

SOS HERMANN GMEINER INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE



Constitution of the Student Representative Council (SRC)

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CONSTITUTION OF THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (SRC)

1.0 Introduction

The Management of the College recognises that staff and students must commit to the same goals and philosophy in order for the school to fulfil its mission. They also acknowledge that students have genuine views and opinions on major decisions, programmes and structures of the school that affect their education here. Therefore, students need to be provided with simple but harmonious links for not only sharing their views with staff and the school Management but also being offered an opportunity to participate in the school decision making process.

The SOS-HGIC Student Representative Council (SRC) is the main body mandated to represent the students and to articulate their views. Its role is to facilitate the free flow of information and opinions between the student body and staff, bring students grievances and suggestions to the attention of the school Management and to influence and foster a positive school spirit. The SRC is guided by patrons with whom they must work on all issues.

The SRC is not on par with the Prefects body which represents school authority at the student level. The specific aims and functions of the SRC are outlined in the sections below.

2.0 Aims of the SRC

- i. To promote understanding between students and staff.
- ii. To foster a fair and equal treatment of students and a creative and unifying atmosphere within the student body.
- iii. To articulate views and opinions of the student body that will help to improve the lives of students.
- iv. To assist in the early detection and solving of problems that may arise within a class or year group.
- v. To promote the school's core values such as academic achievement, excellence, compassion and punctuality.

- vi. To suggest themes or topics of interest or concern to be addressed in symposia or school assemblies or other school forums.
- vii. To assist the Senior Management Team in selecting the most suitable students to leadership positions such as Monitors and Prefects.
- viii. To undertake projects and activities that enhance students life and living in the school.

3.0 Functions

The SRC as a body shall carry out the following functions

- i. Provide opportunities for students to talk about and promote ideas that would make the College a great school.
- ii. Contribute to the revision of school rules and regulations that no longer work or apply and create awareness of the rules among the student body.
- iii. Inform Prefects, Form Tutors, House Tutors and where necessary, the SMT about problems that students bring to their notice.
- iv. Collate nominations from the student body of candidates to be considered for selection as Monitors.
- v. Collate nominations for students to be considered for Special Prizes at Speech day.
- vi. Organise, in conjunction with the Prefects body, two school forums in an academic year as well as other school events such as dances, quizzes, etc. to liven up school spirit. The dates for these events must be captured on the school calendar.
- vii. Assist in the orientation programme for newly admitted students as outlined by the CAS Coordinator and/or the Director of Studies.
- viii. Assist staff of the College to develop and implement strategies to reduce wastage of food, energy, water, paper etc.
- ix. Any other duties that their Patrons or the School authorities may assign to them as necessary from time to time.

4.0 Composition/Membership

The SRC shall consist of an elected representative from each form grouping and an elected SRC Executive Committee made up of President, Vice President, Secretary and Public Relations Officer. Members of the Executive Committee shall be the officers of the SRC. They shall be students who take pride in the school and are able to transfer such pride to the entire student body. The Executive Committee shall be assisted by two (2) staff Patrons of their choice.

5.0 Elections of the SRC members and the Executive Committee

5.1 Election of Class Representatives

- i. At the start of a new academic year (i.e. by the fourth week of the first semester), each class (e.g. IB1 A, IB1B, IB1C etc.) under the guidance of its Form Tutor and an SRC Executive Committee member, shall elect by simple majority (either through show of hands or using ballot papers) one student from amongst them to represent the class on the SRC.
- ii. Such class representatives can be re-elected in subsequent academic years.
- iii. In the course of the academic year, the class may vote to remove their representative for reasons of poor attendance at Council meetings, non-performance of his/her duties or incompetence.

