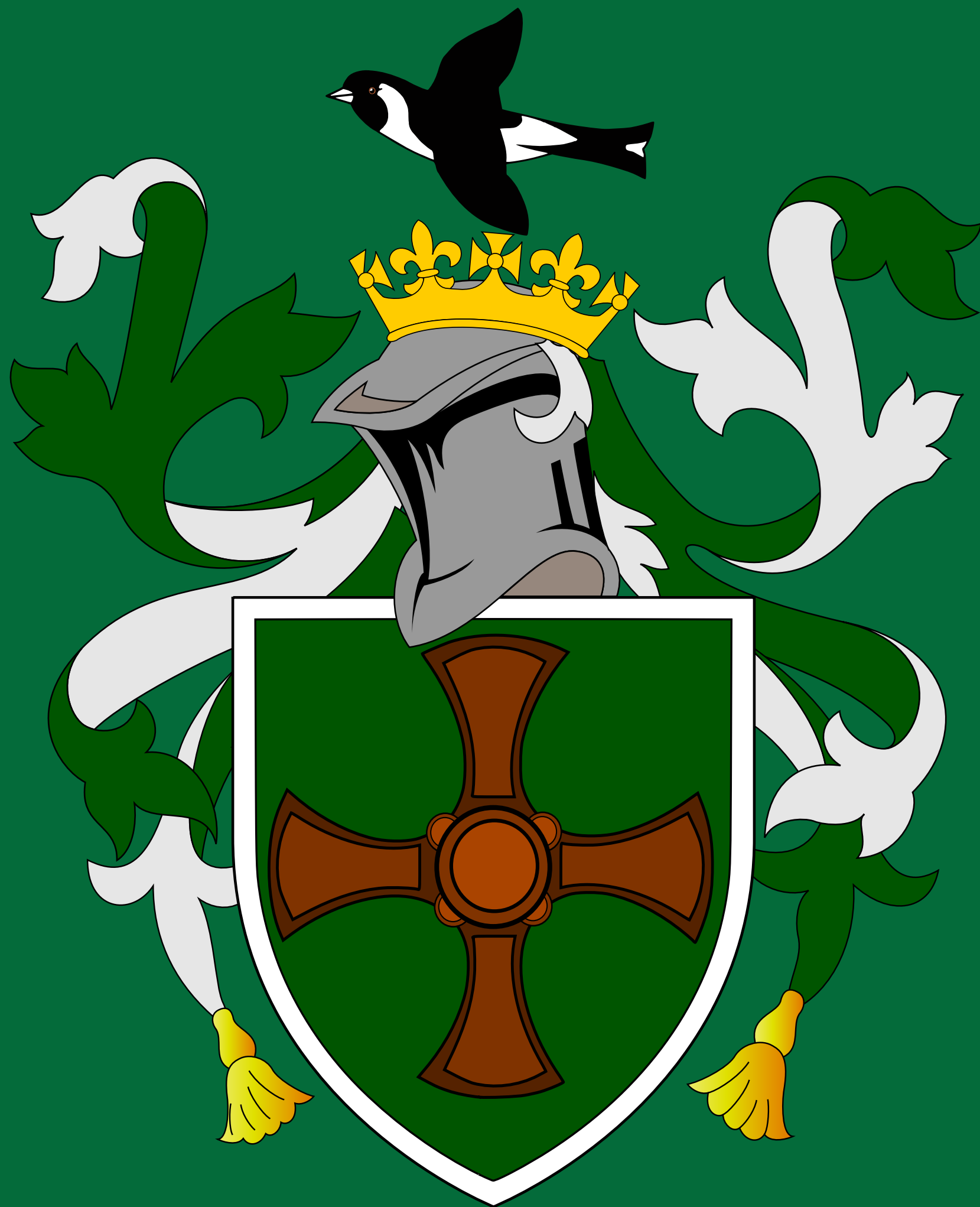


# JCR meeting handbook

2024/2025



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# meet the jcr chair!

email: [chair@cuths.com](mailto:chair@cuths.com)  
insta: [cuths\\_jcr\\_elections](https://www.instagram.com/cuths_jcr_elections)



Hi everyone!

