

# Proposed amendments to the Standing Orders (October 2018)

Clauses are prefixed with P, O and C for Permanent Standing Orders, Operational Standing Orders and Committees and Job Descriptions.

These amendments are designed to be applied in order.

## Amendment of the Standing Orders etc.

### 1. Clarification of Steering Committee Power

In clause P3.1, for "should" substitute "must".

This makes it clear that it is a requirement to submit proposed amendments to Steering Committee ("should" is somewhat ambiguous).

After clause P3.1 insert a new sub-clause (new P3.1.1):  
"Steering Committee can give or withhold its approval or suggest amendments but cannot veto a proposed change."

This makes it clear that Steering Committee cannot prevent changes to the Standing Orders. As Steering Committee is not democratically elected it should not be able to do so.

### 2. Permanent Standing Orders Safeguard

After clause P3.1 insert a new clause (new P3.2):  
"Any proposed amendment to the Permanent Standing Orders must be approved by an Officer of the Executive Committee."

This creates a new safeguard to prevent careless or malicious amendments and reflects the importance of the Permanent Standing Orders to the fair running of the JCR while not being overly restrictive.

Remove (old) clause P3.3 (including 3.3.1)  
(consultation with Head of College).

Currently the Standing Orders require the JCR President to consult with the Head of College and possibly also the College Council about any changes to the Permanent Standing Orders. These clauses are not followed in practice and are mostly redundant. New clause 3.2 creates a new, more practical safeguard.

### 3. Further Clarification

Replace (old) clause P3.2 (new P3.3) with:  
“Following consideration by Steering Committee, a proposed amendment must be presented to a JCR Meeting for debate.”

This makes it clear that all proposed changes must be presented to a JCR Meeting (and not just those proposed by Steering Committee as could be implied from old clause 3.2).

### 4. Simplification – Removal of multiple referenda requirement

After new clause P3.3 insert a new clause (new P3.4):  
“Proposed amendments to the Standing Orders must finally be approved by referendum in accordance with the procedure set out in the Operational Standing Orders.”

Move (old) sub-clause P3.6.1 to be new sub-clause P3.4.1.

Remove (old) clauses P3.4, P3.5 and P3.6.

In new sub-clause P3.4.1, for “reach quota” substitute “be quorate”.

Currently, when amending the Permanent Standing Orders if the first referendum is not quorate, a second referendum is required. This amendment brings changes to the Permanent Standing Orders in line with the rest of the Standing Orders by removing this requirement and requiring only that if the referendum is inquorate that there be a two-thirds majority (as described in old clause 3.6.1/new clause 3.4.1).

## 5. Status of the Appendices

Add to the end of the list in clause P2.5:  
"d) Appendices to the Standing Orders".

After clause P2.5 insert a new clause (new P2.6):  
"Unless explicitly stated otherwise in the Standing Orders, the Appendices to the Standing Orders are advisory only."

Replace (old) clause P3.7 (new P3.5) with the following new clauses (new 3.5 and 3.6):

"3.5. Changes to the Appendices to the Standing Orders that represent a change in policy/procedure may only be made with approval by a JCR motion in accordance with the procedure set out in the Operational Standing Orders.

"3.6. Changes to the Appendices to the Standing Orders that do not represent a change in policy/procedure, such as the addition of new Honorary Life Members or newly approved societies, may be made by the JCR President."

This amendment clarifies the status of the Appendices and essentially formalises the current situation.

## Corrections

### 6. Appointment of HLMs

In clause P5.2 for "in accordance with the Operational Standing Orders, as defined in section 3.2 of the Committees and Job Description Standing Order." substitute "by the awarding panel."

The referenced clause no longer exists.

### 7. Typo

In clause C4.52 for "Order" substitute "Orders".

## Constitutional Committee

### 8. Merging of Governance and Steering Committees

It is proposed that Governance Committee merges with Steering Committee to form Constitutional Committee.

In the Permanent Standing Orders and the Operational Standing Orders for “Steering Committee” and “Governance Committee”, in each place they occur, substitute “Constitutional Committee”.

In clause C2.8 remove “and Steering Committee”, and after “Treasury Committee” insert “and”.

Append the contents of the list in clause C4.52 to the list in clause C4.48.

Remove clauses C4.52, C4.53 and C4.54.

In Committees and Job Descriptions for “Governance Committee”, in each place it occurs, substitute “Constitutional Committee”.

This amendment merges Governance and Steering Committees and renames them as Constitutional Committee. It also removes the responsibility of the Vice-Chair to take minutes for Steering Committee meetings as this could conflict with the scrutiny role of Constitutional Committee.

## 9. Communications Officer

From the list in clause C4.49 remove “The JCR Communications Officer”

This amendment removes the Communications Officer from Constitutional Committee as their membership of the committee does not seem necessary.

## 10. Vice-Presidents

To the list in clause C4.49 after “The JCR President” insert two new items “The JCR Vice-President (Development)” and “The JCR Vice-President (Welfare)”

This amendment gives membership to the Vice-Presidents as senior elected officials of the JCR.

