# The Constitution of the Open University Club

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aims and Objectives</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club Committee &amp; Membership</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elections</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Club Finance</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliated Clubs</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional and National Social Clubs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources and Facilities</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disputes</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Name**

The name of the Club shall be The Open University Club. The Open University Club is a sub division of Estates.

2. **Aims and Objectives**

To provide opportunities for members of Staff of the Open University to participate in social, recreational and cultural activities and to provide a meeting point between Open University Staff and members of the public; to develop social amenities and promote activities of interest and benefit to members.

3. **Membership**

**Ordinary Members are:**

- All employees and research students of The Open University shall automatically become ordinary members of The Open University Club.
- Entitled to the use of such facilities as The Open University Club may have at its disposal.
- Entitled to stand for election to The Open University Club Committee, its Sub Committees or Committees of Affiliated Clubs, of which they are members.
- Entitled to vote at any AGM or EGM meetings or in any ballot or referendum of The Open University Club. Permanent members of The Open University Club staff or those temporarily occupying a permanently established post of The Open University Club may not be voting members of the Club Committee or its Sub Committee.

**Honorary Members are:**

- All retired members of The Open University who automatically become Honorary Members of The Open University Club. Honorary Membership may also be granted to anyone else at the discretion of the Club Committee.
- Staff of the organisations that are contracted by the OU and approved by the OU Club.
- Entitled to the use of such facilities as The Open University Club may have at its disposal, where not detrimental to Ordinary Members.
- Not entitled to stand for election to The Open University Club Committee or its Sub Committees.
- Not entitled to vote at The Open University Club meetings, AGM, EGM or in any Open University Club ballot or referendum.
- Entitled to stand for election to Committees or Affiliated Clubs of which they are members other than as Treasurer.
Reciprocal Arrangements

Members of clubs with which an arrangement has been made, shall enjoy such privileges as Honorary Members of The Open University Club as shall be determined from time to time by The Club Committee.

Card and Constitution

All members shall be presented, on demand, with a copy of the Constitution and if required an appropriate membership card. The card must be signed by the member and is not transferable.

Termination of Membership

Any member who ceases to be eligible under the terms of their membership shall lose all rights of membership and surrender their Open University Club membership card, if held.

Organisation Chart

4. President

There may be an Honorary President who will normally be the Vice Chancellor of The Open University.

5. Club Committee & Membership

Club Committee

- There shall be a Club Committee, the terms of reference of which shall be; to formulate and implement policy for the conduct of The Open University Club, its sub Committees and Affiliated Clubs and where necessary in accordance with any resolutions of the Annual General Meeting.
• The Club Committee will be accountable for its activities to the Director of Estates through the Head of Operations, who will provide advice and guidance on strategic issues and matters relating to University policy, procedures and regulations.

• The quorum for the Club Committees shall be half its membership.

**Membership**

The membership of the Club Committee shall normally be as follows:

**Club Chair**, who shall:

• Chair Club Committee and General Meetings. In the absence of a Club Chair, a nominated member of the Club Committee shall deputise.

• Be the primary contact for the Club Office.

• In conjunction with the Club Office be the OU Club representative when meeting with Affiliated Clubs and members of staff.

• In conjunction with the Club Office be the OU Club representative when meeting external organisations.

• Prepare and report on the Club’s activities for the year for presentation to the OU Club Annual General Meeting.

• Act as co-signatory for purchase orders and authorisation of invoices. Authorisation levels will be subject to University regulations and Estates approval limits.

**Club Office Representative**, being an ex-officio non-voting member of the Club Committee, who shall:

• Co-ordinate the day-to-day activities of The Open University Club.

• Administer and service Club Committee and Sub Committees’ Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary Meetings.

• Give notice of General Meetings.

• Give notice of proposed amendments to The Open University Club Constitution.

• Act as Returning Officer for all elections of The Open University Club.

• Perform such duties and services for the Open University Club, the Club Committee and Sub Committees as may be determined from time to time by the Club Committee.

• In consultation with the Chair of The Open University Club Finance Committee, the Open University’s Estates and Finance Divisions, administer the financial documentation and running of the office operations of The Open University Club.

