



Housing Affairs Council

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Policy Manual

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## Article I: **Housing Affairs Council**

### **I.1 Name**

- I.1.1 The name of the association is Housing Affairs Council, abbreviated as HAC.
- I.1.2 HAC is officially registered as Huurdersvereniging University College Roosevelt Studenten under KvK 22062496 at the Kamer van Koophandel in Middelburg.
- I.1.3 The official internal name is Housing Affairs Council. It is upon the discretion of the HAC Board which name to choose for external contacts.

### **I.2 Mission Statement:**

- I.2.1 “Representing students housing interests and thereby working to ensure the best living conditions on campus for a reasonable price.”

### **I.3 Status of the Policy Manual**

- I.3.1 The Articles of Association will be the primary source of rules and regulations. All references to the Articles are to the Dutch version, which is the only legally binding version.
- I.3.2 The Policy Manual functions as the bylaws of the Articles of Association.
- I.3.3 In case of conflict between the Articles of Association and the Policy Manual, the former will prevail.
- I.3.4 All HAC members are expected to be familiar with the Policy Manual and be aware of its contents.
- I.3.5 The HAC Board has the obligation to inform all members on proposed and approved changes to the Policy Manual.
- I.3.6 The Policy Manual can be changed at any time. Any HAC member and the members of the Independent Body can propose changes.
- I.3.7 Changes are to be approved or rejected by a simple majority of the General Assembly.
- I.3.8 In case the Policy Manual or Articles of Association do not cover an issue, it is upon the discretion of the HAC Board to decide.

### **I.4 Language Use**

- I.4.1 English will be the official language of the HAC.
- I.4.2 With regard to external communication, it is at the discretion of the HAC Board Members to decide whether English or Dutch is most appropriate to use.
- I.4.3 All communication and documentation from the HAC Board to the student body must be in English.
- I.4.4 HAC has the right to refuse to help if problems are addressed in any language other than English.



## **I.5 Communication**

- I.5.1 The main form of communication between the HAC Board and students is email.
- I.5.2 The HAC Board will send out a digital newsletter to all students every week of the semester, and whenever deemed necessary. The newsletter will outline important decisions taken by the HAC Board, as well as important notices related to housing.
- I.5.3 In order for complaints to have formal value, they need to be communicated to the HAC Board in writing, per email.

## **I.6 General Assemblies**

- I.6.1 General Assemblies shall proceed as described in the HAC Articles of Association.
- I.6.2 In case an HAC Member cannot attend a General Assembly, it is possible to authorize another HAC Member to vote in their stead.
  - I.6.2.I A proxy vote can only be cast on matters already described in the General Assembly Agenda.
  - I.6.2.II If there is a specific motion an HAC Member wants to proxy-vote on, the motion is to be added to the Agenda at least 48 hours prior to the General Assembly. This agenda shall then be shared with all HAC Members.
  - I.6.2.III Proxy voting on amendments is not allowed.
  - I.6.2.IV If an HAC Member wishes to let another HAC Member vote in their stead, they should inform the HAC Independent Body at least 24 hours before the start of the General Assembly, in writing, per email.

## **I.7 Confidentiality**

- I.7.1 All complaints, emails and hearings will be processed with the maximum amount of discretion possible, unless the student gives the HAC Board explicit permission to share this with other parties.

## Article 2: Functioning of the Housing Affairs Council

### 2.1 Positions and task descriptions

- 2.1.1 The HAC Board is made up of a HAC Daily Board, consisting of a Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, and a HAC General Board, consisting of the Campus Elders
- 2.1.2 All campus locations, as defined in Article 2.1.3, will be represented in the HAC General Board. The person performing this function will be called a Campus Elder. The main campus locations will be represented by one specific HAC Board Member in the HAC General Board. Responsibility for small, flexible and/or temporary locations will be divided over the other members of the HAC Board.
- 2.1.3 A campus location is a place of residence where any number of UCR students resides during a semester, excluding places of residence where any number of UCR students live who are granted exemption from living on campus. To be considered a 'main' campus location, the location must meet the following requirements:
- 2.1.3.I Consistently, during a semester, more than 45 (forty-five) students, must be living at the location.
- 2.1.3.II The campus location is intended to be a long-term addition to the UCR Campus (more than 3 years).
- 2.1.3.III The campus location is distinct from the other existing main campus locations.
- 2.1.4 In case the HAC Board wishes to add a member to the HAC General Board without the conditions described in point 2.1.3. being met, approval of the General Assembly is needed.
- 2.1.5 The HAC Daily Board legally bears final responsibility over actions and decisions taken by the HAC Board. However, the HAC Daily Board makes sure to always consult and involve the HAC General Board in decisions and discussions as much as possible, especially when related to the specific campus locations.
- 2.1.6 The tasks of the individual HAC Board Members are:
- 2.1.6.I The Chair:
- 2.1.6.I.1 *Carries final, overall responsibility for the HAC Board and the HAC's functioning.*
- 2.1.6.I.2 *Is the motivating factor for the HAC.*
- 2.1.6.I.3 *Prepares the agenda for, sets and chairs the HAC Board meetings and General Assemblies.*
- 2.1.6.I.4 *Works together with the Secretary to decide which course to follow in policy matters and what solutions are for possible problems. Takes the actual decisions after having been discussed with the rest of the HAC Board.*
- 2.1.6.I.5 *Is responsible for all external contacts (amongst which UCR and Villex), including negotiating and upholding all agreements related to these.*
- 2.1.6.I.6 *Maintains a long-term overview of the HAC and its future.*
- 2.1.6.I.7 *Ensures that the Articles of Association and Policy Manual are respected.*
- 2.1.6.I.8 *Is the contact person for the Advisory Council and the Independent Body.*
- 2.1.6.I.9 *Has the responsibility to make sure that all tasks of the HAC Board are carried out properly.*
- 2.1.6.I.10 *Works closely together with the Treasurer and Secretary on the internal operations of the HAC Board.*

- 2.1.6.I.1.1 *Revises and if necessary, updates the Policy Manual.*
- 2.1.6.I.1.2 *With the Treasurer, makes sure that the financial procedure (Article 5) is adhered to and examines the Treasurer's actions.*
- 2.1.6.II The Secretary:
  - 2.1.6.II.1 *Together with the Chair, is responsible for the smooth running of the HAC Board and the association as a whole.*
  - 2.1.6.II.2 *Works together with the Chair to decide which course to follow in policy matters and what solutions are for possible problems.*
  - 2.1.6.II.3 *Works closely together with the Treasurer and Chair on the internal operations of the HAC Board.*
  - 2.1.6.II.4 *Takes minutes of all meetings and provides them to the HAC Board for the next meeting.*
  - 2.1.6.II.5 *Is responsible for the administration and archive system of the HAC.*
  - 2.1.6.II.6 *Is responsible for all incoming and outgoing correspondence.*
  - 2.1.6.II.7 *Is responsible for the organization of the email inbox.*
  - 2.1.6.II.8 *Is responsible for all public relations and publications.*
- 2.1.6.III The Treasurer:
  - 2.1.6.III.1 *Works closely with the Chair and Secretary and is in charge of all financial aspects of the HAC.*
  - 2.1.6.III.2 *Discusses and negotiates funding by external parties.*
  - 2.1.6.III.3 *Prepares and presents the budget to the General Assembly.*
  - 2.1.6.III.4 *Is responsible for keeping track of all expenditures and income of all HAC related activities and keeping a full financial administration.*
  - 2.1.6.III.5 *Ensures that funds are spent in the best interest of the members of the HAC and the HAC Board.*
  - 2.1.6.III.6 *Has contact with third parties that provide services and goods for the HAC.*
  - 2.1.6.III.7 *Keeps track of the HAC inventory and supplies.*
  - 2.1.6.III.8 *Sets the short and long-term financial goals.*
  - 2.1.6.III.9 *Is responsible for a clear reimbursement policy towards the other HAC Board members, the House Elders and all other HAC members.*
  - 2.1.6.III.10 *Ensures that it is clear for the Campus Elders and House Elders how much money they can get reimbursed from the HAC and for what purposes.*
  - 2.1.6.III.11 *With the Chair, makes sure that the financial procedures (Article 5) are adhered to.*