I'm Louise and I'm a 2nd year Maths and Chemistry student and I am so excited to be your JCR chair this year. This role essentially means that I'm in charge of organising and running JCR meetings, looking after the standing orders which are the documents which the JCR runs from and chairing the Governance Committee (which you can get involved in at the first meeting!).

For those unfamiliar, the JCR meetings are where we pass motions to create new societies, allocate budgets and make governance changes to the day-to-day running of the JCR all of which are a great way to make any changes that YOU want to see in Cuths.

Together with Ruairidh, I have meticulously crafted this handbook to demystify Cuths' governance. Our aim is to ensure it's as straightforward as possible to understand the inner workings of our community and how you can actively participate. This handbook encompasses everything from drafting motions and understanding standing orders to the composition of committees and election rules.

Reflecting on my own experience, I remember being in your position last year, somewhat unsure of the purpose of a JCR meeting and bewildered by the jargon and rules that everyone else seemed to grasp. That's precisely why we've created this handbook - to provide clarity and make it all more accessible.

As for my journey to becoming JCR Chair, it began rather unexpectedly. At the first meeting, persuaded by a flatmate, I ran for Students' Union Rep, and though I wasn't elected, it turned out to be a fortunate twist. Two of my flatmates were however elected, so I accompanied them to the next JCR meeting, where a few previous JROs encouraged me to run for JRO. On a whim, with little knowledge of what the role entailed, I decided to go for it - and, to my surprise, I was elected. That was the start of my love with Cuths' Governance. The turning point to becoming chair came during the Presidential meeting when Ruairidh and I, while on a pizza run to Spags, discussed the future of GovComm. It was then I decided to run for JCR Chair. So, I urge you to take the leap and run for a position, even if you're not entirely sure what it involves. It's a brilliant way to make friendships across different year groups and contribute meaningfully to the Cuths community.

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me, Ruairidh or any other members of the exec. We're here to support you and are eager for you to get as involved as possible. Our main goal this year is to engage as many people as possible.

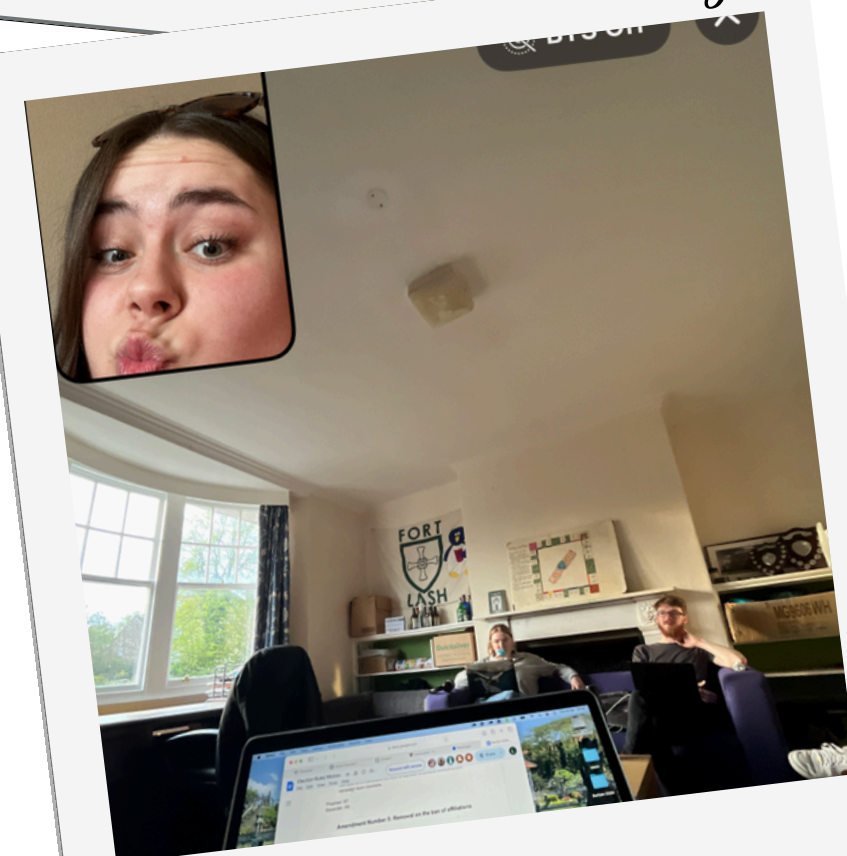
Lots of Cuths' Governance Love,  
Louise xxx



