

**CONSOLIDATED**  
**STANDARD CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**  
**OF THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY AFRICA**  
**SOCIETY**



**(Consolidated on 23 May 2018)**

**STANDARD CONSTITUTION OF THE  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY AFRICA SOCIETY**

*From Michaelmas Term 2016*

**NAME AND OBJECTS**

1. The Club is called the Oxford University Africa Society Club. The Club's objects are the support, development, improvement and promotion of Oxford University Africa Society in the University of Oxford insofar as such objects are charitable; and the income and property of the Club shall be applied solely to those objects.

**COMPLIANCE**

2. (a) The Club shall be administered in accordance with the University's Regulations for the Activities and Conduct of Student Members.
- (b) The activities of the Club will at all times be conducted in accordance with the University procedures, codes of practice and policies in force from time to time on equality, harassment, freedom of speech and safeguarding (which are available to download via the University Student Handbook on the University's webpages).
- (c) If there is a national governing body for the Club's activities with which the Club is eligible to register, the Club shall effect and maintain such registration: purchase any insurance cover which the national body makes available unless the Insurance Section of University Administration and Services ("the Insurance Section") agrees to or prescribes other arrangements; and make every effort to comply with all safety procedures which the national body prescribes, or recommends as good practice.
- (d) The Club shall observe the Code of Conduct on Safety Matters which is set out in the Schedule to this Constitution, ensure compliance with the Code by the members of the Club, and follow an appropriate procedure for risk assessment. Both the Code of Conduct and the procedure for risk assessment must be acceptable to the University's Safety Office.

- (e) No member of the Club shall participate in any activity overseas organised by the Club, whether during term-time or vacation, unless the plans for such activity have been notified at least one calendar month in advance of the date of departure from the United Kingdom to the University Marshal. Each member participating in such activities overseas shall observe any conditions imposed by the Proctors on the recommendation of the University Marshal.
- (f) The Club shall maintain a dedicated website and shall supply details of its web address to the Proctors for listing on the University's clubs and societies webpage. The Club may apply to the University's IT Services to use information technology ('IT') facilities in the name of the Club. Where the Club uses the University's IT Services it is the responsibility of the Club:
  - (i) to designate a member of the Club entitled to a University e-mail account (as defined by IT Services rules) to act as its IT Officer, whose duties shall include liaising with IT Services about the use of facilities allocated and passing on to his or her successor in office all records relating to the use of the facilities allocated;
  - (ii) to designate one of its members (who may be, but need not necessarily be, the same as its IT Officer) or, exceptionally, a member of Congregation to act as its principal Webmaster, whose duties shall include maintaining an awareness of the University guidelines on web information, and co-ordinating and regulating access to the web facilities used by the Club;
  - (iii) to comply with regulations and guidelines relating to the use of IT facilities published from time to time by IT Services;
  - (iv) to ensure that everyone responsible under (i)-(iii) is competent to deal with the requirements, where necessary undertaking training under the guidance of IT Services.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

3. The members of the Club shall be those who are eligible and apply for membership of the Club, who are admitted to and maintained in membership by the Committee, and who have paid the relevant Club subscription.

4. Subject to paragraph 5, all student members of the University, and all persons whose names are on the University's Register of Visiting Students, shall be eligible to become members of the Club. A member shall continue to be eligible until he or she is given permission to supplicate for his or her degree, diploma or certificate, regardless of whether or not he or she continues to be liable to pay fees to the University.
5. If the Club's objects relate directly to a protected characteristic as defined in Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010, the Club may be entitled to restrict membership to members sharing that protected characteristic, provided that the Proctors shall first approve any such restriction.
6. The Committee may also, at its discretion, admit to membership:-
  - (a) students registered to read for diplomas and certificates in the University;
  - (b) student members of Permanent Private Halls who are not student members of the University;
  - (c) members of Ruskin College and Ripon College, Cuddesdon;
  - (d) members of Oxford Brookes University, provided that such members shall not constitute more than one-fifth of the total membership and
  - (e) other persons not falling within paragraph 4 above or paragraphs 6(a) to (d) above, provided that such members shall not constitute more than one-fifth of the total membership.
7. The Committee, having consulted with the Senior Member in relation to the relevant matter, may remove a person from membership if removal of such person from membership is deemed to be in the best interests of the Club. The person concerned may appeal against such removal to the Proctors.
  - (a) meetings of the members
8. There shall be an Annual General Meeting for all the members of the Club in Hilary Full Term, convened by the Secretary on not less than fourteen days' notice.
9. The Annual General Meeting will:

