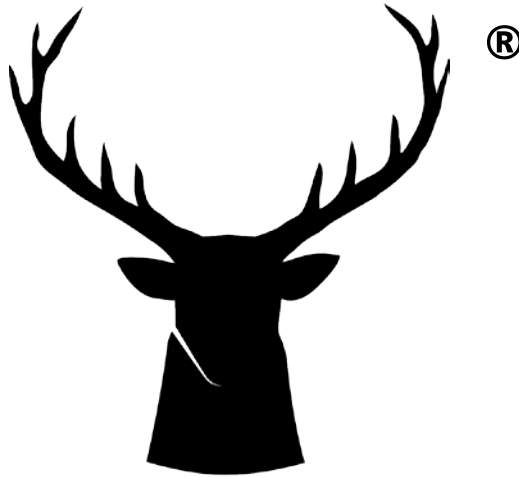


**The University of Surrey  
Students' Union**

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# Byelaws



The University of Surrey  
**Students' Union**

**Approved by the Board of Trustees July 2012**

**Last updated October 2021**

## **Version 16**

The University of Surrey Students' Union

Union House

University of Surrey Stag Hill

Guildford

GU2 7XH

[www.ussu.co.uk](http://www.ussu.co.uk)

The University of Surrey Students' Union is a private limited company, registered in England & Wales with registered number 07470232, registered at the address above. The University of Surrey Students' Union is a registered charity, registered with charity number 1142479

Disclaimer: Whilst every attempt is made to ensure this book is an accurate and faithful account of the byelaws currently in force, the Union cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions contained within. The latest revision of these byelaws is always available on [www.ussu.co.uk](http://www.ussu.co.uk)

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**CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION  
OF A  
PRIVATE LIMITED COMPANY**

**Company Number. 7470232**

The Registrar of Companies for England and Wales, hereby certifies that

THE UNIVERSITY OF SURREY STUDENTS' UNION

is this day incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 as a private company, that the company is limited by guarantee, and the situation of its registered office is in England and Wales.

Given at Companies House, Cardiff, on 15th December 2010.



THE OFFICIAL SEAL OF THE  
REGISTRAR OF COMPANIES



*Companies House*

— for the record —

The above information was communicated by electronic means and authenticated by the  
Registrar of Companies under section 1115 of the Companies Act 2006



This is to confirm that  
UNIVERSITY OF SURREY STUDENTS' UNION

was entered on the Register of Charities on

20 June 2011

Registered charity number:

1142479

William Shawcross  
Chair

Paula Sussex  
Chief Executive

This certificate confirms that a charity has been entered on to the Register of Charities. You can check a charity's current registration status by visiting the Register of Charities at [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)



# Union Chairs

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2010	Rowan Ling
2011	Oliver Deed
2012	Charlie Eastaugh
2013	Hannah Waterhouse
2014	Simona Mariuta
2015	Becky Ibbotson
2016	Zainab Donli
2017	Sam Bryanton
2018	Olivia Mitchell
2019	Theo Donnelly
2020	Amina Nagwamma
2021	Adesuwa Obasohan

# Sabbatical Officers

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## 2020-2021

President	Ajay Ajimobi
VP Voice	Megan Simmons
VP Activity	James Barlow
VP Support	Leri Francis
VP Community	Nathaniel Nelson-Williams

## 2019-2020

President	Lizzie Rodulson
VP Voice	Theo Donnelly
VP Activity	Maya Altamimi
VP Support	Aaron Seabrook
VP Community	Izzy Watkins

## 2019-2020

President	Gemma Paine
VP Voice	Ajay Ajimobi
VP Activity	Lizzie Rodulson
VP Support	Sarah Surget
VP Community	Amina Nagwamma

## 2018-2019

President	Alex Harden
VP Voice	Olly Shearman
VP Activity	Alexa Hughes
VP Support	Paul Olaniyan
VP Community	Gemma Paine

## 2017-2018

President	Saskia Cochrane
VP Voice	Alex Harden
VP Activity	Alistair Douglass

VP Support  
VP Community

Jess Wreford  
Helena Mason

## **2016-2017**

President  
VP Voice  
VP Activity  
VP Support  
VP Community

Alex Mackenzie Smith  
Tai Ademola  
Becky Ibbotson  
Koyin Akinsiku  
Saskia Cochrane

## **2015-2016**

President  
VP Voice  
VP Activity  
VP Support  
VP Community

Mustie Smith  
Munya Mudarikiri  
Alex Mackenzie Smith  
Jack Paulley  
Katy Sawyer

# Changelog

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## **October 2021**

Changes as per QQR to Council.

New complaints and disciplinary policy

De-coupled Byelaws, Code of Practice, and MoU.



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# Introduction

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The byelaws are the ‘instruction manual’ for how the Students’ Union should work, they are also the rules that govern how the Union does business. They are not designed to make things difficult, they are designed to make things fair.

Some of these byelaws arise from legislation that the Union must abide by, these byelaws are marked with an asterisk. It is not possible to consider every single permutation or possibility when agreeing byelaws, and so inevitably there will be situations when a byelaw is vague, inaccurate, or unhelpful. In these circumstances the Union Chair can make a ruling as to their interpretation. These rulings when they occur do not create precedents, and they do not create new byelaws as each situation should be considered on its own merit.

“The golden rule is that there are no golden rules.”

— George Bernard Shaw

## **Articles & Byelaws**

Within these byelaws you will see references made to “Articles”. These are the “Articles of Association” otherwise known as the “Core Constitution” of the Students’ Union. The Articles are registered with the Charity Commission and Companies House and are changed with a company law general meeting and consent of University Council.

## **Asterisk byelaws**

Any byelaw marked with an \* is included as part of the Education Act compliance

# Part 1

## Who runs the Union?

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### **Introduction**

The Union is run on a hierarchical structure. At the very top of the structure is the membership collective, this is covered in the core constitution under the section 'general meeting'. It is important to note that the principle is students collectively, not individually are in ultimate control of the Union. The collective control of the Union on behalf of the students is through the elected officer structure who are placed onto the board of trustees through the election process. This part deals with the hierarchy of positions, part 9 deals with the hierarchy of committees. There are no prescribed deputies for each position, it is for individual officers to arrange someone to deputise for them when the occasion arises. The position of President, is however, the preeminent officer and Trustee.

### **Trustees & Executive**

The composition of the board of trustees can be found on page 92, and the detailed information on the trustee board is in the core constitution. The trustees are by definition 'The Union', they are legally responsible for it and the registered directors of the limited company. A Chief Executive Officer is appointed by the board to run the Union with a staff team, and the elected officers lead the Union and fulfil the representative functions day to day. As the trustees have legal responsibility under the companies act, they must act as they see in the best interests of the Union at all time. This may mean on occasion rejecting or overturning decisions from Union committees. The political policy of the Union is the responsibility of the Executive Committee, the 'Exec' as it is known will decide 'What the Union thinks' on an ongoing basis.

# Sabbatical Officers

Officer trustees, commonly referred to as sabbatical officers are the major office holders of the Students' Union. They are elected annually and may only serve a maximum of two terms\*.

