

Somerville College Oxford – By-Laws agreed by Governing Body 11 June 2008

The Governing Body

1. There shall be a Stated Meeting of the Governing Body at least twice a term. A facultative third meeting may also be scheduled each term, but need not take place unless business so requires.
2. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to send to every member of the Governing Body not less than five days before the date of any Meeting a list of the Agenda to be submitted to that Meeting.
3. A supplementary Agenda may be circulated not less than two days before the Meeting.
4. The Agenda for Governing Body is divided into two parts: Part A and Part B, the latter containing Reserved Business. The JCR President and Treasurer, and the MCR President, may attend for Part A
5. Questions of which notice has not been given in the Agenda or supplementary Agenda shall not normally be considered except with the unanimous consent of those at the meeting.
6. The Minutes of all College Committees which have met since the previous meeting shall normally be circulated to all members of Governing Body before each of its meetings.

Committees of the Governing Body

7. **Education Committee** is composed of the Principal (in the Chair), the Vice-Principal¹, Senior Tutor², Treasurer, and one Fellow Tutor from each Honour School, nominated by the Tutors in that School.

The Agenda is divided into two parts: Part A and Part B, the latter containing Reserved Business. The Librarian attends for Part A, and Library Committee reports to Governing Body via Education Committee (see By-Law 10). The MCR and JCR Academic Affairs representatives may attend for Part A.

Each Honour School may also nominate one Lecturer to serve on the Committee. The Academic Administrator shall act as Secretary unless the Governing Body shall determine otherwise.

The Committee normally meets at least twice a term to consider such educational questions as may from time to time arise and in particular:

- a. policies relating to teaching and learning
- b. the progress, industry and conduct of undergraduates and graduates
- c. the awarding of Scholarships, Exhibitions and Prizes from the appropriate funds, and carrying out an annual review of award holders
- d. examination results
- e. the awarding of course and travel grants from the appropriate funds
- f. the initiation of the College's academic disciplinary procedures in cases of students who fail to meet the standard of application and attendance expected by his or her Tutor

8. **Equality Committee** is composed of the Principal (in the Chair), one Fellow, the Treasurer, Senior Tutor, Domestic Bursar, Personnel Officer (who is also the Equality Officer), Academic Administrator (who is also the Student Welfare and Disability Officer), Chapel Officer, one representative each from the JCR and MCR, one member of academic staff and one member of support staff.

¹ *Ex officio* members are members while they hold the relevant post.

² Exercising in addition the duties and functions of the Tutor for Admissions and the Tutor for Graduates

The Personnel Officer acts as Secretary to the Committee. The Committee normally meets once a term to review the College's equality policies, and to monitor the relevant statistics and action plans.

9. **Finance Committee** is composed of the Principal (in the Chair), the Vice-Principal, four Fellows who shall normally serve for at least two years, the Senior Tutor, Domestic Bursar, and Treasurer who shall, unless otherwise provided, act as Secretary to the Committee. The Governing Body may co-opt not more than three specially qualified persons, whether members of the College or not. The Agenda is divided into two parts: Part A and Part B, the latter containing Reserved Business. The JCR President and Treasurer, and the MCR President and Treasurer, may attend for Part A. The Committee normally meets at least twice in each term to consider such financial questions as may from time to time arise, and in particular:

- a. To scrutinize the annual and management accounts, and financial reports presented by the Treasurer
- b. At such times as may be agreed upon, to approve a forward estimate of revenue and expenditure for each financial year
- c. To review twice each year the state of the college's investments and properties
- d. To authorize exceptional expenditure from revenue and to make recommendations to Governing Body in respect of capital expenditure
- e. To keep under review the terms and conditions of administrative and domestic appointments
- f. To consider other financial issues, as appropriate

10. **Finance Sub-Committee** is composed of the Principal, Vice-Principal and Treasurer, together with two senior fellows, at least one of whom will normally have already served as a member of Finance Committee. The sub-committee shall be convened when required to discuss important issues, and issues of sensitivity.

11. **Library Committee** is composed of the Vice-Principal; four Fellows nominated by Governing Body to represent respectively the Humanities, the Social Sciences, the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences, and the Medical Sciences; one representative each from the MCR and the JCR; the Librarian, and the Assistant Librarian. The Vice-Principal shall serve as Chairman and the Assistant Librarian as Secretary.

The Library Committee shall be responsible for the general administration of the Library and the disbursement of library funds. It normally meets at least once a term and shall report to the Governing Body via Education Committee.

12. **Nominations Committee** is composed of the Principal (in the Chair), the Vice-Principal, and those former Vice-Principals who are members of Governing Body. The Committee shall meet as required to advise Governing Body on nominations for college offices and membership of college committees. It may, where appropriate, discuss other matters of particular sensitivity or complexity relating to Fellows' appointments, for instance, a request to work part-time.

13. **Standing Committee** is composed of the Principal (in the Chair), Vice-Principal, Treasurer, Senior Tutor, together with four Tutorial Fellows, each representing one of the four Divisions of the University. Those other members of the Governing Body who wish to attend should advise the Senior Tutor beforehand of their intention to do so. Heads of Departments not already represented on the Committee (e.g. Bursary, Library) may be invited to attend for discussions of issues of particular interest. The Standing Committee is not a decision-making body but may be asked by Governing Body to take on a delegated authority for operational decisions when the constraints of the timetable of Governing Body meetings require this, e.g. when a decision must be finalized following further enquiry or consultation prior to the next meeting of Governing Body, or during the Long Vacation.

The Committee normally meets three or four times a term to

- a. agree the agenda for meetings of Governing Body
- b. develop academic and other strategies for the College, and to monitor decision-making, and developments that bear on these strategies
- c. consider academic appointments and bids for association with University posts
- d. consider requests for buy-outs and leave, with particular attention to their impact on teaching resources
- e. receive the reports of ad hoc working groups
- f. discuss items which by reason of their complexity and difficulty are beyond the remit of other committees, or which need further attention beyond that given to them in a specialized committee, e.g. Buildings Committee, Finance Committee
- g. give close consideration to policy issues within the wider University, and external bodies, in preparation for consultation with Governing Body.

14. **Somerville Staff Liaison Group** is composed of the Vice-Principal (in the Chair), one nominated Fellow, the Treasurer, Domestic Bursar, Staff Equal Opportunities representative, and representatives from the following groups:

Academic Staff who are not members of Governing Body
Administration and Library (Academic Office, Bursary, Development, IT, Library Principal's Office, and Treasury)
Domestic Departments (Catering, Housekeeping, Lodge, Nursery)
Estates (Gardeners and Maintenance)

The aim of the group is to promote and encourage open discussion, exchange of information and opinion at all levels within the College in order to maintain and develop effective communication and consultation. The group's written Constitution is subject to review by the Governing Body from time to time.

15. **Officers of the College:**

- a. The Stipends of Tutors, together with their allowances, shall be determined from time to time by the Governing Body
- b. Administrative stipends for College Officers shall be determined by the Governing Body from time to time
- c. The remuneration and benefits of lecturers shall be determined by the Governing Body
- d. The Principal, Fellows, and Administrative Officers are eligible to be members of the U.S.S. Pension scheme. Governing Body may at its discretion supplement the U.S.S. pensions of the Principal, Fellows and Administrative Officers; each case is considered on its merits
- e. Tutors and Administrative Fellows of the College are required to be available to carry out their duties throughout the twenty-four weeks of Full Term
- f. Provisions relating to the entitlement to leave for Tutors and the Treasurer are laid down in Statute V(a)(v)
- g. Sick leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, and compassionate leave will normally be in line with the terms currently in force in the University
- h. The seniority of each Fellow of the College shall be determined by the date of her or his admission to the Fellowship unless otherwise provided for by the Governing Body in any particular case on admission.
- i. Research Fellows may undertake a limited amount of teaching by leave of the Governing Body. The maximum number of hours in each case shall be determined by the Governing Body.

16. **The College Accounts:** the banking accounts of the College shall be kept in the name of Somerville College, at such bank or banks as shall be, from time to time, determined by the Governing Body. Instructions shall be given by the Governing Body to the bankers of the College to honour such cheques as shall be signed by any one of the following officers: the Principal, the Vice-Principal, the Treasurer, and such other officers as may from time to time be authorized by the Governing Body.

17. **The College Chapel:**

- a. The Principal, in consultation with the Fellows, shall be responsible for the conduct of Services in the Chapel, and for the maintenance of the non-sectarian character of the worship traditional to the college.
- b. In accordance with paragraph II of the Charter, it shall always be understood that attendance at services in the Chapel shall be voluntary
- c. The Chapel shall always be open to members of the College for prayer and meditation
- d. The use of the Chapel for other purposes may be sanctioned at the discretion of the Principal and Fellows

18. **The College Garden:** the operational management of the College gardens is the responsibility of the Treasurer. The Governing Body may appoint a Garden Committee to provide overall direction and planning.

19. **The College Rules:**

As at other universities, a person accepting admission to the College thereby accepts an obligation to obey the College Rules and those of the University and to pay such fees, dues and charges as the College or University may lawfully determine. The undertaking to obey these rules forms part of the Somerville College Student Contract, which all students are required to sign before entering.

