



# CONSTITUTION of YORK ST. JOHN GEEK SOCIETY

As redrafted by the Society at the Bi-annual General Meeting of Semester 2 in the Academic Year 2017-18 and amended by the Committee in July 2018

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## Preamble

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### *Statement of Purpose*

The Geek Society is an inclusive society offering York St. John University students the opportunity to get involved in University life and widen their friendship groups, through Geek activities. The Society explores Members' Geek interests and the associated culture, introduces Members to new elements of that culture, and enables Members to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for Geek culture.

## Article 1: Membership

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Makes provisions for the terms of Membership of the Society.

### *Terms of Membership*

- (1) Any Member of the Students' Union who pays the appropriate subscription may join the Society.
- (2) A Member of the Students' Union may join the Society through
  - (a) whole-year Membership;
  - (b) single-semester Membership.
  - (c) A recently graduated Alumni may join through an alumni Membership.
- (3) All Members and potential Members of the Society shall be made aware by the Committee of the existence of a Hardship Fund maintained by the Students' Union.
- (4) Membership of the Society may be resigned at any time by a Member by notifying the Students' Union of their intention.
- (5) A Member may only remain a Member of the Society if they are a Member of the Students' Union or are considered to be a recently graduated Alumni.

## Article 2: Committee

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Makes provisions for the structure of the Committee.

### *Committee Offices*

- (1) The Committee shall comprise
  - (a) two *Co-Chairs*, who shall chair the Committee; manage the day-to-day workings of the Society; book campus spaces for the Society's meetings and events; coordinate the organisation and leading of the Society's meetings; oversee Members' welfare; and any other responsibilities which are named within the Constitution and Standing Orders.
  - (b) one *Vice Chair*, who shall assist the Co-Chairs with the management of the Society; assist other Officers with their responsibilities; promote equality and

diversity within the Society; take on the responsibilities of any vacant office; work with the Treasurer to maintain the Society's inventory; and any other responsibilities which are named within the Constitution and Standing Orders.

(c) one *Treasurer*, who shall maintain the Society's finances and monetary accounts; co-ordinate the management of the Society's finances; be responsible for the Society's inventory; maintain accurate records of the Society's finances; and any other responsibilities which are named within the Constitution and Standing Orders.

(d) one *Health and Safety Officer and General Secretary*, who shall produce risk assessments for all Society meetings and events; be responsible for oversight of Members' welfare at Society meetings and events; complete any incident-related reports; take minutes of Committee meetings; assist the Committee with the technical and practical organisation and running of the Society; and any other responsibilities which are named within the Constitution and Standing Orders.

(e) one *Publicity Officer*, who shall create publicity materials for Society meetings and events; actively update the Society's social media; publicise and promote Society meetings, events, and achievements; and any other responsibilities which are named within the Constitution and Standing Orders.

(f) one *Social Officer*, who shall organise Society events, work with other Sports and Societies to organise inter-Club or Society events, promote the integration of new Members into the Society; and any other responsibilities which are named within the Constitution and Standing Orders.

#### *Committee Obligations*

- (2) At any time, the Committee shall comprise a minimum of one Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Health and Safety Officer and General Secretary.
- (3) An Officer may not hold more than one of the Offices of Co-Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Health and Safety Officer and General Secretary.
- (4) Officers shall serve a term to the end of the Semester in which they were elected.
- (5) Any single-member Office specified in section (1) may be divided into a multiple-member Office, limited to two members, by amending section (1) to specify such a division.
  - (a) Such an Amendment shall not fall within the purview of Article 9 section (3).
- (6) Only Members of the Society who are Members of the Students' Union and who are not Alumni Members of the Society may serve as Officers.
- (7) Officers shall be required to take part in Union, Club, and Society training events.
- (8) All Officers, regardless of specific role, shall play an equal part in the organisation of each Society meeting and event, and shall attend such meetings and events except where valid reasons for absence are given in advance, or in the event of an emergency.

### *Casual Vacancies*

- (9) Should a casual vacancy arise, an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened at the earliest practicable time to fill the vacancy.
- (a) If a casual vacancy arises in any of the Offices specified in section (2), the meetings and activities of the Society shall be suspended until the vacancy is filled.
  - (b) During casual vacancies, the Vice Chair shall take responsibility for any vacant Offices' duties and obligations, except where subsection (a) of this section applies.
  - (c) The Committee may appoint an ordinary Officer to assist in the fulfilling of any vacant Offices' duties until the vacancy is filled, except where subsection (a) of this section applies.

