



Code of practice in relation to the JCR and the MCR

In accordance with the provisions of section 22 of the Education Act (1994), the Governing Body of Downing College has in force the following code of practice in relation to the JCR and MCR which are, for the purposes of the Education Act (1994), both “students’ unions”.

Constitutions

Both the JCR and the MCR have written constitutions. These constitutions are available on the JCR and MCR websites, respectively. Both the JCR and the MCR constitution specify that each constitution shall be reviewed by the Governing Body of the College no later than the fifth anniversary of the date on which the constitution was adopted and every five years after such anniversary.

Membership

A student shall become a member of the JCR upon registration as an undergraduate student of the College. A student shall become a member of the MCR upon registration as either a postgraduate student of the College undertaking any postgraduate course, or as an affiliated student of the University of Cambridge who is also a student of the College.

Any student who is a member of the JCR or MCR may opt out of such membership at any time by emailing the Vice-President of the JCR or the MCR, as appropriate. Such a student’s membership of the JCR/MCR shall cease once such an email has been delivered to the Vice-President of the JCR/MCR.

Any student who is eligible to be member of the JCR or MCR but who is not a member may opt in to membership at any time by emailing the Vice-President of the JCR or the MCR, as appropriate. Such a student’s membership of the JCR/MCR shall commence or, as the case may be, re-commence once such email has been delivered to the Vice-President of the JCR/MCR.

No student who exercises their right to opt out of JCR/MCR membership shall be unfairly disadvantaged, with regard to the provision of services or otherwise, by reason of their having done so. In particular, any student who exercises their right to opt out of JCR/MCR membership shall continue to be able to access College accommodation and all social and recreational facilities provided by the College for the benefit of its students such as student clubs and societies, the laundries, gym, Music Centre, sports ground, JCR/MCR common rooms and student bar on equal terms with JCR/MCR members. For the avoidance of doubt, those students who have opted out of JCR/MCR membership shall be eligible to attend activities and events organised by the College, the JCR/MCR or Downing College student clubs and societies on equal terms with JCR/MCR members. Such events include Formal Hall.

The principal effects of opting out of JCR/MCR membership shall be that a student who so opts out will not be eligible to stand for or vote in elections to the JCR/MCR committee, nor will they have the right to be represented by officers of the JCR/MCR in College. A student who opts out of JCR/MCR membership may request representation by officers of the JCR/MCR in College but the provision of such representation shall be at the discretion of the JCR/MCR committee.

A student who exercises their right to opt out of JCR/MCR membership and who believes they have been unfairly disadvantaged by reason of their having done so may make a complaint in accordance with the complaint procedure set down in the JCR or MCR constitution, as appropriate.

Elections

Election to the offices (and therefore committees) of the JCR and MCR shall be by secret ballot. Detailed provisions regarding the conduct of such elections, including provisions regarding notice of elections, nomination of candidates, the conduct of the candidates and their campaigns, the conduct of the ballot and how the result is determined, can be found in the JCR/MCR constitution, as appropriate, in the "Election of Officers" section.

Any member of the JCR/MCR who believes that the conduct of the election, the conduct of the candidates, the conduct of the campaigning, or the conduct of the count was in violation of the provisions of the JCR/MCR constitution may complain to the Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club (senior.treasurer.amalgamation@dow.cam.ac.uk) within 72 hours of the completion of the count. The Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club shall then investigate such complaints. Detailed provisions regarding such complaints, including provisions regarding the timeframe of the complaints procedure, the remedy that can be afforded and how the outcome of such an investigation can be appealed can be found in the JCR/MCR constitution, as appropriate, in the "Election of Officers" section.

The results of JCR/MCR elections and details of any complaints regarding such elections and the outcomes of such complaints shall be reported to the Governing Body by the Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club.

Financial affairs of the JCR/MCR

The funds of the JCR and MCR are held on their behalf by the College. The majority of JCR/MCR funding is derived from funding allocated by the College to student clubs. Such funding is allocated to student clubs by the Downing College Amalgamation Club (DCAC) Committee. The budgets of the JCR/MCR are submitted to the DCAC Committee for approval. The DCAC Committee comprises the Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club, the JCR President, MCR President, JCR Junior Treasurer and the MCR Junior Treasurer. Once the JCR/MCR budgets have been approved by the DCAC Committee they must then be approved by the College's Student Facilities and Societies Committee and then by the College's General Purposes Committee, which approves the budgets on behalf of the Governing Body.