**2.1.6.IV** A Campus Elder:

- 2.1.6.IV.1 *Works closely together with the HAC Daily Board and other Campus Elders and is in charge of pursuing and representing the interests of the members living at their campus location.*
- 2.1.6.IV.2 *Is the main contact person for all external contacts related to their campus location and should initiate contact if deemed necessary by the Campus Elder. These external parties may include neighbours, municipality, neighbourhood police officers, and 'wijkteam'.*
- 2.1.6.IV.3 *Is the contact person for the members living at their campus location, and responsible for all communication to and from those members.*
- 2.1.6.IV.4 *Is responsible for the House Elders of their location as laid out in Article 3.1.*
- 2.1.6.IV.5 *Is the contact person towards Villex for matters specifically related to their campus location(s).*
- 2.1.6.IV.6 *Deals with and is first point of contact for complaints, events and event procedures related to their campus location.*
- 2.1.6.IV.7 *Makes sure Villex maintains an emergency protocol for their campus location and communicates this to their members.*

**2.2 Members:**

- 2.2.1 All students of University College Roosevelt are requested to become member of the HAC.

## **2.3 Elections**

### **2.3.1 Election for the HAC Board:**

- 2.3.1.I** Elections shall be held yearly at the end of the spring semester or when a position is not fulfilled.
- 2.3.1.II** Elections for the HAC Daily Board are open to all members of the HAC.
- 2.3.1.III** Elections for the Campus Elders are open to all HAC members living at the respective Campus Locations (as defined in section 2.1.3).
- 2.3.1.IV** If a candidate runs for a position within the HAC Board, this candidate can no longer run for any other Big Board positions (RASA, HAC, AAC, Elliott) at the same time.
- 2.3.1.V** Elections will be announced at least two weeks before they are to take place, excluding the day of announcement and the day of the General Assembly. Candidates must make their desire to participate in the elections known, in writing, to the HAC Board at least 48 hours before the elections.
- 2.3.1.VI** Candidates must write an election statement, which will be made public to all members prior to the elections. In the election statement, the candidates must clearly specify the function they apply for.
- 2.3.1.VII** Candidates must introduce themselves briefly at the General Assembly by means of a short speech. Candidates that are unable to be present must provide the HAC Board with an official letter, which will be read out during the General Assembly.
- 2.3.1.VIII** All HAC members have the right to cast an anonymous vote.
- 2.3.1.IX** Representatives from the Independent Body, who are neither running nor member of the current HAC Board, will count the votes. After they approve the results, the winners per position will be announced.

## **2.4 Transition**

- 2.4.1** The transition period will run from the election of the new HAC Board to the end of the book year as described in the Articles of Association, when the newly elected HAC Board will officially take office. During the summer the newly elected HAC Board will be taking up the tasks of the old HAC Board. The former HAC Board, however, will remain responsible during this period, and will have to provide assistance and advice whenever requested by the new HAC Board.
- 2.4.2** It is the responsibility of the former HAC Board to compile a transition document containing all relevant information.