Louise Liles (she/her)  
[chair@cuths.com](mailto:chair@cuths.com)



GovComm at a JCR meeting



GovComm meeting



GovComm lifting Prez



# meet the SRO!



Hi, I'm Ruairidh, I'm a third year primary education student and I'll be your Senior returning officer, or SRO, this year. As SRO I organise and run the elections for any elected JCR positions, meaning I make sure all election materials meets the criteria, rules are being followed on campaigning, and arguably most importantly, the JCR voting page is working properly! You'll see me in JCR meetings timing speeches, and working closely with Junior Returning Officers to make sure any election-related material in meetings is run smoothly and effectively, and I'll also be sitting on GovComm, lending a helping hand to the chair and pres and vice-pres.



Ruairidh Forbes (he/him)

[sro@cuths.com](mailto:sro@cuths.com)

I had absolutely no interest in the JCR in my first year at university – there's a bit of a myth that the JCR and sports don't mix (which is a lie), and because I got involved in a few sports at Cuth's, I didn't really engage with the JCR until 2nd year, where after frepping with last year's JCR chair, and SRO, I was encouraged (forced) into running for JRO – or junior returning officer. I had no clue what the role entailed, and in the first meeting, I wasn't utterly enthralled by the endless motions and reports. However, over the year, I realised that the JCR is more like a family that a common room, and I eventually found myself so interested by the motions and standing orders that, after a little bit of encouragement, I ended up running for SRO – which I did whilst I had 12 staples in my head – big shout out to the JCR for supporting me in it, and for all the help I had from members! If you're on the fence about getting involved with the JCR I'd say get stuck in, get involved and become part of the Cuth's family!

## Could you be the final members of GovComm?



Their duties shall be:

- To assist the Senior Returning Officer with the running of elections,
- To oversee the Senior Returning Officer's counting of votes,
- To advertise upcoming elections by putting up posters and posting on social media pages,
- To take over the duties of the Senior Returning Officer should they step down from their position, and
- Carry out the role of SRO should the Stool be unavailable.



Their duties shall be to:

- Assist the JCR Chair in any of their duties,
- Ensure only JCR Members attend JCR Meetings,
- Keep a board of statistics during each JCR Meeting,
- Chair any General, Extraordinary, Constitutional or Governance Committee meetings in the absence of the JCR Chair,
- To organise the prizes and run the raffle during the JCR meeting, and
- Carry out the role of JRO should one or more of the JROs be unavailable.



# meet the president and VP!



G'day everyone, lovely to meet y'all I'm Dan Mercer. I've been elected to be your President of the Society for the next year. Just this past July I graduated with a BSc in Mathematics and Philosophy, and now my degree is all done. It's time to begin my year in office as the JCR's President of the Society. I work full-time to represent you to College and the wider university, and am also in charge of overseeing everything that happens in the JCR. One of the many aspects of the JCR I look over is JCR Governance.



Dan Mercer (he/him)

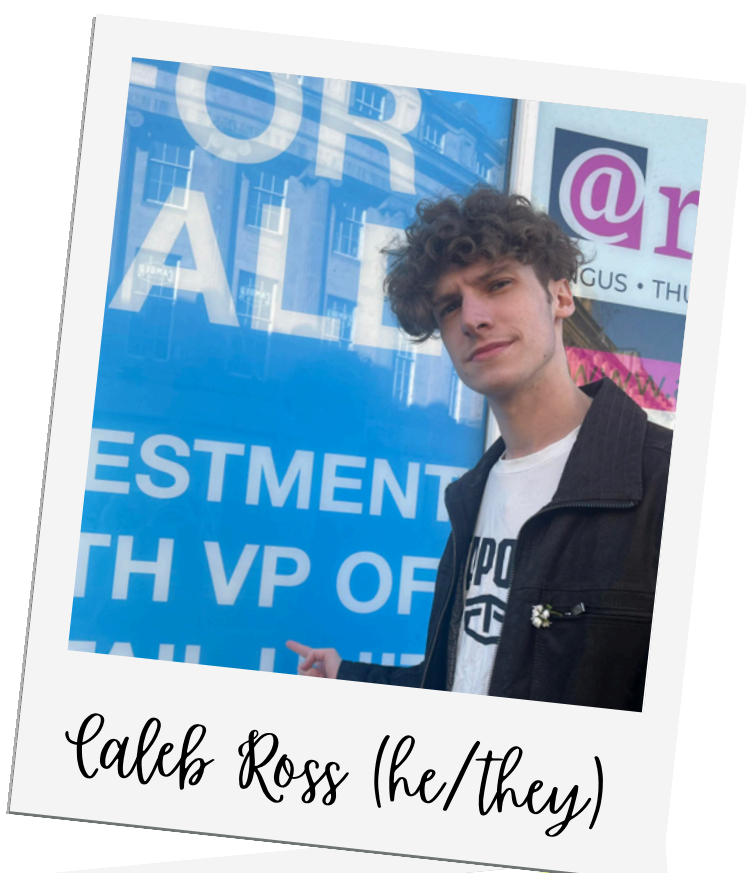
[president@cuths.com](mailto:president@cuths.com)