1. Positions
  - 1.1 The positions of the officer trustees comprise one president and four vice-presidents as follows
    - 1.1.1 President
    - 1.1.2 Vice-President Voice
    - 1.1.3 Vice-President Activity
    - 1.1.4 Vice-President Support
    - 1.1.5 Vice-President Community
  - 1.2 The four vice-president positions will report to the President for the purposes of line management
2. Conduct
  - 2.1 Post holders will be subject to the procedures as laid out in the Staff Handbook in force at the time with the exception of procedures relating to performance in their role
  - 2.2 Performance issues will only be dealt with by the informal performance procedure, motions of censure and no-confidence

- 2.3 Officer trustees facing disciplinary action under the procedures in the Staff Handbook will be subject to those disciplinary procedures
- 2.4 Before any disciplinary action is taken against an officer trustee, the external trustees & student officer trustee must first confirm the matter is not related to performance and confirm the action to proceed
- 2.5 Officer trustees will not be subject to social disciplinaries; any misconduct will be dealt with by motions of censure, no-confidence and the staff handbook procedures

### 3. Term of Office

- 3.1 The term of office shall be one year and the dates of the term will be agreed by the board of trustees annually
- 3.2 Any term started, but not completed for whatever reason shall count as one term of office under the Education Act 1994\*
- 3.3 Officer Elect members shall be those members who have been elected by cross campus ballot but yet to take the post of Officer Trustee
- 3.4 Officer Elect members shall be subject to all disciplinary procedures as per ordinary members

### 4. Pay and Expenses



## Part 1. Who runs the Union?

- 4.1 The Chief Executive shall make a recommendation annually to the board of trustees regarding the annual remuneration and allowances for the Officer Trustees
  - 4.2 Sitting Officer Trustees may not approve alterations to remuneration for their term of office
  - 4.3 Officer Trustees elected to hold post for a second term must absent themselves from trustee decisions on future remuneration
  - 4.4 Expense claims for officer trustees shall be authorised by the president
  - 4.5 Expense claims for the president shall be authorised by the student trustee
  - 4.6 The president shall be the sole Officer Trustee permitted to authorise, or claim for, entertaining expenses
5. Resignation and Vacant Positions
- 5.1 Should any position fall vacant for any reason, the board of trustees shall decide from the following options as to how to fill that position
    - 5.1.1 A bye-election to fill the vacant position, the elected post holder will be required to assume the duties of a trustee under Article 41.2

## Part 1. Who runs the Union?

- 5.1.2 Allow the officer-elect to take the position early (any part term will count as one term under the education act)\*
- 5.1.3 Distribute the duties amongst the remaining positions providing the provisions of Article 37.6 are met
- 5.1.4 If it is not possible to meet the provisions of Article 37.6, the appointments committee may promote a part time officer from the executive committee, nominated by the executive committee to the role of officer trustee.

5.2 Any officer trustee wishing to resign their post must do in writing to the Chief Executive who must report this resignation to the executive committee and board of trustees at the earliest opportunity

5.3 With the exception of Article 37.6, any officer trustee resignation will be effective immediately

5.4 This procedure shall also apply to officer trustee elect positions

## 6. Membership

6.1 There shall be the following classes of membership

6.2 Full Membership shall be available to

6.2.1 All Students at the University of Surrey shall become full members of the Students' Union until graduation or opting-out\*

- 6.2.2 Elected officer trustees
- 6.2.3 Officer trustees elect
- 6.2.4 All students and elected officer trustees in the interim period between successfully graduating in a course of study or a term of office, and registration on another course beginning in the next academic period. This provision does not apply to members who are course terminated, or leaving their course prematurely.
- 6.3 Valid identification for full members shall be the University of Surrey campus card in force at that time.
- 6.4 The definition of a student is the responsibility of the University of Surrey
- 6.5 Staff membership shall be available to
  - 6.5.1 Staff of the Students' Union
- 6.6 Associate Membership shall be available to
  - 6.6.1 Current and recognised retired staff of the University of Surrey
  - 6.6.2 Graduates of the University of Surrey
  - 6.6.3 Partners and children of full members
  - 6.6.4 Partners and children of staff members

6.6.5 Students registered at the following institutions

- i. Academy of Contemporary Music (ACM)
- ii. University of Law, Guildford

6.7 Associate members

6.7.1 May take part in any activity as per full members

6.7.2 May hold non-signatory positions on group committees

6.7.3 May not take part in any decision making process of the Students' Union including elections

6.7.4 May speak at meetings once permission of the meeting has been granted

6.8 Honorary Membership

6.8.1 Honorary membership shall be awarded solely by the Board of Trustees

6.8.2 Honorary membership is subject to the same conditions of membership as per byelaw 6.7

6.9 A register of members shall be maintained in alignment with the current data held by University of Surrey Registry\*

6.10 Members wishing to opt out shall inform the President in writing, or Registry during enrolment. They shall receive written confirmation that they have opted out\*

- 6.11 Students who have opted out of membership shall be required to opt out each academic year if they wish to remain opt out members\*
- 6.12 Opt out members shall enjoy all the rights of full members but may not take part in any decision-making process of the Union\*
- 6.13 Terminated members as per Article 11.4 shall have all rights of membership removed, including access to the Union premises and facilities

## **The Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee is the main decision-making body for the Students' Union. They shall collectively lead the Union through campaigns and representation for each academic year. The Executive Committee shall also be the main body for holding the Officer Trustees to account.

### 7. Positions

- 7.1 The Executive Committee shall comprise of one chair and 13 members as follows
  - 7.1.1 Union Chairperson
  - 7.1.2 President (Deputy Chair)
  - 7.1.3 Vice-President Voice
  - 7.1.4 Voice Zone Member 1

## Part 1. The Executive Committee

- 7.1.5 Voice Zone Member 2
- 7.1.6 Vice-President Activity
- 7.1.7 Team Surrey Chair
- 7.1.8 Societies Executive Chair
- 7.1.9 Vice-President Support
- 7.1.10 Support Zone Member 1
- 7.1.11 Support Zone Member 2
- 7.1.12 Vice-President Community
- 7.1.13 Community Zone Member 1
- 7.1.14 Community Zone Member 2
- 7.2 All members shall have an equal vote and standing on the committee
- 7.3 The two zone member candidates who rank highest in the election will take the zone member positions.
- 7.4 Part time members of the executive committee will hold their position until
  - 7.4.1 They have reached the conclusion of their term of office or
  - 7.4.2 They cease to be a full member of the students' union or

- 7.4.3 They resign their position in writing to the Union Chair (or President)
  - 7.4.4 They are removed from office following a no-confidence procedure
  - 7.5 If a bye-election is to be held for a zone member executive position, non executive committee zone members may stand for the position.
  - 7.6 If an existing zone member wins a bye-election to the executive committee, the candidate in second place will take the non-executive zone position
  - 7.7 Should the existing zone member not win the executive position, then they shall resume their position on the zone committee.
8. **Meeting Process**
- 8.1 The Union Chairperson shall be the member responsible for committee meetings, including;
    - 8.1.1 Scheduling
    - 8.1.2 Advertising to all members
    - 8.1.3 Distribution of papers
    - 8.1.4 Provisions of minute taking
    - 8.1.5 Receiving apologies

8.1.6 Chairing of meetings

8.1.7 Publication of minutes and policies passed

8.2 The Union Chairperson may delegate any functions under byelaw 8.1 to staff members as appropriate

9. Attendance and Quorum

9.1 Any member may attend and speak at Executive Committee meetings, however only committee members may vote

9.2 The quorum for the committee shall be 50% of the voting members plus 1 rounded down.

9.3 Voting intentions may be accepted *in absentia* at the discretion of the Union Chair providing

9.3.1 The Union Chair is satisfied that no further information has been presented to the meeting that may alter a voting intention

9.3.2 Papers circulated prior to the meeting were received by the absent member

9.3.3 No more than 25% of the committee may be permitted to vote *in absentia*

9.4 All votes shall pass with a simple majority with the exception of amendment of passed policy byelaw 10.3, and zone matters (11)



- 9.5 The chair shall possess the casting vote
- 9.6 Should the Union Chair wish to participate and vote in a debate, the chair shall be waived to the deputy.
- 9.7 The Union Chair shall not resume the chair until such time as it is waived back
- 9.8 Any member may attend Executive Committee meetings and speak with the agreement of the Chair
- 9.9 Motions will only be accepted to the Executive Committee from the Zone Committees.
- 9.10 Full members may submit motions as detailed in byelaw 12
- 9.11 Executive Committee meetings shall be run in accordance with the general committee rules, byelaw 59
- 9.12 Where there is a conflict between the general committee rules (59) and these rules, the rules pertaining to the executive committee take precedence
- 9.13 Meetings shall be held at a minimum of a monthly interval during term time
- 9.14 Outside of term time the Officer Trustees may act as the Executive Committee if it is not possible to hold a full executive committee

9.15 If the full committee are unable to meet, the Executive Committee formed of Officer Trustees may only pass emergency policy out of term time

9.15.1 Emergency Policy is any policy which requires ratification or response in between meetings of the full executive committee, and which could not have been discussed during term time.

9.16 Policy motions presented to the Executive Committee may not overturn, amend, alter or distort policy motions passed, or pending debate by a Members Meeting (annual or extraordinary)

## 10. Passed Policy

10.1 Unless specifically stated, policy motions passed at any committee meeting shall form Student Union policy for the period up until the Annual Members Meeting

10.2 Each policy in force shall be presented to the AMM for continuance or deletion

10.3 Policies passed by the executive committee may only be amended once passed if substantive facts come to light after the policy is passed which require it to be amended. A policy amendment must be agreed with a 75% majority

10.4 The Board of Trustees are ultimately responsible for charitable status of the Union and may revoke or amend any

policy passed by the Executive committee on the grounds of legal, financial or reputational damage. \*

11. Zone Matters

- 11.1 The Executive Committee may arbitrarily debate any matter currently or previously being considered within a zone committee on the passing of a 75% majority
- 11.2 The Executive Committee may also 'refer back' any issue to an individual zone for further consideration on the passing of a 75% majority

12. **Submission of Member Motions**

- 12.1 Full members may submit motions for the executive committee to the appropriate zone committee, or liberation committee.
- 12.2 Motions as per byelaw 15.2.1 may be submitted directly to the Executive committee
- 12.3 Motions for submission which do not apply to any zone may be considered for direct submission to the committee with the joint agreement of the chair and deputy chair
- 12.4 The zone committee may
  - 12.4.1 Retain the motion within the zone
  - 12.4.2 Agree to submit the motion to the executive committee

- 12.4.3 Decline to submit the motion to the executive committee
- 12.5 Any motion which a zone declines to submit to the executive committee may be presented to the executive committee providing
  - 12.5.1 The motion is unedited from the final submission to the zone committee
  - 12.5.2 The motion is presented with fifty (50) verifiable full member signatures collected within six weeks of the submission
- 12.6 Motions submitted to the Executive Committee may be rejected by the Chair, with the agreement of the Deputy Chair, on the grounds outlined in byelaw 10.4

## **How Members can influence their Union**

The Students' Union is a membership organisation, this means that they elect a group of representatives to lead their Union each year, and this section outlines what members can do to exert their influence.

- 13. The Annual Members Meeting (AMM)
  - 13.1 The Annual Members Meeting shall be held once in every 13-month period

Part 1. How members can influence their Union

- 13.2 The Annual Members Meeting is not an Annual General Meeting as defined in the Articles.
- 13.3 The AMM shall be called by the Union Chair, and all full members shall be invited to attend
- 13.4 All members shall have the opportunity to submit appropriate motions for consideration at the AMM up until 20 days prior to the AMM
- 13.5 The Union Chair will be permitted to composite similar submitted motions.
- 13.6 The agenda and supporting documents will be made available for all members a minimum of 14 days before the meeting.
- 13.7 The quorum for the AMM shall be 120 full members, no business may be discussed before this attendance is reached.
- 13.8 The AMM will be presented with the annual affiliations of the Students Union for approval by the members. \*
  - 13.8.1 Any affiliation rejected by the AMM shall be put to a referendum to all members
- 13.9 The AMM will be presented with the annual audited accounts of the Students' Union\*
  - 13.9.1 The AMM shall vote to agree that audited accounts have been presented in full. The AMM do not have the

Part 1. How members can influence their Union

authority to amend or disagree with the final audited accounts.

13.10 The AMM will be presented with the forthcoming budget for the Students' Union

13.10.1 The AMM may accept or reject the proposed budget

13.10.2 The AMM may vote to convene an EMM to review a revised budget or refer the budget to the board of trustees for consideration.

13.11 The AMM will be presented with motions to alter the core constitution (articles) of the Students' Union

13.11.1 Any motion to alter the core constitution (articles) of the Union will require a 75% majority to pass

13.12 The AMM shall be presented with policy motions currently in force with the option to continue or delete

13.13 The AMM can be presented with a Motion of No Confidence. This process is covered by byelaw 14

13.14 There shall also be provision for an Extraordinary Members Meeting (EMM)

13.14.1 An EMM shall be called

(a) after a petition of 120 full members is presented to the Union Chairperson

OR

- (b) a resolution is passed to call an EMM by the Board of Trustees

13.14.2 The petition shall state the AMM agenda items that the members wish to discuss at an EMM

13.14.3 An EMM shall run, and have the same power as an AMM, with the exception of the agenda which will be set by the petition.

#### 14. Removal from Office

14.1 Members can be removed from any position that they hold, including (but not limited to)

14.1.1 Sabbatical Positions

14.1.2 Committee Positions (as per the committee appendix)

14.1.3 Signatory positions within groups

14.1.4 Miscellaneous elected positions

14.1.5 'Elect' positions (those who have been elected, but yet to assume office)

14.2 Special provisions exist within Articles of Association 37 – 39 for the removal of trustees

14.3 Any member who has their membership rights terminated, removed from office through a no confidence referendum, or opts out shall lose any position they hold forthwith.

Part 1. How members can influence their Union

- 14.4 Provision may be made within individual committee definitions to remove committee holders by the committee
- 14.5 A Motion of No Confidence shall be presented in the following format
  - 14.5.1 This Union has no confidence in [insert name of member] to hold the position of [insert position].
  - 14.5.2 A testimony to be included as to why they are to be removed from office
- 14.6 The member to be no confided will be presented with the no confidence motion a minimum of 14 days before the motion is published
- 14.7 The member to be no confided will have the opportunity to respond the citation in byelaw 14.5.2 which will be published with the no confidence motion.
- 14.8 If the motion is to be answered by a no confidence referendum, the motion must then be signed by a minimum of 500 members or passed by a 75% majority at an AMM or EMM.
- 14.9 On the passing of a motion of no confidence at an AMM, EMM or a successful valid petition, then a referendum shall be held as per byelaw 14.12
- 14.10 A referendum of no confidence will automatically be held when a member is censured on three occasions within their term of office



## Part 1. How members can influence their Union

- 14.11 A referendum of no confidence may be held on the agreement of the board of trustees following a recommendation from a full disciplinary panel
- 14.12 A no confidence referendum shall be run in accordance to the referendum rules within these byelaws, with the exception that the quorum be equivalent to 50% of the turnout figure for the individual election which elected them to that position.
- 14.13 Any no confidence referendum shall have a simple YES or NO answer where a yes vote allows the post holder to continue and a no vote removes them from office with immediate effect.
- 14.14 A No Confidence referendum is passed with a 50% majority
- 15. Censures
  - 15.1 A censure is an official reprimand or judgement passed by the Students' Union on regarding the conduct of an elected post holder.
  - 15.2 Members may be censured by the following means
    - 15.2.1 Passing of a motion of censure at the Executive committee
    - 15.2.2 Imposed by the Democracy committee
    - 15.2.3 Passing of a motion of censure at an AMM or EMM

15.2.4 Imposed by a full disciplinary panel

- 15.3 A motion of censure will clearly indicate which member is to be censured with a citation as to why they are to be censured.
- 15.4 Any full member may present a motion of censure to an AMM, EMM or Executive Committee Meeting
- 15.5 The member to be censured by the executive committee or a members meeting will be notified of the censure motion a minimum of 14 days before the vote in order to respond to the censure testimony.
- 15.6 Only one censure motion may be in progress per member at any one time (e.g. there may not be concurrent censure motions relating to the same person).
- 15.7 Censure motions remain in place until the post holders conclude their term of office. In the case of the democracy committee issued censure, the censure remains in place throughout the entire term of office that the censure relates to even if it was issued prior to taking office.

## **Part 2. Student Activities**

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### **Clubs, Societies and Groups**

Clubs and societies are one of the core activities of the Students' Union. They should be widely accessible to all members, and administered efficiently with due care and attention to the use of Union funding. These are semi-autonomous groups, which only exist through the existence of the Students' Union. Groups may run their own affairs as they see fit, providing they adhere to byelaws and policies as agreed in these constitutional documents. Clubs are also part of Team Surrey, a collaboration between the Students' Union and the University and so they have additional obligations on them relating to sporting performance, etc which is co-ordinated by Surrey Sports Park. In this section, the term "group member(s)" refers to any class of Union member which is in turn a registered member of a club or society (a group). The term 'full member' refers to a full member of the Students' Union, not a group member.

#### 16. Groups

- 16.1 A group is defined as a correctly constituted Student Group which has held a valid AGM within the previous 14 months, and fully complies with these byelaws
- 16.2 The term 'group' within these byelaws shall refer to all clubs, societies, amenities or any other constituted group.
- 16.3 A group will only be regarded as 'correctly constituted' once its aims and objectives have been approved by the appropriate standing committee, and a valid AGM has taken place.

- 16.4 Any full or opt-out Union member has the right to join a group and become a group member unless prevented by disciplinary sanctions
- 16.5 The recognised membership register of each group shall be through the means prescribed by the VP Activity
- 16.6 Group committees may not place joining restrictions upon any section of the full or opt-out membership implicitly or explicitly\*
- 16.7 Group committees are permitted to place membership restrictions on all classes of membership apart from full or opt-out members, such as membership fees and priority for activities\*.
- 16.8 Each standing committee may not constitute any group which stated aims and objectives run contrary to the aims and objectives of the Students' Union, or conflict with any standing policy.
- 16.9 All groups shall have equal standing within the Students' Union regardless of activity or membership\*
- 16.10 The Students' Union shall not be permitted to afford any group not constituted or without a valid AGM
  - 16.10.1 Protection or insurance from any liability or activity
  - 16.10.2 Administrative assistance
  - 16.10.3 Access to resources

16.10.4 Funding

16.10.5 Any such other assistance that is afforded to valid groups with the exception of byelaw 16.13

16.11 The Students' Union may provide freshers week assistance to groups who have held a valid AGM within the period but require an EGM

16.12 The Students' Union may only assist an un-constituted group assistance in with becoming a correctly constituted group (e.g. hold an AGM)

16.13 To remain an active group, each group must:

16.13.1 Produce an annual plan and review of activities (annual report)

16.13.2 Produce an annual inventory of equipment and belongings

16.13.3 Provide committee member contact details

16.13.4 Hold a valid, quorate AGM

16.14 Groups who do not fulfil the requirements of byelaw 16.13 shall become dormant

16.15 'Registered Members' are those who have joined the group through [ussu.co.uk](http://ussu.co.uk) and paid the fee where appropriate.

- 16.16 The only valid register of members for each group shall be the register on [ussu.co.uk](http://ussu.co.uk)
- 16.17 Groups may have a separate register for members who are not full members of the Union
- 16.18 Groups may only use Microsoft 365 as provided by the University of Surrey for the digital management of their group.

17. AGMs

- 17.1 Each group shall be required to hold an Annual General Meeting at least every 14 months
- 17.2 A group must have at least 10 registered members before being eligible to register or convene an AGM
- 17.3 An annual AGM period and committee handover shall be published by the VP Voice to coincide with committee training
- 17.4 It shall be the responsibility of the incumbent committee to notify the Union of the following:
  - 17.4.1 intention to hold an AGM
  - 17.4.2 Preferred date
  - 17.4.3 Whether the votes held should be open or restricted
- 17.5 It shall be the responsibility of the relevant Vice-President to:

- 17.5.1 Book an appropriate room, which may only be located
  - (a) On the Stag Hill campus
  - (b) In an academic building
  - (c) In Surrey Sports Park
- 17.5.2 Advertise the AGM
- 17.5.3 Arrange an official to oversee the AGM
- 17.5.4 Provide adequate resources for their AGM (e.g. ballot papers)
- 17.5.5 Provide a list of registered group members for AGM's with restricted voting
- 17.6 The responsibilities under byelaw 17.4 may be delegated to staff members
- 17.7 All AGMs must be widely advertised for a minimum of 14 calendar days before the event to allow all members to attend
- 17.8 The quorum for an AGM shall be 10 full Union members, or 50% of the registered membership total for that group; whichever is the lower figure.
- 17.9 Each AGM shall have the following agenda
  - 17.9.1 Apologies for absence

17.9.2 Outgoing committee report on previous year

17.9.3 Election of incoming signatories

17.9.4 Election of incoming non-signatory positions

17.10 The annual report (17.8.2) must be available for members to read in advance of the AGM

17.11 The election of signatory members is only complete once the signatory agreement has been signed

17.12 Failure to elect three signatory committee members at an AGM will result in the group becoming dormant.

## 18. AGM Voting

18.1 The voting system for each AGM shall be simple majority (first past the post) with the exception of elections as per 26.3

18.2 Voting may be either

18.2.1 Open, where any full Union member may vote in the AGM, or

18.2.2 Restricted, where only members of the group having the AGM may vote

18.3 The voting method is agreed by the outgoing signatories prior to the AGM (see 17.3.3 )



- 18.4 The VP Voice will publish the date prior to which membership of the group must be held if the voting system is restricted
- 18.5 Each AGM shall contain a voting option for Re-Open Nominations
- 18.6 The RON (Re-Open Nominations) option may be included under a different name providing it is also marked as 'RON (Re-Open Nominations)'
- 18.7 Voting will be held in secret at the sole discretion of the official overseeing the AGM
- 18.8 Ballot papers shall at all times be dispensed and counted by the official overseeing the AGM and/or their appointed assistant
- 18.9 The official overseeing the AGM may require voting members to produce membership cards in order to vote
- 18.10 The only officials competent to oversee group AGMs shall be members of the executive committee, elected members of the zone committees, or staff members as designated by the democracy committee.
- 18.11 The only officials competent to oversee group EGMs shall be part time officers, volunteers in another trusted capacity in the Union, or staff members as designated by the democracy committee.

18.11.1 Any official overseeing an AGM must not be a member of the group holding the AGM.

18.12 The procedure for AGM elections is as follows

18.12.1 Only full members may stand for signatory positions

18.12.2 There is no prescribed order for positions to be elected, this will be decided by the chair of the meeting

18.12.3 The Chair shall ask for those who wish to stand for the position being contested

18.12.4 When the candidates have announced themselves, the chair may allow them to make a speech, it is not compulsory for the candidates to leave the room – but is advisable to allow those in the room to vote freely and without embarrassment.

18.12.5 Members may use procedural motions (65), the two most applicable are card vote and secret ballot. If a card vote is called for then only holders of a valid student card can vote. If a secret ballot is called, then the official must use ballot papers.

18.12.6 It is the duty of the official overseeing the AGM to ensure the elections are free and fair and have the final ruling on meeting procedure within these byelaws

18.12.7 Those elected to the signatory positions must then sign the signatory agreement

19. Committee Positions

- 19.1 Each committee shall contain 3 signatory positions
- 19.2 Groups may designate and vote on further positions, however they shall hold no signatory authority
- 19.3 All actions taken on behalf of the group shall require the signature of at least two signatories
- 19.4 Any full member may present themselves for election to any of the committee positions
- 19.5 Only full members are permitted to hold signatory positions or nominate any committee position candidate
- 19.6 The Union shall be required to provide adequate training and guidance to all committee position holders as soon as practicable following an AGM
- 19.7 The committee elected at each AGM shall take office on the appointed day set by the VP Activity as per 17.2
- 19.8 Incoming signatory committee members shall only be permitted to take office following attendance to the designated committee training
- 19.9 Incoming signatory committee members may only take office without attending committee training at the discretion of the VP Activity

19.10 Elections for vacant signatory committee positions must be held as per byelaw 18

19.11 Signatory position holders may resign in writing to the VP Voice.

19.11.1 Where possible, it is expected that evidence be provided that any resignation is by mutual consent

**20. Invalid AGMs**

20.1 Any member who feels the provisions of byelaws 17, 18, or 19 have not been adhered to may request to the VP Voice for an annulment of the AGM

20.2 If the VP Voice officiated at the AGM, then the appeal will be presented to the Union Chair

20.3 If the member is not satisfied with the response from their request, they may appeal directly to the returning officer stating the reasons as to why they are appealing.

20.4 The returning officer may decide to

20.4.1 Refuse to hear an appeal

20.4.2 Issue guidance on future matters of procedure

20.4.3 Overturn the original decision

- 20.5 In the event of a complaint being made the relevant officer trustee (or in the case of an appeal the returning officer) shall first determine if there is a case to answer
  - 20.6 If there is no case to answer the relevant officer trustee (or in the case of an appeal the returning officer) shall write to the complainant outlining how the provisions of byelaws 17, 18, 19 were met
  - 20.7 If there are grounds for a complaint the group activities shall be suspended until a valid AGM is held
  - 20.8 Should the complaint be upheld the relevant officer trustee (or in the case of an appeal the returning officer) shall instruct the AGM to be invalid, and a new AGM to be held under EGM rules
21. **Extra-Ordinary General Meetings (Groups)**
- 21.1 EGMs for groups shall follow the procedure for AGMs
  - 21.2 An EGM must be held for groups within four term weeks if;
    - 21.2.1 There are less than three members holding signatory positions following resignations or termination of membership after a successful AGM
    - 21.2.2 A petition of at least 50 valid full members has been presented to the VP Voice requesting an EGM
    - 21.2.3 Byelaw 20.8 is enacted

- 21.3 Groups who have failed to hold an EGM prior to the end of the academic year will have four complete term weeks from the start of the next academic year to hold an EGM
  - 21.4 Groups requiring an EGM have to have completed a successful EGM by the second Friday following the February standing committee meeting or shall remain dormant until the following academic year.
  - 21.5 In the case of 21.2.1 or 21.2.2 all committee positions will then be vacated at the EGM
  - 21.6 If there are less than two members holding signatory positions, the group shall be classed as dormant until a valid EGM is held
22. Creation of Groups
- 22.1 Only full members may propose the creation of a new group
  - 22.2 In order to create a new group there must be
    - 22.2.1 A petition of 20 full members presented to the VP Activity
    - 22.2.2 A completed description of the aims and objectives of the group
    - 22.2.3 A majority vote in favour of creating a new group by the Activity Zone committee (zone ratification)

- 22.2.4 A majority vote in favour of creating a new group by the relevant standing committee (full ratification)
- 22.2.5 Sports clubs to be created may be subject to additional conditions within the Team Surrey memorandum of understanding
- 22.3 A dissolved group as per 24.1.2 may not be recreated within any time limit set by the disciplinary committee which cannot exceed past the end of the academic year
- 23. Dormant Groups
  - 23.1 Groups are deemed to be dormant if and when
    - 23.1.1 In the opinion of the activity zone, they have not undertaken any significant activity during the academic year
    - 23.1.2 They have failed to hold an AGM or EGM within 14 months of the previous AGM.
  - 23.2 A dormant group may be restarted by fulfilling the conditions required of an active group
  - 23.3 Any active group which ceases to be valid through not meeting these byelaws will be classified as dormant
  - 23.4 An AGM or EGM for a dormant group shall have the following provisions

23.4.1 A petition of 10 full Union members may call for an AGM or EGM of a dormant group

23.4.2 The quorum for a dormant group AGM or EGM shall be 10 full Union members

24. Dissolution of Groups

24.1 A group may cease to exist by the following means

24.1.1 A dormant group is not restarted within 18 months of becoming dormant

24.1.2 A full disciplinary panel instructs the dissolution of the group. The panel must also state the time there cannot be a recreated group which cannot extend past the end of the academic year.

