

OUSU CRAE Constitution

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Preamble

The campaign for Cultural and Racial Awareness and Equality (hereafter CRAE) aims to promote cultural and racial awareness and understanding, combat racism and generally take steps to make the Oxford University community an inclusive and welcoming one for people of all racial and cultural backgrounds.

We acknowledge the existence of racism in our community and beyond. We pledge to identify and fight against all forms of racism and racial and cultural insensitivity. We are united in our commitment to the equitable and just treatment and the upholding of dignity of the entire University of Oxford community, which we execute through the adoption of this constitution.

Definitions and Notes

By **culture** we mean traditions, customs, norms, attitudes and beliefs of particular social groupings.

We understand **racism** to comprise both overt, covert and latent racism. Overt racism is understood as manifested in prejudicial, biased, and irrational verbal, physical, and other means of harm (or intended harm) directed at persons on the basis of their skin colour and other physical features, ethnicity, religion, or culture which seeks to undermine inalienable human rights, justice, or dignity. Covert racism is understood here as structural racism, specifically identifiable in the under-representation of people of colour and ethnic minorities (whether in the University of Oxford student or staff body) and inadequate and inefficient programs and policies that seek to address these types of inequities. Latent racism constitutes behaviour that is unwittingly racist; racially offensive without necessarily intending to be so.

We take cultural and racial considerations to encompass what are often referred to as issues of 'ethnicity'.

A) Aims

1. To foster awareness, understanding and tolerance of cultural and racial differences at the University of Oxford.
2. To fight against all forms of racism in order to protect the dignity and equitable treatment of students and cultures at the University of Oxford.
3. Encourage the just and equitable empowerment of persons of racial and cultural minorities at the University of Oxford – with emphasis on groups historically subject to discrimination - in areas including, but not limited to, leadership, representation, and access.
4. Strive for racial and cultural diversity on the CRAE Council. Also provide a suitable setting for people of different racial and cultural groups, anti-bias organizations and other interested parties to build effective advocacy alliances and networks.
5. Promote the generation and dissemination of constructive research and information relating to cultural and racial equality.
6. Encourage the contributions of, and consultation with, students who may be affected, either directly or indirectly, by issues of concern to CRAE.

Note: These aims are complementary. As an illustration: it should be obvious that we do not aim to promote tolerance of cultural views (Aim #1) if they are racist (Aim #2).

B) Membership

B1 Eligibility for Membership of CRAE Council

Members must be a member of the Oxford University Student Union (hereafter 'OUSU'). However, members need not self-identify as belonging to any particular race, ethnicity, or religion. We request that all members comprehend and comply with the group's aims and agree to foster a "safe space" (free from personal attacks) in order to provide open discussions pertaining to the welfare and interests of persons of colour, as well as ethnic and religious minorities. A person may, on request, be added to the membership/ mailing list at any time other than during a meeting of the Council. The VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) shall automatically be a member, but is restricted from running for, or being elected to, an office/executive/campaign committee position due to potential conflict of interest.

B2 Rights of Membership

The Rights of Membership shall be: to vote in elections; to participate in the

making and execution of Campaign policy at Open Meetings (See C); to run for Executive positions and Campaign Committees as and when vacancies shall arise.

B3 Denying or Revoking Membership

The permanent executive committee of CRAE may, by means of an unanimous vote, deny or revoke the membership of any member, if they have good reasons to believe that said person would be/is detrimental to the council's aims. Any person thus denied membership shall have the right to appeal against the decision to OUSU, initially by contacting the VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities).

C) Open Meetings

C1 At least two Open meetings shall be held per full term. These shall be called by the Chair and publicised by the Secretary at least one week in advance. The meetings should be held where possible in a location with disabled access.

C2 All Executive members shall attend all Open Meetings.

C3 The Order of meetings shall be as follows: ratification of previous minutes, questions to Executive, reports, elections, motions, discussion of campaigns.

i. The minutes of the previous meeting shall be considered ratified unless an objection is raised. In that case a majority of a show of hands shall ratify the minutes.

ii. The executive shall then report on the progress of any ongoing campaigns and on any other business of CRAE Council.

ii. Members may then ask questions to committee pertaining to the business of CRAE Council.

iii. Following questions, elections for any positions shall be carried out as described under 'elections' below.

iv. Following elections, motions shall be debated as described under 'motions' below.

v. Following motions, ongoing campaigns shall be discussed and those responsible may be mandated by simple majority vote by show of hand by present members to take necessary actions to achieve the aims of the campaign.

D) Executive

D1 Qualifying for Executive membership

Executive members shall be members of CRAE Council and be elected as set out in E.

D2 Duties of all Executive members

The Term of Office of any member of the Permanent Executive shall be at most three terms, and of Temporary Executive members one term. Any member may stand for the same position more than once. All Executive members shall produce a full written handover report at the end of their term of office. All Executive members shall produce a short written termly report to the secretary by the end of 8th Week. Executive members are volunteers and cannot be paid for their work for CRAE Council. They may, however, be recompensed for all expenses incurred through fulfilling their responsibilities, on production of receipts to the Treasurer. Executive members shall jointly organise speakers, discussion meetings etc. of interest to CRAE Council members.

