

The Constitution of the
Online Postgraduate Combinatorial Conference (ePCC)

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Introduction The e-Postgraduate Combinatorial Conference¹ is an established conference organised for, and by, current research students in combinatorial and discrete mathematics in Europe and beyond. The ePCC began with a series of virtual seminars in the Autumn of 2020, where research students could present and discuss their research in a relaxed environment outside of their own department and to meet other researchers in their area, broadening the potential scope of discussions

This Constitution is to detail: the rules and regulations the ePCC and, in particular the committee must follow; the purpose of the Conference and Seminar Series; how the business of the ePCC is to be carried out; the organisational positions and their roles in the ePCC; and the procedures that are to be followed by the Committee. The Committee members and other attendees of the ratification of this Constitution are also given.

Article I Committee

The committee will contain five executive roles: the Chair, Past Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Welfare and Inclusion Officer. The committee may also have elected to it an Engagement Secretary, Fundraiser and Membership Secretary as well as some number of Ordinary Members. The committee shall consist of no more than ten members in total: five Executive (four if no Past Chair exists) and up to five non-Executive. More roles being added requires a discussion at a General Meeting, followed by the procedure for amending the Constitution to add this role.

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND THEIR ROLES The following are the five Executive Officer roles that are to be held by members of the ePCC. Nomination and election of these officers is described in Article IV, Section ii. Any Executive Officer has the ability to veto a motion before the Committee; this can be bypassed by qualified majority by the remainder of the Executive Committee.

Chair The Chair of the ePCC serves to oversee, facilitate and guide business meetings as well as encourage cooperation and cohesion in the ePCC. Importantly, the Chair should take an active role in pursuing the goals outlined for their committee and make contact where relevant with other organisations. The Chair presides over meetings as standard (unless delegated by necessity to another Executive Committee member) and presides over seminars and talks by default if no other Committee members would be more suitable or would prefer to do so (for instance, if one member of the Committee has greater expertise on the topic of the talk they may be better positioned to preside over the talk to facilitate discussion). The Chair, or the Committee Member presiding over a talk, should ensure that as many as possible in attendance have an opportunity to contribute to any discussion. Outside of meetings, the Chair should have an understanding of all work going on for the ePCC, as decided by the whole committee, and receive regular updates from members of the committee. The chair makes appointments to replace Committee members who have left office (for instance, have resigned or been impeached). They are also at liberty to form sub-committees, such as a welfare committee, where deeper and more formal investigations may be required. In the case of a Chair leaving their position for any reason, a new Chair is to be nominated by and from the remaining Executive Committee members and then elected by the entire Committee members.

Past Chair The Past Chair of the ePCC is the immediate predecessor of the current Chair, if one exists. They are the only unelected member of the Committee and are not obliged to attend every meeting, but they should be kept informed of proceedings and consulted wherever this proves helpful or necessary. They serve the ePCC in an advisory capacity, their role adapting to the requirements of the Committee and ePCC as a whole. The Past Chair presides over impeachment proceedings against a sitting Chair.

Secretary The Secretary of the ePCC is to deal with all administrative matters. This involves preparing agendas and taking minutes for business meetings, keeping the committee and membership informed of any proceedings and upcoming conference events. The methods of disseminating such information may vary and can be partially delegated to a non-executive member of the committee, the first choice of which should be the Press Secretary if this position has been filled. The Secretary should be the first point of contact for membership and external communications: all correspondence should be dealt

¹Herein, *the ePCC* refers to the group including the Committee, members and participants.

with by the Secretary (unless, again, they delegate some such duties). The Secretary is also responsible for collecting material for the regular publication produced by the ePCC and for circulating this publication, if applicable. The Secretary should communicate with any participants of the ePCC who are interested in giving a talk or seminar, including them in the year's timetable and ensuring they are aware of any relevant details. The Secretary should aim to search for potential new speakers regularly, ideally every two weeks, and communicate with any interested parties.

Treasurer The main role of the Treasurer of the ePCC is to handle the financial accounts of the Conference. They should be responsible for coordinating, managing and communicating to the rest of the committee the standing of accounts at business meetings. Such records should include any income, outgoings and overall balance; receipts for any purchases; and relevant documents for any grants and support received. At the AGM, the Treasurer will be required to give a more detailed insight of the financial standing of the ePCC by way of a presentation to the committee and other attendees. This should focus on the current account balance, how much money has been raised (for instance, through fees and grants), how much has been spent since the last AGM (and on what) and any perceived upcoming financial issues.