5.2 Election of SRC Executive Committee members

- i. Just before the mid-semester break of the second semester (i.e. March), the incumbent SRC Executive Committee shall invite interested IB1 students to offer themselves as candidates to be elected to any of the Executive Committee positions for the next academic year.
- ii. Prospective candidates shall fill an application form which shall be reviewed and vetted by a Vetting Committee comprising the Principal, Vice Principal, Director of Boarding, the SRC patrons and the current SRC Executive body to ensure that applicants are students who
 - Show pride in being students here and are able to transmit same to other students.
 - Believe in the vision, mission and philosophy of the school.
 - Have exhibited exemplary behaviour and show the same attributes as those used for nominating Prefects.

- iii. The application form shall be provided by the patrons of the SRC and shall include requirements for a teacher and two fellow students to endorse a candidate.
- iv. Candidates shall be briefed by the outgoing Executive Committee members and the patrons on the dates, guidelines and procedures for the conduct of the elections as published by the Committee.
- v. Candidates shall avail themselves for key parts of the election process such as presentation of manifestos at a scheduled time.
- vi. There shall be a manifesto night at which candidates will present their statements of intent, ideas, positions on and goals for key aspects of school life and their plans for attaining those goals.
- vii. On a date published by the Executive Committee, each student will vote by secret ballot in a free, fair and transparent election.
- viii. Duly elected students shall be presented to the school community at a whole-school Assembly.
- ix. Newly elected Executive Committee members shall join their Prefects Body counterparts for the Leadership Training Workshops just before the start of the next academic year.

6.0 Term of office

- i. The term of office of the SRC Executive Committee members shall be one academic year (i.e. August –June).
- ii. Any executive committee member who breaks any of the major school rules shall be summarily removed from the Committee.
- iii. Class reps can hold office for one academic year but they can be re-elected in subsequent academic years until they leave the College.

7.0 Mode of operation

- a. Each class shall meet at least once a month during Form Meeting times to discuss issues of concern to the class.
- b. The class shall instruct its representative to take no more than two (2) items of importance to the next SRC meeting (in order for the agenda not to exceed 32 items).
- c. The representatives meeting will discuss the issues and decide
 - i. Which items are frivolous and should be ignored.

- ii. Which should be discussed informally with a Prefect, a House Tutor or the SMT for a solution or request to be granted.
 - iii. Which should be formally passed on to the Prefects Body or House Tutors for action by them or to be passed on to higher authority.
- d. At the next form meetings, the representative will report on the actions they have taken in the Council meeting as above and also what actions Prefects, House Tutors and /or higher authorities are taking.
 - e. The SRC as body (i.e. the Class Representatives plus the Executive Committee members) shall hold general meetings once a month. The SRC Executive Committee shall meet once a month before the general meetings.
 - f. Class reps or SRC Executive Committee members may call emergency meetings to discuss pressing issues or carry out specific tasks such as responding to surveys, filling nomination forms, etc.
 - g. The patrons of the SRC shall be teachers who shall be nominated by the officers of the SRC. Their role will be advisory as well as aiding in the planning of events and activities.

8.0 Supplementary provisions

8.1 The duties of members of the SRC Executive Council

The following are the duties that each member of the Executive Council shall perform during their tenure of office.

The President

The Student Representative Council President is responsible for overseeing all undertakings of the SRC as a whole. She/he is responsible for the wellbeing of the students and will work as the link between students and school management to ensure that students' needs are met to the best extent possible, or reach the best compromise possible. She/he is also responsible for the following actions:

1. Chair all meetings of the SRC and follow through with decisions taken.
2. Oversight of all major and minor projects undertaken by the SRC.
3. Mobilization of the SRC as an entity to carry out tasks.
4. Lead in seeking out authority figures or sponsors for events to be undertaken by the SRC, if needed.
5. Mediation between the Student Body and the Staff.

The Vice-President

The Vice-President of the SRC, as aide-camp, shall assist the President and fulfill the same roles as the President regarding seeking the wellbeing of the student body and promoting understanding between students and staff. He/she shall perform the following specific duties.

