

Constitution for the Student Council of Blackrock College

In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, from whom is all authority and for whom judgement is reserved,

We, the Students of Blackrock College,

in order to establish a more perfect community, founded on trust, cooperation and respect, which works to promote the common good and strives towards a harmonious and progressive partnership, guided by wisdom, truth and compassion, so that the dignity and well-being of the individual is assured, whilst the order and spirit of the whole is preserved, in order that mental, physical and spiritual development is encouraged; fullest potential is sought after and achieved; love and support is offered by all to all; the fundamental values of faith are cherished; flaws are acknowledged and improved upon; and honest citizenship of society is forged,

do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution.

1. Title

1.1 The body shall be known as the Blackrock College Student Council.

1.2. A Student Council is a representative structure through which students in a post-primary school can become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with school management and staff and parents for the benefit of the school and its students.

2. Objectives of the Student Council

2.1. To provide a forum, in which student can, in a constructive way, be able to represent the needs, concerns and aspirations of the student body to the rest of the College community.

2.2 To promote the Core Values as defined in the Mission Statement of Blackrock College.

- 2.3. To be aware of and embody the Ethos of the College and its Holy Ghost influence so that all can advance in a spirit of co-operation and mutual support to the benefit of pupils, teachers, parents, guardians and the Community.
- 2.4. To enhance the lives of the students within the College.
- 2.5. To assist in the maintenance of a calm, safe and learning environment within the College.
- 2.6. To act in the common good and promote the happiness of the students.

3. Structure of Student Representation

- 3.1. The Student Council comprises of two House Representatives from each school year, the Principal and Deputy-Principal or their representatives and any others the Council may wish to co-opt.
- 3.2. In the case of an absent student on the Student Council, the respective Dean may appoint a temporary replacement from within the House Representatives.
- 3.3. Among other functions the House Representatives will meet their Student Council Members at least once every two weeks to inform them of the concerns and needs of their fellow students.
- 3.4. Once a term, at the discretion of the Council, a Student Congress will be held. This will comprise of the Student Council and all House Representatives. The Council Chairperson will chair the Student Congress and Council Secretary will act as Secretary.

4. Council Meetings

- 4.1. Each elected Council will last for 12 months, commencing October of each Year.
- 4.2. At the first meeting the Student Council will elect a Chairperson and a Secretary from the 5th and 6th Year Representatives, who shall retain their position for 12 months. The Council should also elect a chairperson for the September Meeting.
- 4.3. Council meetings will take place twice a month during term. The Chairperson may call an extraordinary meeting but notice of at least one week must be given.
- 4.4. For a valid Council meeting at least 7 Student Council Representatives and a member of College Management or Teaching Staff must be present.
- 4.5. The Council recognises that problems relating to individual pupils or parents and/or teachers are a matter for determination between the individual pupil and/or parents/guardians and the College authorities.

- 4.6. Only the elected Student Council Representatives may vote on issues. In the case of a split vote the elected Chairperson may exercise a second, casting vote.
- 4.7. The Student Council Secretary shall keep an attendance of those present for all meetings. Three unexplained absences by a student may lead to the withdrawal of that member. The Secretary shall also record the minutes of the meetings and circulate these to all Student Council Members within 3 school days.
- 4.8. The Chairman shall be responsible for keeping order at the meetings and enforcing the rules of assembly. Standing orders must be adhered to. All discussions will be “through the chair”.
- 4.9. Both the Student Council Secretary and Chairperson will draw up the agenda of the following meeting in consultation with the Principal and Deputy-Principal and shall be included in the circulation of the minutes.
- 4.10. The Board of Management of the College has the right to suspend or disband the council at his discretion and to amend the Student Council’s Constitution. An explanation of such changes will be given to the Student Council.
- 4.11. Any sub-committee of the Student Council will be subject to the rules and regulations of the Student Council Constitution.

