**MU Clubs & Societies Honorary President Policy / Guidelines**

Article 9.1 of the Clubs & Societies standard constitution states that:

*“There shall be a Honorary President of the Club/Society who shall be a staff member in compliance with the regulations set down by the Clubs and Societies Committee. The Honorary President’s term of office shall be for one academic year. Honorary Presidents shall be entitled to attend and speak at all general meetings of the Club/Society. Honorary President shall not have voting rights and are ineligible for election to the Club/Society’s Governing Executive Committee. The rights of an Honorary President shall not exceed those of an ordinary member of the Club/Society.”*

**Why have an Honorary President?**

Student Clubs and Societies are the “lifeblood” of student life and are very much at the heart of the Maynooth Experience. Nonetheless, clubs and societies are quite unique in how they run as they change their Governing Executive Committee (GEC), the committee that runs a Club / Society, every year. In the majority of cases, this is what makes Clubs / Societies so special, leading to plenty of innovative ideas and new activities on a constant basis. However, in a number of cases this can also result in no continuity in a GEC from one year to another which can be detrimental to the progress and development of a given Club / Society.

In order to combat this loss of “institutional memory” (Institutional memory has been defined as "the stored knowledge within the organisation), the role of Honorary President has been included in the Club / Society Standard constitution.

For this reason, the Honorary President must be a staff member of the Maynooth University or SPCM.

**Purpose of the Role**

Aside from continuity, there are other practical purposes for having an Honorary President including:

* Continuity and maintaining institutional memory with a view to offsetting any negative effects of the annual membership change in the GEC;
* Bringing experience and a skill set that may be missing in the GEC;
* May have an interest / expertise in the specific area / activity of the Club / Society;
* General support and advice to the GEC throughout the year;
* Being part of the wider campus community which can result in the good work of Clubs / Societies being communicated to a wider audience;
* Can act as a Mentor to GEC members.

**Term of Office**

A staff member should be invited to take up the position of Honorary President for one academic year (1st July to 30th June of a given Academic Year or some other date) on the basis that it has been approved by the General Executive Committee (GEC) of the Club / Society. This position, while it can be the same staff person from year to year, does not automatically roll-over from year to year – it must be renewed by the Club / Society GEC every year. (**Not sure if need to include this line -** While it is good practice from a continuity perspective to have an individual in place for multiple years it is also good practice to change the person in this role every 5 years or so).

**Choosing / Confirming / Reconfirming an Honorary President**

In advance of any vote, it is advised that the GEC have a preliminary discussion around what staff member(s) to approach to take up the position of Honorary President. On identifying an appropriate staff member, it is suggested that the GEC approach the staff member to ascertain their interest in taking up the position (or continuing in the position) as well as outlining the duties. If the staff member agrees to take up or stay in the role of Honorary President, a formal motion can be put before the GEC to ratify / approve the appointment. Ideally this motion affirming the person taking up the role of Honorary President should be agreed at a meeting of the GEC before the end September (or June) each year.

**General Rights of an Honorary President**

An Honorary President can:

* Attend and Speak at all general meetings of the Club or Society;
* Join the Club or Society as an Associate member.

An Honorary President cannot:

* Vote (at general or executive meetings);
* Sit on the GEC but may be invited to a GEC meeting;
* Have rights that exceed that of an ordinary full member of the Club or Society.

The MU Clubs & Societies Committee can determine any other rights to be bestowed on the role of Honorary President.