### *Honorifics*

- (10) The Committee may bestow certain Honorific Titles to Members based on merit, which may include but are not limited to *Friend of the Committee*; *Oracle of [specific interest]*; *Member as Old as Time*.

### *Departure*

- (11) An Officer may vacate their Office through
- (a) a letter of resignation delivered to the Co-Chair (or to the Vice Chair in the case of the resignation of a Co-Chair);
  - (b) being impeached through the impeachment proceedings outlined in Article 7;
  - (c) no longer being eligible for the Office under the requirements set out in this Article.

## **Article 3: General Meetings**

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Makes provisions for the holding of Bi-annual and Extraordinary General Meetings.

### *Bi-annual General Meetings*

- (1) There shall be two Bi-annual General Meetings each Academic Year, held in the 10<sup>th</sup> week of each respective Semester, or at the closest practicable time within one week before or after the 10<sup>th</sup> week.
- (2) Bi-annual General Meetings are only properly convened when
- (a) notification of the General Meeting is given to the Society at a Society meeting and via social media at least fourteen days in advance of the meeting;
  - (b) an agenda is circulated to the Society at a Society meeting and via social media at least five days in advance of the meeting;

(c) the meeting is attended by an appropriate quorum; an appropriate quorum being defined as 10 Members, or 10% of the total Membership, whichever number is the greater, present such General Meetings.

(d) A General Meeting is not properly convened if these criteria are not met, and the General Meeting shall not proceed if it is not properly convened.

#### *Extraordinary General Meetings*

(4) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened by the Committee whenever a need for such a meeting arises.

(5) Extraordinary General Meetings are only properly convened when

(a) notification of the General Meeting is given to the Society at a Society meeting and via social media at least seven days in advance of the meeting;

(b) an agenda is circulated to the Society at a Society meeting and via social media at least three days in advance of the meeting;

(c) the meeting is attended by an appropriate quorum; an appropriate quorum being defined as 10 Members, or 10% of the total Membership, whichever number is the greater, present such General Meetings.

(d) A General Meeting is not properly convened if these criteria are not met, and the General Meeting shall not proceed if it is not properly convened.

#### *Attendance Requirements*

(6) Any Member is entitled to attend and vote at a General Meeting.

### **Article 4: Elections**

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Makes provisions for the mechanisms of elections.

#### *Election Procedure*

(1) The instant-runoff vote system shall be used to conduct any elections to single-member Offices, and the single transferable vote system shall be used to conduct any elections to multiple-member Offices, except where the Standing Orders specify otherwise.

(2) The Standing Orders shall include a definition of and the instructions for the voting systems specified in section (1).

### **Article 5: Financial Provisions**

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Makes provisions for the organisation and maintenance of the Society's finances.

#### *Accounting*

(1) The Treasurer shall maintain accurate records of the Society's finances.

- (2) The Treasurer shall regularly report the state of the Society's finances to the Committee, and to the Society at Bi-annual General Meetings.
- (3) The accounting of the Society's finances shall be done in accordance with the financial regulations of the Students' Union.

#### *Ways and Means*

- (4) Use of the Society's monies for the purchase of equipment for the Society and the reclamation of properly incurred expenses shall be approved by the Committee before the transaction is made.

#### *Reversion of Monies*

- (5) In the event of the Society becoming inactive for twelve months, any funds and monies which the Society has shall revert to the Students' Union.

### **Article 6: Members' Achievements**

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Makes provisions for the recognition of Members' achievements.

#### *Members' Achievements*

- (1) At each Society meeting, Members may choose to reveal a unique item and
  - (a) if the present Membership of the Society judges an item to be the most interesting item of the revealed items, the Member to whom the item belongs shall be rewarded with a small token or valuable thought;
  - (b) items revealed in this way may only be revealed once, nor shall any replicas be revealed by other Members.
- (2) Members may request the assistance of the Society in endeavours relating but not limited to academia, media, sports, and games.
- (3) The Committee shall encourage Members to respond to requests for assistance, though Members are not obliged to respond.

### **Article 7: Disciplinary Process and Impeachment Proceedings**

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#### *Scope*

- (1) The scope of this Article shall relate to
  - (a) behaviour at all Society meetings and events;
  - (b) any Society sponsored or organised activity, individual, recognised group, or any activity held under the auspices of the Society;
  - (c) any matter referred to the Committee by any Member;
  - (d) any matter referred to the Committee by the Students' Union or the University;

(e) any related matter considered appropriate by the Committee.

- (2) This Article shall apply to all Members, regardless of all other characteristics, ranks, powers, and privileges.
- (3) The Society shall not tolerate any bullying, harassment, inappropriate behaviour, prejudices, discrimination, or other behaviour which causes distress to any Member based on a Member's individual characteristics, including but not limited to those designated as protected by law.
- (4) The Society affirms the behavioural policies of the University and the Students' Union.
- (5) Should any Member or Officer be believed to be in contravention of the Constitution or believed to be failing to fulfil their Constitutional obligations and responsibilities, they shall be subject to an investigation under this Article.

#### *Records*

- (6) The Committee shall maintain a record of all Members who offend and the outcomes of proceedings.

#### *Temporary Powers*

- (7) In order to maintain the good order and running of the Society, Committee Officers have the right to execute the temporary power of requiring a Member or Officer to immediately leave a Society meeting or event.

#### *Lead Officer*

- (8) The Co-Chairs and Vice Chair shall designate from among themselves a Lead Officer who shall administer this Article.

#### *Disciplinary Process (Member)*

- (9) Where an incident has occurred between Members of the Society in which the alleged offender is not a Committee Officer, an incident report or statement may be made to any Committee Officer.
- (10) Where such a report or statement has been received by a Committee Officer, that Officer shall immediately notify the Committee and the Lead Officer.
- (11) The Lead Officer shall perform an Initial Assessment based on the evidence received and determine the next stage in the proceeding within three working days of the receipt of the report or statement.
  - (a) The Lead Officer may decide to
    - (i) not refer the matter to a Disciplinary Panel;
    - (ii) refer the matter to a Disciplinary Panel;
    - (iii) refer the matter to the Students' Union;
    - (iv) refer the matter to the Police.



- (12) If the matter is not referred to a Disciplinary Panel, the Lead Officer may issue a Warning to the alleged offender, and such a Warning shall be communicated to the offender within 10 working days of the decision.
- (13) If the matter is referred to the Students' Union, the Lead Officer shall cooperate and liaise with the Students' Union's procedures.
- (14) If the matter is referred to the Police, the Lead Officer shall cooperate with all investigatory and legal proceedings where necessary.
- (15) If the matter potentially constitutes a criminal offence but is not under investigation by the Police, the matter shall be referred to the Students' Union.
- (16) If the matter is referred to a Disciplinary Panel, such a Panel shall be convened under this Article and shall comprise
  - (a) the Lead Officer (chair);
  - (b) no less than two other Committee Officers (one acting as secretary to the Panel).
- (17) If the Lead Officer or any nominated Panel Officer believes there is a conflict of interest on the part of themselves or another Officer, they shall recuse themselves or instruct the Committee to cause the recusal of the conflicted Officer.
  - (a) Where such recusals result in the inability of a panel to be convened in accordance with this section, the matter shall be referred to the Students' Union.
- (18) The Lead Officer shall inform the alleged offender that they are under investigation by the Panel within 10 working days from the day of the referral to the Panel.
- (19) The Lead Officer may seek temporary power from the Committee to suspend the alleged offender from the Society for the duration of the procedure.
- (20) The Lead Officer shall invite those involved in the matter to an Investigatory Hearing, either individually or collectively and all parties shall be given the right to request individual Hearings.
- (21) The Lead Officer shall on the balance of the evidence presented at the Investigatory Hearing and with the advice of the Disciplinary Panel determine the appropriate course of action thenceforth, either
  - (a) dismissing the allegation;
  - (b) issuing a penalty appropriate to the case;
  - (c) referring the matter to the Students' Union, the University, or Police for further investigation.
- (22) In all cases, the Lead Officer or a designated Panel Officer shall write a Judgement which shall be given to all parties and which shall include all evidence and decisions relating to the matter.

