

Bye-Law 11: Union Student Groups

1 General

- 1.1 The Union will have at least three categories of student groups including Societies, Student Media Outlets and Raise and Give (RAG) Groups.
- 1.2 In addition to this bye-law, there will be regulations which support the running and oversight of all student groups. These regulations will be reviewed annually and approved by the Executive Committee.
- 1.3 The Union will provide support to student groups to help them deliver their aims and objectives.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 Society
A society is an affiliated student group who work towards achieving agreed aims and objectives.
- 2.2 Student Media Outlet
A student media outlet is an affiliated student group whose core aim is to produce student media.
- 2.3 Raise and Give (RAG) Group
A RAG Group is an affiliated student group whose core aim is to raise funds for charity.
- 2.4 Regulations
Each category of student group has a set of regulations providing more detail on how students groups operate.
- 2.5 Appropriate Staff Member(s)
Members of Union staff responsible for supporting student groups as defined by the Chief Executive.
- 2.6 Board
Each student group category will have a Board of elected Student Members from within those student groups who will oversee funding and other matters defined in the bye-laws and regulations. Each Board will be supported by an appropriate staff member.
- 2.7 Student Group Constitution
All student groups will have a constitution which sets out the core aims and objectives.

3 Affiliating a Student Group

- 3.1 Members of the Union can apply to affiliate a new student group in accordance with the relevant regulations.
- 3.2 New student groups must have:
 - (a) A set of core aims and objectives that do not duplicate with another activity or service already provided by the Union or another student group. This shall be set out in the student groups constitution.

- (b) At least three founders who can perform the duties of the student group organisers until such time as the student group leaders and other officers can be elected.
- (c) A minimum number of members within an agreed period of time.

4 Maintaining affiliation

- 4.1 Student groups must demonstrate that they are active to maintain affiliation to the Union.
- 4.2 All student groups must meet the following requirements to be deemed active:
 - (a) Annually elect its three student group leaders.
 - (b) Have an up to date constitution that is reviewed annually.
 - (c) Be able to demonstrate the student group is working towards its aims and objectives as defined in its constitution.
 - (d) Comply with all finance, health & safety and other requirements as deemed appropriate by the Union.
 - (e) Maintain a credited subs and grants account.
 - (f) Ensure there are a sufficient number of members as defined in the regulations.

5 Disaffiliation

- 5.1 The Vice President Activities and Development or the relevant student group Board, with guidance from the appropriate staff member may disaffiliate or suspend some or all of the support given to a student group upon evidence of one or more of the following:
 - (a) It being inactive for a period of 4 months or longer.
 - (b) There being financial mismanagement.
 - (c) There being a violation of the Union's Memorandum of Association, Bye-laws, Regulations and Policies.
 - (d) A contravention of their own Constitution.
 - (e) Not attending compulsory training.
- 5.2 Upon Disaffiliation, or suspension of support, the student group has ten working days within which to appeal to the President of the Union. The Union President or nominee will then have the responsibility for conducting an investigation into the appeal. This evidence will then go to the next meeting of the Executive Committee, to which the Society concerned will be allowed to also present their case. The Executive Committee will then decide one of three options:
 - (a) To lift the suspension.
 - (b) Continue the suspension.
 - (c) Disaffiliate the student group.
- 5.3 If the Executive Committee decides to lift the suspension, then the student group must enter a trial period to demonstrate they are active in accordance with this bye-law. This trial period shall last until the next meeting of the Executive Committee.
 - 5.3.1 At the end of the trial period if the student group is considered active the suspension will remain lifted, if the student group has not proven to be active they will automatically be disaffiliated from the Union.

