

Bye-Law 7: Student Groups

1 General

- 1.1 The Union will create opportunities and provide support for students to organise and run student groups around their interests, such as societies, student media and Raising and Giving (RAG).
- 1.2 In addition to this bye-law, there will be a Student Group Handbook which supports the running and oversight of all student groups. The Student Group Handbook will be reviewed annually and approved by the Union's Senior Leadership Team.

2 Affiliating a Student Group

- 2.1 Members of the Union can apply to affiliate a new student group in accordance with the Student Group Handbook.
- 2.2 New student groups must have a Development Plan which defines:
 - (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.
 - (b) At least three founding Student Members who can perform the duties of the student group organisers until such time as the student group leaders and other officers can be elected.

3 Maintaining Affiliation

- 3.1 Student groups must demonstrate that they are active to maintain affiliation to the Union.
 - 3.1.1 All student groups must meet the following requirements to be deemed active:
 - (a) Annually elect three student group leaders in accordance with the Student Group Handbook.
 - (b) Have an up-to-date Development Plan that is reviewed annually.
 - (c) Be able to demonstrate the student group is working towards its aims and objectives as defined in its Development Plan.
 - (d) Comply with the Student Group Handbook and the Articles of Association, Bye-Laws and Union Policy.
 - (e) Maintain a credited subs and grants account.

4 Disaffiliation

- 4.1 The designated Sabbatical Officer, with guidance from the Chief Executive or their nominee may disaffiliate or suspend some, or all the support given to a student group upon evidence of one or more of the following:
 - (a) It being inactive for a period of four months or longer.
 - (b) There being financial mismanagement.
 - (c) There being a violation of the Student Group Handbook, the Union's Articles of Association, Bye-laws, and/or Union Policies.
 - (d) A contravention of their own Development Plan.

- 4.2 Upon disaffiliation, or suspension of support, the student group has ten working days within which to appeal to the President of the Union. In the event the President is the designated Sabbatical Officer for student groups or has a conflict of interest, another Sabbatical Officer will fulfil the role of the President for disaffiliation appeals. The President or nominee will then have the responsibility for investigating the appeal. The student group concerned will be allowed to also present their case. The President will then decide one of three options:
- (a) To lift the suspension.
 - (b) Continue the suspension.
 - (c) Disaffiliate the student group.
- 4.3 If the President 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 for eight weeks.
- 4.3.1 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.

5 Members

- 5.1 All Student Members of the Union can be full members of any student group and stand to be an elected student group leader.
- 5.2 All Associate Members of the Union can hold associate membership of any student group.
- 5.4 There is no minimum membership fee to join a student group. When a student group decides to set a membership fee this must be purchased through the Union.
- 5.5 The Union will maintain an up-to-date record of memberships sold for each society. The membership lists held by the Union are definitive.
- 5.6 Student group members must adhere to the Union's Student Group Handbook, Articles of Association, Bye-Laws and Union 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.
- 5.6.1 A student group member wishing to appeal having their membership removed can make a complaint in accordance with Bye-Law 9 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.

6 Elected Student Group Leaders

- 6.1 All student groups must annually elect at least three student group leaders to the positions listed in the Student Group Handbook.
- 6.2 The Union will communicate to all student groups the process and timeline for which these elections must take place.
- 6.3 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 Student Group Handbook and their student group Development Plan.
 - (d) They violate the Union's Articles of Association, Bye-Laws, Union Policies or Student Group Handbook.
 - (e) A motion of no confidence is passed by a two thirds majority of the student groups members at a General Meeting of their student group.
- 6.3.1 The designated Sabbatical Officer with support from the Chief Executive or their nominee is responsible for removing elected student group leaders in accordance with the reasons stated in 6.3.
- 6.3.2 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. Interim measures may be put in place until this election is possible.
- 6.4 Student group leaders will normally be in office from the 1 August to 31 July unless stated differently at the point of election.
- 6.5 The elected student group leaders and other positions defined in the individual student groups Development Plan should form the committee for the student group.

7 Student Group Management and Activities

- 7.1 All student groups are required to have at least one General Meeting a year, to be known as their Annual General Meeting.
- 7.1.1 The Student Group Handbook will detail how General Meetings should be run, including the quorum, how a meeting can be called and the role responsible for being Chair.
- 7.2 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, this will include training on how to run your student group and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- 7.3 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 Student Group Handbook, but the Union will not provide funding for this.
- 7.4 Student groups must adhere to university regulations, including those concerning freedom of speech.
- 7.5 The designated Sabbatical Officer 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.

- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 Student groups must ensure their activities are appropriately insured.
- 7.8 Student groups must never sign contracts. Contracts shall be signed by the Chief Executive or their nominee.
- 7.9 Student groups planning to work with children or vulnerable adults must notify the Chief Executive or their nominee and ensure that relevant student group members joining the activity complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check. Members with an existing DBS Check can show this to the Chief Executive or their nominee for review.
- 7.9.1 Further details of student volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults is detailed in the Union's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure.
- 7.10 All student group affiliations must be compliant with Bye-Law 8: Affiliations.
- 7.11 Student media groups 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.
- 7.11.1 All student groups must comply with the Union Publishing Policy.

8 Finance

- 8.1 Student Groups will have a subs account and a grants account.
- 8.1.1 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.
- 8.1.2 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.
- 8.2 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.
- 8.2.1 The designated Sabbatical Officer and the Chief Executive or their nominee will jointly be responsible for allocating the agreed funding in accordance with the process set out in the Student Group Handbook. Where the designated Sabbatical Officer has a conflict of interest, another Sabbatical Officer will fulfil this role for the relevant student group.

- 8.2.2 Any student group that is deemed active can apply for funding from the Union. Student groups that have not received funding within the academic year will receive priority.
- 8.2.3 Awarded funding from the Union which has been unspent within an agreed timeframe may be redistributed by the Union to other student groups.
- 8.2.4 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.
- 8.2.5 The Union will not normally allocate funds for alcohol, soft drinks, and food.
- 8.3 Student groups are not permitted to operate an external bank account under any circumstances.
- 8.4 Student groups are subject to VAT in accordance with relevant legislation.
- 8.5 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.
- 8.6 Sponsorship contracts should not conflict with the Union's Articles of Association, Bye-Laws and Union Policy. All sponsorship contracts must be authorised by the Union.
- 8.7 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.
- 8.7.1 If a new student group is affiliated with a similar name and aims, then the designated Sabbatical Officer with support from the Chief Executive or their nominee will decide whether this is the continuation of the former student group and whether the funds will transfer to the new group.
- 8.8 All expenditure by a student group must be compliant with the relevant regulations.

9 Complaints and Disciplinary

- 9.1 All complaints and disciplinary matters will be dealt with under Bye-Law 9: Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure.