



Constitution of Van Mildert College Senior Common Room, Durham University

Mission of the SCR

The Senior Common Room exists to contribute to the life, enrichment and development of the College as an all-age community of scholars. This is achieved through meeting socially and the sharing of ideas. Our aims are, but are not limited to:

- helping to create an appropriate intellectual, pastoral and spiritual environment for student members of the College;
- providing an academic forum for members of the College, University and wider community;
- serving as a base for our visiting and honorary fellows, offering to them a genuine collegiate atmosphere of conviviality, intellectual stimulus, networking and recreational opportunities;
- helping to develop links with a range of University Departments and Institutes;
- supporting students through their University education; and
- playing a key role in developing links with the wider community.

1.0 Membership

1.1 There shall be the following categories of SCR membership:

Ex-officio members:

- College Principal, Vice-Principal and any other staff members as considered appropriate by the College Principal and SCR Executive Committee.
- Members of the College Advisory Board
- Current University Chancellor
- Current University Vice-Chancellor and Warden
- College Mentors and Coaches

The above will be offered membership of the SCR, by the College Principal and SCR President, by virtue of their role. Ex-officio SCR membership will cease when they vacate their role. They will not need to pay an annual subscription.

The list of those eligible for ex-officio membership shall be maintained and reviewed annually by the Executive Committee.

Full members:

The following are eligible to be nominated, invited or allocated to SCR membership:

- Current and retired members of Durham University staff
- Former students of the College
- Visitors to the College
- Members of Durham City and wider communities

Members may be:

- nominated by existing Full members of the SCR for approval by the Executive Committee
- invited by the SCR President on behalf of the Executive Committee or
- invited by the College Principal without the need for approval by the Executive Committee. This includes new University staff members allocated to the SCR by the Colleges Division. The Executive Committee should be informed of such invitations.

1.2 Full members pay an annual subscription as determined by the Executive Committee.

1.3 Partners of Full members are not automatically Full members of the SCR.

1.4 Members of the MCR are also considered to be full Members of the SCR upon payment of the annual subscription via the MCR fee.

Honorary members:

1.5 The Executive Committee may approve Honorary membership of the SCR on the nomination of a minimum of 3 Full Members of the SCR.

1.6 Honorary members must be Full members of the SCR at the time of their nomination, have a long historical relationship with the College and be deemed by the Executive Committee to have made an outstanding contribution to the College and/or the SCR.

1.7 Honorary membership may also be conferred on Visiting Fellows, for the duration of their time in Durham, by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Principal.

1.8 Honorary members will not pay an annual subscription.

2.0 Executive

2.1 The SCR Executive Committee shall consist of a President, Vice-President (if deemed necessary by the Executive Committee), Secretary, Treasurer, Events Coordinator, Communications Officer, and Web Officer. In addition, the Principal (or their designated representative), Vice-Principal and MCR President shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall allocate responsibilities to its individual members in areas that it considers of importance for the achievement of the SCR's *Mission*.

2.2 In the event that the President steps down before the end of their term in office, the Vice-President should fill the position as 'Acting President' until such time as an election can be

held. The timing of the election should be agreed by the Executive Committee. In the case of the other Executive Officer positions, a member of the Executive Committee may act in these roles until such time as an election is possible.

2.3 All members of the Executive Committee (with the exception of ex-officio members) shall be elected for an initial maximum period of three years. Re-election shall be possible for further periods of up to 2 years, to a maximum appointment period of nine years in total, subject to the annual approval of the members at the AGM.

2.4 Members may be co-opted to serve on the Executive Committee, but their continuation in the role should be subject to election by the AGM after one year in office.

2.5 The SCR Executive Committee shall report termly to College Advisory Board.

Elections shall take place at the Annual General Meeting (or if necessary at an Extraordinary General Meeting). Each candidate should provide a written statement to the SCR Executive Committee prior to the meeting detailing their intention to stand for election and setting out why they are interested in the role and what they can bring to it. Each candidate must have a proposer and seconder, each of whom shall be a member of the SCR. The Executive Officers will handle the necessary arrangements in relation to the election of members of the Executive Committee. In their absence the Principal or his nominee shall handle any necessary arrangements.

3.0 Administration

3.1 The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a term, and shall be responsible for the general running of the SCR.

3.2 The Annual General Meeting shall normally be held in the Michaelmas Term.

3.3 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the SCR may be called by the Executive Committee at any time. At the discretion of the Executive Committee, an Extraordinary General Meeting of the SCR may be called in response to a written request from any member.

3.4 Any change in the Constitution shall be made by two-thirds of members present at the Annual General Meeting, or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for this purpose with two weeks' notice.

3.5 Details of the Annual General Meeting shall be communicated to the membership at least two weeks in advance of the meeting via email.

4.0 Membership Fees

4.1 There is no joining fee. Full members shall pay an annual subscription of an amount, determined by the Executive Committee, which will have the power to waive or reduce the fee in individual circumstances. Annual subscriptions should be paid by a date in the Michaelmas Term to be agreed by the Executive Committee, after which time membership will be deemed to have lapsed.

- 4.2 Temporary members will be expected to pay an appropriate proportionate subscription fee based on their period at the College (e.g. termly). This may be waived at the discretion of the SCR Executive Officers in agreement with the Principal.
- 4.3 Honorary members will not pay a subscription fee.
- 4.4 Partners admitted into ordinary membership of the SCR in their own right may be joint members paying a reduced subscription fee compared to individual rates.
- 4.5 Those joining the SCR after the beginning of the financial year may, at the discretion of the Executive Committee, be eligible for a reduced subscription fee.

5.0 Rights and Privileges

5.1 Members may:

- use the Senior Common Room at any time, except when it is booked for another event;
- dine at High Table for both formal and other meals;
- participate in any event organised by or associated with the SCR;
- vote at the Annual General Meeting and any other general meeting of the SCR;
- book the SCR for any event through the Principal's Executive Assistant.

5.2 The Principal or the President may suspend or terminate the membership of any member if he/she determines that it is in the best interests of the College or SCR to do so. A member whose membership is suspended or terminated may appeal the decision to College Advisory Board.

6.0 Activities

- 6.1 The SCR shall have at least one Guest Night or SCR Formal Dinner per term.
- 6.2 Other activities shall be organised by or in consultation with the Executive Committee.
- 6.3 The SCR shall receive a termly bulletin and calendar and other information about forthcoming events and activities via a weekly e-bulletin. This will be sent out by a member of the Executive.
- 6.4 The SCR mailing list (vm-scr@durham.ac.uk) shall be the main means of contacting the membership.
- 6.5 In each year, some activities, both academic and social, shall be organised in conjunction with the MCR and JCR.

This constitution was adopted by the SCR at the Annual General Meeting held on 27 October 2022.