# Guide to the 2019 Model Parents’ club constitution

In 2019, the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training published a new Model Parents’ Club Constitution.

This document summarises the key changes between the 2017 and 2019 versions of the constitution and explains the practical impacts on Parents’ Clubs.

You can view the Department’s policy in relation to Parents’ Clubs [here](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/pages/parentclubs.aspx).

If you have any further questions please contact: [community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au)

| **Section** | **Type of change** | **Summary of changes** | **What does this mean for the Parents’ Club?** |
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| 1. **Parents’ Club/Association Values** | **New section** | A section addressing values has been added to the constitution. This is in line with the Department’s values. | Including a section on values outlines the expected behaviour of members and the club as a whole. The club may choose to use these values as a starting point for developing a code of conduct (see Section 14 – Standards and Procedures in the constitution for further details). |
| 1. **Membership and Annual Registration** | **Change** from Financial Membership to Registered Membership | The 2017 Constitution required parents to become Financial Members of the Club.  Financial Membership has been changed to Registered Membership. Individuals must now complete and submit the Registration Form to become a member. The Registration Form is at Schedule 1 in the constitution. | Individuals no longer have to pay a registration fee to be members of the Parents’ Club. This requirement was deemed unnecessary given members are volunteers who donate their time for the benefit of the school community. Instead they must complete a Registration Form (at Schedule 1 of the constitution).  Individuals wishing to be Registered Members must submit the Registration Form to the secretary of the club prior to the Annual General Meeting.  An individual wishing to join the Parents’ Club at another point in the year can submit their Registration Form at a General Meeting. They will be entitled to vote at the following General Meeting.  Registration is valid until the next Annual General Meeting, regardless of the time of year a member has joined.  In the case of starting a new club (which would not have office bearers until after the inaugural meeting), the Registration Form should be submitted to the principal or principal’s delegate. |
| **Minor** **updates** | The option for attendance to be recorded in the minutes of each meeting is a further alteration to this section. | To reduce administrative burden, the secretary of the Club has the option to record attendance through either   * an attendance book * the minutes of the meeting. |
| 1. **Office Bearers** | **Minor updates** | Minor updates for clarity to the wording regarding the period office bearers are elected for. | Office bearers are elected until the next Annual General Meeting. |
| 1. **Election of Office Bearers** | **Minor updates** | These updates seek to clarify:   * the role of the person conducting the election * the process for filling a casual vacancy for office bearer positions. | The election must still be conducted by a person independent of the club.  A casual vacancy of an office bearer should be filled at the next General Meeting of the Club by election. All Registered Members of the Club should receive notification at least seven days before the meeting when the election will be held. |
| 1. **Annual General Meeting** | **Minor updates** | Clarification of wording regarding changing the date of the Annual General Meeting. | A Parents’ Club may change the month of their Annual General Meeting for a specific year during a General Meeting. The previous constitution required this to take place at the Annual General Meeting.  For example: the constitution for a club states the Annual General Meeting should take place in April. However, due to extenuating circumstances it is not possible for the club to hold its Annual General Meeting in April this year. Therefore the club can vote at a General Meeting to change the month of the Annual General Meeting. |
| 1. **General Meeting** | **Minor updates** | Wording clarifies that should a club not meet monthly, the meeting frequency must be agreed on by a majority of Registered Members. | If the club is not going to meet monthly (i.e. fortnightly or once per term), then the majority of all Registered Members must agree to the proposed meeting frequency. In this instance, majority of quorum at a meeting would not be enough; it must be a majority of all Registered Members. The change in meeting frequency could be voted on at the Annual General Meeting (when most, if not all, will be present) or via email, if appropriate. |
| 1. **Conflict of Interest** | **Minor updates** and **additional text** | Previous language has been altered and additional language inserted to ensure Parents’ Clubs meet the Department’s Conflict of Interest Policy requirements. | Parents’ Clubs must continue to comply with the Department’s Conflict of Interest Policy. |
