



## The Constitution of Polyglossia: Cambridge University Modern Languages Society

### Name

**Section 1.01** The name of the society shall be “Polyglossia: Cambridge University Modern Languages Society” (“Polyglossia” or the “Society”)

### Article II. Objects

#### **Section 2.01** The Society shall

- (i) Promulgate information, advice and contacts regarding academic issues and careers in language-related and other areas
- (ii) Provide regular speaker and social events for its members (including an annual Freshers’ Event and Careers Fair in Michaelmas Term, Formal Dinner with AGM in Lent Term and Garden Party in Easter Term)
- (iii) Publish a biannual journal, Polyglossia, containing articles of interest to Linguists of which the majority should be both written by students of the university and in foreign languages
- (iv) Wherever possible, provide members with discounted opportunities to pursue their linguistic development through agreements with third parties

- (v) Act as a point of liaison with other Language-related societies and the MML faculty and other groups across the world

### **Article III. Constitution**

**Section 3.01** The business of Polyglossia shall be conducted in accordance with the terms set out in this document (the “Constitution”)

**Section 3.02** The Constitution shall be applied in accordance with the regulations of the University of Cambridge (the “University”) and all applicable law of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

### **Article IV. Membership**

#### **Section 4.01 The Scope of Membership**

- (i) Membership shall be open to all members of the University
- (ii) The Committee may set a variable membership fee

#### **Section 4.02 Termination of Membership**

- (i) The Committee may terminate any individual’s membership for conduct unbecoming to the Society on a three-quarters vote at any Committee meeting
  - a) *The quorum for any such meeting being five Committee members, including*
  - b) *The notice for such a meeting being seven days or more*
  - c) *The individual concerned being given an opportunity to justify his conduct by way of a hearing at the meeting*
  - d) *The individual concerned being granted a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer*

#### **Section 4.03 Membership Records**

- (i) The Committee shall maintain a set of records of all members in a form that they shall deem to be suitable and legal

### **Article V. Committee**

#### **Section 5.01 Structure of the Society Committee**

- (i) The Society Committee shall be comprised of a Committee and sub-Committees

- (ii) The term “Committee” shall hereafter be used to refer to the Committee, not including the subCommittees

## **Section 5.02          Components of the Committee**

- (i) The affairs of the Society shall be managed by a Committee consisting of between 8 and 11 Officers
- (ii) The Committee must be comprised of individuals from at least five different colleges

## **Section 5.03          Committee**

- (i) The Officers of the Society shall be the President, Vice-President and International Officer, Treasurer, Secretary, Webmaster, Editor of Polyglossia, Social Secretary and Marketing and Sponsorship Secretary
- (ii) They shall be elected annually and together, they shall comprise the Committee
- (iii) All decisions of the Committee shall seek to be unanimous
  - a) *If this proves impossible, a majority vote including that of the President will suffice*
  - b) *Should the Committee be evenly split on any vote, the President will carry the deciding vote*
- (iv) The number of the Committee in office at any one time may never be below six and a Committee member may not hold more than one position at any given time.
- (v) If this number should drop below six through resignation or failure to fill a position, the current Members of the Committee shall appoint suitable candidates to the unfilled positions

## **Section 5.04          Sub committees**

- (i) The Social Secretary, Editor of Polyglossia and Marketing and Sponsorship Secretary shall each form sub-committees
- (ii) Members of such sub-committees shall not have to attend main Committee meetings, although they are entitled to do so
- (iii) Members of such sub-committees shall not hold voting rights at those Committee meetings

## **Section 5.05          Senior Treasurer**

- (i) The Senior Treasurer holds their position indefinitely until they resign or are removed

- (ii) A new Senior Treasurer shall be elected by mutual agreement between the Committee and the outgoing Senior Treasurer
- (iii) The Senior Treasurer shall not be personally liable for any of Polyglossia's debts

