

The Permanent Standing Orders  
of  
Van Mildert College  
Junior Common Room



# Permanent Standing Orders

Van Mildert College Junior Common Room

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This version of the Permanent Standing Orders was revised by the Steering Committee of  
2017-2018:

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## 1. PREFACE

- 1.1. In these Standing Orders the following terms shall be understood with the following meanings:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
JCR	Junior Common Room of Van Mildert College
MCR	Middle Common Room of Van Mildert College
College	Van Mildert College
College Council	College Council of Van Mildert College
DSU	Durham Students' Union
Standing Orders	Collectively the Permanent Standing Orders, the Operational Standing Orders and the Committees and Job Description Standing Orders
Framework	The DSO Framework

- 1.2. The JCR is a student organisation which is part of the Durham Student Organisation (DSO) and operates within the DSO Framework. The JCR voted to accept the DSO Framework on 3rd March 2011.
- 1.3. In accordance with the DSO Framework, the parent body of the JCR is the College.
- 1.4. Matters on which agreement cannot be reached between the College and the JCR shall be adjudicated by a panel established by agreement of the JCR President and the Head of College for that purpose.

## 2. STATUS OF STANDING ORDERS

- 2.1. The JCR must be operated in accordance with the DSO Framework and its Standing Orders. Should there be a conflict between the Framework and the Standing Orders, the requirements of the Framework will take precedence.
- 2.2. Any documents, policies or decisions of the JCR must be subject to the Standing Orders.
- 2.3. These Permanent Standing Orders may not be suspended.
- 2.4. The Standing Orders must be reviewed at least once every five years.
- 2.5. Where a conflict exists between sections of the Standing Orders, the order of precedence is as follows:
- a) Permanent Standing Orders
  - b) Operational Standing Orders
  - c) Committees and Job Descriptions
- 2.6. The JCR Chair must rule on matters of interpretation.

### **3. AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS**

- 3.1. Any proposed changes to the Standing Orders should be submitted to the JCR Steering Committee for its consideration.
- 3.2. Any changes proposed by the Steering Committee must be presented at a JCR meeting.
- 3.3. Any proposed changes to the Permanent Standing Orders must be discussed by the JCR President and the Head of the College.
  - 3.3.1. If in their view the changes may have an impact on the college more broadly, the proposed amendments may be discussed at a meeting of the College Council.
- 3.4. Changes to Permanent Standing Orders must be approved by referendum in accordance with the procedure set out in the Operational Standing Orders.
- 3.5. If after two attempts such a ballot fails to be quorate, then its decision may stand if it received at least two-thirds of the votes cast in the second attempt.
- 3.6. Changes to Operational Standing Orders and Committees and Job Descriptions must be approved by referendum in accordance with the procedure set out in the Operational Standing Orders.
  - 3.6.1. If the ballot fails to reach quota, then its decision may stand if it received at least two-thirds of the votes cast.
- 3.7. Changes to the appendices of the Standing Orders may only be made by approval through JCR motion in accordance with the procedure set out in the Operational Standing Orders.
- 3.8. No amendment to Standing Orders may result in the invalidation of a JCR decision which was reached in accordance with the Standing Orders in effect at the time the decision was made unless explicitly stated.

## **4. PURPOSE OF THE JCR**

4.1. The purpose of the JCR is:

- (a) to contribute to the education of its members;
- (b) to provide opportunities for participation in intellectual, cultural and social activities;
- (c) to support the welfare of its members;
- (d) to provide, in co-operation with the College, facilities, services and opportunities for recreation (including the maintenance of a Common Room);
- (e) to act as a channel of communication between its members and the College and other bodies of the University;
- (f) to represent its members in matters relating to the government and welfare of the College;
- (g) to provide opportunities for its members to develop leadership, organisational and other skills;
- (h) to be accountable and transparent to its members;
- (i) to use its resources fairly and effectively for the benefit of its members.

4.2. No member of the JCR may support any activities which could bring into disrepute the JCR, the College or the University.