Throughout my time in Cuth's I've ran in far too many elections! In my first year coming into University as a Working Class student I really wanted to work on the access the University, College and JCR provided around class so I ran to be the Assistant Working Class Students Representative, then I ran to be the main Working Class Representative along with the role of Communities Committee Chair. Then still as a fresher I ran to be the Senior Welfare Officer going into my second year, but I lost that one! However, I knew I still had a passion for Welfare and wanted to be involved in my second year leading me to run to be the Male Welfare Officer! Giving it another shot, I ran to be the Senior Welfare Officer again and hold the role in my third year. This time I won, and found myself with my first (permanent) Exec position. FINALLY it came to January of my final year here in Cuth's and I had unfinished business, so I ran and won the role of President of the Society, hence why I'm sticking around this year.

Hi, I'm Caleb the JCR's vice president. My role consists of generally assisting Dan and minuting every committee meeting but when it comes to GovComm I also get to exercise my adequate knowledge of the standing orders.

Last year I was both a member of Welfare Campaigns and Assistant Student with Disabilities Rep because I was passionate about issues surrounding ableism and mental health. From there I saw how much the JCR actually do and found a community of engaged and welcoming individuals.

With encouragement from those closest to me I decided to run for vice president and at many points felt like I had no idea what I was doing. At the end of the day I knew I had ideas on how I would be as a VP and I trusted my gut and got it.



Caleb Ross (he/they)



VP and Presidents

[vice-president@cuths.com](mailto:vice-president@cuths.com)



# what's in the agenda?



At the start of each term the dates of the JCR meetings for the whole term will be posted and then 7 days before the meeting we will advertise which roles are running on @cuths\_jcr\_elections and Cuths' JCR Elections Facebook page.

The official agenda is typically circulated online under the event description of each meeting on the Facebook page 24 hours before the meeting, provided there aren't any technical difficulties. Printed copies of the agenda are often circulated at the meeting for your reference. Here is an example agenda:

If you are a JCR officer you must send apologies to the vice president at vice-president@cuths.com before the JCR meeting

Caleb is in charge of writing all the minutes!

**JCR Meeting 1.1 Agenda (06/10/2024)**

- Apologies**
- Approval of Minutes**
- Reports**
- Correspondence**
- Motions**
  - Postgraduate and Mature Students' Representatives Restructure Motion  
*Mature and Postgraduate students representation on Welfare and Communities Committees*
  - Creation of Cuths Formula One Society  
*Motion to establish Cuths Formula One Society*
  - Creation of Cuths Wine Appreciation Society  
*Motion to establish Cuths Wine Appreciation Society*
- Break**
- Raffle**
- Elections**
  - PGM President (I)
  - Development Officer (I)
  - Tech Manager (I)
  - POC Rep (I)
  - Music Rep (I)
  - Bar Officer (I)
  - Environment Rep (I)
  - PG Treasurer (II)
  - Stool (II)
  - JRO x 3 (II)
  - SU Comm Member x 3 (II)

Depending on the meeting, different people will submit a written report about what they have been up to recently

Where anyone can make an announcement :)

Example motions

The next section explains motions!

