



# THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Oxford University Department  
for Continuing Education

## CONSTITUTION

[2009 version; 5.3 and 6.1b modified in 2016]

### 1. OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIETY

- 1.1 To promote philosophical discussion and contact between people, of any background, who have an interest in philosophy.
- 1.2 Under the auspices of the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education (OUDCE), to support the organisation of lectures and courses in philosophy, thereby enabling members to hear distinguished speakers and to participate in philosophical discussion.
- 1.3 To retain a close relationship with OUDCE, so that the objectives of both shall be furthered.
- 1.4 To encourage the formation of local discussion groups.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY

- 2.1 Membership shall be open to any who are interested in philosophy.
- 2.2 Members are defined as those who have paid subscriptions for the current calendar year, or who are honorary life members.
- 2.3 Honorary life membership may be awarded to anyone who has rendered exceptional service to the Society, to be awarded only by a majority vote at any Annual General Meeting (AGM).

### 3. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 Members receive notice of future courses and lectures.
- 3.2 Members receive a free copy of the Philosophical Society Review, which is published annually, and to which they are invited to contribute.
- 3.3 Members may borrow books on philosophy from the Rewley House Library, and audio recordings of previous lectures from the Society's Recordings Library.
- 3.4 Members are entitled to participate in the AGM and are able to influence the selection of topics and speakers for future weekends.
- 3.5 At the AGM one vote may be exercised by each member. The Chairman shall have the casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes.
- 3.6 Members may be considered for bursaries designed to assist members on limited incomes with course fees. These are limited in number, and allocated at the discretion of the President.

### 4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 4.1 The subscription year will commence on 1st January and will end on 31st December of the same year.
- 4.2 The subscription for the following year will be decided at the AGM.
- 4.3 Renewal of subscription is due before January of each year. If the subscription is not received by the end of February, membership may be deemed to have lapsed.

### 5. OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

- 5.1 The officers of the Society are : the President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor of the Society's Review, Web Master, Recordings Librarian, and Communications Officer.
- 5.2. The **President** of the Society will be the Director of Studies in Philosophy for OUDCE. He or she will act as the executive officer of the Society. When planning and arranging the detailed programmes he or she will take into account the general policy laid down by the Committee. In the absence of the Chairman, the President will act as Chairman at meetings of the Society and Committee.
- 5.3. The **Chairman** will hold the office for three years, not being eligible for re-election in the following year. The Chairman will preside at the annual general meeting and will take the chair at the meetings of the Committee. The Chairman's function will be to stimulate interest in

the society's programme and to represent, as far as possible, the viewpoints of members in planning general policy.

- 5.4. The **Secretary** will prepare agendas for meetings, write minutes of the meetings and keep records of the Society's activities, and will also maintain a list of members and be responsible for issuing membership application forms and ensuring that new members are issued with appropriate documents.
- 5.5 The **Treasurer** will be responsible for the funds of the Society, keep adequate accounts, and advise the President and Committee on financial matters.
- 5.6 The **Editor** will be responsible for all aspects of the production of an electronic version of the Society's Review at suitable intervals. The creation of an editorial board will be at the discretion of the Editor.
- 5.7 The **Web Master** will be responsible for maintaining the website, including updates of all the regular items, with editorial discretion, in appropriate consultation with the Chairman.
- 5.8 The **Recordings Librarian** will be responsible for the Society's Recordings Archive and for making the recordings available to members at appropriate times.
- 5.9 The **Communications Officer** will be responsible for the physical production and distribution to members of printed matter such as the Annual Review and the year card, working with other Society officers as required. He/she will also be responsible for ensuring that such events as Members' Day and the Society's annual dinner are organised, in collaboration with the Chairman and the Committee.

## 6. THE COMMITTEE

- 6.1 This will consist of the following:
  - a) the officers of the Society;
  - b) at least four ordinary members who will serve for three years and who will not be eligible for re-election during the following year.
- 6.2 The Committee will meet at least once per year and at such times as it may think necessary. Its function is to plan the general policy of the Society and elicit and represent the members' wishes.
- 6.3 The Committee shall have the power to co-opt further members for special purposes, but these members shall have no vote in Committee unless otherwise authorised by the Committee. Such members will hold office for one year but will be eligible for re-election.
- 6.4 Members of the Committee may claim legitimate expenses.

## 7. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 7.1 There will be an Annual General Meeting of members of the Society, for the election of officers and members of the Committee, and to provide a platform for the expression of members' opinions. The Chairman will take the chair.
- 7.2 Notice of the AGM and an agenda shall be given to all members at least 21 days prior to the date of the meeting by post, email, publication on the Society's web site, or in the Review.
- 7.3 Changes to this constitution may be made by majority vote at the AGM. Prior notice of 60 days must be given to a Committee member of any proposed changes, and all members must be informed (as per Clause 7.2) when the meeting agenda is issued.
- 7.4 The AGM may elect a President Emeritus and approve the appointment of life members. It will determine the membership fee, and make recommendations about the general use of the funds of the Society.
- 7.5 Resolutions shall be decided by simple voting by a show of hands. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a second and casting vote.
- 7.6 A quorum at the AGM shall be at least 15 members.

## 8. FUNDS

- 8.1 The Treasurer shall receive all monies on behalf of the Society.
- 8.2 Society funds shall be banked with a bank or other organization approved by the Committee, and all cheques shall be signed by one of two persons nominated by the Committee.
- 8.3 The Treasurer shall submit to the AGM a statement of account.