## **Section 5.06          Duties of the Officers**

### **(i) The President shall**

- a) *Oversee the running of the society as a whole and direct its future development and growth*
- b) *Ensure that all other Committee members fulfil their elected roles and organise Society meetings as regularly as he/she sees fit (at least twice a term)*
- c) *Be the main point of contact for all third parties and in this capacity, pass on information, advice and contacts received from third parties to relevant committee members*
- d) *Liaise and correspond with the MML Faculty, other societies and university bodies, other universities and external bodies of interest to the Society in the UK*
- e) *Act as spokesman/woman at official engagements and as required*
- f) *Draw up and publicise the Agenda for all Society Meetings and take the chair at Society Meetings*
- g) *Be entitled to attend the meetings of any sub-committee, or receive reports from them*

### **(ii) The Vice President and International Officer shall**

- a) *Assist the President in his/her duties*
- b) *Organise elections held by the Society in accordance with the constitution*
- c) *Provide any necessary support/ correspondence/ structures of advice for those students on their Year Abroad/ those students planning their Year Abroad*
- d) *Liaise and correspond with other universities and external bodies of interest to the Society located abroad*

### **(iii) The Secretary shall**

- a) *Be responsible for organising all aspects of membership of the party, including taking payment from new members, keeping records of members and encouraging new members to join the society*
- b) *Book rooms for Society meetings and take minutes at those meetings (excluding meetings of sub-committees but including Hustings before elections)*
- c) *Publish minutes and agenda for Society meetings by sending them via email to all Society members*
- d) *Be responsible for all correspondence with the society via email in a weekly email detailing all Society news*
- e) *Supervise the Society notice board in the MML Faculty*
- f) *Ensure that the Society operates according to its constitution*

**(iv) The Treasurer shall**

- a) *The Treasurer shall have responsibility for the financial affairs of the Society in accordance with Article XIII of this Constitution*

**(v) The Social Secretary shall**

- a) *Be responsible for the organization of Society Events with the help of a sub-committee which they should draw up*
- b) *Provide regular events that fulfil Polyglossia's aims of providing opportunities for linguists to socialise, to improve their awareness of future career opportunities and to practise their languages*
- c) *Put on, as a minimum, an annual: Freshers' Event and Careers Fair (in Michaelmas term), Formal Dinner with AGM to coincide with the end of elections and a Garden party (in Easter term)*
- d) *Act as liaison between the social committee and the Society committee*
- e) *Collect student opinion and recommendations with regards to events to be put on by the society*

**(vi) The Editor of Polyglossia shall**

- a) *Oversee the publication of a biannual journal, Polyglossia, containing articles of interest to Linguists (of which the majority should be in foreign languages and written by students)*
- b) *Draw up a sub-committee to help publish the journal*
- c) *Distribute responsibilities within the committee as he/she sees fit, normally according to article content falling into one of four groups: Arts & Culture, Politics and Current Affairs, Creative Writing, and Travel*
- d) *Ensure that the journal is edited in time to print*
- e) *Ensure that the journal is fully funded by advertisements, sponsorship or other society funds before it goes to print*
- f) *Work towards the development and improvement of the journal*

**(vii) The Marketing and Sponsorship Secretary shall**

- a) Be responsible for promoting the society's events and services through all media channels (Attend meetings of the social sub-committee, in order to be instructed on events to be marketed)*
- b) Be responsible for attracting sponsorship of the society as a whole or for specific Society events or initiatives and by arranging advertisements to fund the journal (Attend meetings of the Editorial sub-committee in order to arrange journal advertisement)*
- c) Set up a marketing sub-committee in order to carry out these duties*
- d) Act as the link between the social and editorial sub-committees and the marketing sub-committee*
- e) Liaise with third parties to arrange member benefits including discounts on local and international services relevant to Polyglossia's members*
- f) Arrange and order Society stash, according to demand*

**(viii) The Webmaster shall**

- a) Manage the Society website, email accounts and any other online facilities, (other than banking), by updating and improving them where he/she sees fit*
- b) Assist any Society member with computer-related problems to the best of his/her ability (In particular working closely with the marketing secretary to promote events online)*
- c) Attend Society and (if necessary sub-committee) meetings*
- d) Work to promote the online profile of the Society*

## **Article VI. Committee Meetings**

### **Section 6.01 Committee Meetings**

- (i) Committee Meetings must be held at least twice a term
- (ii) They shall be chaired by the President
- (iii) A committee meeting may be called by either
  - a) *The President*
  - b) *Any three members of the Committee (not including sub-committee members)*
- (iv) Notice of Committee meetings must be given to all Committee members at least seven days in advance