4.3. The JCR is opposed to, and will take steps to combat, all forms of unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, appearance, caring responsibilities, caste, class, educational background or current educational status, gender, health status, marital or family status, nationality, political beliefs, religion, immigration status, race/ethnicity, sexuality, irrelevant criminal conviction, physical or mental ability or trade union activity.

## 5. MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1. The following people are full members of the JCR:
  - (a) All undergraduate students of Durham University who are registered as members of Van Mildert College and have not opted out of JCR membership.
  - (b) Sabbatical officers of the JCR.
  - (c) Any sabbatical officer of a student organisation recognised by the University who was within the twelve months before their appointment as sabbatical officer a member of the JCR.
  - (d) Any member of the MCR who has opted-in to the JCR.
- 5.2. There are also Honorary Life Members appointed in accordance with the Operational Standing Orders, as defined in section 3.2 of the Committees and Job Description Standing Order.
  - 5.2.1. Honorary Life Members are not permitted to be officers of the JCR.
- 5.3. All members of the JCR, other than Honorary Life Members and sabbatical officers of the JCR, are required to pay a levy. This levy shall be collected in the first term of that member's first year of study. Persons who have not paid the levy shall be considered to have opted out of JCR membership.
- 5.4. Any member may opt out of JCR membership at any time by providing a signed statement to that effect to the JCR President.
- 5.5. A person who has opted out of JCR membership may opt in to JCR membership by providing a signed statement to that effect to the JCR President and paying the JCR levy if they have not previously done so.
- 5.6. Only JCR members are entitled to vote on decisions of or to be an officer of the JCR (or any club or society affiliated to it).

## 6. BUSINESS

- 6.1. Decisions of the JCR must normally be made at a JCR meeting at which all members of the JCR are entitled to attend.
- 6.2. The JCR Chair must ensure that there are at least two ordinary meeting of the JCR per academic term.
- 6.3. At least five days' notice must be given for an ordinary meeting of the JCR.
- 6.4. At least three days' notice must be given for an extraordinary meeting of the JCR, which may be called by:
  - (a) A signed request from JCR members with the signatures of at least 10% of JCR members.
  - (b) JCR Executive Committee.
- 6.5. At least 24 hours' notice must be given for an emergency meeting, which may be called by the Executive Committee in the case where an immediate decision by the JCR is required.
- 6.6. At least three days' notice must be given for a referendum or election.
- 6.7. Where "notice" is required to be given for the purposes of subsections 6.3-6.6, this must be given by an email to all JCR members and by a post on the JCR Facebook group. It is the joint responsibility of the Chair and Communications Officer that such notice is given in sufficient time.
- 6.8. Where "notice" is required to be given for the purposes of subsections 6.3-6.5, this must include the agenda for the meeting. If any changes are subsequently made to the agenda prior to the meeting, the Chair should make this known at an appropriate time.
- 6.9. All members are invited to attend meetings of the JCR and all have an equal right to vote and to speak on any matter. The Operational Standing Orders set out the procedures by which business is considered at JCR meetings.
- 6.10. A meeting of the JCR shall be considered quorate if 7% of the members are present.
- 6.11. In the event of a JCR meeting being inquorate, the meeting may not vote on motions or elections.
- 6.12. Unless otherwise stipulated by the Standing Orders, decisions must be made by simple majority vote.
- 6.13. Any motion, normal or financial, may be referred to the Executive Committee or Treasury Committee respectively for a ruling if a decision is required before the next quorate JCR meeting.
  - 6.13.1. If passed, the motion must be debated at the next JCR meeting.
- 6.14. All policy passed by the JCR must be renewed annually in a JCR meeting and must be incorporated into Appendix I of the Standing Orders.
- 6.15. A referendum of the JCR shall be considered quorate if 10% of eligible members vote.

6.16. In the event of a referendum failing to be quorate, the decision shall be invalid unless a provision in the Standing Orders states otherwise.

6.17. The JCR has an Executive Committee which is collectively responsible to the JCR for:

- (a) Administering the JCR during the periods between JCR Meetings. This will include making decisions on behalf of the JCR on routine or non-contentious matters.
- (b) Making decisions for which the deadline does not allow consideration at a JCR meeting.
- (c) Representing the JCR to the College and wider University community.
- (d) Ensuring the proper conduct of JCR Officers and committees.
- (e) Ensuring that the JCR is maintained in a sound financial position and that appropriate financial records are being maintained.
- (f) Managing the business of the JCR meeting.

