspiring environment together with formal learning opportunities that lead to qualifications and finding work.

Being homeless is devastating for a person's mental and physical health. Crisis helps people rebuild their health and wellbeing through classes, social activities, personal coaching.

At Crisis at Christmas every year we provide companionship and support to tackle loneliness and isolation, and help people take their first steps out of homelessness."

No voting because the proposer was not present

Motion to Donate from the MCR Charity Fund to Mental Health Drama Project

Brought forward by: Roxana Willis

Presented by: Roxana Willis

I would like to nominate a mental health drama project for consideration for an award from the MCR Charity Fund. This is a student-led initiative, which is set up and delivered by members of St Edmund Hall.

The project builds on the successful Act for Change Healing Minds project developed by college members in 2014. Healing Minds involved creating an interactive play on postnatal depression which was performed in slum communities, leprosy society, and medical training centres in India. For more information on this project, please see:

We now hope to develop another branch of Act for Change in order to address youth mental health in the UK. The project is called Hearing Young Voices, which is a mental health public engagement project initiated by young people for young people. We attach the project proposal here for your consideration.

Justification for the Project

Each year, one in four people in the UK will experience a mental health problem (Mind, 2016). Moreover, it is predicted that three children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health disorder (Young Minds, 2016). However, access to mental health support is limited – partly due to a lack of funding, and partly due to limited understanding of mental illness. Services dedicated to the mental health support of young persons, such as the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), are heavily overburdened, which leaves many young people without healthcare assistance. Understandably, young people are

increasingly turning to self-medication in order to mitigate the short-term difficulties they experience.

Our project provides a space for young people from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds to openly discuss mental health through interactive drama exercises. This dialogue is then communicated to policymakers, youth workers, researchers, and medical practitioners with a view to influence developments in youth mental healthcare services.

Project Outline

The project uses an interactive type of drama called "forum theatre" as a way for participants to explore their experiences of mental illness. Unique to this project, the plays produced will be developed, written, and performed by the participating young people. While a large part of the project will be run by student volunteers from Oxford, we are also partnering with Complementary Education Academy, Northamptonshire, which is a school for children excluded from mainstream education.

The first stage will involve working with young adults at the University of Oxford, who will take part in forum theatre training workshops. In the course of these workshops, students will discuss and explore their mental health needs and challenges. These exercises will then inform the development of an interactive play, which will be performed for young people enrolled in secondary schools previously attended by the University of Oxford student participants. In the second stage, the Oxford volunteers will work with CE Academy students to conduct similar workshops in Northamptonshire. Next, a group of student volunteers from CE Academy will have the opportunity to take part in developing an interactive play based on their experiences in the workshops. This interactive play will then be performed for young people enrolled in other schools in Northamptonshire, widening the dialogue about youth mental health. In the final stage of the project, the plays developed by the Oxford volunteers, and the CE Academy students will be refined and performed in a conference targeting researchers, charity workers, teachers, and policymakers in Northamptonshire and Oxford. In this way, the experienced voices of young people will be able to be heard and responded to.

Budget

We seek to raise £10,000 for the project to take place. So far, we have secured a grant of £1,000 from the Magdalen College Trust. A donation of £500 from the St Edmund Hall MCR community would be an instrumental contribution to help us to meet our target. We will ensure that the MCR community will have an opportunity to benefit from the project, for example, by enabling MCR members to take part in the forum theatre workshops.

Thank you for considering our project for this support. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

We propose that the MCR community donate £500 from the Charity Fund to the Hearing Young Voices project.

Statement:

Similar mental health workshops have been successful in India.

The UK is experiencing a youth mental health crisis. Responding in early life is essential.

The focus of the project is on children with difficult upbringing where no response to mental health problems is available. All money goes directly to costs for workshops.

Discussion:

The costs can be broken down into the following categories: transport, flights of instructor from india, college will provide free space, filming, diaries for children. The teaching is on a voluntary basis. It is essential to fly the instructor over from India, as their approach is nonexisting in the UK. Experts will teach instructors (student volunteers) in the UK to ensure sustainability.

Votes

In favour: 24

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion to Donate from the MCR Charity Fund to Pets and Animal Lovers Thane organisation

Brought forward by: Sneha Menon

Presented by: Sneha Menon

I would like to put forth a proposal to financial support an organization called P.A.L. (Pets and Animal Lovers Thane). This is an animal rescue and welfare organization based in Thane, Maharashtra, India. They are singular in the space that they work in, and are often the first responders in the umpteen cases of animal abuse coming out of this region. They facilitate the medical care, rehabilitation and adoption of animals, particularly stray dogs and also work on the legal recourse. They have saved over a thousand animals, facilitating adoptions in almost all cases, in the half decade of their existence, and are also currently expanding their operations by investing in an animal ambulance. I would like to propose an allocation of the charity fund toward this ambulance and the medical resources (material and human) needed for the project. Moreover, as many animals are left handicapped by the events from which they are rescued, I would like to propose an allocation toward their first-response care and long-term support. I have volunteered with P.A.L. on many occasions and have raised funds for them in the past. When I return to Mumbai this summer, I will be working on fundraising again. My dog is also a P.A.L. rescue. I know the medical professionals and care-workers of the organization well and I know their commitment to the welfare and protection of animals.

