

PSA Qualitative Research Specialist Group Constitution

1 Name

The group shall be called the UK Political Studies Association Qualitative Research Specialist Group

Objectives

The objectives of the group are to:

- 1) welcome and support all scholars interested in using qualitative methods to investigate politics, irrespective of their field of interest
 - 2) promote best practices in political science qualitative research
 - 3) promote and expand competencies in the use of qualitative research methods in the profession and appropriate standards of peer review
 - 4) facilitate contact and communication between academics and other researchers, artists, curators, industry professionals, journalists and research students who use qualitative methods
 - 5) provide a supportive, intellectual and critical environment for PhD students and early career researchers to develop their qualitative methodology and showcase their research findings
 - 6) advocate qualitative research and methodology beyond traditional spheres of influence including engagement with the media and educators at schools and colleges
 - 7) achieve these objectives by: using a website to facilitate online networking and communication, organizing group conferences and workshops, panels at general conferences, and other events.
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Membership

Membership shall be open to all members of the Political Studies Association (PSA) of the UK (and similar national associations) and to others with a professional interest in applying qualitative research methods to political analysis.

There shall be an annual membership fee to be determined each year at the Specialist Group's Annual General Meeting. The fee for members of the PSA will be less than that for non-members. A reduced fee will be payable by graduate students.

Officers

The officers of the group shall be members of the group at the time of election, and shall consist of one or two co-convenors, plus such other officers as the group deems necessary. They shall hold office for two years and shall be elected by separate vote from among the members of the group at the Annual General Meeting of the group which will coincide annually with the PSA Annual Conference. All officers of the society shall be current PSA members. An officer shall be eligible for re-election provided that they are still a bona fide member of the group and a current PSA member.

The co-convenors shall agree amongst themselves the distribution of duties, which shall include (but not be limited to):

Ensuring that membership records are managed efficiently
Maintaining financial records and overseeing financial arrangements
Circulating emails and managing the email distribution list
Ensuring that arrangements are made for the annual conference/ workshop and the group's activities at the PSA conference and other relevant conferences
Liaising with the PSA and with sister organisations, for example, in APSA and ECPR
Maintaining the specialist group website and social media presence.
Providing reports to PSA News on the group's activities
Representing the interests of qualitative researchers in the profession to the PSA

Advisory group

There shall be an advisory group comprising former convenors of the PSA Qualitative Research Specialist Group willing to be involved. Members of the advisory group shall offer advice and support to the current officers and have the responsibility of ensuring that the group is run satisfactorily and in accordance with custom and practice established since its inception.

Records

Records for the specialist group shall be kept by the co-convenors and made available for inspection by any member of the group upon written request. These records will include minutes of the AGM and the Annual Report. Current membership lists shall be maintained, including details of membership fees paid.

Vacation of Office/ casual vacancies

Officers may resign at any time or may be removed by resolution of the annual general meeting of the group supported by two-thirds of the members present and voting. If necessary, interim arrangements shall be made by the advisory group. Casual vacancies shall be filled by the annual general meeting of the group at the first available opportunity.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting shall normally be held during the annual conference of the PSA. If the conference is not held in any year, it shall take place at the group's annual conference or workshop.

Group Meetings

As the general business of the group is facilitated through email any additional group meeting will be arranged in this fashion or through alternative media such as online conferencing and will be organised by the convenors as and when necessary.

Finance

The convenors, in consultation with group members, will decide how current and expected income is to be spent during each financial year. Applications by the group to PSA, BISA and other funders for grants of money shall be made by the convenors in consultation with group members. The funds will be managed through the PSA. A financial report shall be presented to the PSA executive each year along with the Annual Report.

Financial Priorities

The priorities for financial expenditure of the group are: (a) offsetting travel, accommodation and registration costs so that postgraduate student members can participate in workshops, conferences and events organized by the group; (b) offsetting travel, accommodation and registration costs so that regular group members can participate in workshops, conferences and events organized by the group; (c) providing all organizational costs (e.g. venue, refreshments) for one-off dedicated group workshops; (d) providing additional travel and accommodation costs for speakers at one-off dedicated group workshops; and (e) contributing funds to smaller workshops and conferences with direct relevance to the objectives of the group – especially if the funds can be directed to increase the attendance and participation of postgraduate students in the first instance, and group members where funds allow. On vacating office the convenor of the group shall hand over the books of account to his/her successor within two weeks or a timely manner agreed by the parties.

PSA Constitution

The group shall be governed by the appropriate clauses of the Articles of Association of the PSA with regard to any matter not covered by this Constitution.

Amendment of the Constitution

This constitution may be amended or altered only by a resolution supported by two-thirds of the members present and voting at a general meeting, provided that no alteration shall contravene the Articles of Association of the PSA.

This constitution shall be made available to all members of the group on request.