D3 Specific Executive positions and their responsibilities

Where there are sufficient numbers there shall be the following Permanent Executive positions:

i) Chair

- a) Shall have the deliberating and casting vote.
- b) Chairs Executive meetings and Open Meetings.
- c) Is responsible for the upholding of the constitution.
- d) Is responsible for general coordination of all CRAE Council's activities.
- e) Must attend all OUSU Council meetings as the CRAE Council voting representative, where (s)he shall seek to represent the interests of CRAE Council's members, and must take motions to OUSU Council as appropriate.
- f) Shall act as representative for CRAE Council within and outside Oxford University.
- g) Must meet with the VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) twice termly
- h) Calls Elections, By-elections, Executive meetings and Open meetings.
- i) Shall assist the Campaigns Co-ordinator in carrying out campaigns.

Campaigns Co-ordinator

- j) Is responsible for pursuing and coordinating Campaigns as agreed at Open Meetings, with the help of the rest of the Executive
- k) Is jointly responsible with the Chair for writing motions for JCRs, MCRs and OUSU Council, where appropriate
- l) Shall report on the progress of ongoing campaigns at each meeting
- m) Opens elections for and oversees Temporary Campaigns Co-ordinators.

iii) Treasurer

- n) Is responsible for keeping accounts and reporting their status to the Executive and at the beginning of Open meetings.
- o) Is responsible for producing an account of all expenditure and activities to the relevant OUSU Officer by Friday 5th

Week of Trinity Term, and, with the help of the rest of the Permanent Executive, a bid for funds for the next academic year by the same date to the VP (Finance).

- p) Authorises expenditure of Executive members which is not more than 10% of the yearly budget. Larger sums must be passed in an Executive meeting.
- q) Shall assist the Campaigns Co-ordinator in carrying out campaigns

iv) Secretary

- r) Shall compile a termly report for the OUSU VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) from Executive members' reports by the end of 10th Week
- s) Shall minute all Executive meetings and open meetings and type these up within one week of the meeting. They shall be circulated to the membership
- t) Shall publicise meetings and elections at least one week in advance to the mailing list
- u) Is responsible for keeping the membership/ mailing and College reps lists up to date
- v) Is responsible for keeping a copy of College and University anti-discrimination policies pertinent to the CRAE campaign (to the extent these are available)
- w) Shall assist the Campaigns Co-ordinator in carrying out campaigns

There may be the following Temporary Executive position:

Temporary Campaign Co-ordinator (TCC)

- a) At most one TCC may be elected per active campaign beyond the first, at the discretion of the Campaign Co-ordinator.
- b) A TCC shall be responsible for (a) specific campaign(s) nominated at their election, or that they agree to take up at a later date on the request of the Campaigns Co-ordinator.
- c) A TCC shall work towards the aims of the campaign(s) they are responsible for, and report to each meeting and to the Campaign Co-ordinator.
- d) A member shall cease to be a TCC when they are no longer responsible for any ongoing campaigns.

D4 Unfilled Executive positions

The duties of unfilled Executive positions shall fall to the Chair, who may distribute them amongst the rest of the Executive, or seek assistance from non-Executive members. However, unfilled positions may mean that certain functions of the Council cannot run, and in order for the Council to function there must be two Executive members.

In the event that this condition is not met, the Council shall close and the VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) shall be responsible for recruiting Executive members.

If a position is not filled at the appointed election time, it shall be held open

until it can be filled. In this case a person may be elected to the position through an unanimous vote of the Permanent Executive at an Executive Meeting, and ratified by a simple majority at the next Open Meeting. If a position becomes vacant through a resignation, the Chair shall call a by-election, unless the Chair has resigned, in which case the duty shall fall to another member of the Permanent Executive.

D5 Resignation

An Executive member shall be deemed to have resigned if they give notice at an Executive meeting, or give written notice to the Chair, or cease to be a member of OUSU or are removed through the complaints procedure.

D6 Complaints Procedure

Any complaints shall be submitted initially to the Vice President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities)

D7 Executive meetings

Shall be held at least once every two weeks during full term.

E) Elections

E1 Timing of Elections

Executive Elections shall be held in the 8th week Open Meeting of Michaelmas term. By-elections shall be called by the Chair when necessary.

E2 Notice of Elections

The Secretary shall publicise elections at least one week beforehand.

E3 Handover

New Executive members elected at the normal time shall officially start their posts at the end of 8th week of Michaelmas term.

E4 Permanent Executive Election Procedure

The Secretary shall be the returning officer (RO) for all elections unless the Secretary is a candidate, in which case the Chair, Campaigns Co-ordinator, Treasurer or VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) shall be the RO, in that order, with no candidate in the election able to be RO.)

Voting shall be by secret ballot, with the RO counting votes. TESSA (This Election Shall Start Again) shall be a candidate in all elections and allow members to register a negative vote against the candidate(s). If elected the position will be considered unfilled (See D4). A simple majority shall be enough to elect a candidate. Only members may vote.