- (a) receive the annual report of the Committee for the previous year and the annual accounts of the Club for the previous year, the report and accounts having been approved by the Committee;
  - (b) receive a report from the Committee on the Club's compliance with paragraph 2 above;
  - (c) elect Members of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 24 below: the Committee's nominations for the Officers and the Senior Member shall be contained in the notice of the Meeting: any alternative nominations must be seconded and have the consent of the nominee, and must be received in writing by the Secretary not less than seven days before the date of the Meeting: nominations for the other Committee Members may be taken from the floor of the meeting;
  - (d) consider any motions of which due notice has been given, and any other relevant business.
10. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called in any Full Term; by the President, the Secretary or the Treasurer on not less than seven days' notice; or on a written requisition by seven or more members, stating the reason for which the meeting is to be called, and delivered to the Secretary not less than fourteen days before the date of the Meeting.
  11. Prior to all General Meetings notice of the agenda shall be sent out with the notice of the Meeting.
  12. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be ten members present in person or by proxy, of whom three must be members of the Committee. When any financial business is to be transacted there must be present the Treasurer, or a member of the Committee deputed by the Treasurer to represent his or her views to the Meeting (provided that where it is a case of a deputy, the only financial business transacted shall be that which was set out in the agenda accompanying the notice of the meeting).
  13. Every matter, except where this Constitution provides otherwise, shall be determined by a majority of members present and voting. In the case of equal votes the President of the Club shall have the casting vote.
  14. Minutes of all meetings shall be kept and formally adopted. Copies of the Minutes shall be made available to members and, upon request, to the Proctors.

## THE COMMITTEE

15. The affairs of the Club shall be administered by a Committee consisting of not more than eight persons, which shall determine the subscriptions payable by the members of the Club, and have ultimate responsibility for the activities of the Club. Members of the University shall at all times make up the majority of the members of the Committee. The Committee shall have control of the funds and property of the Club, and of its administration.
16. No member of the Committee (or the Club) shall enter in to or purport to enter into any arrangement, contract or transaction on behalf of the Club with a value exceeding £1,000 unless the Committee has resolved to approve the relevant arrangement, contract or transaction at a Committee meeting.
17. The quorum for a Committee meeting shall be [four] members present in person. When any financial business is to be transacted, there must be present either the Treasurer or a member of the Committee deputed by the Treasurer to represent his or her views to the meeting.
18. The Committee shall be made up of the President, the Secretary, the Treasurer (together, the "Office Holders"; and their offices are referred to as "the Offices"), the Senior Member and other persons. The President, the Secretary and the Treasurer shall each be either a member of the Club whose eligibility stems from paragraph 4 above or paragraphs 6(a) to (d) above, or (with the approval of the Proctors) a member of Congregation. If his or her eligibility stems from paragraphs 6(a) to (d) above, on election to office he or she must sign an undertaking to abide by the University Student Handbook, and to accept the authority of the Proctors on Club matters.
19. The President shall have the right to preside at all meetings of the members of the Club and at all meetings of the Committee. Should the President be absent, or decline to take the chair, the Committee shall elect another member of the Committee to chair the meeting.
20. Minutes of all meetings, including Committee meetings, shall be kept and formally adopted. Copies of the minutes shall be made available to members and, upon request, to the Proctors.
21. The Secretary shall:

- (a) maintain a register of the members of the Club, which shall be available for inspection by the Proctors on request;
- (b) give notice of meetings of the members and the Committee;
- (c) draw up the agendae for and the minutes of those meetings;
- (d) notify the Proctors promptly following the appointment and resignation or removal of Office Holders and other members of the Committee;
- (e) notify the Proctors not later than the end of the second week of every Full Term of the programme of meetings, speakers and events which has been arranged for that term (e.g. by providing them a copy of the term card);
- (f) provide the Insurance Section with full details of any insurance cover purchased from or through a national governing body pursuant to paragraph 2(c) above; and
- (g) inform the Proctors if the Club ceases to operate, or is to be dissolved, and in doing so present a final statement of accounts (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe).