- (23) All documents and records of incidents and the proceedings of the Disciplinary Panel shall be confidential and shall not be circulated by any party to any individuals other than those directly involved in the matter, and to the Committee.
- (24) Where the Panel has found the Member guilty and issued an appropriate penalty, the Member shall have recourse to appeal the Judgement via the appropriate channels within the Students' Union.
- (25) The Lead Officer shall share all evidence and documentation concerning the matter with the Students' Union upon request.

*Standards Process (Committee Officer)*

- (26) Where an incident has occurred between Members of the Society in which the alleged offender is a Committee Officer, an incident report or statement shall be made to the Co-Chairs.
- (27) Where an incident has occurred between Members of the Society in which the alleged offender is a Co-Chair, an incident report or statement shall be made to the Students' Union.
- (28) Where such a report or statement had been received by one Co-Chair, that Co-Chair shall immediately inform the other Co-Chair.
- (29) The Co-Chairs shall perform an Initial Assessment based on the evidence received and make a determination on the next stage in the proceeding within three working days of the receipt of the report or statement.
  - (a) The Co-Chairs may decide to
    - (i) not refer the matter to a Standards Panel;
    - (ii) refer the matter to a Standards Panel;
    - (iii) refer the matter to the Students' Union;
    - (iv) refer the matter to the Police.
- (30) If the matter is not referred to a Standards Panel, the Co-Chairs may still issue a Warning to the alleged offender, and such a Warning shall be communicated to the offender within 10 working days of the decision.
- (31) If the matter is referred to the Students' Union, the Co-Chairs shall cooperate and liaise with the procedures of the Students' Union.
- (32) If the matter is referred to the Police, the Co-Chairs shall cooperate with all investigatory and legal proceedings where necessary.
- (33) If the matter potentially constitutes a criminal offence but is not under investigation by the Police, the matter shall be referred to the Students' Union.
- (34) If the matter is referred to a Standards Panel, the Co-Chairs shall convene themselves under this Article as a Standards Panel, and one Co-Chair shall act as Secretary to the Panel.

- (35) If either Co-Chair believes there to be a conflict of interest on the part of themselves or their co-Officer, the matter shall be referred to the Students' Union.
- (36) The Co-Chairs shall inform the alleged offender that they are under investigation by the Panel within 10 working days from the day of the referral to the Panel.
- (37) The Co-Chairs may exercise powers to suspend the alleged offender from the Committee or the Society for the duration of the procedure.
- (38) The Co-Chairs shall invite those involved in the matter to an Investigatory Hearing, either individually or collectively and all parties shall be given the right to request individual Hearings.
- (39) The Co-Chairs shall on the balance of the evidence presented at the Investigatory Hearing determine the appropriate course of action thenceforth, either
- (a) dismissing the allegation;
  - (b) issuing a penalty appropriate to the case;
  - (c) referring the matter to the Students' Union, the University, or Police for further investigation.
- (40) In all cases, the Co-Chairs shall write a Judgement which shall be given to all parties and which shall include all evidence and decisions relating to the matter.
- (41) All documents and records of incidents and the proceedings of the Standards Panel shall be confidential and shall not be circulated by any party to any individuals other than those directly involved in the matter, and to the Committee.
- (42) Where the Panel has found the Officer guilty and issued an appropriate penalty, the Officer shall have recourse to appeal the Judgement via the appropriate channels within the Students' Union.
- (43) The Co-Chairs shall share all evidence and documentation concerning the matter with the Students' Union upon request.

#### *Penalties*

- (44) Where a Member or Officer has been found guilty of an offence under this Article, appropriate penalties may be issued by the Disciplinary Panel or Standards Panel.
- (45) In the case of a Disciplinary Panel, that Panel shall determine the appropriate penalty and refer that penalty to the Committee for ratification, which shall ratify the penalty no later than three working days after the referral is made.
- (46) In the case of a Standards Panel, that Panel shall determine the appropriate penalty and instruct that penalty to be applied.
- (47) A Warning or a number of Strikes may be recorded against a Member.
- (48) Where a Member already has a Warning recorded against them, all further penalties shall include a number of Strikes.

- (49) Where a Member has three Strikes recorded against them, they shall be expelled from the Society as part of the due penalty applied by the Panel.
- (50) Other penalties may be enacted, which may include a temporary or permanent suspension from certain Society meetings or events, restrictions on the eligibility to undertake certain activities or responsibilities, or restrictions upon that Member's activities under the auspices of the Society.
- (51) Where other such penalties are enacted, the Committee may reverse such penalties at its own discretion.

