

THE ASCR (“THE HOUSMAN ROOM”)

Constitution

1. Article 1 of the ASCR Constitution defines the ASCR as “an association of members of staff of UCL” and “Its aims are to enhance the academic and collegial focus of UCL and to promote collegiality at all levels.”
2. The Common Room is managed by a committee (Article 4a) and the Committee’s terms of reference include the requirement “To manage and organise facilities, services and activities for the benefit of the members” (Article 4f).
3. Article 1 states that “The Association occupies rooms customarily provided for members’ exclusive use”, and currently that is met by occupation of the Housman Room.

Provision and facilities

4. The ASCR meets its aims as stated in Article 1 by providing an attractive space in a central location for staff at all levels and from all departments to meet, converse, discuss and socialise with facilities for eating and drinking. These facilities promote collegiality, both academic and social, and contribute to the well-being of the UCL community. The Housman Room also provides very congenial surroundings for display of large-scale paintings from the College collection. It offers an impressive room to which visitors can be welcomed and thereby brings prestige to UCL. It is an excellent space for a variety of social events. The ASCR Annual General Meeting gives the membership an opportunity to comment on the facilities and to raise concerns about social provision within UCL. There is currently no space in UCL which can offer similar benefits.

Management

5. The ASCR is managed on a day-to-day basis by a Manager supported by an Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. Policy, finances and development are managed by the Common Room Committee which normally meets every two months. The Committee reports annually to the Annual General Meeting in November. The effectiveness and resourcing of the management are kept under review by the Committee.

Officers

6. The roles of the Officers and the administrative and financial arrangements are currently being reviewed and will be formalised in more detail.

Location

7. The location of the ASCR in the Housman Room is one of its main attractions and advantages. Centrally placed in what can properly be described as the iconic UCL building it provides a social and collegial environment which is not replicated anywhere else in UCL. Relocation would result in the loss of many of the essential benefits of the Housman Room.

Other social facilities

8. The Committee is currently investigating the social facilities which are planned for UCL East and those which are provided in the Institute of Education. The ASCR committee would be happy to share experience and expertise with those developing UCL East. It is the Committee's view that UCL should be encouraged to redevelop the Kathleen Lonsdale/ Slade courtyard that is currently a dumping ground. The yard has the potential to be covered and turned into a space similar to the Wilkins Terrace.

Risks

9. Potential risks to the future of the ASCR are:
 - (i) the nature of the UCL catering contract and a breakdown of the present good relationship with Sodexo;
 - (ii) resurrection of a UCL Masterplan which did not place staff welfare and the promotion of collegiality through the provision of social facilities above the demand for space;
 - (iii) a shortage of staff willing to volunteer time as members of the Committee and oversee the running of the ASCR.

Future strategy

10. The future strategy of the ASCR Committee for the Housman Room is to continue to provide the facilities and benefits currently available and to enhance them in whatever ways are feasible.

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