- a) Those who have accepted a College place but have to withdraw for any reason should give at least three months' notice. Failing this, they will be expected to pay the fees and charges for the ensuing term. The same applies to any Junior Member withdrawing after beginning his or her course. In the case of absence through illness for long periods, a partial remission of maintenance charges may be made.
- b) Any Junior Member who, in the course of his or her academic career, is planning or experiences any material change in their personal circumstances must discuss it with his or her Personal Tutor and with the Principal, Treasurer, or Senior Tutor.
- c) Academic work must have the first claim on the time and effort of all Junior Members; students are expected to work to the best of their ability, to attend all academic appointments, and to produce all required written work punctually.
- d) In order to maintain appropriate peace and quiet in the College community, Junior Members must accept such restrictions as the Dean, after consultation with members of the College, may from time to time impose.
- e) If a Junior Member fails to meet the standard of application and behaviour expected, the College's procedures for academic and decanal discipline may be invoked. These, together with appropriate complaints and appeal procedures, shall be kept under review by the Governing Body and promulgated by means of the College Handbook, web-site and other appropriate media.
- f) The Governing Body reserves the right to require withdrawal by any Junior Member whose residence, whether for want of industry or any other stated reason, is considered by the Governing Body to be no longer desirable
- g) Any undergraduate standing for a JCR Executive post must consult his or her tutor in advance of the election. No undergraduate on probation for his or her place may seek election to the JCR Executive or to a similar office in a student organization. Undergraduates on report may not seek election to the JCR Executive without their tutor's permission.

- h) Undergraduates in their first year are expected to live in College during Full Term. Any exception to this must have the approval of the undergraduate's Tutor and of the Principal.
- i) An undergraduate or graduate room in College is for single occupancy by the Junior Member to whom it is allocated. Hence Junior Members must strictly observe the limits on the number of occasions when they may entertain a guest overnight, given in the *Deans' Regulations*.
- j) All Junior Members have an obligation to keep themselves informed by checking their pigeonholes and their College e-mail daily, and checking for notices in the Porters' Lodge, in the Front Hall, and on the College web-site www.some.ox.ac.uk
- k) It is the responsibility of all students, undergraduate and graduate, to make sure that they can be easily contacted at any time. When not in Oxford, therefore, Junior Members have an obligation to inform the College authorities in advance if they cannot be contacted within three or four weeks over the Vacation.

20. The Use of College and Hall:

- a. Permission to use the College for Vacation Conferences shall be left to the discretion of the Principal and the Domestic Bursar
- b. Permission to use the College Hall for all purposes including public meetings and entertainments shall be left to the discretion of the Principal on the understanding that she may refer any application for such permission to the Governing Body.

21. The College Seal: in pursuance of Statute I, II, the Principal, Vice-Principal, and the Treasurer shall be jointly responsible for the safe custody of the Common Seal of the College.

22. Student Admissions: Undergraduate and post-graduate students shall be admitted in accordance with the University's admissions procedures.

23. Student Awards:

- a. **Undergraduates:** Scholarships, Exhibitions and Prizes may be awarded to undergraduates for good work on the recommendation of their tutors to Education Committee.
- b. Scholarships and Exhibitions shall be reviewed annually by Education Committee in Trinity Term, and may be suspended or withdrawn
- c. **Graduates:** Scholarships may be awarded to post-graduate students on the recommendation of Standing Committee or Education Committee
- d. The value of these awards shall be determined from time to time by Governing Body

24. Student Fees: fees for undergraduate, graduate and visiting students shall be determined from time to time by the Governing Body

25. Somerville Association

- a. The College shall maintain an Association of former members.
- b. The Somerville Association shall have the power to draw up and amend its own constitution according to procedures determined by it. The constitution thus drawn up, and subsequent amendments to it, must be approved by Governing Body.
- c. The following points in this by-law (items 'd' through 'h') shall be incorporated into the constitution.
- d. An Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held at the College for the election of SA officers and Committee members and the transaction of other business.
- e. Two fellows of the College shall be nominated by Governing Body to serve on the SA Committee.

- f. The Association shall be entitled to submit to the Governing Body resolutions of which due notice shall have been given and which have been passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a General Meeting of the Association.
- g. The College, after due consideration with the SA President, shall appoint an SA Secretary who shall maintain the records of the Association, coordinate its activities, and be responsible for the circulation to members of an Annual Report. The SA Secretary shall be a paid officer of the College and ex officio a member of the SA Committee.
- h. The Treasurer of the College shall exercise overall responsibility for the finances of the Association, and disburse such sums as may be required to meet its ordinary administrative costs. The Association shall not commit the College to any extraordinary expenditure without prior consultation with the Treasurer, who may be asked to attend the Committee for the discussion of matters involving expenditure.

26. **Suspension, alteration or repeal of by-laws:** none of these by-laws shall be altered, suspended or repealed, except by resolution of the Governing Body at a Stated Meeting, notice of the proposed alteration, suspension or repeal having been given at a previous meeting.