Statement:

The proposer has experience in working in the social sector in India and declared that P.A.L. needs money the most. P.A.L. is the sole actor for animal welfare in greater Bombay. There is a lot of cruelty against animals, stray animals, and street accidents involving animals. P.A.L. is a relatively new organization composed of vets. All money goes to medical care and monitoring the 20.000 adoptions they enabled in the last 4 years.

Discussion:

Besides medical care and adoption service, P.A.L. sterilizes street animals to prevent population growth and they create awareness of animal welfare by working with schools and hospitals. All workers volunteers who use their own medical equipment. Therefore costs are relatively low. They partner with organisations in other areas, but not with global animal welfare organisations. P.A.L. receives other grants. Details on this and metrics of their impact can be found on their website.

Vote:

In favour: 23

Against: 2

Abstentions: 0

Items for Discussion

Re-evaluation of guest membership.

The MCR has been approached by college with a request to restructure the membership system and the rules that guide admittance. This has created a discussion which we would like to have the general community involved in. The following points need to be discussed.

Possibility of limiting guest membership and to whom we should allow guest membership
The possibility of increasing the termly fees for guest memberships

Statement:

The structure of graduate programs in the university is changing. Student numbers in doctoral training programs shared between universities and part-time programs are increasing. To foster strategic relationships with other academic bodies, college would like to ask the MCR to consider changing their membership criteria for associate members. Specifically, college plans to take a limited additional group of students starting next year from a doctoral training program, whose students are not (only) part of the university of Oxford. At the same time, college has noticed that the profile and body of guest members of the MCR has increased significantly in recent years. While they find it important that the MCR determines its own mechanisms, they would like to suggest new criteria for guest membership which are intended to emphasize the MCR's status as a society within an academic community.

The specific proposal comes down to the following two changes:

- Adding a category of students eligible for associate membership consisting of individuals pursuing research or learning around Oxford and not being members of other MCRs, who have been admitted to Associate Membership of the College under an institutional or individual agreement and nominated by the Tutor for Graduates.

This group will not be a full member of college, but has the right to eat in the College Dining Hall; Access to College IT facilities and reference-only access to the College Library

- Change Guest membership eligibility to:
 - o Visiting graduates coming to Oxford to do work with an Ordinary member and/or a Fellow of the College;
 - o Postdoctoral research staff in the University, who are not members of any other College of the University;
 - o Recognised Students of the University who are not members of any other MCR of the University.

Our Current Guest membership is defined as follows:

Guest Membership may be conferred upon persons who, in the opinion of the MCR, would benefit from MCR membership. Persons eligible for Guest Membership include, but are not limited to:

1. (a) spouses and partners of Ordinary Members; and
2. (b) visiting graduates coming to Oxford to do work under the aegis of a Fellow of the College.

At the moment the MCR has around 50 guest members, roughly equally divided over the following groups:

- spouses
- former students
- academic guest members.

The MCR committee would like to hear the opinion of the MCR regarding the proposed measures and alternative suggestions to decrease the number of guest members.

Discussion:

There is no financial burden on the MCR imposed by associate/guest members, other than their participation in events. The MCR is financed by the amalgamated clubs with an amount of 1700 GBP per term. This is roughly 30% of the MCR's termly budget. The other part comes from MCR membership fees, which are equal for all members (including guest members and associate members). Associate members from the doctoral training program will be charged by college through their battels.

With respect to guest membership, the MCR would like to consider its specific role as part of the college as a whole, which includes offering a social space and providing welfare support according to the MCR constitution.

The MCR student body has a diverse profile, therefore it is important to accommodate different groups of students with different needs. The guest policy provides the required flexibility to do so.

The MCR welfare officers note that it is a challenge to keep students who are accompanied by their spouses during their time in Oxford involved. Guest membership for spouses helps the MCR to achieve this goal. The MCR notes that former members of the college should be welcome as guest members.

The question of associate membership requires careful consideration, as new groups of students affect the atmosphere within the MCR. However, the composed group of students is arbitrary in a sense, therefore the MCR sees no reason why doctoral training partnership students or part-time students should be excluded. There should be a limit to the increase in students and the MCR would like to ask college to be transparent about their future plans with regards to the new category of associate membership.

The MCR notes that college is reaching the limit of its capacity. Increase in number of students should be supported by an increase in capacity of various facilities. Specifically, the Christmas Dinner, Trinity Dinner, and regular formal halls are at maximum capacity, but also the physical capacity of the MCR and other facilities and rooms in college are reaching their limit. A sustainable university-wide approach to DTP students would be favored over an ad hoc admission by individual colleges.

Other options to control capacity by limiting MCR guest membership in various ways have been proposed but were not supported by a majority.

APPENDIX I