6 Members

- 6.1 All Student Members of the Union can be full members of any student group and stand to be an elected student group leader.
- 6.2 All Associate Members of the Union can hold associate membership of any student group.
- 6.3 Each category of student group will have a required minimum number of Student Members which needs to be achieved by a set deadline as defined in the relevant regulations.
- 6.4 The minimum membership fee to join a student group is £1 and must be purchased through the Union, unless stated in the regulations.
- 6.5 The Union will maintain an up to date record of memberships sold for each society. The membership lists held by the Union are definitive.
- 6.6 Student group members must adhere to the Union's Memorandum of Association, bye-laws, regulations and policies. Student group members deemed to be in violation of these may have their student group membership removed by the student groups committee without refund of the membership fee.
 - 6.6.1 A student group member wishing to appeal having their membership removed can make a complaint in accordance with Bye-Law 13 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.

7 Elected Student Group Leaders

- 7.1 All student groups must annually elect at least three student group leaders to the positions listed in their relevant regulations.
- 7.2 The Union will communicate to all student groups the process and timeline for which these elections must take place.
- 7.3 The position of an elected student group leader will be vacated if:
 - (a) They are no longer a Student Member of the Union.
 - (b) They resign.
 - (c) They do not perform the responsibilities detailed in this bye-law, the relevant regulations and their student group Constitution.
 - (d) They violate the Union's Memorandum of Association, bye-laws, regulations or policies.
 - (v) A motion of no confidence is passed by a two thirds majority of the student groups members at a General Meeting.
- 7.3.1 The Vice President Activities and Development with support from the appropriate staff member is responsible for removing elected student group leaders in accordance with the reasons stated in 7.3.
- 7.3.2 When an elected student group leader position is vacated an election shall be called at the earliest convenient time to appoint a new student group leader.

- 7.4 Student group leaders will normally be in office from the 1 August to 31 July unless stated differently at the point of election.
- 7.5 The elected student group leaders and other positions defined in the individual student groups constitution should form the committee for the student group.

8 Student Group Management and Activities

- 8.1 All student groups must have a constitution that sets out the student groups core aims and objectives, the elected student group leader positions and other requirements set out in the relevant regulations.
- 8.2 The Union will provide a template constitution for each category of student group. Where student groups do not use the template constitution they will need to seek guidance from the appropriate staff member and approval from the Board for any deviations.
- 8.3 All student groups are required to have at least one General Meeting a year, to be known as their Annual General Meeting.
 - 8.3.1 The student groups constitution will detail how General Meetings should be run, including the quorum, how a meeting can be called and the role responsible for being Chair.
 - 8.3.2 Motions must be passed by 50% + 1 members present unless stated differently in this bye-law or supporting regulations.
- 8.4 The Union will provide a comprehensive program of training for student group leaders. Those sessions that are stated to be compulsory require student group leader's attendance to maintain support from the Union, such as accessing space and funding.
- 8.5 The Union will provide space for every student group on the Union website. Student group leaders are responsible for ensuring the information is up to date and accurate. In addition, student groups are allowed to have their own external website which will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate staff member in accordance with the regulations, but the Union will not provide funding for this.
- 8.6 The Union will support student groups to promote their student group and activities on campus. Student groups must follow all guidance provided by the Union.
- 8.7 Student groups must adhere to University regulations, including freedom of speech.
- 8.8 The Vice President Activities and Development shall have the power to act in the interests of student groups members on all student group related business in the absence of a student group committee. This shall normally be:
 - (a) To establish an elected committee by organising elections
 - (b) To aid recruitment of new members so that a committee election may take place.
 - (c) To undertake essential administrative tasks.
- 8.9 Any recognised student group may undertake charitable fundraising with the prior authorisation of the Union. All such fundraising will be in accordance with the Union financial procedures.

