



THE QJCR CONSTITUTION – HOW TO MAKE CHANGE

For more information, see the [JCR Constitution](#). The JCR is obligated to make sure it, and all policy, is available for you to see.

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I have an idea. How do I get the JCR to adopt it? You will first have to think of the nature of your idea, and what you want to get out of it. Then there are a few options:

- **Contacting a JCR Committee member**

Your first port of call might just be getting in touch with a JCR Committee member. You can find their contact details at qjcr.org.uk. They could enquire about an idea, or act on some feedback on your behalf in college committees, or by sending an email to a member of the Queens' staff or fellowship. They don't need permission from anyone to do this, assuming they are not acting against policy, although any big changes would probably need the support of evidence that the JCR Committee (or wider JCR body) are in support along with a thorough proposal of the change you are trying to make.

- **Asking the JCR Committee to install Committee Policy**

The JCR Committee maintains publicly available 'Committee Policy' that dictates the policy and processes that the JCR Committee follows. This can be edited by a vote at a JCR Committee meeting. You might like to ask a JCR Committee member to raise an addition or amendment. You could also come along to help guide the argument or present your case and amendment (although you could not vote). As a member of the JCR you are entitled to attend JCR Committee meetings. To do so, you might like to email the JCR Secretary (jcr-secretary@queens.cam.ac.uk).

- **Triggering a referendum to install Referendum Policy**

If you want to make a bigger statement OR you feel like your idea needs a bigger mandate OR the JCR Committee has not dealt with your idea to your satisfaction and you want to overrule them, then you can turn to Referendum Policy. Referendum Policy overrules JCR Committee Policy. There are a few ways you can trigger a referendum:

- You can ask the JCR Committee to trigger a referendum.
- You gather a petition of more than 30 people, or 5% of the JCR membership, whichever is lowest.

Under the JCR Constitution, an opportunity of debate is required. This will be up to the Returning Officers who are appointed to run the vote. This could be in the form of an open meeting (held virtually or in person), an online forum, a moderated debate, or a JCR Committee meeting which is nominated as an open meeting.

The referendum will need to have met a quorum (number of people voting) of 100 people, or 20% of the JCR membership, whichever is lowest (they are about the same), to be binding.

The JCR Committee should regularly advertise these means of making change, and they may choose to call for motions at a specific point in term so that referenda can all be run at the same time.

If you are in any way unhappy with your dealings with the JCR Committee (or the Returning Officers of a referendum), you can refer to the 'grievances' section of the JCR Constitution, whereby you can contact the Senior Treasurer of the College Union.

Below you will find some examples of how you might like to raise different issues. These are suggestions only – you could ask a JCR Committee member to change the college colours to Cyan (but you might not get there) or trigger a referendum to add your favourite snack to a vending machine (it just might be overkill).

Contacting a JCR Committee Member

- ❖ You want to suggest that a certain process is made clearer on the JCR website / emails.
- ❖ You want to organise your own welfare initiatives.
- ❖ You'd like to see if the buttery could serve chocolate mousse.

Committee Policy

- ❖ You wish to have in writing that:
 - the JCR aim to limit emails to x per week;
 - the JCR does not purchase any single-use plastics;
 - the JCR does not use the font Calibri in its newsletters;
 - QEnts bans ABBA music¹;
- ❖ You think there should be further guidance on how the JCR hosts hustings for elections.
- ❖ You are particularly worried about JCR's institutional memory and want it written publicly that the JCR organises consent workshops.

(and to make this happen, you'd have to persuade the JCR Committee)

Referendum Policy

- ❖ You want to table a motion that the JCR:
 - oppose the serving of ruminant meat in buttery;
 - discontinue affiliation with any external body, if the JCR Committee had refused;
 - oppose a practice in the way college is run.
- ❖ You wish to force the resignation of a JCR Committee member*.
- ❖ You wish to propose amendments to the JCR Constitution or Appendix*.

*These are prescribed in writing in the constitution, though you may like to consult with a member of the JCR Committee first to see if the issue can be resolved in other ways.

TW, November 2020

¹ This is just an example. We love ABBA.