6.18. The Executive Committee consists on the following members:

- (a) JCR President
- (b) JCR Vice-President (Development)
- (c) JCR Vice-President (Welfare)
- (d) JCR Treasurer
- (e) JCR Communications Officer
- (f) JCR Events Officer
- (g) JCR Services Manager
- (h) JCR Senior DSU Representative
- (i) JCR Senior Freshers' Representative
- (j) JCR Sports and Societies Officer
- (k) JCR Outreach Officer
- (l) JCR Chair
- (m) Sabbatical Bar Steward

6.19. The Executive Committee, whenever possible, will be chaired by the JCR Chair

6.19.1. When not possible the order of precedence for chairing Executive Committee is as follows:

- a) The JCR Vice-Chair
- b) The JCR President
- c) The JCR Vice-President (Development)
- d) The JCR Vice-President (Welfare)
- e) The Communications Officer
- f) Any other member of the Executive Committee



- 6.20. The Executive Committee must submit reports on its actions to JCR meetings as appropriate.
- 6.21. The JCR may delegate responsibilities to committees and officers as set out in Operational Standing Orders.
- 6.22. Without prejudice to any indemnity to which any Executive Officer may otherwise be entitled, every Executive member or other officer of the student body shall be indemnified, out of the assets of the student body, against any liability incurred by them in defending any proceedings, whether civil or criminal, in which judgment is given in their favour or in which they are acquitted, or in connection with any application in which relief is granted to them by the court from liability for negligence, default, breach of duty, or breach of trust in relation to the affairs of the students.

## **7. APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL OF JCR OFFICERS**

- 7.1. The term "JCR Officers" refers to members of the Executive Committee and any other position explicitly defined as being so in the Standing Orders.
- 7.2. All JCR Officers must be elected by the JCR.
- 7.3. In all elections "Re-open Nominations" (RON) must be included as an option.
- 7.4. Executive Officers (i.e. those officers of the JCR who are members of the Executive Committee) and Non-executive Officers (i.e. those officers of the JCR who are not members of the Executive Committee) must be appointed using Single Transferable Voting in accordance with the Operational Standing Orders.
  - 7.4.1. An election shall be considered quorate if 10% of members have voted.
- 7.5. Members of JCR Committees shall hold office until the end of the academic year in which they are appointed, or for a period as determined by the Committees and Job Description Standing Order.
- 7.6. Any non-sabbatical Officer of the JCR may stand down from their role by writing to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee must report this to the next JCR meeting.
- 7.7. Should a JCR Officer be considered to have fallen short of fulfilment of the duties assigned to them, a quorate JCR meeting may agree a formal warning against that officer.
- 7.8. Should a JCR Officer continue to fall short of fulfilment of the duties assigned to them following a formal warning, or if the actions of an officer are considered to be serious misconduct, a motion of no confidence must be debated at a JCR meeting and then put to a referendum.
  - 7.8.1. If a motion of no confidence is agreed, the officer shall immediately cease to hold their office.
  - 7.8.2. The Executive Committee may suspend the officer from carrying out their duties until the referendum has been voted on.
- 7.9. Any vacancy which arises must be filled at the earliest opportunity by an election conducted in the manner normal for that post. The vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the original term of office.
  - 7.9.1. Any officer appointed in this manner shall be eligible to stand for re-election for a full term of office at the normal time should they continue to meet any conditions for election to that role.
- 7.10. The following special conditions apply to the appointment of sabbatical officers of the JCR:
  - 7.10.1. Following their election, their appointment shall only be valid following the signing of a contract of employment with the University.
  - 7.10.2. Sabbatical officers may resign from their post by giving written notice of one term to the Executive Committee and the Director of HR of the University.
  - 7.10.3. If a sabbatical officer is accused of committing a serious offence that falls within the University's definition of gross misconduct (as set out in the University's

Disciplinary Regulation) the JCR Executive will consider a motion of no confidence.