1. Deputize for the President when the latter is absent
2. Take charge of specific areas of the SRC's work
3. Carry out tasks that the President shall assign to him/her.

The Public Relations Officer (PRO)

The Public Relations Officer is the spokesperson of the SRC and is expected to publicize the activities of the SRC to the student body and the school management. The PRO shall:

1. Ensure effective and efficient communication between the students and school authorities.
2. Make all announcements on behalf of the SRC
3. Develop and provide materials that publicize the work of the SRC.
4. Liaise with relevant persons, departments or student groups to ensure successful completion of SRC initiated projects and programmes.

The Secretary

The SRC Secretary shall act as the clerk of the Council and is responsible for aspects of the Council's work that require writing and editing of material in various forms. The job shall entail the following:

1. Taking and circulating minutes of regular SRC meetings, Executive Council meetings as well as meetings with SMT or groups of students or staff.
2. Drawing up surveys and proposals for SRC projects.
3. Drafting and sending mails to school authorities, staff and the student body concerning current SRC matters.

8.2 Procedures for the conduct of SRC Executive Council elections

The SRC holds elections every year to elect the next group of competent students to represent the student body. The Council aims at conducting free, fair and transparent elections where the vote of every student counts. To ensure that this happens, the following procedures are outlined to guide the conduct of the elections.

8.2.1 Elections calendar

Approximate schedule for elections during the 2 nd semester of each academic year	
Mid- March	Announcement to be made asking for those who wish to run for any SRC position.
March	Candidates shall be required to fill the candidate form, vetted and briefed by the SRC Executives and Patrons.
March	Candidates shall be introduced to the school by the incumbent Executive Committee members at a forum arranged for that purpose.
Late March – Early April	Candidates shall use the mid-semester break to prepare their campaign strategies and materials
Early April on a Monday	Campaign period officially starts and shall be for two (2) weeks
Mid- April on a Wednesday	The candidates shall debate topical issues relating to school life in order to demonstrate their competency
Mid- April on a Sunday/Thursday	Manifesto Night: candidates shall present their statements of ideas and goals for key aspects of school life and their plans for attaining those goals.
Mid-April on a Monday/Friday	Voting shall take place

8.2.2 Components of the Elections

1. Nominations
2. Campaigning
3. Debate Night
4. Manifesto Night
5. Voting

1. Nominations

- i. Nominations for SRC executive positions are available to IB1 students only.
- ii. An announcement shall be made to the school requesting interested IB1 students to consider standing for SRC executive positions. There will be a period of five days for the collection of nominations after which no further applications will be accepted.
- iii. After the Vetting Committee completes its work, candidates cleared to stand for the elections shall be introduced to the student body by the President of the SRC.

2. Campaigning

i. A two-week campaign period shall be given to all candidates and this time restriction will be strictly enforced. If any candidate is found to have started campaigns before the prescribed period the candidate would **risk being withdrawn from the elections.**

ii. Candidates are encouraged to be modest and considerate in their campaign methods. Creativity is strongly advised rather than blatant displays of wealth.

iii. For the sake of equity, the following rules with respect to campaign materials shall apply.

- A total of 20 posters between the hostels and the college, with A2 being the biggest size
- Candidates are **NOT** permitted to use shirts, badges, pens and pencils, note books, calendars, huge banners, key chains or any other extravagant paraphernalia.
- Candidates who would like to use something for their campaign that has not been specified must clear it with the SRC Executive Committee before proceeding.
- Candidates shall be decorous in their utterances and demeanour; showing respect to fellow contestants at all times. Any candidate found to disparage another candidate will **immediately** be disqualified. **NO PROPAGANDA.**
- Candidates will be notified of the areas on school grounds where the posting of campaign materials is prohibited.
- If the Executive Committee finds any form of campaign activity (not stated herein) inappropriate, the candidate involved would be cautioned to desist from said behaviour. Any subsequent offence will lead to disqualification of the candidate.
- All campaign methods and materials to be used by candidates shall be passed through the Executive body for approval. Failure to do so shall result in disqualification of the offending candidate.
- During campaigning, candidates are encouraged to be realistic and honest with the student body. **Avoid extravagant promises that you are aware you may not be able to fulfil.**