## 11. Autonomy

After clause C4.49 insert a new sub-clause (new C4.49.1):  
“The ordinary committee members must not be JCR Officers.”

As part of its work, Constitutional Committee must scrutinise the activities of JCR Officers and so for them to be on the committee as normal members would be inappropriate as it would increase the proportion of the committee who were Officers, as well as creating further conflicts of interest.

Remove clause C4.51.

After clause C4.50 insert a new clause (new C4.51):  
“4.51. Constitutional Committee may meet without the JCR Chair, Vice-Chair, Vice-President(s) and/or President as necessary to successfully fulfil its functions.

“4.51.1. Any Officers excluded from the meeting count as being present for the purposes of determining if the meeting is quorate.”

As the committee must also scrutinise those Officers who are members, it is vital that it can meet without them. Clause C4.51 is removed as it implies restrictions to when the committee can act that do not exist.

## 12. Head of Constitutional Committee

It is proposed that the new Constitutional Committee has an appointed head.

After clause C3.12 insert new clauses (new C3.13 & C3.14):

“3.13. The responsibilities of the Head of Constitutional Committee include:

- a) To head Constitutional Committee;
- b) To ensure that the functions of Constitutional Committee are carried out;
- c) To represent Constitutional Committee and report to the JCR as necessary.”

“3.14. The Head of Constitutional Committee must not be a JCR Officer or the head of any other committee.”

To the list in clause O3.1 after “Environmental Conservation Committee Director” insert a new item “Head of Constitutional Committee”.

This amendment creates the appointed position of Head of Constitutional Committee.

At the start of the list in clause C4.49 insert a new item “The Head of Constitutional Committee”.

From clause C4.49 remove “(head of the committee)”.

This replaces the JCR Chair as head of the committee.

### 13. Constitution Copy

To the list in clause C4.48 append “To print a copy of the Standing Orders at the end of every term.”

This amendment mandates the committee to create a physical copy of the constitution at the end of every term.

### 14. Minutes

To the list in clause C4.48 append “To obtain and publish (including the creation of a printed copy) the minutes of JCR meetings and meetings of Executive Committee, Treasury Committee and Constitutional Committee.”

This amendment gives the committee a new responsibility to collect and publish (including a printed copy) minutes of significant importance for accountability.

### 15. Scrutiny of the Chair

In clause C4.48 for “To act as an advisory body to the JCR Chair” substitute “To scrutinise the decisions of the JCR Chair.”

This amendment changes the committee to be more of a scrutiny body than advisory for the Chair.

## 16. Approval for Constitution Interpretations

After new clause P2.7 (old P2.6) insert a new sub-clause (new P2.7.1):  
“These rulings must be approved by a vote of Constitutional Committee.”

This amendment introduces a new level of scrutiny for constitutional decisions of the Chair.

## 17. Culture of Transparency and Accountability

To the list in C4.48 append “To promote a culture of transparency and accountability in the JCR.”

## 18. Anonymous Voting

After clause C4.51 insert a new clause (new C4.52):  
“Voting in Constitutional Committee meetings must be anonymous.”

A secret ballot prevents undue pressure being applied to members of the committee.

## Committees/Clubs/Societies

### 19. Temporary Committees

Ad hoc committees may be required for many reasons. For example, a committee to investigate a specific issue or to run a special event.

After clause O4.9 (and its sub-clauses) insert a new clause (new O4.10):  
"4.10. A Temporary Committee may be created by the Executive Committee with approval of a motion of a JCR meeting.  
"4.10.1. The motion must specify the purpose, the membership (including the head), and the lifetime of the committee, and if the committee will be able to spend JCR funds.  
"4.10.2. Further motions may be passed to amend or disband the committee."

This amendment allows the creation of Temporary Committees with approval of the JCR.

## 20. Ban on use of JCR funds for payment of fines

After clause O6.3 insert a new clause (new O6.4):  
"6.4 No JCR committee, club or society may use its funds for payment of fines nor may it collect money from its members for the purpose of paying possible future fines.  
"6.4.1. This clause may be waived in exceptional circumstances by the JCR Treasury Committee."

Use of JCR funds for payment of fines is inappropriate and could encourage poor behaviour. The prospective collection of funds for paying fines is also normalising of poor behaviour. The waiver sub-clause allows for flexibility in unforeseen circumstances.

## Executive Committee

### 21. Convening Meetings

To the list in C1.14 append "To convene meetings of the Executive Committee".  
From clause C1.33 remove "convene and".

This amendment transfers to the convening of Executive Committee meetings to the President from the Chair.

## Freedom of Speech

### 22. Freedom of Speech Clause

After clause P6.22 insert a new clause (new P6.23): "The JCR must not censor the speech, writing or other works of its members unless they are grossly offensive, misleading, disclosing confidential information, defamatory, illegal, or otherwise likely to result in legal action being taken against the JCR, except where this is a disclosure of information showing that wrongdoing has been committed, or where the speech is commercial in nature."

This amendment prohibits censorship, with exceptions to prevent offence or legal liability.