Welfare and Inclusion The Welfare and Inclusion Officer has two main duties: they should be both the first point of contact to raise welfare concerns at or between any events regarding the ePCC and they should be an active promoter of an inclusive and diverse community within the ePCC. This office serves to obtain feedback from participants to relay to the rest of the Committee in order to improve the ePCC and the events provided. They should actively seek out all suggestions from members and participants in their inclusion-related duties, in particular by making contact with any institutions that could aid with accessibility and diversity. In particular, the Welfare and Inclusion Officer should ensure all materials are distributed in accessible formats for all participants, for instance using audio transcripts. They may head a sub-committee if this involves, for instance, an application for an award or recognition of the diversity goals being met. This officer answers only to the Chair in confidential matters of welfare, who may choose to create a Welfare Committee for the most serious welfare-related concerns.

SECTION II. NON-EXECUTIVE OFFICERS AND THEIR ROLES These non-Executive Committee positions need not be filled, but - if there is sufficient interest - nominations should be taken and a vote held to elect members to this position, again as detailed in Article IV.

Engagement Secretary The Engagement Secretary should be made responsible for circulating information relevant to the ePCC on social media and through emails and dealing with any press engagement or similar correspondence. They should be responsible for updating the website and ensuring all information is relevant, up-to-date and accessible. This includes advertising upcoming talks and updating media outlets such as Agora, which should occur around a week before the talk is due to be given.

Web Officer The Web Officer is responsible for the technical aspects of updating the website; this should be informed by the relevant secretaries and wider committee. The Web Officer may also maintain a dedicated email account, with automatic reminders for upcoming ePCC talks or similar. The Web Officer cannot be asked for unreasonable or excessively time-consuming features to be added to the website, nor anything significantly outside of their skills and expertise.

Fundraiser If the ePCC believes the organisation is in a position to acquire funding (for instance, through grants or encouraging membership), then they may open nominations for the role of Fundraiser. This role requires the pursuit of grant applications, coordination with other organisations interested in financially supporting the ePCC or through any other means the Committee agrees may be appropriate and relevant.

Membership Secretary The ePCC may choose to elect a Membership Secretary in order to manage the participant engagement, usually assigned to the Secretary, perhaps in the case of Membership being formally verified or the membership growing in size significantly. Their role may be to introduce levels of membership (full, associate, honorary and the like), which would require a qualified majority to pass at an AGM or EGM. The Membership Secretary should focus on engagement and participation as their first priority in their capacity.

Ordinary Members The Committee may also hear nominations and elect Ordinary Members to the Committee. These members serve as representatives of the member base, and there may be several Ordinary Members, so long as the total number of Committee members does not exceed ten, with the number of ordinary members not exceeding five. For instance, if all Executive and non-Executive positions have been filled, there may only be one Ordinary Member, but if only the Executive roles have been filled, there is room for five Ordinary Members.

Article II Rules

SECTION I. NAME AND AFFILIATION The organisation will be known as the Online Postgraduate Combinatorial Conference, ePCC.

SECTION II. PLATFORM The ePCC is a conference and seminar series created for and by postgraduate students in the study of Combinatorics and Discrete Mathematics; a large proportion of participants will likely be research students in these areas, but this is not to exclude others who may be interested at the discretion of the Committee.

SECTION III. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES The ePCC is created to do the following:

1. Give participants a forum for developing their presentation skills to audiences other than their own departments.
2. Provide a means for participants to discuss their work with others in a comfortable and relaxed environment.
3. Allow participants to meet and develop research relationships with other researchers in and around their area of interest.
4. Circulate information about combinatorics and related events to interested participants.
5. Foster a sense of community, especially amongst research students and early career researchers, in Combinatorics and Discrete Mathematics.
6. Facilitate academic interactions to other researchers in the UK and across Europe, creating links between research cultures.
7. Provide a platform for participants to communicate with each other outside of the Conferences, as decided during the AGM.

SECTION IV. MEMBERSHIP Members of the ePCC are those who have made themselves known to the Membership Secretary (or Secretary, if no Membership Secretary exists) as candidates for membership and have been accepted as such. These individuals are entitled to vote at AGMs and EGMs and any business meetings (unless specified that a vote is for members of the Committee alone). Membership should ordinarily be granted and renewed at the AGM, but may be done at any other time at the discretion of the Secretary. Membership should be renewed annually at or sometime before the AGM. The Committee may deny or revoke membership of the ePCC at any time given reasonable, true and justified explanation is given and voted on, if relevant and appropriate. To further the goals of the ePCC for inclusion and accessibility, membership fees will not be charged.

SECTION V. COMMITTEE The Committee Officers, as detailed in Article I, should be elected at the AGM where possible; elections should be carried out as outlined in Article IV.

SECTION VI. RESIGNATION Any member of the Committee is permitted to resign at any time. Where a resignation has been submitted to the Committee, the Officer ceases to occupy their role as of the date and time specified (this may be of immediate effect) and the Chair has the ability to appoint the resigned officer's successor. This appointment lasts until either the AGM occurs or an EGM is called at the discretion and agreement of the Committee.