3. Debate Night

i. On Debate Night, all candidates shall answer two sets of questions on stage. The first set will be composed by the outgoing Executive Body and given to the candidates beforehand for preparation. The second part of the debate shall involve questions put forward by members of the audience (i.e. the student body).

ii. A set of questions specific to each position shall be given to the candidates on the morning of the debate. These are to be answered during the debate within a set time limit for each candidate. This shall be determined by the nature of questions posed. The candidates vying for President shall be given more time than the others. (For example, if every candidate is given three minutes, the candidates for the position of President would have five minutes).

iii. Candidates shall be allowed to take prepared notes and gadgets up on stage to aid them.

4. Manifesto Night

i. Candidates shall be given the opportunity to present their manifestos to the student body in any form they wish (videos, performances etc.) within an allotted time.

ii. Endorsements by video, performances, banners, etc. should strictly be by students, other members of the school community and/or a maximum of two (2) alumni of the College in good standing who can testify to the qualities of the candidate. All such videos and planned performances must be cleared with the Executive Committee members in advance before they are presented to the whole school. Any candidate whose video, performance, etc. violates this rule shall be disqualified.

5. Voting

i. An SRC Electoral Committee shall be set up to oversee each election period.

ii. The Electoral Committee shall clearly set out the guidelines and procedures for voting, collation and announcement of results.

iii. The committee shall consist of:

- 3 members of staff (one from the ICT Department and shall also be the Supervisor of the Electoral Committee). The other two shall be the SRC patrons.
- The SRC Executive Committee members (i.e. 4 students)

- iv. The school community shall be informed about the members of the Electoral Commission before the start of the elections.
- v. The Electoral Commission shall be responsible for
- Developing the electronic-voting program and ensure that it functions smoothly.
 - Setting up the polling 'stations' for voting and regulating closing of polls.
 - Arbitrating any pre- or post- voting complaints that are formally presented to them.
- vi. Voting shall be compulsory for all students with the understanding that all students must have a say in who represents them as leaders.
- vii. Students who are incapable of voting, for valid reasons, at the polling stations shall inform the Supervisor if they wish to vote before the voting time-slot. Such students shall then be allowed to use proxy voting systems.
- viii. Any proxy voting carried out shall be supervised by the Supervisor of the Electoral Committee in order to ensure that the choices of the voter are accurately presented. This would require that a written message or email (i.e. through a verifiable medium) shall be sent to the Electoral Commission beforehand, specifying the voting choices of the voter.
- ix. Individual voter's right of choice must be respected. No student shall coerce or bully another student to vote in any way other than what the voter chooses.
- x. Each student shall vote once and once only and shall be confidential. No student shall give their voter password or code information to another student for that other student to vote multiple times.
- xi. Any complaints concerning the fairness or integrity of the electoral process shall be voiced to the Electoral Committee through its Supervisor before the announcement of the results. Any complaints after the results have been declared would have to be formally lodged in writing to the Electoral Committee within 24 hours of the declaration of the results.
- xii. The results shall be announced orally to the student body on the night of Voting Day by the Electoral Committee. A follow up email regarding the outcome of the elections shall be sent to the school community by the Supervisor of the Electoral Committee soon after the oral declaration of the results.

xiii. Any information on the outcome of the results before the official announcement shall be considered as provisional and confidential and which shall be restricted to the Electoral Committee only.

9.0 Conclusion

- i. Any student who has any enquiries on any of the provisions of this SRC Constitution may contact a member of the SRC Executive Committee for clarification.
- ii. This Constitution shall be amended after operating for a period of two academic years from the time of its coming into effect. However, minor revisions shall be made any time that some unworkable provision is identified in the course of using it.

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