**Club Treasurer**, who shall:

• Act as Chair of the OU Club Finance Committee as and when required.
• Oversee the finances of The Open University Club and expected expenditure on club budgets in conjunction with Estates and assist in preparing monthly and yearly forecasting and year end accrual and pre-payment processes.

• Participate in the unit planning and budget setting process for presentation to Estates Finance. Budgets are to relate to The Open University Club’s annual financial requirements.

• Present periodic financial statements for approval by the Club Committee at the regular Club Committee meetings or as requested by the Club Committee.

• Assist Affiliated Club Treasurers with annual bids and financial reporting and controls when requested.

• Prepare a report on the Club’s financial activities for the year for presentation at the OU Club’s Annual General Meeting.

• Act as co-signatory for purchase orders and authorisation of invoices. Authorisation levels will be subject to University regulations and Estates approval limits.

The Entertainments Chair, who shall:

• Be responsible for the planning and organisation of a variety of events throughout the year, in line with the stated aims of The Open University Club.

• Chair the Entertainments Committee as and when required.

• Be responsible for encouraging other members of The Open University staff to organise events as part of The Open University Club’s Entertainments programme, and to offer advice and assistance where appropriate or necessary.

• Be responsible for ensuring that The Club Office is kept informed of all appropriate decisions regarding the Entertainments programme.

• Report monthly to the Club Committee on the planning, organisation and outcome of events in the Entertainments programme. Monthly cost forecasts are to be prepared and submitted to the Treasurer in order that forecast processes can be undertaken.

• Prepare a report on the year’s Entertainments programme for presentation at The Open University Club Annual General Meeting.

• Act as a co-signatory for The Open University Club purchase orders and invoices and be responsible for over-seeing budget expenditure from The Open University Club’s Entertainment budget.

The Sports Chair, who shall:

• Act as The Open University Club’s primary contact with The Open University on matters relating to sports facilities, and implement policy decisions of the Open University Club in association with sports activities.

• Chair the Sports Committee, as and when required.

• Act, in conjunction with the Club Office, as The Open University Club’s contact with Affiliated Clubs and external sports organisations other than those relating to specific sports (e.g. the local Sports Council).
• Be responsible for ensuring that the Club Office is kept informed of all appropriate decisions made regarding sporting matters.

• Report on the Club Committee on sports activities.

• Prepare a report on the year’s sporting activities for presentation to The Open University Club’s Annual General Meeting.

• Act as co-signatory for The Open University’s Club purchase order and invoices and be responsible for over-seeing budget expenditure from the Open University Club’s Sports budget. Monthly cost forecasts are to be prepared and submitted to the Treasurer in order that forecast processes can be undertaken.

The Club Committee Secretary, who shall:

• Be responsible for taking the minutes at meetings of the Club Committee, Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings.

• Act as co-signatory for The Open University’s purchase order and invoices. Authorisation levels will be subject to University regulations and Estates approval limits.

Ordinary Committee Members:

• Up to ten elected Ordinary Committee Members, at least one of whom is encouraged to be a member of University Staff not based at Walton Hall.

Co-opted Committee Members:

• It shall be open to the Club Committee to co-opt additional members for any purpose except that in no circumstances may the size of the Club Committee exceed twenty members.

No individual may hold more than one of the Club Committee posts at any one time.

Rights of Attendance:

• For business affecting an Affiliated Club, a representative of that Affiliated Club shall be entitled to attend the Club Committee meeting but shall have no voting rights.

6. **Meetings**

The operational year of The Open University Club shall run in line with that of The Open University.

**Club Committee Meetings:**

Club Committee meetings shall be called by the Club Office at least six times a year, giving at least seven days’ notice in writing to all Club Committee members. Additional meetings may be called by agreement of the Club Committee.
Annual General Meeting:

There shall be an Annual General Meeting before the end of the financial year and at least twenty eight days notice shall be given by the Club Office. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting shall be available at the Annual General Meeting and by request from The Club Office no earlier than twenty eight days after the previous Annual General Meeting.

Proposals for amendment to the Constitution, additional agenda items and nominations for election must be submitted to the Club Office not less than fourteen days before the meeting. The final agenda will be available seven days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

All communication regarding the Annual General Meeting will be posted on the Club website, noticeboards at Walton Hall and other premises of the Open University as appropriate.

All Affiliated Clubs shall be constitutionally obliged to send at least one member of their Club to the Annual General Meeting.