SECTION VII. IMPEACHMENT Impeachment proceedings can be brought against any sitting member of the Committee by another member of the Committee (either of their own accord or in sponsorship of complaints of a non-Committee member) for a significant violation of the goals, ethos, aims or procedures of the ePCC or any infraction of relevant regional laws (such as data protection legislation, or copyright infringement). Unless the proceedings are brought against them, the Chair presides over impeachment proceedings. In the case of proceedings against a sitting Chair, the Past Chair should preside over the impeachment proceedings; if the ePCC has no Past Chair, or the Past Chair is unavailable, any previous member of the Executive Committee may chair the impeachment proceedings. Impeachment of a Committee member can only be carried out in the presence of a quorum by qualified majority of the Committee present. In the event impeachment proceedings are brought forward against a member of the Committee, an impeachment sub-Committee should be formed to investigate the allegations that form the grounds of the impeachment case.

SECTION VIII. SUB-COMMITTEES The Chair may, at any time, appoint a sub-Committee, under the advice of the Committee or any of its members or of their own volition. This should be used for special considerations of a topic, organisation of a particular event or investigation of some issue. It is the discretion of the Chair alone to appoint this sub-Committee, which may consist in Executive or non-Executive members of the Committee (or some combination of both). One notable use of an investigative sub-Committee is to examine a welfare complaint or issue raised by one or several members of the ePCC or participants. Special consideration must be made by the sub-Committee for all relevant legislation in such a case and it is their duty to ensure the ePCC complies with such laws. Any sub-committees should be time-limited, according to the nature and expected length of the project they have been assigned to. This time limit should be specified at the onset of the sub-committee.

Article III Organisation

SECTION I. CONFERENCES Conferences should be carried out according to the following requirements.

Local Coordinator For each conference, a Local Coordinator should be appointed for interfacing with venues, speakers and other such arrangements. This Coordinator should be selected and agreed upon by the Committee (and all voting members present at the relevant business meeting). The Local Coordinator should be an active member and participant of the ePCC. They should liaise with a designated member of the Committee, presumably the Secretary, who will relay communications to the Committee (or the Chair only, as required).

Choice of Venue The Local Coordinator of the given Conference should discuss venue options with the Committee and, if at a business meeting, any present members and participants. If there are multiple suitable options, this should be decided by a vote (passing by simple majority).

Frequency The Committee should decide in the AGM in which they were elected how many conferences they should like to organise during their term, if any.

Content The Committee will ensure that each conference covers as broad a range of topics as possible, encouraging attendees to learn and discuss new aspects of Combinatorics and Discrete Mathematics they may not have explored before.

Speakers The Committee will be responsible for obtaining speakers for each Conference. This may be done by communicating with the membership of the ePCC and advertising through the media outlets associated with the Conference. The Committee, advised in particular by the Welfare and Inclusion Officer, should actively pursue diversity in the speakers that are invited to speak. The expenses of invited speakers should be paid by the Committee, organised by the Treasurer. Each Conference should have a clear format for speakers to be allotted, finalised at least a month before the Conference.

SECTION II. SEMINAR SERIES The Committee should aim to provide a regular series of seminars and talks, given by members of the ePCC and other interested parties. The Committee is responsible for obtaining and liaising with speakers, deciding on the platform (e.g. via a Zoom seminar, a livestream of a lecture hall and so on) and communicating these details to the membership. The Committee should decide in the AGM in which they were elected how frequently these seminars or talks should take place, when there might be any breaks and so on.

SECTION III. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Publications The ePCC Committee may aim to publish regularly an informal journal, collecting work done by members and affiliated parties or organisations of interest and circulated among the membership to further the aims and goals of the ePCC in engaging postgraduate students in the study of Combinatorics and Discrete Mathematics. Submissions to such a publication should be made to the Secretary by the deadline they give (presumably in the previous edition), who will then collate submissions (along with an editorial from the Chair and any other pieces from the Committee) and circulate the publication. The Committee should decide at the AGM the following:

1. How often should the publication be distributed?
2. How long will the publication be?
3. How academic will the publication be, or what will the proportion of technical to non-technical be?
4. How will it be distributed? E.g. should it be emailed to members, printed (funds allowing) and circulated physically or uploaded to a website?

Regular communications The Committee should ensure regular updates are pursued through a mailing list or similarly accessible method. Along with email, information might also be passed through associated social media, the ePCC website, and other means the Committee deems appropriate, through the Engagement Secretary, if appointed. All relevant legislation must be followed closely when handling personal and private data, such as names and email addresses.

Article IV Procedures

SECTION I. VOTING PROCEDURE Most votes will be considered public unless either explicitly made private in the meeting agenda or a motion is brought forward to have a private ballot, which can then be seconded and voted on. For a public ballot, the Chair should attempt to determine the vote through asking those in favour to say "Aye" and those opposed "No" - if it is at all unclear at this stage whether a motion carries or fails, the Chair must call for a written ballot. All votes that end in a tie will be decided by a fair coin toss (or by casting lots, if there are multiple candidates or outcomes).