- 8.10 Student groups must comply with all relevant legislation and health & safety requirements.
- 8.11 Student groups must ensure their activities are appropriately insured.
- 8.12 Student groups must never sign contracts. Contracts shall be signed by the Chief Executive or their nominee.
- 8.13 Student groups working unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults will complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check. Members with an existing DBS Check will show this to the appropriate staff member for review.
- 8.14 All student group affiliations must be compliant with Bye-Law 11 Affiliations.
- 8.15 Student Media Outlets may:
 - (a) Expect freedom of expression without undue interference;
 - (b) Report on any issues that are of interest to members, and to make fair comment on any such issues;
 - (c) Be a legitimate method to communicate the work of the Elected Officers, positive or negative to members;
 - (d) Access all open and public Union meetings, and to publish a report on the content of such meetings;
- 8.15.1 All student media must comply with the publishing policy. This includes media produced by all categories of student groups.

9 Finance

- 9.1 Student Groups will have a subs account and a grants account.
 - 9.1.1 The subs account is for income generated through membership fees, external sponsorship, event income and other income that has not come from the Union. Funds in the subs account will annually carry forward to the next financial year.
 - 9.1.2 The grants account is for funds provided to student groups by the Union. Funds in the grant account will not carry forward to the next financial year.
- 9.2 The Union's Board of Trustees will annually approve funds to be spent on furthering the aims of student groups. This figure may change during the year in exceptional circumstances.
 - 9.2.1 Each category of student group will have a set amount of funding with individual criteria of how that funding can and cannot be used.
 - 9.2.2 The relevant student group Board will be responsible for allocating the agreed funding in accordance with the process set out in their regulations. Where a Board is not able to meet the Vice President Activities and Development with support from the appropriate staff member can allocate funds.
 - 9.2.3 Any student group that is deemed active can apply for funding from their relevant student group Board. The process for applying for funding is defined in the regulations. Student groups that have not received funding within the academic year will receive priority.

- 9.2.4 A student group cannot bid for funding from more than one Board.
- 9.2.5 Awarded funding from the Union which has been unspent within an agreed timeframe may be redistributed by the Union to other student groups.
- 9.2.6 The Union will not allocate funds for:
- (a) Retrospective bids.
 - (b) Donations or affiliations to either a charity or a political body.
 - (c) Ultra Vires spending.
- 9.2.7 The Union will not normally allocate funds for alcohol, soft drinks and food.
- 9.3 Student groups are not permitted to operate an external bank account in any circumstances.
- 9.4 Student groups are subject to VAT in accordance with relevant legislation.
- 9.5 All student group income, from whatever source, must be paid into the Union as soon after receipt as possible where it will be credited to the student groups subs account. Income deposited by cash or cheque will be receipted at the time of transaction and the receipt must be retained in the student groups records.
- 9.6 Sponsorship contracts should not conflict with the Union's Memorandum of Association, bye-laws, regulations or policies. All sponsorship contracts need to be authorised by the Union.
- 9.7 If a student group is left dormant for more than 18 consecutive months any balance in the student groups accounts will be transferred to the general fund for allocations to student groups.
- 9.7.1 If a new student group is affiliated with a similar name and aims, then the relevant Board will make a decision whether this is the continuation of the former student group and whether the funds will transfer to the new group.
- 9.8 All expenditure by a student group must be compliant with the relevant regulations.

10 Student Group Boards

- 10.1 Each category of student group will have a Board of elected student group members to oversee the running of that category of student groups. At least the following boards will exist:
- (a) Societies Board
 - (b) Student Media Board
 - (c) RAG Board
- 10.2 Members of the Boards will be elected in a fair and democratic way in accordance to guidance distributed annually by the Union.
- 10.3 The purpose of each Board shall be:
- (a) To review and affiliate new student groups that are relevant to their category.

- (b) To review funding applications and award funds in accordance with the regulations and available funds.
- (c) To recommend to the Executive Committee amendments to the relevant groups regulations.
- (d) All other responsibilities as defined in this bye-law and supporting regulations.

10.4 The quorum for each Board shall be 50% + 1 of all members.

10.5 All Boards report to the Executive Committee.

11 Complaints and Disciplinary

11.1 All complaints and disciplinary matters will be dealt with under Bye-Law 13 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.