- 7.10.4. In the event of a motion of no confidence in a sabbatical officer, a panel will be convened to consider the case for dismissal from office. The membership of the panel shall be agreed by the members of the JCR Executive Committee in consultation with the Director of HR (or their deputy) of the University.
- 7.10.5. Should a sabbatical officer be dismissed from Office they have the right of appeal. The appeal process will be determined by the JCR Executive in consultation with the HR Director of the University (or their deputy).
- 7.10.6. Where there is a vacancy for a sabbatical officer, it shall be filled for the remainder of the term of office by a non-sabbatical officer elected in the normal manner. An individual appointed in these circumstances shall be eligible to stand for re-election for a full term of office.
- 7.11. Following informal discussions, if a member considers that there has been misconduct by the JCR President the matter should be discussed with the JCR Chair who must consult with the JCR Executive Committee (other than the President).
- 7.12. Where more than one member of the JCR Executive Committee (excluding the Chair) considers that there may be a case of misconduct by the JCR President, the matter must be discussed with the Head of College.
- 7.13. Following discussion with the Head of College (and where necessary with the Director of HR of the University), if the JCR Executive Committee consider that there has been misconduct, but that misconduct falls short of gross misconduct as defined by the University Regulations, the Executive Committee must implement an appropriate remedy (that complies with the Standing Orders) and report this to the JCR. This may include a vote of no confidence in the President.
- 7.14. Following discussion with the Head of College and the Director of HR, if the JCR Executive Committee consider that there has been gross misconduct as defined by the University Regulations, the JCR must have a vote of no confidence in the President.
- 7.15. If the JCR President ceases to be an employee of the University, then they shall also cease to hold the office of JCR President.

## **8. JCR FINANCES**

- 8.1. The JCR President has overall responsibility for the JCR's finances and for ensuring that the JCR remains in a sound financial position.
- 8.2. The JCR Treasurer is responsible to the JCR President for the financial transactions of the JCR and must advise the JCR President and the Executive Committee on financial matters.
- 8.3. The JCR Treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the JCR budget and accounts and for liaising with the Colleges Accounts Team and the Head of College as appropriate.
- 8.4. Other JCR officers may be delegated specific financial responsibilities. Their work will be overseen by the President.
- 8.5. The JCR Treasury Committee has the power to intervene in the running of a JCR Committee or Society account if they are making a financial loss or if there is reasonable suspicion of misuse of funds.
- 8.6. The JCR Financial Auditing Committee must have access to all financial documents of the JCR.

## **9. RESOLUTION OF ISSUES**

- 9.1. Members of the JCR should attempt to resolve issues by informal discussion before following the formal procedures for resolution of issues.
- 9.2. Any matter which may represent a criminal act must be reported by the JCR President or JCR Chair to the Head of College who shall liaise with the Registrar.

### **Appealing a Decision of the JCR**

- 9.3. If a member of the JCR wishes to appeal against a decision of the JCR (or one of its committees or officers) they may do so by writing to the JCR Chair to request the decision be considered at a JCR meeting.
- 9.4. If, following consideration by the JCR, a member considers that the final decision of the JCR unfairly disadvantages a member or group of members they may raise the matter in writing with the Head of the College, who shall take reasonable steps to resolve the matter. Should this not prove possible, the matter will be referred to the College Council for final resolution.

### **Alleged Misconduct by a JCR Member**

- 9.5. If a member considers that there has been misconduct by a member or members of the JCR (while participating in JCR activities), the matter should be discussed with either the JCR President or the JCR Chair. The JCR President or Chair may consult with the Executive Committee if this is considered by the JCR President or Chair to be an appropriate course of action.
- 9.6. Where the JCR President or JCR Chair determines that a breach of the JCR Standing Orders or policy has occurred, they must implement an appropriate remedy (that complies with the Standing Orders), consulting with Governance Committee and, where appropriate, Executive Committee.
- 9.7. Where the JCR President or JCR Chair consider that the misconduct may represent a breach of College or University Regulations, the matter must be raised in writing with the Head of College who shall take appropriate action.