22. The Treasurer shall:

- (a) keep proper records of the Club's financial transactions in accordance with current accepted accounting rules and practices;
- (b) develop and implement control procedures to minimise the risk of financial exposure, such procedures to be reviewed regularly with the University's Internal Audit Section ("Internal Audit");
- (c) ensure that bills are paid and cash is banked in accordance with the procedures developed under (b);
- (d) prepare an annual budget for the Club, and regularly inform the Committee of progress against that budget;
- (e) ensure that all statutory returns are made including VAT, income tax and corporation tax if appropriate;
- (f) seek advice as necessary on tax matters from the University's Finance Division;

- (g) develop and maintain a manual of written procedures for all aspects of the Treasurer's responsibilities;
- (h) make all records, procedures and accounts available on request to the Senior Member, the Proctors and Internal Audit;
- (i) forward to the Proctors by the end of the second week of each Full Term a copy of the accounts for the preceding term (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe) signed by the Senior Member, for retention on the Proctors' files; and
- (j) if the Club has a turnover in excess of £25,000 in the preceding year, or if owing to a change in the nature or scale of its activities, it may confidently be expected to have such a turnover in the current year, submit its accounts (the format of which the Proctors may prescribe) for independent professional inspection and report by a reporting accountant approved in advance by the Proctors. Accounts are to be ready for inspection within four months of the end of the Club's financial year and the costs of the inspection and report shall be borne by the Club. If requested by the reporting accountant, the Club shall submit accounts and related material as a basis for a review of accounting procedures, the cost likewise to be borne by the Club.

23. The Senior Member shall:-

- (a) keep abreast of the actions and activities of the Club;
- (b) provide information relating to the Club to the Proctors on request;
- (c) seek to settle any preliminary disputes between the Committee and members;
- (d) following paragraph 22(i) above, consider the accounts of the Club and approve them if he or she considers them to be in order;
- (e) ensure that adequate advice and assistance is available to the Secretary and the Treasurer in the performance of their responsibilities under paragraphs 21 and 22 above; and
- (f) be available to represent and speak for the Club in the public forum, and before the University authorities.

24. The members of the Committee shall be elected by the members of the Club annually, and shall be eligible for re-election. The members of the Club shall not appoint several individuals jointly to hold any of the Offices, nor allow any individual to hold more than one Office at a time. When electing other members of the Committee each year, the members of the Club shall also appoint a member of Congregation as the Senior Member, and he or she will then be a member of the Committee *ex officio*.
25. If during the period between the annual elections to offices any vacancies occur amongst the members of Committee, the Committee shall have the power of filling the vacancy or vacancies up to the next Annual General Meeting by co-optation.
26. Each Office Holder must, on relinquishing his or her appointment, promptly hand to his or her successor in Office (or to another member of the Club nominated by the Committee) all official documents and records belonging to the Club, together with (on request from the Committee) any other property of the Club which may be in his or her possession; and must complete any requirements to transfer authority relating to control of the Club's bank accounts, building society accounts, or other financial affairs.
27. Without derogating from its primary responsibility, the Committee may delegate its functions to finance and general purposes and other subcommittees which are made up exclusively of members of the Committee.
28. The Committee shall have power to make regulations and by-laws in order to implement the paragraphs of this Constitution, and to settle any disputed points not otherwise provided for in this Constitution.
29. No member of the Committee shall be removed from office except by the approving votes of two-thirds of those present in person or by proxy at a General Meeting.

## **INDEMNITY**

30. So far as may be permitted by law, every member of the Committee and every officer of the Club shall be entitled to be indemnified by the Club against all costs, charges, losses, expenses and liabilities incurred by him or her in the execution or discharge of his or her duties or the exercise of his or her powers, or otherwise properly in relation to or in connection with his

or her duties. This indemnity extends to any liability incurred by him or her in defending any proceedings, civil or criminal, which relate to anything done or omitted or alleged to have been done or omitted by him or her as a member of the Committee or officer of the Club and in which judgement is given in his or her favour (or the proceedings are otherwise disposed of without any finding or admission of any material breach of duty on his or her part), or in which he or she is acquitted, or in connection with any application under any statute for relief from liability in respect of any such act or omission in which relief is granted to him or her by the Court.

31. So far as may be permitted by law, the Club may purchase and maintain for any member of the Committee or officer of the Club insurance cover against any liability which by virtue of any rule of law may attach to him or her in respect of any negligence, default, breach of duty or breach of trust of which he or she may be guilty in relation to the Club and against all costs, charges, losses and expenses and liabilities incurred by him or her and for which he or she is entitled to be indemnified by the Club by virtue of paragraph 30.

## **DISSOLUTION**

32. The Club may be dissolved at any time by the approving votes of two-thirds of those present in person or by proxy at a General Meeting. The Club may also be dissolved (without the need for any resolution of the members) by means of not less than thirty days' notice from the Proctors to the Secretary of the Club if at any time the Club ceases to be registered with the Proctors.
33. In the event of the Club being dissolved, its assets shall not be distributed amongst the members, but shall be paid to or at the direction of the University.

## **INTERPRETATION**

34. Any question about the interpretation of this Constitution shall be settled by the Proctors.
35. This Constitution shall be binding on all members of the Club. No regulation, bye-law or policy of the Club shall be inconsistent with, or shall affect or repeal anything contained in, this Constitution.

**University of Oxford Africa Society**  
**By-Laws**

**(approved 20 May 2018)**



## **Preamble**

We, the members of the Oxford University Africa Society, recognizing the need for an umbrella body dedicated to the provision of a strong and legitimate voice within the Oxford community to persons from or with a relationship to Africa, hereby adopt these By-Laws to govern the internal affairs of the Society.

## **FOUNDATIONAL VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Article 1: Foundational Values**

The Oxford University Africa Society is founded upon, and shall strive for adherence to, the principles of Pan-Africanism, Community, and Solidarity.

### **Article 2: Organizational Principles**

1. The Oxford University Africa Society Constitution (the Constitution), as set out by the Oxford University Proctors and approved by the Africa Society, sets forth the rules, principles and procedures that shall govern the Society and define the rights and duties of its Committee and members.
2. The Africa Society adopts this document, to be known as the University of Oxford Africa Society Constitution By-Laws (the By-Laws) are adopted in terms of section 28 of the Oxford University Africa Society Constitution.
3. These By-Laws serve as the secondary principles that govern the internal affairs of the Oxford University Africa Society.
4. Subject to the Constitution and these By-Laws, all powers not expressly provided for are reserved for the Committee acting in good faith.

### **Article 3: Objectives and Key Activities**

1. The General objectives of the Society shall be to -
  - a. serve as a democratic, representative, and legitimate voice for Africa and all her peoples' within the Oxford community;
  - b. foster a sense of community among Africans within the University of Oxford and the wider Oxford Community through social and cultural activities,
  - c. provide a permanent platform for discussions, debates, and other stimulating events relating to Africa by way of ancestry, research, experience, or general interest.

2. In pursuance of the objectives stated in sub-article (1), the Society, acting through the Committee, shall endeavor to undertake key activities which may include:
  - a) Representing its members at the Consultative Committee of the African Studies Centre, the Steering Committee of the Africa Oxford Initiative, the Oxford University Students Union, and the central administration of the University of Oxford. This representation shall include:
    - (i) providing updates on the activities of the Society,
    - (ii) bringing concerns raised by its members for collective remedial action, and
    - (iii) cooperating on specific projects of the Society;
  - b) Establishing working groups of members on a demand-driven basis for selected matters that are deemed important by the Committee;
  - c) Organizing an annual conference with the broad aims of providing a vibrant and interdisciplinary platform for discussions relevant to contemporary African issues, including politics, economics, and culture;
  - d) Creating and maintaining networks with organizations across Africa and abroad through engaging in strategic partnerships either on a long-term basis or for specific events so as to maximize opportunities for its members;
  - e) Actively supporting the University of Oxford in raising more scholarship funds for black and African students, at undergraduate and graduate level;
  - f) Providing mentorship to assist prospective African students interested in pursuing their studies at the University of Oxford specifically, or in the United Kingdom generally, by establishing and maintaining a program linking them to current students from the same geography or similar field of academic interest;
  - g) Inviting speakers from or experienced in Africa to discuss issues in the fields of interest and benefit to the members; and
  - h) Organizing social events including African meals, dance events, and film screenings for members to exchange ideas and celebrate their diverse cultures.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **Article 4: Categories of Memberships**