Ordinary and Qualified Majorities Some voting items, as outlined in this Constitution, will require an ordinary majority. This is simply a minimum of $1/2$ of those present if there are two options available, and the highest proportion of the vote when more than two options are being voted on. Other items may require a qualified majority, which is a $2/3$ consensus of those present. In the case of numerous outcomes, multiple ballots may be required in order to achieve such a majority.

Quorum For particularly important voting items and business matters, this Constitution requires that a quorum of the membership is present. This means a minimum of $2/5$ of the ePCC voting membership is present (physically or virtually) in order to discuss a particular item of business or vote on a given matter.

SECTION II. NOMINATION AND ELECTION TO THE COMMITTEE For any position on the Committee, to be entered into a ballot an individual must be nominated (by someone other than themselves). Every nominee must be seconded to be put to a vote; naturally, if the nominee has been seconded and runs for their Committee position unopposed, they gain the position by default. If more than one individual achieves a nomination and their nominations are seconded, this must be put to a private and anonymous ballot. The method of balloting is left to the Committee presiding at the AGM/EGM, the outgoing Committee.

Executive positions Executive positions - as outlined in Article I, Section i - have ordinary terms of one year. There are no limits on the number of terms an Executive Committee member may serve; they may stand for re-election at any AGM (or indeed EGM). The one exception to this is the Past Chair: this is an unelected position, and the sitting Chair automatically becomes a Past Chair when a new incumbent succeeds them. The previous Past Chair no longer holds this position, but can be called upon to assume this role if the current Past Chair is unavailable for events and business in which a Past Chair are required.

Other Committee positions Non-Executive Committee offices are filled in a similar way. Individuals interested in filling any of these posts must be nominated and their nomination must be seconded

SECTION III. BUSINESS MEETINGS All meetings should have a pre-prepared agenda, circulated in good time of the meeting, and should be minuted. Both the agendas and minutes are the responsibility of the Secretary or someone they delegate to perform these duties.

Annual General Meeting The AGM should occur annually. The outgoing Committee presides over the AGM and hears nominations for new candidates to the incoming Committee. Because all crucial ePCC business is addressed at this meeting, a quorum of 2/5 of the voting membership must be present, including the entire Executive Committee. Notification to the membership of the date, time and location of the AGM must be made by the Secretary in good time to the membership and other attending parties. The agenda shall be made available no later than seven days before the meeting and the details of the meeting shall be made available no later than fourteen days before. The AGM should provide a chance to review, among other considerations, the effectiveness of communication methods and the utility of the platforms provided for participant interaction between events and meetings. At the AGM, the following reports should be given before any business is conducted:

1. The Secretary should introduce the meeting and detail the structure to be followed. If one was elected/appointed to the Committee, this may include a summary of the Membership statistics from the Membership Secretary.
2. The Treasurer should then give their report on the financial position of the ePCC. The Treasurer may be assisted in this report by the Fundraiser, if one exists on the Committee,
3. Finally, the Chair should address those present giving an overview of the year, with highlights and suggestions for the year to come.

Additionally, the Welfare and Inclusion Officer, if appropriate, may give a report on any completed and disclosed investigations and detail the inclusion efforts undertaken during their time in this position. This may not often be possible due to the confidential nature of their role. At the AGM, the frequency of the regular meetings of the coming year should be decided.

Extraordinary General Meeting EGMs can be called by suggestion of the committee and qualified vote by attending members at meeting, so long as a quorum is present.

Committee Meetings Any member of the Committee is at liberty to request a meeting with any combination of other Committee members; their presence cannot be compelled in such a case, as with Executives at AGMs.

SECTION IV. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION At an AGM or EGM, amendments to the Constitution of the ePCC can be suggested. These amendments must be suggested to the Secretary before they have circulated the agenda. To pass, an amendment must obtain a qualified majority with a quorum present.

SECTION V. DISSOLVING THE EPCC Should the ePCC be dissolved, a vote should be held on a charitable cause to donate any remaining funds the ePCC may hold. The Committee members shall not be held accountable or liable for contributions to this. Care must be taken to deal with private or confidential material according to all relevant legislation.

Article V
Ratification

We, the undersigned Committee members and present participants of the Postgraduate Combinatorial Conference, in order to fully implement the aims outlined above, hereby adopt, establish and abide by this constitution as the governing apparatus of our organisation.

Executive members present for the ratification of this constitution:

1. Benjamin M Bumpus - Chair
2. Michael McKay - Secretary
3. Jake Horsfield - Treasurer
4. Ethan Kelly - Welfare and Inclusion

Date, time, signatures