#### *Appeals*

- (52) All parties concerned may appeal to the Students' Union if they believe that any part of this process has been conducted contrary to good order, unfairly, or to challenge a dismissal or penalty resulting from an investigation.
- (53) Where upon appeal the Students' Union determines that a Panel has acted contrary to good order or has issued an inappropriate penalty, the Lead Officer or Co-Chairs shall apologise in writing to the individuals concerned.

#### *Impeachment Proceedings*

- (54) Should it be deemed necessary by the Co-Chairs to remove an Officer from the Committee as a result of an investigation under a Standards Panel, the Co-Chairs shall begin Impeachment Proceedings.
- (55) The Co-Chairs shall convene a meeting of the Committee at the earliest possible time and shall table and put a Motion which shall read:

"Whereas a Standards Panel has been convened under Article 7 of the Constitution; and whereas that Panel has found [*name*] to have breached or failed to fulfil their Constitutional obligations as related in the Judgement concerning [*name*], the Committee hereby removes [*name*] from the Office of [*office*] and requests that the Co-Chairs call an Emergency General Meeting to fill the resulting casual vacancy."

- (56) The Co-Chairs shall release their written Judgement to the Committee in advance of the meeting at which the Motion in section (55) has been tabled.

### **Article 8: Byelaws**

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Makes provisions for specific Byelaws adopted by the Society since the dawn of time.

#### *Standing Orders*

- (1) There shall be Standing Orders which codify the procedures of General Meetings, and any other procedure or protocol specified in the Constitution.
  - (a) Standing Orders shall have full force and effect.

*Byelaws*

- (2) At least half of all Society events held within the City of York which end after 10 p.m. shall end at Efe's Chip Van and
  - (a) chips, cheese, and gravy (hereinafter referred to as "Sexy Chips") shall be purchased by at least one Member on two separate occasions per Academic Year.
- (3) Any intra-Society disputes shall be settled through Agni Kai, given that at least one Member involved in the dispute can demonstrate the requisite skills.
- (4) All disputes, regardless of the invocation of the Agni Kai Provision, shall be settled by the Committee, through Article 7 (Disciplinary Processes and Impeachment Proceedings).
- (5) The Candela (abbreviated as cd and defined as the luminous intensity, in a given direction, of a source that emits monochromatic radiation of frequency  $540 \times 10^{12}$  hertz and that has a radiant intensity in that direction of  $1/683$  watts per steradian) shall be the Society's official unit of measure, regardless of its suitability, applicability, or appropriateness.
- (6) It shall be the prerogative of the Committee to execute Order 66 at any time which the Galactic Senate deems appropriate for the security and unity of the Galactic Empire.
- (7) Cthulhoot, for which no language for abyssms of shrieking and immemorial lunacy exist, is recognised as the Society's patron and shall be revered thus: Ph'nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhoot R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagen.

**Article 9: Amendments to the Constitution**

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Makes provisions for amending the Constitution.

*Proposal*

- (1) The Committee may propose necessary and expedient substantive Amendments to the Constitution through the processes outlined in Standing Order no. 7 (Submission of amendments).
- (2) Members may propose Amendments by petitioning the Committee to make such a submission.
- (3) The Committee may make minor alterations to the Constitution and Standing Orders between General Meetings, and these minor alterations shall be limited to
  - (a) correcting spelling and grammar;
  - (b) updating definitions of words, titles, or processes;
  - (c) updating or correcting the consistency of language and terminology.

- (4) Amendments to the Constitution and Standing Orders made in this way shall be published to the Society via social media, and if 10 Members or 10% of the total Membership, whichever number is the greater, object in writing to the Co-Chairs, believing instead that such Amendments are substantive, the Committee shall suspend the Amendments until a vote under Standing Order no. 18 (Amendments to the Constitution) is held.

*Ratification and Redrafting*

- (5) Substantive Amendments may be ratified by the Society at a General Meeting through a Motion moved by the Committee.
- (6) After all questions concerning Amendments have been put, the following Motion shall be moved by the Chair of the meeting –

“That the Society redrafts the Constitution.”

and the question shall be put without debate.