The BEST part - and it's free

(I) = method I elections  
↳ Needs some preparation but continue reading to see what!

(II) = method II elections  
↳ NO prep needed

Elections are run by Ruairidh!



# what are the standing orders?



**What are the standing orders?** <https://cuths.com/standing-orders/>

**Rules** and **guidelines** that govern how the JCR functions and are needed in order to be compliant with the law. Louise's main focus is editing them and changes can only be made by passing different motions. They help maintain order, promote transparency, and ensure that all members understand their roles and responsibilities within the committee. The current standing orders we have are:

## Standing Orders

Meetings of the JCR Order

Positions in the JCR Order

Terms of Office Order

JCR Membership Order

DSU Assembly Elections Order

Method I Rules Order

Method II Rules Order

Method III Rules Order

Referendum Rules Order

Funds Order

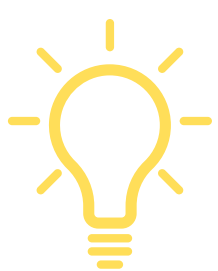
Budgeting Order

Election Sanctions and Appeals Order

Sports and Societies Order

Awards Order

Optional Order



- If you are thinking of taking up a position or have found yourself with a position it would be beneficial to have a read of "Positions in the JCR order"
- Don't worry about trying to know the standing orders inside and out very few people do, but they are good documents to refer to in certain situations.

## Points of Order and Information

Points of order and information can be made at any time by calling either 'order' or 'information' if there's a term or standing order that needs to be understood.

It must only be made to seek or to offer factual information relevant to the matter then under discussion.

# how to write a motion:



A motion is a **formal proposal** put forward to the JCR that usually changes the way the JCR works. They allow us to change the rules of the JCR (the Standing Orders), to create new positions or societies, to have the JCR take an official stance on key issues, to allocate JCR finances, and more therefore writing a motion is your way of getting the JCR to do what you want!

Motions may be proposed by any Full or Honorary member and seconded by another Full or Honorary member. They should be of the form but may not require all of the parts:

- **This JCR Notes:** should explain the current situation and should be purely factually based.
- **This JCR Believes:** should explain what the proposer thinks should happen and as such is likely to be more opinion based.
- **This JCR Repeals:** should contain details of Standing Orders that are to be superseded (removed) by the motion.
- **This JCR Orders:** should contain the Standing Order that the motion aims to introduce.
- **This JCR Mandates:** should contain directions for the actions of JCR Officers and Committees.
- **This JCR Resolves:** should contain details of financial expenditure or where the required action is not encapsulated by another available option.

## Passing motions

Before the JCR meeting GovComm will review and discuss all motions, often suggesting revisions for clarity. During the JCR meeting, the proposer will first present their motion and then answer questions from attendees.

The Chair will invite amendments, which must be proposed and seconded. Each amendment will be voted on individually and, if approved by a simple majority, incorporated into the motion. The Chair will then ask if there is any opposition to the motion. If opposition is expressed, speakers will alternate between arguments for and against the motion until discussion concludes. Finally, the motion will be put to a vote, either by a show of hands with eyes closed if there is opposition, or by a **general "aye"** if there is no opposition.



If you're unfamiliar with drafting a motion and need guidance, please feel free to reach out to me, Louise, or email [chair@cuths.com](mailto:chair@cuths.com).



# *what are the different types of methods in elections?*



## **What is a Method I position?**

A Method I position entails the highest level of responsibility and therefore demands the most time and commitment. Due to the significant duties associated with this role, it is not possible to hold any other positions at the same time. This position also necessitates a more rigorous election process. Candidates are expected to develop a detailed manifesto outlining their ideas, create a poster or other media form, and deliver a three-minute speech at the JCR meeting. Following the presentations, voting will take place on DUVS for a duration of 48 hours.

## **What is a Method II position?**

A Method II position entails relatively less responsibility and typically involves serving as a committee member, executing tasks delegated by the committee chair or an individual holding a Method I position. Due to the reduced time and commitment required, you can hold up to two Method II and/or Method III positions at the same time. Candidates for a Method II role are expected to deliver an impromptu one-minute speech during the JCR meeting. Following these presentations, voting will be conducted with eyes closed and hands raised

## **What is a Method III position?**

A Method III position entails a level of responsibility and duties comparable to those of a Method II position. However, the election process for a Method III position is conducted through an application and selection process overseen by a specified overseer. You can usually find more information on the relevant instagram page towards the start of Michaelmas.