### **Section 6.02 Attendance**

- (i) If a Committee member cannot make a meeting, they shall notify the Secretary not less than 24 hours before the meeting
- (ii) The secretary shall take minutes including the names of those Committee members present, the decisions taken at the meetings and, where deemed appropriate, the reasons for such decisions and these shall be communicated by email to the society members

### **Section 6.03 Handing Over**

- (i) The outgoing Committee shall hand over to the incoming Committee at the end of Easter term
- (ii) The outgoing President shall pass the incoming President a bound version of the Constitution, which shall be the authoritative copy

## **Article VII. Elections**

### **Section 7.01 The Elected Positions**

- (i) The elected posts for each term of office are those comprising the Committee, but not the sub-committees
- (ii) Excluding the Senior Treasurer, the Committee holds office for one calendar year from 1<sup>st</sup> July

### **Section 7.02 Candidature**

- (i) To stand for election, candidates must be students of the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages and/ or Linguistics at the University
- (ii) Joint candidatures are forbidden for all posts except Social Secretary, Editor of Polyglossia and Marketing Secretary
- (iii) To be eligible to run, the candidate must be a university student and resident in Cambridge for the University Terms which fall within his or her term of office

### **Section 7.03      The Returning Officer**

- (i) The Returning Officer shall be responsible for organising Hustings as well as for the administration of the elections
- (ii) The outgoing Vice-President shall be the Returning Officer, and the outgoing President shall be the Deputy Returning Officer
- (iii) If the outgoing Vice-President is barred from acting as Returning Officer, through standing for an elected position or some other reason, then the outgoing President, shall personally select a suitable Returning Officer
- (iv) The decision of the Returning Officer with regard to the running of the elections and interpretation of the Constitution regarding election matters shall be subject to a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer, whose decision shall be absolute and final

### **Section 7.04      Timing of Elections**

- (i) Elections shall take place by the beginning of Easter Term
- (ii) The Returning Officer must ensure that the candidates and all members of the Society eligible to vote are informed of the time of the elections and how to vote in the elections by e-mail and any other suitable form of advertisement, and that voting remains open for at least five hours

### **Section 7.05      Nominations**

- (i) All candidates must be nominated and seconded
- (ii) Any member of the Society may nominate or second a candidate for office, with the proviso that
  - a) *No candidate may nominate or second another candidate for office*
  - b) *Any such nomination shall be void*

### **Section 7.06      Opening of nominations**

- (i) The opening of nominations shall be not less than one week before the close of nominations and the time period shall be at the discretion of the returning officer
- (ii) The Returning Officer shall ensure that all eligible voters are notified of the opening of nominations by email at least five days in advance
- (iii) Prospective candidates submit their nominations to the Returning Officer at least in electronic format

### **Section 7.07**      **Close of nominations**

- (i) Nominations shall close one week before elections
- (ii) The Returning Officer shall ensure that all candidates and other members of the Society who are eligible to vote are notified of who is standing for elections by email and by posting manifestoes on the Society's notice board in the MML Faculty, and on the Society's website at least seven days before the elections

### **Section 7.08**      **Publicity**

- (i) Each candidate for a post on the Committee shall be required by the Returning Officer to submit a written manifesto of up to 250 words (including a single photograph only of themselves) by the close of nominations, which will be communicated to voters by the society
- (ii) Each candidate may use only society channels and any other online facilities to market their candidacy
- (iii) Failure to comply with this requirement invalidates the nomination
- (iv) The Returning Officer is required to bring these rules to the attention of candidates

### **Section 7.09**      **Hustings**

- (i) Hustings shall take place on the day preceding elections, and all candidates for all posts shall be required to present their manifestoes in a short speech
- (ii) The procedural format adopted at Hustings shall be determined by the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer. The procedural format must:
  - a) *Be notified to all candidates at least twenty four hours before Hustings*
  - b) *Allow each candidates a minimum of three minutes to speak*
  - c) *Allow the audience to ask each candidate at least two questions*
- (iii) Failure on the part of a candidate to attend Hustings without an excuse accepted by the Returning Officer shall constitute an electoral offence