The quorum for an Annual General Meeting shall be twenty five ordinary members, not including the Chair, Treasurer, Entertainments Chair, Sports Chair and Secretary, hereon referred to as Executive Officers.

No meeting of Affiliated Club or other activity organised on behalf of The Open University Club shall normally take place concurrently with the Annual General Meeting of The Open University Club.

The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Elect the members of the Club Committee for the coming operational year.
- Receive, discuss and approve the Club Chair’s report on the previous year’s activities of the Open University Club.
- Receive, discuss and approve the Club Treasurer’s report on the Open University Club’s financial activities for the year and financial position at the end of the University’s financial year preceding the meeting.
- Receive and discuss other Sub-Committee Chair reports.
- Consider any matters relating to policy and practice of The Open University Club. The Annual General Meeting shall be empowered to make amendments to the Constitution.
- Receive, and consider for approval, the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and of any subsequent Extraordinary General Meeting.

Extraordinary General Meeting:

An Extraordinary General meeting may be declared by the Club Committee, or on receipt of a request signed by not less than twelve Ordinary Members. It shall take place not later than ten working days from the date of the request, except where amendments to the Constitution are proposed, in which case the meeting shall take place not earlier than fifteen working days and not later than twenty working days following the receipt of the request. The agenda will be available, at least five working days prior to the Extraordinary General Meeting.

An Extraordinary Meeting may take amendments to the Constitution, and consider any matter relating to policy or practice of The Open University Club. No business other than that on the agenda shall be transacted.
The quorum for an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be twenty-five Ordinary Members not including Executive Officers.

Voting at the Annual General meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting:

Voting at all General Meetings shall be by simple majority of all Ordinary Members present, except for amendments to the Constitution, which shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote. The Club Chair shall have a casting vote.

Sub Committee Meetings:

Sub Committee Meetings shall be called as necessary by the relevant Chair of the Sub Committee. Minutes of these meetings should be taken and distributed to The Open University Committee members within one week of the meeting.

Voting at Committee and Sub Committee Meetings:

Voting at Club Committee Meetings and Sub Committees shall be by simple majority of those present. The relevant Chair shall have a deliberate and a casting vote.

The minutes of these meetings, once approved, shall be available to Ordinary Members from the Club Office.

7. Elections

All elections shall take place at the Annual General Meeting, or at an Extraordinary General meeting, if necessary.

- The Club Office representative shall act as Returning Officer.
- The method of voting in all elections shall be by simple majority.
- Candidates for election as Officers or Members of the Club Committees or of Sub Committees shall be proposed and seconded by Ordinary Members on forms available from the Returning Officer.
- Completed forms must be submitted to the Returning Officer not less than fourteen working days before the Annual General Meeting, or not less than seven working days before an Extraordinary Meeting.
- Should the number of persons nominated be less than the number of vacancies, the Club Committee shall be by co-option of Ordinary Members who are willing to fill such vacancies.
- Mid-term resignations by Officers of any Club Committees shall be filled by co-option where possible by the Club Committee.

8. Central Club Finance

Allocation of funds to The Open University Club will be made at the discretion of the Open University through the annual unit planning and budget setting process with Estates and Finance. The amount of which shall be reported each year to the Annual General Meeting.

It shall be the responsibility of The Open University Club Committee to:

- Ensure appropriate financial controls are in place and that financial activities are conducted in line with the Open University's financial regulations.
• Promote other legal fund-raising activities.

• Administer funds from external sources, as required.

The financial year of The Open University Club shall end in line with the current financial year of The Open University.

The Open University Club shall present its Annual Report and financial statement to the Council of The Open University if and when requested to do so.

Payment requests, purchase orders and requisitions on behalf of The Open University Club shall be signed or authorised jointly by two of the named co-signatories. University authorisation levels and system accesses will be applied by the Estates Finance Department. The Open University Club Committee members are required to operate within these authorisation levels. Where orders have been approved in accordance with the above procedure, invoices may be approved by the Committee Member responsible for the expenditure i.e. as confirmation that the services or goods have been provided to their satisfaction.

Internal reviews of Affiliated Club activities may take place from time to time by Estates Finance.

9. **Affiliated Clubs**

The Open University Club has a general but not exclusive interest in the promotion of social and cultural activities within the University, and for this purpose Affiliated Clubs may be formed.