24.1.3 The Activity zone agree with a unanimous vote that the group is not operating within their ratified aims and objectives

24.2 A group may remain dormant for a period of 18 months in which time the group may be restarted by holding a valid AGM or EGM

24.3 Dormant groups will cease to exist 18 months after becoming dormant. The group must be reconstituted from new.



- 24.4 Any funds held in dormant groups 'own funds' account will be held pending transfer to a group with similar aims and objectives
- 24.5 The transfer of funds held in dormant group accounts shall be at the discretion of the Finance Committee

25. **Restrictions on Groups**

- 25.1 The Activity zone may place further requirements on the management of groups as they deem appropriate
- 25.2 Requirements placed on the management of groups may also have corresponding sanctions

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Q. How can my club or society affiliate to another body?

A. As groups are part of the Union, then the Union must affiliate to that body on your behalf, and this must be declared at the Annual Members meeting (13.8). The Union cannot affiliate to, or donate to political parties.

Q. How can I remove a committee member?

A. To elect a new committee, then an EGM must be called. This is detailed in 21. If you call for an EGM, then all committee positions are re-elected.

Q. Can we have our own constitution and byelaws?

A. No, groups are part of the Union, and therefore can only operate within the Union constitution. This doesn't stop individual groups having their own policies or procedures as long as they do not conflict with these byelaws

Q. We have someone who is not a student who would like to help run the society, what can they do?

A. Non-students cannot hold signatory positions and so cannot be responsible for the group.

Q. Can we have our own bank account?

A. No. All group funds must be deposited within the Union accounts

## Part 3. Elections

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### 26. Principles

26.1 All Union elections for trustees and zone officers, including bye-elections shall be held in accordance with part 3 rules.

26.1.1 Special provisions may be made by the democracy committee for other elections within the Union.

26.1.2 Group elections are conducted as per the AGM process detailed from byelaw 17

26.2 Each election will be held according to the following principles

26.2.1 Fair access for all potential candidates

26.2.2 Secure voting by members

26.2.3 A robust election process in which the members have confidence

26.3 All cross-campus elections shall use the ERS'97 (STV) voting system

26.4 All Officer Trustee, Executive Committee, and such other positions as determined by the democracy committee shall be elected by cross-campus ballot

26.5 Elections that are held as cross-campus ballots, which will be satisfied under the following conditions

26.5.1 Electronic or Internet voting which may be used exclusively and without polling stations

26.5.2 Polling stations at a minimum of three locations on the Stag Hill campus

27. Election Officials

27.1 The Democracy committee shall be responsible for the annual appointment of a competent returning officer

27.2 The returning officer may not be a member of the Students' Union

27.3 All members will have the opportunity to object to the appointment of the returning officer on the following grounds

27.3.1 They are not a competent person

27.3.2 Evidence of bias

27.3.3 Conflict of interest

27.4 Objections may be heard by the democracy committee up to 14 days after the appointment is announced

- 27.5 The returning officer and the democracy committee may in turn appoint a number of deputy returning officers to deputise for them in matters of returning the election
- 27.6 Election administrators appointed by the Chief Executive shall be responsible for the operation of the election.
- 27.7 The returning officer remains responsible for the conduct of the deputy returning officers
- 27.8 The returning officer is responsible for the election being held according to these rules.
- 27.9 Further detail on the bye-elections of executive committee members is detailed in byelaw 7.5

28. **Rights of full-members**

- 28.1 All Full Members and only Full Members are eligible to stand for any position unless stated otherwise in the agreed role description of the position.
- 28.2 Candidates must be valid full members during the election process, and from election until they assume office, with the following exceptions:
  - 28.2.1 Candidates may assume office after graduation for Officer Trustee Roles
  - 28.2.2 Candidates may assume any role after graduation, providing they are enrolled for another course giving full membership in the next academic year

- 28.3 No person may stand for more than one post in the same election.
- 28.4 A Full Member may not serve as an Officer Trustee for more than two (2) years, whether consecutive or non-consecutive\*
- 28.5 Only full members are eligible to nominate or propose another student in the election.
- 28.6 Full Members have the right to attend and participate in the Question Time for the candidates.
- 28.7 Full Members have the right to information about the process of the election, the positions available and the candidates standing in the election.
- 28.8 Full Members shall have the right to object to the validity of any candidate.
- 28.9 Full Members have the right to vote in private in the elections, however ballots are recorded for the purposes of fraud prevention and auditing.

## 29. Election Process

- 29.1 The returning officer shall produce the following information for all potential candidates at least 14 days prior to the closing of nominations

- 29.1.1 Election timetable, comprising

- (a) Nominations close time
  - (b) Deadlines for any relevant submissions
  - (c) Election briefing time & location
  - (d) Voting times
  - (e) Count and results announcement time
- 29.1.2 Voting mechanism to be used
  - 29.1.3 Permissible spending limit on campaign
  - 29.1.4 Nomination requirements, e.g. how many proposing members are required for each candidate
  - 29.1.5 Regulations specific to that contest
- 29.2 Nomination forms received before the deadline with all information correct and valid shall be accepted.
  - 29.3 The RO shall have sole discretion to allow amendments to incorrect nomination forms after the nomination deadline
  - 29.4 The RO shall have sole discretion to accept nominations after the nomination deadline if appropriate extenuating circumstances are presented
  - 29.5 the list of valid candidates shall be published 24 hours before the campaign period begins

- 29.6 The RO shall be responsible for publicising the access to the voting system and voting times
- 29.7 All elections shall be open for voting for a minimum of 1 working day and must be held within University term dates
- 29.8 There shall no access to ballot papers or votes while an election is in process, and no interim results shall be produced
- 29.9 The RO shall ensure that access to voting is restricted to full members only according the electoral roll
- 29.10 The electoral roll shall be produced prior to the start of voting and no changes shall be permitted during the election with the exception detailed in 29.11
- 29.11 Any member who has been excluded from the electoral roll owing to administrative error may be added by the RO

### 30. Election Events

- 30.1 The election administrators shall be responsible for organising the election events as agreed by the Democracy Committee
- 30.2 Attendance to the election events shall be optional for all candidates
- 30.3 The election administrators shall not be required to make special provisions for any candidate who does not attend any election event for whatever reason