5. Functions of the Student Council Representatives

- 5.1. Through the act of seeking and accepting election the Student Council Representative has undertaken to:
 - 5.1.1. Undergo an in-service course in Youth Leadership as provided by Blackrock College
 - 5.1.2. Attend all Student Council and Congress meetings
 - 5.1.3. Represent the needs of the students
 - 5.1.4. Maintain contact with the student body through fortnightly meetings with the House Representatives
 - 5.1.5. Act with integrity so as not to harm the good name of the College or student body
 - 5.1.6. Abide by the rules of the Council

6. Elections of the Student Council Members

- 6.1. Elections for Student Council Members shall take place within one week of the investiture of the House Representatives or as close as possible to this time.
- 6.2. Eligibility for election is open to all House Representatives, each of whom will have one vote.
- 6.3. Each eligible candidate will be allowed to address the House Representatives for 2 minutes.
- 6.4. Voting will take place within the Representatives for each year and will be by secret ballot.
- 6.5. The Dean or another teacher appointed by College Management will act as Returning Officer.

7. Replacement of a Student Council Member

- 7.1. The Student Council will sanction the replacement of a member if:
 - 7.1.1. The majority of House Representatives from his year express to the Chairman of the Student Council their dissatisfaction with this Student Council Member in writing
 - 7.1.2. The Student Council Member chooses to resign. In such a case the resignation must be made in writing to the Student Council Secretary.
- 7.2. Such a decision should be taken on a majority vote of the Council and the member in question should be given adequate notice of the proposal, the reasons therefore and the opportunity to present his case at an extraordinary meeting.
- 7.3. This new election must be held within 1 week of this meeting in accordance with Article 5.
- 7.4. Any House Representative of the same year group may seek candidature for this position including the outgoing student.

8. Duties of House Representatives

- 8.1. Through the act of seeking and accepting election the House Representative has undertaken to:
 - 8.1.1. Promote the Core Values as defined in the Mission Statement for Blackrock College

- 8.1.2. To be aware of and embody the Ethos of the College and its Holy Ghost influence so that all can advance in a spirit of co-operation and mutual support to the benefit of pupils, teachers, parents, guardians and the Community.
 - 8.1.3. Represent the needs, concerns and aspirations of his House and fellow students
 - 8.1.4. Enhance the lives of the students within the College
 - 8.1.5. Assist in the maintenance of a calm, safe and learning environment within the College
 - 8.1.6. To act for the common good and promote the happiness of the students.
 - 8.1.7. Act with integrity so as not to harm the good name of the House, College or Student Body
 - 8.1.8. Attend all fortnightly meetings with the Student Council Members
 - 8.1.9. Attend all Student Congress meetings
- 8.2. A House Representative who is suspended by the College Authorities will forfeit his position as a House Representative.
- 8.3. He shall be replaced by another member of his House, who shall be selected by the other House Representative of that particular House.

9. Elections of House Representatives

- 9.1. Elections for House Representatives shall take place by the second week in September or as close as possible to this time.
- 9.2. Voting procedures are as follows:
 - 9.2.1. Two days before elections, nomination forms must be made available by each respective dean
 - 9.2.2. Students wishing to put themselves forward for election must sign their name on the form and successfully ask two fellow students to propose and second them
 - 9.2.3. A list of all nominations received will be voted upon by the student body of that year
 - 9.2.4. Every student and teacher in the college is entitled to 1 vote

- 9.2.5. Voting will take place by secret ballot and the Dean or another teacher appointed by College Management along with a student of his choice will act as Returning Officers.

10. The Constitution

- 10.1. The Constitution must be ratified by a two-thirds majority at a Student Congress.
- 10.2. Changes to the Constitution will be made at a Student Congress. Any such changes will require a two-thirds majority of those present.
- 10.3. The proposed changes to the Constitution shall bear the names of the Proposer and Secunder and shall also be communicated to the College Management.

11. Student Congress

- 11.1. The Student Congress shall take place annually in the month of May. The Chairperson and the secretary of the Student Council shall present their reports at the Student Congress.
- 11.2. House Representatives shall be given notice of two weeks prior to the Student Congress.
- 11.3. Motions for the Student Congress shall be proposed and seconded at least one week prior to the Student Congress
- 11.4. Any notice of a motion for the Student Congress which proposes a change in the Constitution, shall be published to the Student Congress members at least two weeks in advance of the Student Congress.
- 11.5. The Student Congress shall be chaired by the Chairperson of the Student Council with the Council Secretary acting as secretary.