If you are curious about the various committees you can join, simply turn the page. The following section provides an in-depth overview of our committees, outlining the methods associated with each role and the meetings in which these positions are elected. This information is intended to guide you in navigating the application process for the role that interests you. There is truly something for everyone, and I hope you feel inspired to get involved.







# *what do I need to submit for an election?*



## What to submit for Method I?

By 7pm three days before the JCR meeting in which the position will be hosted, the candidate must electronically submit to the SRO:

- A copy of their manifesto,
- A 200-word summary of their manifesto (to be posted on the DUVS website by the SRO),
- A copy of their poster,
- Optionally, one additional audio/video/visual campaign material, and
- Optionally, an official photo to be used on the DUVS site (in JPEG format).

## Material guidelines for Method I:

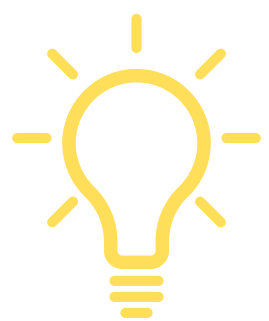
Posters and manifestos should be no larger than A4 and should include:

- The name and signature of the candidate,
- A photograph of the candidate,
- The position the candidate is running for, and
- The official St Cuthbert's Society crest.

You will also need to **bring two copies** of both your manifesto and poster to the JCR meeting to be put across Cuths.

## What to submit for Method II?

Nothing! You can decide to run on the spot!



### Tips to remember with materials:

- Speak to the incumbent member and ask for advice as they're likely to explain the role and the behind the scenes which you might not see.
- Have a look for previous holders' manifestos as well.
- You can't refer to someone's name in your manifesto or poster so remember to refer to them as their role! (If you're not sure ask!)

# how to hust in a method I/II position?



All candidates for **Method I** positions may hust for a maximum of **3 minutes**, whether this be prepared before hand or completely made up on the spot!

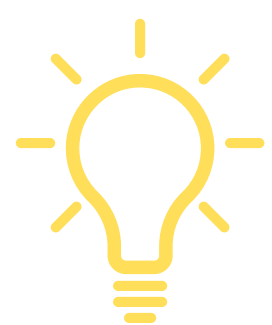
All candidates for **Method II** positions may hust for a maximum of **1 minute**.

## During hustings, candidates are forbidden from:

- Offering any bribes or exchange of value for votes
- Personally attacking a current or previous JCR Member,
- Campaigning for Reopen Nominations,
- Associating or affiliating with any member of
- Governance Committee, the Executive Committee, or the incumbent, and
- Any action or phrase that the SRO deems as negative campaigning.

After each candidate's hust there shall be an opportunity for candidates to be asked up to a maximum of **2 targeted questions** about the content of their hust or manifesto.

There shall be an opportunity for candidates to be asked up to **3 non-targeted questions** after all the candidates have husted.



## Tips to remember when husting:

- You can't refer to someone's name when you're husting so remember to refer to them as their role! (If you're not sure ask!)
- Look at the past hust bank on the website to give you some inspiration!
- Look through the minutes from the previous years meetings for your election on the website and have a look at the common questions which come up and prepare some answers :)

## What if I can't make the meeting for the role I want to run for?

Any candidate may decide to **run in absentia**, if they cannot be present at the meeting, or if for any reason they feel unable to hust in person. You should email [sro@cuths.com](mailto:sro@cuths.com) with your hust before the meeting!

If a candidate is running in absentia, the candidate's speech will be read by a member of Governance Committee and no questions shall be asked to any candidate in that election to make sure it's fair to all candidates.



# how to campaign for method I?



## A candidate may campaign via:

- Word of mouth,
- Official posters, and
- Social media

If the candidate seeks to campaign in any way not explicitly defined within this order they must have the approval and authorisation of the SRO in writing. Failure to comply could result in Methods of Sanction.