- 30.4 There shall be an election briefing for all candidates which will cover
    - 30.4.1 Election rules from these byelaws
    - 30.4.2 Election rules specific to that contest
    - 30.4.3 Explanation of other election events
  - 30.5 There shall be a candidate question time for each position contested
  - 30.6 The candidate question time must
    - 30.6.1 Be free to enter for all members
    - 30.6.2 Allow for a free and fair debate between the candidates
    - 30.6.3 Be publicised for all full members to attend and participate
    - 30.6.4 Chaired by a member who has agreed to abide by the chairing code of conduct in force at that time.
  - 30.7 Speaking rights for election events shall be confined to
    - 30.7.1 Full Members
    - 30.7.2 Those with prior permission from the RO
  - 31. Election complaints
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- 31.1 The returning officer shall be the sole official to deal with election complaints in the first instance
- 31.2 Any full member may complain to the returning officer regarding any aspect of the election
- 31.3 On receipt of a complaint the returning officer may refuse to consider a complaint if it is deemed to be
  - 31.3.1 Frivolous
  - 31.3.2 Vexatious
  - 31.3.3 Repetitious
- 31.4 When considering complaints regarding candidates, the RO must take into consideration the byelaws and the rules specific to that contest as well as any relevant policies in force
- 31.5 The RO may
  - 31.5.1 Take no further action
  - 31.5.2 Issue a clarification to all candidates
  - 31.5.3 Issue a warning
  - 31.5.4 Issue one or more strikes
  - 31.5.5 Refer the complaint to the University of Surrey Secretary for guidance

### 31.5.6 Suspend the election

- 31.6 If a candidate receives a total of three strikes, then they are automatically removed from the election process. Voting preferences for these candidates are passed over to the next subsequent preference
- 31.7 Any candidate removed from the election process will have the right to appeal their exclusion to the democracy committee
- 31.8 Any candidate appealing exclusion shall remain in the election until such time the appeal is heard
- 31.9 Should an appeal hearing as per 31.8 be scheduled after the close of voting, the election in which that member is participating shall not be counted until the appeal procedures are completed
- 31.10 Any candidate who has their membership rights removed during the election process shall be excluded from the process
- 31.11 The University of Surrey are obliged by law to ensure free and fair elections in the Students' Union. Any member may complain to the University Secretary regarding the conduct of the RO\*
- 31.12 In the event of a justified complaint regarding the conduct of the RO, the democracy committee shall be obliged to act on the adjudication from the University Secretary.

- 31.13 The RO shall have the authority to suspend or cancel any election if they believe the process has become compromised for whatever reason
- 31.14 If the RO considers any decision of the democracy committee to be contrary to the core constitution, the byelaws or the code of conduct they may report their concerns directly to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Surrey.
- 31.15 The Vice-Chancellor has the ultimate authority to suspend or cancel any election within these rules.
- 31.16 Following the completion of the election process the RO shall produce a summary report of complaints received and adjudications delivered which may be used as precedents for future elections.

## 32. Suspended Elections

- 32.1 If an election is suspended, all ballot boxes or access to electronic voting portals shall be suspended
- 32.2 Ballot boxes shall remain sealed while the election is under suspension
- 32.3 The maximum period an election may remain in suspension is five working days
- 32.4 The RO shall make all reasonable efforts to publicise to the membership when the election shall resume

32.5 If any candidates are excluded or withdraw during the period of suspension, ballot papers or forms with their names included shall be withdrawn. These candidates shall be removed from any election lists.

33. Cancelled Elections

33.1 In the event of a cancelled election no count shall take place

33.2 All positions will be re-opened for nominations

33.3 Any candidate excluded from the previous election shall be entitled to stand in the re-run election providing they still meet the requirements of being a candidate

34. Referenda

34.1 Any full member may call for a referendum on presentation of a valid petition containing the signatures of at least 150 full members collected within one term

34.1.1 A term is defined as the semester periods in between vacations as defined by the University “Key Dates”

34.2 The executive committee may put any question to a referendum on a unanimous vote

34.3 The executive committee may combine multiple questions on one ballot providing no there are no contradictory questions

- 34.4 It is the responsibility of the RO to hold a referendum election within 10 term weeks of the petition being presented.
- 34.5 All referendum questions shall be stated on the petition and shall have a simple yes or no answer
- 34.6 The board of trustees may exclude any referendum question on the following grounds
  - 34.6.1 The question would bring the Union into disrepute
  - 34.6.2 The question contravenes the standing policies
  - 34.6.3 The question has been answered by a motion passed in a General Meeting (Article 14)\*
  - 34.6.4 The question has been answered in a referendum held up to two years previously
- 34.7 Referendum votes will be conducted according to the election rules, with the exception of the voting system which shall be first past the post
- 34.8 Referendum questions will pass with a simple majority

## Part 4. Finances

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- 35. Responsibilities
  - 35.1 The board of trustees have responsibility for the correct administration of the Union finances\*
  - 35.2 The board of trustees may delegate their responsibility to the chief executive
  - 35.3 The chief executive has the authority, subject to the agreement of the Finance Committee to
    - 35.3.1 Open bank accounts
    - 35.3.2 Enter into legal & contractual agreements
    - 35.3.3 Employ staff
    - 35.3.4 Set staff remuneration
    - 35.3.5 Make investments
    - 35.3.6 Take appropriate measures on behalf of the board as required for the successful operation of the Students' Union
  - 35.4 The finance committee may delegate operational issues to the chief executive

- 35.5 The chief executive shall be required to recommend to the Board of Trustees an auditor for the Students' Union
- 35.6 The chief executive shall be required to prepare annual budgets in line with the requirements of the board of trustees and the memorandum of understanding
- 35.7 The chief executive shall be required to prepare quarterly financial reports in line with the requirements of the board of trustees and the memorandum of understanding
- 35.8 The board of trustees shall have the authority to delegate signatory authority on all Union accounts and agreements
- 35.9 All financial transactions shall require a minimum of two signatures
- 35.10 The board of trustees shall agree annually a financial procedures manual to ensure the correct operation of the Union accounts and transactions.
- 35.11 All funds and assets shall remain in the ultimate control of the board of trustees

## 36. Rights of Full Members

- 36.1 Full members may have access to any aspect of the Union financial data with the exception of data excluded by the general data protection regulations, or data held by Union in confidence.



36.2 Expenses shall be available for all full members to view on request

37. Group Finances

37.1 Each group signatory committee shall be responsible for the correct administration of their group finances

37.2 In the event of a committee failing to administer the group finances correctly the signatory committee members shall face a collective disciplinary

37.3 It shall be the responsibility of the group committee to correctly account for all group finances through the Union finance office

37.4 Groups are not permitted to hold accounts or funds in any location other than the Students' Union.

37.5 All group funds must be declared and deposited in the group accounts within the Union

## Part 5. Fundraising

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### 38. RAG

38.1 All fundraising activities organised by the Union for charities other than the Students' Union shall be administered through RAG\*

38.2 Any fundraising activity shall clearly state

38.2.1 That a portion of the fee for the event or service will be held by RAG

38.2.2 In the event that part of a fee is donated to RAG, the portion shall be clearly stated

38.3 Funds raised for RAG shall be held by the Union in escrow for the RAG fund

### 39. RAG Fund

39.1 The RAG fund shall invite bids from regulated charities to be considered for donations from the RAG fund.

39.2 The RAG fund shall be donated according to the RAG donation policy.

39.3 The Union shall produce in its annual report a summary of bids received and a detailed report of funds donated.

- 39.4 The Community zone shall produce a clear and transparent bidding process for charities seeking funds.