An Affiliated Club is:

• An association of members of staff of The Open University, with or without others, formed independently and adopted by The Open University Club after application and investigation.

• The terms under which a Club may be affiliated are:
  
  • The Club shall be open to any member of The Open University Club, however where facilities are limited, it shall be within the power of the Affiliated Club Committees to determine the level of membership and to give preference to Ordinary Members on a first come first served basis above all other categories of membership.
  
  • The Club shall hold an Annual General Meeting within the specified Open University financial year.
  
  • The Club shall provide minutes of the Annual General Meeting, (or a written report), to The Open University Club Committee within 4 weeks of the affiliated club AGM.
  
  • The Club shall prepare annual financial reports; to be submitted with the minutes of the Annual General Meeting. Financial records should be for a minimum period of six years as part of good accounting practices.
  
  • The Club should have at least two Committee Members nominated with their banking institution as signatories to cheque and withdrawal processes.
  
  • Proposals for affiliation of a Club must include a Constitution and a brief summary of the Club’s proposed programme, which must be submitted to The Open University Club Committee for approval.
  
  • Such other terms as determined by the Club Committee shall from time to time.

Further requirements and obligations such as finances and Committee structure can be found in the Affiliated Club Handbook located on the OU Club website.
10. **Regional and National Social Clubs**

Staff members based at locations outside Walton Hall may wish to form a local social club. A Committee will be elected consisting of a minimum of a Chairperson and a Treasurer. Their roles will be to administer controls, ensuring that The Open University's financial regulations are adhered to at all times. Funding may be provided, to support their social activities, via the annual bidding process.

An annual financial report is to be submitted to The Open University Club Committee reflecting all transactions and cash balances being held by the Club.

Internal audits may be performed by Estates Finance on an ad-hoc basis or as requested by The Open University Club Committee.

Further requirements and obligations can be found in the Regional and National handbook located on the OU Club website.

11. **Equipment**

An inventory of assets and equipment held by all Clubs including The Open University Club shall be maintained, including information regarding its condition, place of storage and replacement cost values. A copy of these inventories shall be held in the Club Office.

Amendments to the inventory of any Affiliated, Regional and National Clubs shall be notified immediately to the Club Office.

The Affiliated Clubs and Regional and National Social Clubs are expected to take full responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of their equipment.

12. **Resources and Facilities**

Facilities for Club activities will be made available at the discretion of the Director of Estates. Allocation of such facilities will be the responsibility of the Club Committee.

Estates will not accept any liability for the loss of costs incurred by the Club, Affiliated Clubs or any other third party as a result of cancellation or withdrawal of such facilities. University business will take priority over any Club activity.

13. **Policy**

The Club will comply with all University policies relevant to its activities, in particular relating to Equal Opportunities (including EO monitoring), Human Resources and Health & Safety. A list of current University policies can be obtained from Human Resources.

14. **Discipline**

All members of the University Club and Affiliated Clubs will be expected to abide by the principles and values of Open University policy. Any issue of conduct will be dealt with by the Club Committee in accordance with the relevant University policy (e.g. bullying and harassment.)

Where such issues relate to an Affiliated Club, the Club Committee will be responsible for ensuring appropriate action is taken, which may include exclusion or expulsion from the Club.

Where such conduct issues relate to a breach of University policy, the matter will be escalated within Estates and relevant advice will be sought from the University’s Human Resources Division regarding the appropriate course of action, which may include disciplinary action for members of University staff.
15. **Disputes**

In the event of a dispute which cannot be resolved between Affiliated Clubs and the Committee, the matter may be referred to the Director of Estates for arbitration, only once all reasonable endeavours to resolve at Club level and through escalation within Estates have been exhausted.

In such cases, the decision of the Director of Estates will be final.

16. **Interpretation**

The Club Committee shall act as the sole interpreter in the event of any ambiguity or difference of opinion concerning the purport of interpretation of any clause of this Constitution, with reference to the Director of Estates as appropriate.

The Club Committee shall be empowered to deal with any relevant matter not provided for in the Constitution, with reference to the Director of Estates as appropriate.

The Constitution and any amendments to the Constitution shall be presented to the Council of The Open University if and when the Council so requests.