

ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH CONTRACT STAFF CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

1.1 The name of the Association shall be the Association of Research Contract Staff, to be abbreviated as A.R.C.S.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 The overall aim of the A.R.C.S. is to promote the interests of research staff in College and in so doing to create a working environment which encourages excellence in research and serves to attract and retain high quality researchers.

2.2 Its specific aims are:

2.2.1 To provide a collective voice for researchers within College to articulate and promote their views and to liaise with College authorities.

2.2.2 To improve the status of researchers on fixed contracts within College, commensurate with their contribution, experience and responsibilities.

2.2.3 To encourage greater recognition of the contribution of researchers through parity of esteem and reward. This will include, inter alia, advocating:

- a. the development and implementation of structured career paths for researchers with appropriate job titles and salary scales, pensions and other benefits on a par with those of other academic staff.
- b. the creation of more permanent posts for researchers.
- c. the eligibility of research staff to apply for Fellowship.
- d. the eligibility of research staff to vote for Provost and other elective posts within College, regardless of length of service.
- e. the representation of research staff on College committees.

2.2.4 To provide a forum for research staff to meet, network and discuss issues of mutual concern and in so doing to build a cross-disciplinary College research community.

3 MEMBERSHIP OF THE A.R.C.S.

3.1 Membership shall be open to all research staff on non-permanent contracts.

3.2 Members shall agree to abide by the Constitution.

4 THE COMMITTEE

- 4.1 Only members of the Association shall be eligible to be elected to the Committee of the A.R.C.S.
- 4.2 The Committee shall consist of the following Officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and eight ordinary members.
- 4.3 The Committee shall have at least two members of each gender. There should be one member from each faculty and no more than three from any one academic unit, where possible.
- 4.4 Members of the Committee may remain on the Committee either as Officers or ordinary members for no longer than two consecutive terms of one year. Such members shall be re-eligible for election after the elapse of one year.
- 4.5 Should an Officer or a Committee member go on extended leave of absence from College (i.e. four months or more), or leave the employ of the College before their term of office expires, they shall be deemed to have resigned.
- 4.6 In the case of any Office becoming vacant the Committee shall appoint one of its members to fill this post until an election may be held.
- 4.7 In the case of vacancies arising among the ordinary members on the Committee, the Committee shall co-opt that person who shall have received the next highest vote to the last person elected to that position at the previous A.G.M. of the A.R.C.S. until an election may be held. In the event of that person being unavailable or unwilling to take up the position, the Committee shall co-opt that person with the next highest number of votes and so on until the position has been filled.
- 4.8 Where no new Committee can be formed, residing officers may remain in position for at most one further year.
- 4.9 Meetings of the Committee shall be held at least once a month.
- 4.10 Meetings shall be convened by the Secretary by decision of the Committee, or at the written request of any three members of the Committee.
- 4.11 A quorum for meetings of the Committee at which a motion may be passed shall be five.
- 4.12 Decisions of the Committee may be reversed by a simple majority of those present and voting at a General Meeting of the A.R.C.S.

4.13 The Committee shall have the power to appoint sub-committees whose members shall be members of the Association. It shall also have the power where necessary to co-opt non-members.

4.14 Any member of the Committee may be removed from their position before the completion of their term of office only by the conditions set out in Article 6.10 below.

5 THE OFFICERS

5.1 All Officers shall be answerable to the Committee.

5.2 The responsibilities of the Chairperson shall include:

- (i) Chairing of meetings of the Committee and General or Extraordinary meetings of the A.R.C.S.
- (ii) Responsibility for the overall running of the Committee.
- (iii) Liaison with College authorities and other bodies not covered in the briefs of other Officers.
- (iv) Delegating any other duties to ordinary members as are seen fit.

5.3 The responsibilities of the Vice-Chairperson shall include:

- (i) The duties of the Chairperson in the event of the Chairperson being indisposed.
- (ii) The legal affairs of the Association.
- (iii) The constitutional affairs of the Committee.
- (iv) Providing, collecting and counting ballot papers at elections.

5.4 The responsibilities of the Secretary shall include:

- (i) The preparation of agendas and minutes for meetings of the Committee and the Association.
- (ii) The general correspondence of the Association and matters arising thereof.
- (iii) Maintaining a list of members and their contact details.
- (iv) The keeping and proper archiving of the Committee's records.
- (v) Any A.R.C.S. publications.

5.5 The responsibilities of the Treasurer shall include:

- (i) The financial matters of the Association.
- (ii) All dealings with banks and other financial institutions in conjunction with the Chairperson.
- (iii) Maintaining the financial records of the Association.

5.6 The Officers of the A.R.C.S. are furthermore obliged to ensure that all members of the Association are given an up-to-date copy of this Constitution and any policy document(s) at the Annual General Meeting.

6 MEETINGS OF THE A.R.C.S.

- 6.1 General Meetings of the A.R.C.S. shall take place on the third Tuesday of October, February and June each year, or as close to those dates as possible. That in October shall be designated the Annual General Meeting; those in February and June shall be designated Ordinary General Meetings.
- 6.2 Extraordinary General Meetings shall be convened by the Secretary by decision of the Committee, or at the written request of at least one quarter of the members of the Association.
- 6.3 Notice of General Meetings shall be sent to all members at least fourteen days in advance.
- 6.4 The quorum for General Meetings of the Association including the Annual General Meeting shall be twenty-five. The quorum for an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be a simple majority of the members of the A.R.C.S. Inquorate meetings may transact no business other than that contained in parts (1) to (4) of the agenda as set out at Section 6.5, and may not take a vote on any matter.
- 6.5 The procedure at General Meetings shall be as follows:
- (1) Minutes of the previous General Meeting.
 - (2) Matters arising from the minutes.
 - (3) Reports of the Officers.
 - (4) Matters arising from these reports.
 - (5) Motions to amend the Constitution (see Article 8 below).
 - (7) Elections (see Article 7).
 - (8) Motions.
 - (9) Any Other Business.
- 6.6 Any members of the A.R.C.S. shall be entitled to table motions under parts (5) & (8) of the agenda, on giving ten days prior written notice to the Secretary of the A.R.C.S. Said motions shall be distributed to members at least seventy-two hours in advance.
- 6.7 No motions shall be entertained at a General Meeting, save as provided for at section 6.6; unless they constitute valid amendments to such motions.
- 6.8 All motions must be proposed and seconded by members of the A.R.C.S.
- 6.9 A motion to adjourn or to suspend standing orders may be introduced at any time, but requires a 2/3 majority of those members present and voting to be carried.

6.10 A motion to impeach an Officer or Member of the Committee shall require a 2/3 majority of those members of the Association present and voting to be carried.

6.11 The Chairperson shall keep order at General Meetings and the Chair's decisions on matters of order shall be final. The Vice-Chairperson will act in this capacity should the Chairperson be indisposed.

6.12 All members of the A.R.C.S. shall be entitled to attend General Meetings.

6.13 Members may gain access to all records of the Association on application to the Secretary.

7 ELECTIONS

7.1 Only members of the Association shall have votes at elections of the A.R.C.S.

7.2 No member may hold more than one vote.

7.3 All elections shall be held by a system of proportional representation using the single transferable vote.

7.4 At the A.G.M. the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the eight ordinary members of the Committee, who are to be elected by the Committee shall be elected in that order for the following year.

7.5 Nominations for the positions of any of the Officers or ordinary Committee members may be taken from the floor or submitted in writing to the Secretary in advance of the General Meeting at which the election is to be held.

7.6 If only one nomination is received for an office then a yes/no vote shall take place to ensure that s/he is acceptable to the ordinary membership. If this position is not filled a new election shall take place immediately.

7.7 If no further nominations or if a further rejection takes place, the election to fill that post shall be carried over to an E.G.M. held no later than two weeks following the General Meeting. Nominations from the floor may be taken at an E.G.M. alone.

7.8 If no nominations for any position on the Committee are received then the sitting Committee may remain as set out in Article 4.8 above.

7.9 The new Committee will take office within seven days of election.

8 CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

8.1 Amendments to this Constitution may only be made at a General Meeting of the Association and not by the Committee.

- 8.2 Ordinarily notice of a motion to amend the Constitution must be communicated in writing to the Secretary with the names of the proposer and seconder at least twenty-one days prior to the General Meeting or E.G.M. at which it is to be proposed. Amendments may only be proposed and seconded by members of the A.R.C.S.
- 8.3 Details of any proposed amendments shall be circulated to members by the Secretary of the A.R.C.S. at least fourteen days prior to the meeting.
- 8.4 No amendment shall be made except by the affirmative vote of two thirds of the members of the Association present and voting.
- 8.5 Amendments to the Constitution shall become effective at the end of the General Meeting at which such amendments have been approved.
- 8.6 Any point of clarification or interpretation of this Constitution which may be required shall be determined by a simple majority vote of the Committee. Any such determination shall be binding unless reversed by a motion put to a General Meeting of the A.R.C.S.
- 8.7 This Constitution will be binding as and from at the inaugural A.G.M. on 8 November 2005 subject to the approval by simple majority of the A.R.C.S. members present.