The majority of JCR/MCR spending occurs on a reimbursement basis, where officers of the JCR/MCR make purchases on behalf of the JCR/MCR and reimbursement requires the approval of the JCR/MCR Junior Treasurer, as appropriate, and the Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club. It is a condition of reimbursement that a receipt for the expenditure is provided. The reimbursement is processed by the Bursary. In some cases, the Bursary makes purchases on behalf of the JCR/MCR and debits the expenditure against the JCR/MCR budget. Such purchases require the approval of JCR/MCR Junior Treasurer, as appropriate, the Senior Treasurer to the

Amalgamation Club, and one of: the Assistant Bursar (Finance), Junior Bursar or Senior Bursar. Finally, on some occasions the JCR/MCR make purchases directly from the College (e.g. catering provision). Such purchases are effected by an internal transfer of funds from the JCR/MCR budget. Such internal transfers require the approval of the JCR/MCR Junior Treasurer, as appropriate, and the Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club. It is a condition of such a transfer that an invoice from the College be provided.

In this way, the Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club, who is a member of the Governing Body, approves every item of expenditure for the JCR/MCR and monitors JCR/MCR expenditure on the Governing Body's behalf.

The Junior Treasurer of the JCR/MCR is responsible for causing proper accounts of JCR/MCR expenditure to be made. In practice, such accounting is done by the Bursary each time funds are transferred out of the funds held by the College on the JCR/MCR's behalf (which comprise 100% of the JCR/MCR's funds) in accordance with the reimbursement, advance purchase and internal transfer procedures described above. Audited accounts of the JCR/MCR are considered as part of the Governing Body's approval of the College's annual accounts. These audited accounts are sent by email to all students once they have been approved by the Governing Body not later than the division of Lent Term.

Allocation of resources to groups or clubs

The primary source of funds for student groups and clubs in College is the funding allocated by the College for this purpose. Such funding is allocated to student clubs by the Downing College Amalgamation Club (DCAC) Committee. The JCR and MCR do not allocate funding to student groups or clubs. The DCAC is not a "students' union" within the meaning of the Education Act (1994).

Affiliation to external organisations

In the event that the JCR/MCR decide to affiliate to an external organisation (including the Cambridge Students' Union), the JCR/MCR Vice-President shall within 7 days of the making of such decision shall send notice of the decision stating the name of the organisation and 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, by email to all JCR/MCR members and the Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club. The Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club shall report such notification to the Governing Body at its next meeting.

A list of the external organisations to which the JCR/MCR is currently affiliated and details of subscriptions or similar fees paid, or donations made, to such organisations in the past year (or since the last report) shall be sent not less than every twelve months by email to all JCR/MCR members and to the Senior Treasurer to the Amalgamation Club.

The JCR/MCR Committee shall ensure that once each academic year the current list of affiliations is submitted for approval by Members by way of a Referendum.

JCR/MCR members may request a referendum on the question of the JCR/MCR's continued affiliation to an external organisation in accordance with the relevant clauses of the JCR/MCR Constitutions.

Complaints procedure

The JCR/MCR Constitutions contain specific provisions for making, investigating and resolving complaints arising from: the conduct of an election or referendum, the conduct of candidates in an election or any person in relation to a referendum, the conduct of campaigning in an election or referendum or the conduct of the count in an election or referendum.

If students are otherwise dissatisfied with their dealings with the JCR/MCR or believe they have disadvantaged by reason of having exercised their right to opt-out of membership of the JCR/MCR, they may make a complaint in one of two ways. The first method of making a complaint is to complain in writing to the JCR/MCR President or, if the complaint concerns the JCR/MCR President, to the JCR/MCR Vice-President. The JCR/MCR President (or, as the case may be, the JCR/MCR Vice-President) shall investigate the complaint and within 14 days of receiving the complaint shall notify his/her decision in relation to the complaint by email to the person who raised the complaint. In the event that the JCR/MCR President (or, as the case may be, the JCR/MCR Vice-President) upholds the complaint he/she shall procure that such appropriate remedy as are within the powers of JCR/MCR Committee is afforded to the person who raised the complaint. Should the complainant be dissatisfied with the outcome, he/she may pursue the complaint in accordance with the College's complaints procedure. The second method of making a complaint is to make a complaint in accordance with the College's complaints procedure. The JCR/MCR Committee shall implement any remedy afforded to the person making the complaint, whichever of the two methods of making a complaint they use.