

CONSTITUTION OF THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY HUMANIST GROUP

1. Name & Aim

- a) The Group shall be called "The Oxford University Humanist Group!"
- b) The aim of the Group shall be "to stimulate a free and independent criticism of religious views of life and to promote the constructive alternative of Humanism."

2. The Constitution

- a) The Constitution shall be binding on all members of the Group.
- b) A copy of the Constitution shall be kept available for reference by the Secretary.
- c) The Secretary shall incorporate in the Constitution any amendments approved by the Group and by the Proctors.
- d) Such amendments shall be submitted in writing to the President by mover and seconder.
- e) The President shall announce proposed amendments to a meeting of the Group at least seven days before they are moved.
- f) Constitutional amendments shall not be deemed carried unless they obtain a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

3. Membership

- a) All resident members of the University shall be eligible for membership.
- b) Members of the following establishments shall be eligible for membership of the Group:- Ruskin College, Dept. of Education, Ruskin School of Drawing, Barnett House, Research workers from the Science Area, School of Forestry, and Queen Elizabeth House.
- c) The Committee shall elect to Honorary Membership persons of distinction in the Humanist Movement.

4. Subscription

- a) The Committee shall decide the terminal subscription at its final meeting in the previous term.
- b) By proctorial regulation, no subscription shall be paid by those eligible for membership under Article 3(b) of the Constitution.

5. The Constitution of the Committee

- a) There shall be a Committee which shall never number more than twenty, and which shall include
 - (i) the Senior Member. (In the event of his being unable to attend meetings, he shall be informed of the proceedings by the Secretary.)
 - (ii) Ex-Presidents of the Group while still resident members of the University.
 - (iii) the President.
 - (iv) the Secretary.
 - (v) the Treasurer.
 - (vi) as many other Officers as shall be elected under Article 7.
- b) No person who regards himself as a member of a Christian Church shall be a member of the Committee.

6. Meetings of the Committee

- a) meetings of the Committee shall be called by the President or by a minimum of six members.
- b) Six members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- c) The President shall take the Chair at Committee Meetings.
- d) In the event of the President's absence or unwillingness to preside, the Secretary shall take the Chair.
- e) In the event of a proposal of a motion of no-confidence in the President, Secretary, and/or Treasurer, the senior Ex-Officer available shall take the Chair.
- f) Resolutions shall be binding on all members of the Committee, whether present or not at their passing.
- g) The President shall have a casting-vote only.
- h) no Committee meeting shall be valid unless all Committee members have been informed of its holding at least forty-eight hours beforehand.

7. Election of Officers

- a) Officers shall be due for re-election after a term in office.
- b) (i) Before the the President calls for nominations, the Committee shall decide the number of Officers necessary for the smooth and efficient running of the Group in the next term.
 - (ii) If no such decision is taken by the Committee, it shall be assumed that the same posts as exist in the current term need to be filled.

- (iii) Elections shall be held before the end of the seventh week in each term.
- (iv) The President shall call for written nominations at least one week before the election is held.
- (v) The President shall close nominations three days before the election is held.
- (vi) Any member of the Group may nominate a candidate for office, including himself.
- (vii) Nominations shall be invalid if not countersigned by the nominee.
- (viii) The President and ex-Presidents shall not stand for election to any office.
- (ix) The President and ex-Presidents shall be responsible for the conduct of elections, and shall arrange and announce their time and place.
- (x) Voting shall be by secret ballot.
- (xi) There shall be a transferable vote for the offices of President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- (xii) In the voting for the remainder of Officers, each voter shall have the same number of votes as there are vacant offices.
- (xiii) The President shall have a casting-vote only.
- c) (i) In the event of there being no nominations, those holding office shall continue to do so.
- (ii) If any refuse to do so, the post may be left vacant and filled by the Committee.
- d) Any Officer at any time wishing to relinquish his position shall inform the Committee who shall nominate a substitute for the remainder of the term.