Candidates need not hust unless they are requested to by a member. Members may ask candidates questions pertaining to the position prior to the election.

Candidates shall apply to the RO no less than 24 hours in advance of the election, when the RO shall publicise a list of candidates to the membership list.

E5 TCC Election Procedure

Election of TCCs shall take place in an open meeting immediately after it is decided that a TCC is needed for a campaign. The election shall be by a blind

show of hands, counted by the Secretary.

F) Campaigns

F1 A campaign shall have a set aim that shall not be in contradiction with the aims or policy of the Council.

F2 A campaign shall be considered a campaign of the Council if a motion in favour of the campaign passes at a meeting.

F3 One member of the Executive shall be responsible for the campaign and is responsible for working to bring about its aims.

F4 A campaign shall cease to be a campaign of the council in the following circumstances:

- i. Its aims are completed.
- ii. There are insufficient Executive members to take responsibility for it and no-one can be found.
- iii. It is cancelled by a campaign cancellation motion.

F5 The member responsible for a campaign shall make reports on the progress of the campaign at each meeting and shall encourage members to work towards the aims of the campaign.

G) Motions

G1 Motions shall be submitted by members to the Secretary at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

G2 The secretary shall publicise an agenda of motions 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

G3 The Permanent Executive Committee may submit an emergency motion without advance notification if in the final 24 hours anything arises which requires immediate attention.

G4 Any motion which no member opposes passes without debate; if a member wishes to oppose a motion at a meeting, a speech may be made for and against the motion before members move to debate, following which a vote is carried out by show of hands among the members present to determine whether the motion passes or not. The Chair shall count votes.

G5 If a member requests, a vote on a motion may be carried out blind. The Chair shall count the votes.

G6 During debate, members may propose amendments to the motion. If the proposer of the motion does not accept these amendments as friendly, speeches are made for and against the amendment and a vote is taken; after this vote debate continues on the motion (which is duly amended if the vote on the amendment passes). Such an amendment may not alter the spirit of the motion.

G7 Types of motion:

i.Censure. A motion of censure can be passed by a straight majority vote against any committee member who is failing to fulfil their duties. Any committee member who is censured at two separate meetings is removed from their office and an election for their position will take place at the next meeting. The chair of the meeting shall be passed to the Secretary, Campaigns Co-ordinator, Treasurer or OUSU Vice-President Welfare in that order if the Chair is the subject of such a motion.

ii.No confidence. A motion of no confidence can be passed by a 2/3 majority vote against any committee member who is grossly neglecting their duties or who is deemed unfit to hold their position. Should a motion of no confidence be passed against a committee member, they are immediately removed from office and an election for their position will take place at the next meeting. The chair of the meeting shall be passed to the Secretary, Campaigns Co-ordinator or OUSU Vice-President Welfare in that order if the Chair is the subject of such a motion.

iii.Constitutional amendment. Changes to the constitution require a 2/3 majority vote in both an Executive and Open Meeting, and must then be taken to OUSU Council.

iv.Mandates. Executive members can be mandated to complete tasks within their remit and the aims of the council and the council's ongoing campaigns.

v.Campaign cancellation motion. A motion to cancel a campaign can be passed by a simple majority vote unless it is opposed by the Executive committee, in which case a 2/3 majority vote is required for it to pass. If a campaign cancellation motion passes, that campaign is no longer a campaign of the council.

G8 Any motion that requires financial support beyond the budget of the council, which names OUSU, contradicts OUSU policy or has wide implications on non-members must be unanimously supported by the permanent executive. Such a motion must then be taken to OUSU Council.

G9 Any request for financial support from OUSU must first be passed as a motion.

G10 A decision to undertake a Campaign need not be submitted as a motion, but can be passed by a simple majority show of hands during discussion of campaigns.

H) Miscellaneous

H1 Bank Account

CRAE Council may hold an account in the name of 'CRAE Council. The Chair and two other Permanent Executive members (where possible) shall be signatories to this account; the account should be set up to require two

signatories for access.

H2 Constitutional Amendments

Any Amendment may be proposed by any member. The Amendment must pass by a 2/3 majority at both an Executive meeting and an Open meeting. The Amendment must then be taken by the Chair to OUSU Council to be ratified by a simple majority. In an emergency, an Amendment may be altered by a unanimous vote of the Executive to take effect immediately. If not ratified at the earliest opportunity by an Open Meeting and subsequent OUSU Council any provision made in this manner will lapse.

H3 Constitutional Interpretation

In the event of a dispute over the interpretation of any part of the Constitution, the interpretation of the Chair shall be final.

H4 CRAE Handbook

The Permanent Executive shall assist OUSU in choosing (a) CRAE Handbook editor(s) biannually. This individual should be deemed to have some experience of being part of the CRAE Community, and is responsible for reviewing and updating the previous edition of the handbook, as well as sourcing or creating new articles or images where appropriate. They shall liaise with the OUSU VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) and the CRAE Council Executive over the content and production of the Handbook. The role shall not be mutually exclusive with holding another Executive position.