### **Article 3: HAC Volunteers**

#### **3.1 House Elders, see also appendix B.**

- 3.1.1 All houses, floors, and hallways, as defined by the HAC Board, are required to have a House, Floor or Hallway Elder. In this Policy Manual, Floor and Hallway Elders are being referred to as House Elders. Floor, Hallway, and House Elders have equal status.
- 3.1.2 The HAC Board will strive to have a House Elder be responsible for a maximum of 25 people.
- 3.1.3 The tasks, responsibilities and rights of the House Elder are specified in the House Elder Contract and the House Elder terms and conditions.
- 3.1.4 The Campus Elder is responsible for organizing new House Elder elections prior to the current House Elder stepping down.
- 3.1.5 House Elders are elected for a period of one year. Preferably, House Elders are elected at the start of the Spring semester and will remain in office during the Summer break and the Fall semester after.
- 3.1.6 Unless there are no other candidates, students in their last semester cannot run for House Elder.
- 3.1.7 The elections will be facilitated either by hosting a meeting during which all house/floor/hallway inhabitants are physically present or by e-mail if the former proves to be impossible. The House Elder will be elected with a simple majority vote.
- 3.1.8 In case of only one candidate applying for House Elder, the inhabitants of the house/floor/hallway will have the opportunity to approve or disapprove of their election. If a majority disapproves, new elections will be held.
- 3.1.9 In case no candidates sign up, the Campus Elder, in collaboration with the resigning House Elder, will actively try to find a new House Elder.
- 3.1.10 The HAC Board will allocate a certain amount of money per member in the yearly HAC budget to be used for activities or objects that the whole house, floor or hallway benefits from. The House Elder, after discussing it with their house, floor or hallway, decides what it is to be spent on (with approval of the HAC Board's Treasurer) and is the only one who can ask for the reimbursement with their personal bank account(s).
- 3.1.11 In case a House Elder is elected to be Campus Elder, they will step down as House Elder and the normal procedure will be followed to find a replacement.

#### **3.2 Other HAC Volunteers**

- 3.2.1 Members will be regarded as HAC Volunteers after both the Chair of the HAC and the member have signed a contract outlining the duties of both parties.
- 3.2.2 Damages to materials used while a member is in their function of HAC Volunteer will be either partially or completely be paid for by the Association. This decision is up to the discretion of the HAC Board, and this will be presented to the members in the HAC newsletter. Would any member disagree, then they are able to request the IB to mediate.

## **Article 4: External Contacts**

### **4.1 Relation HAC-Villex**

- 4.1.1 HAC is to represent and act in the in the best interest of its members during meetings with Villex.
- 4.1.2 In case an individual HAC member is not able to solve an individual complaint or problem with Villex after reasonable effort, HAC should help this member in finding an appropriate solution. HAC can, in this case, address individual problems of members to Villex, and should, when addressing this problem, carefully consider the interests of the member it is acting for.
- 4.1.3 The HAC should have regular contact with Villex.

### **4.2 Relation HAC- University College Roosevelt (UCR)**

- 4.2.1 HAC is to represent, and act in the best interest of, its members during meetings with UCR's staff and faculty.
- 4.2.2 In case an individual HAC member is not able to solve an individual complaint or problem with UCR after reasonable effort, HAC should help this member in finding an appropriate solution. HAC can in this case address individual problems of members to UCR, and should, when addressing this problem, carefully consider the interests of the member it is acting for.
- 4.2.3 The HAC should have regular contact with UCR.

### **4.3 Huurdersvereniging Middelburg (HVM)**

- 4.3.1 HAC is a member of the Huurdersvereniging Middelburg for support on difficult issues that the HAC Board itself does not have full knowledge on.

## **Article 5: Financial Procedures**

### **5.1 Allocation of the HAC Budget**

- 5.1.1 The HAC budget should be allocated in a manner which best reflects the HAC's mission statement. All funds should be spent with the interest of the total body of members and the continuation of the Association in mind.
- 5.1.2 At the start of the fall semester, the HAC Board prepares a budget for the coming year, which shall be presented at the Budget General Assembly.
- 5.1.3 The budget proposal has to be approved by the General Assembly by a simple majority.
- 5.1.4 For expenditures that exceed €500 and are not covered in the budget, the HAC Treasurer has to inform the members. In this case, the members have the right to appeal to the Independent Body.
- 5.1.5 If HAC Boards decide to organize a Furniture Fund it will be decided at the first General Assembly of the Fall semester how the profits will be spent by the respective HAC Board.
- 5.1.6 The HAC Treasurer will present the members of the Independent Body with a financial report of the previous year at least two weeks before the start of the Fall semester.
- 5.1.7 The Independent Body will audit the financial report (art. 5.1.5) and present its findings at the first General Assembly of the Fall semester.

### **5.2 Financial Procedures**

- 5.2.1 The HAC Treasurer is the only HAC Board Member who can transfer money for HAC.
- 5.2.2 With regard to article 5.2.1 the HAC Board can ascribe the Chair with the responsibility to make transactions by a simple majority vote. The type of transactions and which transactions also have to be voted upon by a simple majority vote by the HAC Board.
- 5.2.3 The HAC Treasurer needs the approval of the Chair for all transactions.
- 5.2.4 All transactions should be in line with HAC's official Articles of Association. All transactions should also be in line with Article 5.1.4.
- 5.2.5 Money spent by members can be reimbursed with the official HAC reimbursement form, provided that the conditions mentioned on the form are met.
- 5.2.6 The reimbursement needs to be made within two weeks. Else, the Treasurer must provide a valid reason for the delay.
- 5.2.7 Reimbursement forms are to be handed in to the Treasurer within four weeks after the expense was made. It is up to the discretion of the HAC Board to approve of late reimbursements.

## Article 6: Independent Body & Advisory Council

### 6.1 Independent Body (IB)

6.1.1 The Independent Body's tasks are fourfold:

- 6.1.1.I Acting as an appeal court to settle disputes between the HAC Board and another party that cannot be settled internally.
- 6.1.1.II Auditing the accounts of the HAC Board twice a year.
- 6.1.1.III Counting votes at a HAC General Assemblies.
- 6.1.1.IV Acting as a mediation committee to settle disputes internally between the HAC Board and another party.

6.1.2 The Independent Body shall meet at least once a semester, and it is the responsibility of the Chair of the IB to make sure that this takes place.

6.1.3 The Independent Body should always act in total accordance with the HAC Policy Manual and Articles of Association.

### 6.2 Independent Body Membership

6.2.1 Members of the Independent Body are appointed for an undetermined period of time by the General Assembly. When a member wishes to resign, the member should inform the Chair of the Independent Body three weeks in advance in writing. The General Assembly can also dismiss members.

6.2.2 Two weeks before the last General Assembly of the Spring semester, the Chair of the Independent Body should evaluate who will stay member of the Independent Body in the next year.

6.2.3 This evaluation should result in a proposal for Independent Body membership for the next year by the Chair of the Independent Body, including a list of newly proposed members.

6.2.4 The newly proposed delegates shall be presented at the General Assembly upon which the General Assembly votes on the whole group.

6.2.5 All HAC members -except for current HAC Board Members- are eligible for IB Membership.

6.2.6 Membership to the Independent Body has several restrictions:

6.2.6.I The Independent Body will ideally consist of five people, but at least three.

6.2.6.II The Chair and Secretary preferably have been studying at UCR for at least three semesters at the time of their candidacy.

6.2.6.III The IB should reflect and represent the international character of UCR

6.2.7 At the start of every academic year, the Independent Body chooses a Chair and a Secretary from its members.

### **6.3 Auditing**

- 6.3.1 At least two weeks before the start of the Fall semester, the HAC Treasurer of the previous year will present the members of the Independent Body with a financial report of the previous year.
- 6.3.2 At least two weeks before the Budget General Assembly, the Treasurer will present the members of the Independent Body with the budget proposal for the coming year.
- 6.3.3 During the auditing period, the HAC Board shall be available to answer any questions or further inquiries from the Independent Body.
- 6.3.4 The audit shall be executed by the Chair of the Independent Body and two other members of the Independent Body, chosen from among the Independent Body members on a yearly basis.
- 6.3.5 The auditing committee shall present its findings at the first upcoming General Assembly.
- 6.3.6 The audit results in an advice given to the General Assembly to approve or disapprove of the budget proposal or year report.