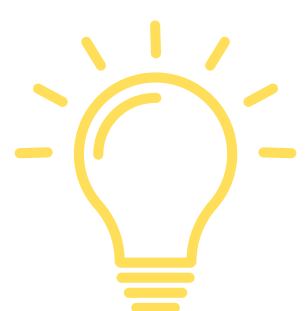
Pre-campaigning is permitted for both Method I and Method II 24 hours before the JCR meeting in which the candidate will hust and is strictly limited to word of mouth.

**All posts or private messages on social media** sent by the candidate should contain the candidate's manifesto or poster alongside the **corresponding** manifesto/poster of all other candidates, with accompanying text at their own discretion. (This rule does not apply to campaign team members, who are only required to post the manifesto/poster of the candidate they are campaigning for)

Candidates may approach a potential **Proposer** and **Seconder** no earlier than 7 days before the JCR Meeting husting, at any time of day and they will automatically become members of the campaigns team of the candidate they propose or second. The candidate may approach **(3) potential campaign team members** no earlier than 7pm two days before the JCR Meeting husting. When approaching a potential candidate they must also state who else is running in their election and provide information on how to view all of the candidates' manifestos.

## Campaign team members must not:

- Be a member of an opposing candidate's campaign team,
- Be a previous holder of the position (with the exception that the candidate is re-running for a position),
- Be a member of the Executive Committee or Governance Committee,
- Hold or have held a sabbatical membership of the JCR,
- Be or have been elected for the next term to chair the committee the position will sit on, nor
- Be a Student Trustee



## Tips to remember when campaigning:

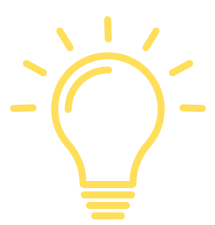
- Only Campaign Team members may campaign for the candidate. The candidate is responsible for all campaigning done on their behalf.
- Campaigning in either St Cuthbert's Club (12 South Bailey Bar,) St. Cuthbert's Dining Hall, or Brooks House Bar (except for when there are hustings).

# how to vote in elections?



## Vote for Method I elections at: [www.cuths.com/vote](http://www.cuths.com/vote)

Voting is conducted via the Durham University Voting System (DUVS) through using the **Single Transferable Vote** method whereby the voter's second preference would become their first in the event that their first choice was removed.



## Tips to remember when voting on DUVS:

- You don't have to vote for everyone! If your friend has asked you to vote in their election but you're not interested in voting for the other elections, if you click **next ballot** you can skip to their election and just vote for them.
- Similarly, you don't have to rank all candidates.
- If you want to find out more about each candidate's manifesto there will be 200-word summary manifesto to read on the website.
- All elections will have **Re-Open Nominations (RON)** as a candidate.
- Some elections will have **Caucus voting** which you can only vote for if you identify with the minority group.

## Vote for Method II elections at: [the JCR meeting](#)

After hustings and questions have concluded all candidates will be taken out of the room by a member of Governance Committee.

Attendees of the JCR Meeting shall be asked to close their eyes and vote for their preferred candidate(s) by raising their hand. Attendees shall be given the option to Reopen Nominations and to abstain.

The result of the election shall be declared by the SRO immediately after the conclusion of voting.





- **JCR** the Junior Common Room of St Cuthbert's Society.
- **Meeting 1.2** denotes the 2nd meeting of the 1st term of the academic year.
- **DUVS** = Durham University Voting System
- **STV** = Single Transferable Vote. A method of voting whereby candidates shall be eliminated in increasing order of votes received, and their votes transferred to the voters' second choice, until a single candidate has a majority vote.
- **Caucus voting procedure** is a method of voting in which members that do not identify with the minority group the position is elected to represent are recommended to abstain in the election.
- **RON (Re-open nominations)** if you're not happy with any of the current candidates standing for election, you can vote RON. If RON wins, the election will be reopened again.
- **Proposer** someone who supports your application.
- **Secunder** someone who supports your application.
- **VONC** is a Vote of No Confidence, which means any officer can be removed from office prior to the conclusion of their term.
- **Budget meeting** = 3.2 Meeting in which the treasurer and president of the society give a breakdown of the organisation's finances.
- **""Comm** = "" committee
- **SU** = Students' Union
- **JRO** = Junior Returning Officer
- **SRO** = Senior Returning Officer
- **PGM** = Postgraduate and Mature