8. Duties of Officers

- a) The President shall:-
 - (i) take the Chair at all Meetings.
 - (ii) supervise the Officers in the execution of their duties, subject to the approval of the majority of the Committee.
- b) The Secretary shall:-
 - (i) communicate with prospective speakers and arrange the places of meetings etc.

- (ii) arrange for the printing of termly programme-cards of the Group's activities.
- (iii) maintain liaison with the University Humanist Federation.
- c) The Treasurer shall:-
 - (i) be responsible for the finances of the Group.
 - (ii) submit terminal accounts with bank statements for the Committee's approval.
- d) The remaining Officers shall act as the Committee shall direct.

9. Meetings of the Group

- a) Meetings of the Group shall be held at the President's discretion, unless the Committee decides otherwise.
- b) Open Meetings shall be held at the Committee's discretion, subject to proctorial approval.
- c) The President shall take the Chair at all Meetings.
- d) In the event of the President's absence or unwillingness to preside, the Secretary shall take the Chair.
- e) In the event of a proposal of a motion of no-confidence in the President, Committee, or any Officer of the Group, the senior ex-Officer present shall take the Chair.
- f) The Committee shall formulate Standing Orders for the conduct of all meetings, which shall be binding on all members.

NOTE The above Constitution was approved in final form by the Group on 5th February 1961, and by the Proctors on 6th February 1961.

1. Quorum

- a) Six members, including at least one Officer, shall form a quorum.
- b) If within half-an-hour of the time appointed for the meeting to commence a quorum is not present, the meeting shall be dissolved.

2. Order of Business

- a) An Agenda prepared by the President shall be read by him at the beginning of meetings.
- b) The President may vary the order of items at his discretion.

3. Minutes

- a) The Minutes of the appropriate previous meeting shall be read by the Minutes Secretary.
- b) Discussion shall be allowed only on a question of accuracy.
- c) When the Minutes have been approved, and signed by the President, questions may be asked on "matters arising".
- d) Such questions shall be for purposes of information only; not a discussion of policy.

4. Selection of Speakers

- a) Members shall rise to speak and shall address all remarks to the President.
- b) When more than one member wishes to speak, they should attempt to catch the President's eye.

5. President's Ruling

- a) No two members shall be on their feet at the same time.
- b) If the President rises for any purpose connected with the proceedings, the member speaking shall thereupon resume his seat.
- c) The ruling of the President on all matters concerned with the running of the meeting shall be final.

6. Interruptions

- a) No interruptions of a speaker shall be permitted.

- b) Any interruption shall be called to order by the President.
- c) Speakers may accept points of information at their discretion.

7. Speeches

- a) A member except the proposer of the original motion shall have the right to speak and shall do so on any given motion.
- b) The proposer shall have the right to reply.
- c) The proposer and opposer shall speak for not more than eight minutes.
- d) No other speaker shall speak for more than four minutes.

8) Motions & Amendments

- a) There shall be no seconding or seconding and no vote by disposition.
- b) There shall be no motion for a division of amendments.
- c) No amendment shall be discussed until the previous amendment is disposed of.
- d) If an amendment is accepted it replaces the original motion.

9) Closing Debate

- a) Motions for a postponement, adjournment, next business, or closure, must be moved and accepted.
- b) The following motions shall be put to the vote immediately, without discussion:-
 - (i) That the motion be not put;
 - (ii) That the matter be postponed to a later specified meeting;
 - (iii) That the motion be not put;
 - (iv) Previous question;
 - (v) That the matter lie on the table;
 - (vi) That the meeting be adjourned.
- c) Points of Order shall take absolute precedence.
- d) The President shall decide what is a point of Order.

10. Voting

- a) Voting shall be by show of hands.
- b) The President shall have a casting vote only.

11. Resolutions & Amendments

No motion or amendment shall be rescinded at the same meeting at which it is passed.

NOTE The Standing Orders above were approved by the Committee on 19th February 1961 in accordance with constitutional amendment of 5th February 1961.