### **6.4 Appeals**

- 6.4.1 In the case that a member wishes to appeal to an HAC Board decision, the member must contact the Independent Body in writing within two weeks of being informed of the sanction or decision by the HAC Board.
- 6.4.2 After receiving such writing, the Independent Body must confirm receiving the complaint and set a date for a hearing. This hearing must take place within two weeks upon receiving the writing.
- 6.4.3 The Independent Body will review the complaint, using the Articles of Association and Policy Manual.
- 6.4.4 When an appeal is accepted, the Independent Body shall review whether there are any personal relationships between Independent Body members and the relevant actor exist that might influence the objectivity of the appeal. If there is any such relationship, the relevant member shall temporarily step down from the Independent Body.
- 6.4.5 All transcripts made by the HAC Board during the investigation process shall be made available to the Independent Body for review.
- 6.4.6 If it is deemed necessary the Independent Body can instigate further hearings of any of the parties involved, including the HAC Board itself.
- 6.4.7 The Independent Body will present a binding advice to the HAC Board and relevant actors.

### **6.5 Mediation**

- 6.5.1 In the case a dispute arises between a member and the HAC Board that cannot be settled between the parties, either party can contact the Independent Body.
- 6.5.2 After receiving such writing, the Independent Body must confirm receiving the complaint and set a date for the mediation. This mediation hearing must take place within two weeks upon receiving the writing.
- 6.5.3 The Independent Body will be entirely neutral and will only serve as mediator in the conflict.



**6.6 Advisory Council**

- 6.6.1 The Advisory Council provides the HAC with advice to ensure the HAC has a reference to earlier experience and policy advice, when either party considers this helpful or necessary. The reason for this is to ensure HAC's long-term goals for the benefit of the student body.
- 6.6.2 The HAC Board can request non-binding advice from the Advisory Council, after which it is obliged to answer within three weeks.
- 6.6.3 The Advisory Council can only consist of former HAC Board Members, and is appointed by the HAC Board.

## **Article 7: Code of Conduct and Warnings**

### **7.1 Code of Conduct**

7.1.1 All HAC members are expected to treat each other with respect and not to discriminate each other on any grounds. All HAC members are expected to abide by the rules & regulations as set out in their Tenancy Agreement, General Terms and Conditions of the Tenancy Agreement and House Rules.

### **7.2 Warning procedure**

7.2.1 The HAC Board shall consider complaints made by any person against any HAC Member with respect to:

7.2.1.I Misconduct on or around the campus locations or at events organized by the HAC.

7.2.1.II Causing nuisance of any kind towards others living on campus.

7.2.1.III Theft or damage to HAC or personal property.

7.2.1.IV Actions contrary to the statutes or this Policy Manual.

7.2.2 After careful consideration of the situation, the HAC Board will start the warning procedure. In most cases, the following steps are followed, however it is up to the discretion of the HAC Board to which extent this procedure is followed:

7.2.2.I The Campus Elder sets a meeting with the students in question and will ask them to change their ways. Along with an email detailing the complaint, this is considered the first official warning.

7.2.2.II If the student continues to cause nuisance and/or misbehave in other ways, the HAC Chair will set a meeting with the student to talk about their behavior. After this meeting, the Chair can choose to give a second official warning in writing.

7.2.2.III If the student does not show willingness to cooperate or continues their misbehavior, the HAC will hand over the case to UCR Management. Depending on the situation, the HAC may advise UCR Management to place the student on social probation.

7.2.2.IV Official warnings are issued when the misconduct, behavior or actions are serious, but not considered grave enough for further action. This is up to the discretion of the HAC Board.

7.2.2.V If a student is to receive repeated warnings, and the steps as described in article 7.2.2 have not caused improvement, a suspension as described in the Articles of Association will be considered.



## **Appendix A: General Terms and Conditions of the House/Floor/Hallways Elders**

(updated version to be found on the RASA website)





**Appendix B: Event Application Form**

(updated version to be found on the RASA website)