There shall be three categories of membership, namely:

- a) ordinary members, who shall be persons registered as students of Oxford University pursuing either undergraduate or graduate studies;
- b) associate members, who shall be persons not eligible for membership in terms of sub-paragraph (a) above but who are persons otherwise affiliated with the Oxford University;
- c) honorary members, who shall be persons who, in the opinion of the Committee, have rendered outstanding service worthy of recognition by the Society.

#### **Article 5: Registration as a Member**

1. Members shall be admitted and registered at the discretion of the Committee on a rolling basis throughout the Oxford University academic year.
2. The Committee, after considering the financial position of the Society, may prescribe a financial contribution as a requirement for ordinary membership or associate membership in the Society in a given Oxford University academic year.
3. The Committee shall ensure that an accurate record of all members is kept at all times.
4. Ordinary members and associate members shall be bound by the rules and regulations of the Society as contained in these By-Laws and the Constitution.

#### **Article 6: Revocation of Membership**

1. The Committee may revoke the ordinary or associate membership of a person provided that the steps aimed at ensuring procedural fairness are taken, which steps shall include that:
  - a) A written revocation petition is presented to the Committee naming the member in question and the grounds for revocation;
  - b) the member in question is presented in writing with the information contained in the petition for membership revocation;
  - c) the member in question is afforded the opportunity to respond in writing to the Committee addressing the information contained in the revocation petition;
  - d) at the requested of the member in question, the Committee holds a hearing, for which the member is provided notice of its date, time, and location; and
  - e) the Committee votes by two-thirds majority to revoke membership after

- all previous steps are completed.
2. The member concerned may appeal against the revocation of membership to the Senior Member.
  3. The decision of the Senior Member shall be final.

## **MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS**

### **Article 7: Annual General Meeting**

1. There shall be one Annual General Meeting for all the members of the Society held in Trinity Full Term, convened by the General Secretary, in his or her absence, the President or Vice-President, on not less than fourteen days' notice.
2. The Annual General Meeting shall:
  - (a) receive the annual report of the Committee for the previous year and the annual accounts of the Society for the academic year, the report and accounts having been approved by the Committee;
  - (b) receive a report from the Committee on the compliance with University of Oxford Rules and Regulations as contained in Article 3 above;
  - (c) elect, by secret ballot, members of the Committee in accordance with this Constitution: provided that -
    - (i) the Committee's nominations for the Officers and the Senior Member shall be contained in the notice of the Meeting;
    - (ii) any alternative nominations shall be seconded and have the consent of the nominee, and shall be received in writing by the General Secretary not less than seven days before the date of the Meeting;
    - (iii) nominations for the other Committee Members may be taken from the floor of the meeting;
  - (d) consider any motions of which due notice of two days has been given, and any other relevant business.
3. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be at least twenty members with voting rights of the Society present in person, and at least half of the members of the Committee, including the President and Treasurer.
4. If the quorum is not met at the General Meeting, the Secretary General, in his or her absence, the President or Vice-President may conduct the election through an online voting process, provided that measures aimed at ensuring the fairness and integrity of the vote are taken.

## **Article 8: General Meetings**

1. There shall be at least one General Meeting for all the members of the Society in Michaelmas Term and Hilary Term to discuss the current affairs of the Society.

## **Article 9: Extraordinary General Meetings**

1. An Extraordinary General Meeting for all members may be called by the President, Vice-President, General Secretary, or Treasurer to discuss urgent issues related to the Society in no less than seven days' notice.
2. An Extraordinary General Meeting for all members may be called on the written requisition by seven or more members, stating the reason for which the meeting is to be called, and delivered to the General Secretary in no less than ten days before the date of the Meeting.
3. Prior to all General Meetings notice of the agenda shall be sent out with the notice of the Meeting.
4. The quorum for an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting shall be twenty members of the Society present in person, of whom three must be members of the Committee. When any financial business is to be transacted there must be present the Treasurer, or a member of the Committee deputed by the Treasurer to represent his or her views to the Meeting: provided that where it is a case of a deputy, the only financial business transacted shall be that which was set out in the agenda accompanying the notice of the meeting.