- (iv) Year Abroad Candidates should partake in hustings via webcam and/or submit a written/video or audio speech to be played/ read out in their place
- (v) All resident candidates shall attend hustings
- (vi) These rules should be brought to the attention of the candidates, and enforced by, the Returning Officer
- (vii) The Returning Officer shall inform all eligible voters of the date, time and location of Hustings at least five days in advance. The Returning Officer should also encourage them to attend

## **Section 7.10      Electoral Offences**

- (i) It shall constitute an electoral offence for any candidate to
  - a) *Publish election material other than that approved first by the Returning Officer*
  - b) *Intimidate or defame any other candidate*
  - c) *Interfere with the publicity produced by another candidate*
  - d) *Perpetrate any other action which the Returning Officer considers to be contrary to the fair, dignified and equal procedure required in a Society election*
- (ii) If the Returning Officer considers that any candidate has committed an electoral offence, he or she may come to a decision with the Deputy Returning Officer as to the consequences
  - a) *This decision is subject to a right of appeal to the Committee in an emergency committee meeting, who may then come to a conclusion on a majority vote*
  - b) *The quorum for such a meeting is five people*
  - c) *The decision of the Committee is subject to a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer*
  - d) *In both cases, at the Committee meeting and before the Senior Treasurer, the accused candidate shall be allowed a hearing to make his or her case*

## **Section 7.11      Voting**

- (i) Voting registers
  - a) *The Society membership list shall be the voting register*
  - b) *The Society's membership list shall close on the opening of nominations, and any prospective voters must have paid their membership fee by that date*
- (ii) Only members of the Society who own a Raven account may vote in elections

- (iii) The Returning Officer must be satisfied that only eligible voters may cast a vote in the election and that the voting system satisfactorily identifies prospective voters
- (iv) Voting shall be by CUSU's online voting system for societies
- (v) Quorum: The total number of votes cast in an election shall first be ascertained and if this number is less than 25% (of those able to vote) of the total Polyglossia membership entered on the voting register as eligible to vote the Returning Officer shall declare the election to be a nullity and shall not proceed to count the votes. A further vote shall be held and the outcome shall be binding whether or not 25% of votes are cast
- (vi) Counting the votes: All elections shall be in accordance with the University Single Transferable Vote Regulations prescribed in the University of Cambridge for the time being in force

## **Section 7.12          Resignation of a Member of the Committee**

- (i) Any member of the Committee excluding the Secretary and President may resign their position in writing to the Secretary. After one week their position shall fall vacant.
- (ii) An EGM must be held within four weeks to appoint a new member to the vacant position on the Committee, unless no candidates come forward in which case the deadline shall be extended as required. The newly elected member will then hold their position until the next 1<sup>st</sup> July.

## **Article VIII.    Extraordinary General Meetings EGM**

### **Section 8.01          Calling an EGM**

- (i) An EGM may be called at the instigation of the President, a three-quarters majority of the Committee, or any twenty members of the Society
- (ii) If the President is not calling the EGM, then a petition must be made to the President who is then obliged to call it
- (iii) At least seven days' notice of such a meeting shall be given to all members of the Society
- (iv) The quorum at such a meeting shall be 30 members
- (v) The Secretary shall be responsible for publicising the EGM

- (vi) If the meeting concerns the conduct of the Secretary, then the President shall be responsible for publicity
- (vii) If the meeting concerns the conduct of the Secretary and President, then any Committee members not directly involved and those responsible for the instigation of the meeting shall be responsible for publicity

## **Section 8.02 Powers of an EGM**

- (i) To require any Committee member to give an account of his or her actions
- (ii) To remove any Committee member from office
- (iii) To alter the Society's Constitution
- (iv) Any proposed action at an EGM shall be approved by a three-quarters majority of those present at the meeting

## **Section 8.03 Right of Appeal**

- (i) Any Committee member removed from office by the procedure outlined above shall have a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer

## **Section 8.04 Minutes**

- (i) The Secretary shall maintain minutes of the names of those Committee members present, comments made and decisions taken at the meetings