| 1. **Quorum** | **Minor updates** | Language now stipulates the minimum number of members required for a quorum to reflect good governance practices. | Quorum now requires a minimum of 3 registered members. |
| 1. **Voting** | **Additional text** | Additional text to clarify:  voting entitlement at the type of meeting the member has joined at   * + the majority needed to pass a motion   responsibility regarding teleconferencing and videoconferencing facilities  the process around secret ballots for those who are present via teleconferencing or videoconferencing. | A person who has become a Registered Member at the Annual General Meeting is immediately eligible to vote.  A person who has become a Registered Member at a General Meeting becomes eligible to vote at the next meeting held.  A motion can be passed by a simple majority (i.e. more than 50% of members present).  The secretary of the Club is responsible for ensuring appropriate teleconferencing or videoconferencing facilities are available for a meeting. This should be arranged prior to the meeting with the member who will be present via teleconferencing or videoconferencing.  If a secret ballot is called, it is up to the president to determine the process for voting for the member/s present via teleconferencing or videoconferencing. |
| 1. **Finance** | **Additional text** | Additional text to clarify:   * the expectations of Parents’ Clubs in relation to audits * holding funds for the purpose in which they were raised * the location of relevant financial policies. | Clubs and Business Managers are still required to work in partnership to ensure that all money raised by the Parents’ Club is captured in a separate subprogram in CASES 21.  Clubs may still be audited as part of an audit of the school’s finances.  Clubs still have the responsibility to ensure all financial records are up to date. |
| 1. **Fundraising** | **Text removed** | Language regarding the role of the school council when considering a fundraising proposal has been removed from the constitution. This has been placed in the School Policy and Advisory Guide as the constitution relates to the requirements of Parents’ Clubs. | Parents’ Clubs are still required to have all fundraising proposals approved by the school council. The process for approval has been removed from the constitution and placed in the School Policy and Advisory Guide. Clubs must still adhere to the Department’s fundraising policy and relevant procedures. |
| 1. **Standards and Procedures** | **New section** | This section allows clubs to develop their own standing orders along with other operating procedures such as a dispute resolution process and code of conduct. | Clubs may choose to create their own standing orders and meeting procedures unique to their club. However, they must not conflict with the Model Constitution.  Standing orders help clubs operate effectively. They are a set of rules or procedures regarding how meetings run. Standing orders do not have to be long or onerous, but they may help esnsure meetings run as effectively as possible. |
| 1. **Privacy** | **New section** | The Registration Form requires members to agree to comply with Victorian privacy law and the Schools’ Privacy Policy, however there was no corresponding requirement in the constitution. The constitution has been amended to reflect the language in the Registration Form to address privacy responsibilities. Wording regarding where the Schools’ Privacy Policy is located has also been added. | Parents’ Clubs must comply with Victorian Privacy Law and the Schools’ Privacy Policy. These cover the protection and use of personal information. |
| **18. Alteration of Constitution** | **Removal** | The previous constitution had a section which referred to the process for changing the constitution. | Clubs can only change the name of the club and the month of the Annual General Meeting in the constitution. No other parts of the Model Constitution may be amended.  If clubs wish to change the name or the month of the Annual General Meeting in the constitution, they can do so by vote at a General Meeting. This should be minuted and kept in the club’s records.  The revised constitution needs to be resubmitted to the Department via [community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au) |
| **18. Incorporations** | **New section** | This section clarifies that Victorian Government School Parents’ Clubs are not incorporations. | If your school’s Parents’ Club is an incorporation please contact: [community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:community.stakeholders@edumail.vic.gov.au) |
| **Schedule 1: Registration Form** | **New section** | The Registration Form has been added to reflect the changes in membership in Section 3 – Annual Registration. | The Registration Form must be completed and submitted in order for an individual to become a member of the Parents’ Club. Registration Forms must be stored on school premises. Membership lasts until the next Annual General Meeting. The Registration Form requires that members uphold the values of the Constitution, Victorian Privacy Law and the Schools’ Privacy Policy.  Parents’ Clubs may insert the school’s logo on the Registration Form. |