## **THE COMMITTEE**

### **Article 10: Members of the Committee**

1. The Committee shall be made up of the following persons:
  - a) A President, whose powers, duties and responsibilities shall be to:
    - (i) Represent of the Society inside and outside of the University of Oxford
    - (ii) Lead the Committee in close liaison with the Vice President;
    - (iii) Made ad-hoc decisions on day-to-day activities of the Society in consultation with the Vice President;
    - (iv) Issue invitations to guests visiting the Society in Oxford;
    - (v) Approve all documents and motions proposed for Society Meetings.
  - b) A Vice President, whose powers, duties and responsibilities shall be to:

- (i) Support the President in the day-to-day running of the Society;
  - (ii) Supervise at least two committee members;
  - (iii) Manage, strengthen and broaden the Society partnerships/relations within and outside Oxford.
- c) A General Secretary, whose powers, duties and responsibilities are outlined in section 21 of the Constitution.
- d) A Treasurer, whose powers, duties and responsibilities are outlined in section 22 of the Constitution.
- e) A Social Secretary, whose powers, duties and responsibilities shall be to:
- (i) Manage the social agenda of the Society which includes the discussion, planning and execution of social and intellectual events
  - (ii) Consider the integration and accommodation of all members of the Society all parts of the African continent in the planning of the events
  - (iii) Give an account to the Members of the events held during the year at the annual general meeting;
  - (iv) If necessary, lead the appointment of an assistant social secretary to aid in the execution of the duties and responsibilities in this section.
- f) Such additional Committee members as may be necessary for the effective running of the Society, in particular to carry out the responsibilities related to organizing the annual Conference referred to in Article 2(2)(c) of this Constitution, social events, scholarships, membership and alumni affairs, and diversity: provide that such additional members shall not be less than four and not exceed six positions.

2. Persons elected shall be eligible for re-election to the Committee in the subsequent year(s).

**Article 11: Election of Committee Members**

1. Only persons eligible for ordinary or associate membership in terms of these By-Laws shall be eligible for election to a position on the Committee: provided that only persons who are of African descent or African citizenship shall be eligible for election to the position of President.
2. The President, General Secretary, Vice President and Treasurer shall be elected at a General Meeting of the Society held in Trinity.

3. All other members of the Committee may be elected at the first General Meeting of the Society of the University of Oxford academic year, which shall be no later than Week three of Michealmas Term.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Article 12: Miscellaneous Provisions**

1. The Oxford University Africa Society may be abbreviated 'AfriSoc'.
2. The year of the Society shall be the official academic year of the University of Oxford.

### **Article 13: Amendments to these By-Laws**

1. Any member may, in writing, propose amendments to these By-Laws. The proposed amendments shall be made to the Committee without such Committees' approval.
2. The proposed amendments shall be considered by the members of the Society at either Annual General Meeting or the Extra-Ordinary General Meeting duly called under these By-Laws.
3. Proposed amendments or changes to the By-Laws shall be adopted if approved by half of the members present at a meeting referred to in sub-article (2) above, subject to the approval of the Proctors.

### **Article 14: Interpretation and Commencement**

1. Any question about the interpretation of these By-Laws shall be settled by the Committee.
2. These By-Laws are effective as of the commencement date being the date of final approval by the members of the Society, and are subordinate to the Oxford Africa Society Constitution as well as the Statutes, Rules and Regulations of the University of Oxford in so far as they are of relevance and applicability to the Society.
3. Where possible these By-Laws shall be interpreted -
  - a. to be consistent with the provisions of the Constitution; and
  - b. in good faith in accordance with the ordinary meaning to be given to its terms in their context and in the light of their object and purpose, including that of the Preamble.

**Adopted on this: 20<sup>th</sup> day of May 2018.**