## **Article IX. Annual General Meetings AGM**

**Section 9.01** An AGM shall be held at the end of Lent term, the date and time shall be left to the discretion of the President

**Section 9.02** At the AGM, the President shall be required to give a thorough report of the activities and progress of the Society over their term so far and plans for Easter term

**Section 9.03** The President, in conjunction with the rest of the Committee, shall be required to produce a written review and assessment of the work of each area of the Society, to be available both in printed format and on the website

## **Article X. Discipline**

### **Section 10.01 Impeachment of Committee Members**

- (i) If an elected member is considered to be failing in his or her duty as an Officer, a vote of impeachment may be proposed by either the President or two other Committee members
- (ii) The impeachment proposal must be presented to all members of the Committee and the Senior Treasurer
- (iii) The examination of the conduct of the member shall take place at an EGM, with the member in question permitted to answer any charges of misconduct or negligence brought against them
- (iv) The vote of impeachment shall be a secret ballot undertaken in the absence of the member in question
- (v) This process shall be subject to a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer

## **Article XI. Appeals**

### **Section 11.01 Requirements of the Senior Treasurer**

- (i) For the purposes of the removal of a society member, impeachment and other forms of discipline, the Senior Treasurer shall not be permitted to attend the Committee meetings or vote on the process
- (ii) An appeal shall be heard within a week of the Committee vote if requested by the aggrieved member
- (iii) The Senior Treasurer shall chair a panel of three, chosen at his or her discretion, to hear the appeal
- (iv) The appeal decision shall be absolute and final

## **Article XII. Amendments to Constitution**

### **Section 12.01 Manner of Alteration**

- (i) The Constitution may only be changed in the following ways
  - a) *By a three-quarters majority vote at an EGM*
  - b) *By a three-quarters majority vote of those members present at any Committee Meeting, the quorum for such a meeting being five people*
- (ii) Seven days notice of any amendment proposals shall be given to all Committee members

## **Section 12.02**      **Submission of proposals**

- (i)* Any proposed amendment in the Constitution must be submitted to the Senior Treasurer for final approval
- (ii)* Any proposed amendment to the Constitution shall take effect as soon as it has received the approval of the Senior Treasurer

## **Article XIII.    Treasurer**

### **Section 13.01**      **Requirements of the Treasurer**

- (i)* The Treasurer shall have particular responsibility for the financial affairs of the Society
- (ii)* He or she shall keep records of all expenditure and income which shall be inspected by the Committee at least twice during their term of office
- (iii)* He or she shall prepare the accounts of the Society for annual submission to the Junior Proctor, after their approval by the Senior Treasurer
- (iv)* All documents must be made available to the Treasurer-Elect for inspection within seven days after an election. They should officially be handed over before the end of the term of office
- (v)* The Treasurer is responsible for updating the Committee of the change in the financial status of the Society from the previous Committee meeting
- (vi)* The Treasurer is responsible for drawing up an annual budget of the amount to be spent and/ or raised and regarding the division of funds for the year following discussion by the Society on its aims for the year

## Section 13.02 Authorisation of Payments

- (i) The Treasurer shall be responsible for using the online banking facility to manage Society funds as well as for the security of any passwords associated with the online banking system
- (ii) The Treasurer shall make payments by cheque as far as is practical
- (iii) Any cheque to be paid out of Polyglossia funds, including any committee expenses, must be signed by a minimum of two members of the Committee
  - a) *One of these must be the Treasurer*
  - b) *It should be normal practice for the President to approve such transactions, but with his authorisation, or in the event of an emergency, the Vice-President or Secretary may provide theirs*
- (iv) Authorisation should take the form of a written declaration stating the date of transfer, intended transferee, a short description of the reason for payment and the amount of the payment, signed in accordance with the authorisation procedure under subsection (iii) above. This declaration should be kept with the society accounts.
- (v) Such authorisation should usually occur before payment is made, however in an emergency or when practicality prohibits this (such as when a payment must be made within a short period outside of term) a transfer may be ratified in writing after the event. In this case there must be: (a) An oral authorisation before the online payment is made (b) A written ratification, made as soon as practically possible. A subsequent ratification shall be conducted in the same manner as a prior authorisation and record that oral authorisation was given before the payment occurred.