## **Part 6. Miscellaneous Provisions**

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### 40. Honorary Membership

- 40.1 Any class of member can nominate an individual, group or entity for honorary membership of the Students' Union
- 40.2 Honorary membership is a symbolic accolade awarded in extraordinary circumstances to those who have distinguished themselves by meeting one or all of the following criteria
  - 40.2.1 A continued dedication to improving the experience of University of Surrey Students through the course of their career or studies.
  - 40.2.2 Have improved the experience of University of Surrey students through an individual action
  - 40.2.3 Recognition of an outstanding achievement by a current member
  - 40.2.4 A non-member who has provided extra-ordinary assistance and/or expertise as a volunteer for a Union activity
- 40.3 Honorary membership is awarded by the board of trustees
- 40.4 Honorary members receive no membership rights

**41. Official Mascot**

- 41.1 The Official Mascot for the Students' Union is 'Steve the Stag'
- 41.2 No member is permitted to position, use, photograph, or depict the official mascot in any way that would run contrary to the values of the Union, this includes (but not limited to)
  - 41.2.1 Drinking alcohol
  - 41.2.2 Smoking cigarettes
  - 41.2.3 Involvement in lewd acts
  - 41.2.4 In a partial state of undress (e.g. not wearing the entire costume)

**42. Interpretation of the byelaws**

- 42.1 There may be a requirement to interpret these rules if there is, for example an ambiguity, or absolute adherence would create an unacceptable situation
- 42.2 The interpretation, or suspension of these byelaws is the responsibility of the Union Chair
- 42.3 Rulings by the Union Chair do not create precedents
- 42.4 A ruling by the Union Chair may be overturned by a unanimous vote of the Union Executive (excluding the chair)

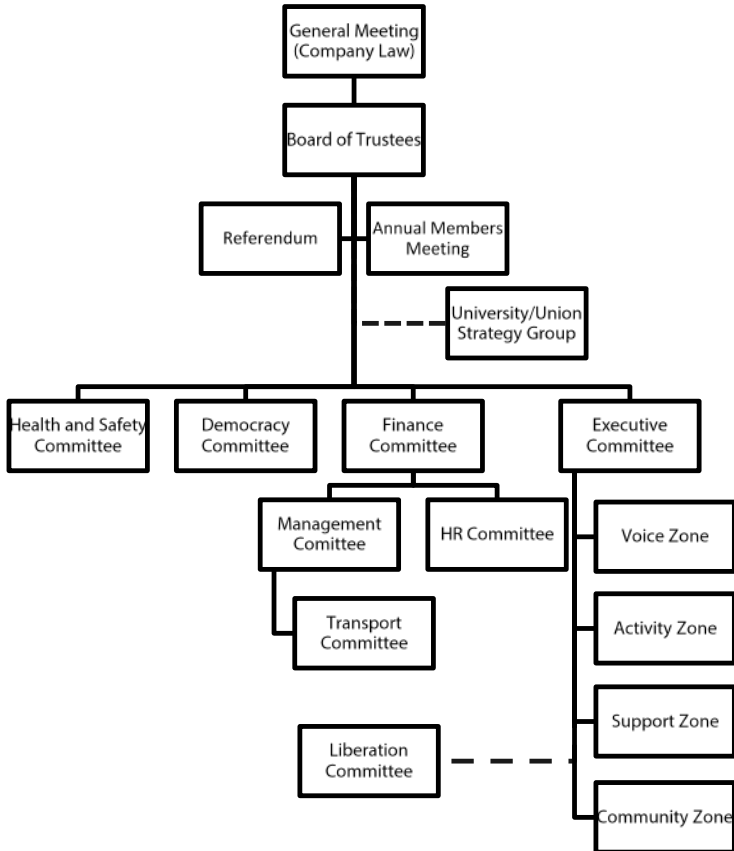
- 42.5 Should a ruling be successfully challenged, the Board of Trustees shall be the final arbiters of the rule interpretation, who must consider the core constitution and the code of conduct in their deliberations

Q. Why do we have byelaw 41?

A. Steve the Stag features in many community events, for example the annual pancake race in Guildford high street, where he will meet local schoolchildren. It is only appropriate therefore that we ensure those schoolchildren don't go on Facebook later and see photos of Steve doing things their parents would not approve of.

# Part 7. Committees

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# General Committee Rules

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## 43. Committee Protocol

- 43.1 Each committee will have a chair, the chair will have the casting vote
- 43.2 Any reference to a committee taking an action will require a simple majority (50%+1) unless specifically stated.
- 43.3 Committees may take any action within their terms of reference, and must take action on their stated duties
- 43.4 It is the responsibility of the chair of each committee to ensure the frequency of meeting is adhered to as a minimum

## 44. Committee Sessions

- 44.1 Committees may sit in one of the following sessions
  - 44.1.1 **Open**, any member of the Union may attend, and participate with the permission of the chairperson. Minutes and/or recordings of the proceedings will be made available to the membership.
  - 44.1.2 **Private**, only committee members, and participants listed as in attendance may remain in the meeting. Minutes and/or recordings of the proceedings while in this session are only distributed to members and participants listed as in attendance.



44.1.3 **Closed**, committee members only are permitted to remain in the session. Minutes and/or recordings of the proceedings while in this session are only distributed to committee members. The committee may permit a non-member to remain for the purposes of record keeping only. The committee may also permit non-members to remain in this session.

44.2 The default session for all Union meetings is Open

44.3 All committees are subject to the procedural motions as outlined in Byelaw 65

45. Conflict of Interest

45.1 The conflict of interest policy applies to all committees

45.2 Any conflict of interest must be declared at the opening of any meeting based on the pre-prepared agenda

45.3 It is the responsibility of the chair to ask for conflict of interests

45.4 Should a discussion arise during the course of any meeting not initially indicated by the agenda, and committee member who feels they may have a conflict of interest must declare at that point

45.5 If a member declares a potential conflict of interest they may either

45.5.1 Take no further part in discussions of that topic *or*

45.5.2 Continue in discussions and abstain from voting *or*

45.5.3 Request permission from the committee to continue in the discussions and vote

45.6 Following a declaration of a potential conflict of interest a committee may

45.6.1 Decide there is no conflict and allow the committee member to continue as a full member *or*

45.6.2 Restrict the conflicted member from voting *or*

45.6.3 Remove the conflicted member from the meeting for the duration of the discussion

46. Chair's Action

46.1 The chair of any committee may take a chair's action on any point which in their opinion the committee would not find contentious

46.2 All chair's actions must be reported to the next meeting of the committee

47. Quorum & Voting

47.1 Unless specifically stated in the committee overview, the quorum for the committee shall be 50% of the voting members plus 1

- 47.2 If the chair wishes to receive votes electronically he/she may, providing the following is met
  - 47.2.1 The voting is time limited and this is made clear
  - 47.2.2 The entire vote is held electronically
  - 47.2.3 All voting members of the committee are clearly aware of the procedure
  - 47.2.4 The electronic voting is secure to an acceptable standard (for example e-mail responses would be acceptable, a Facebook poll would not)
- 47.3 Conflicted committee members unable to vote shall not affect the quorum, and will be regarded as present for the vote
- 47.4 The chair shall decide if a meeting is quorate
- 47.5 Casting vote definition
  - 47.5.1 Unless otherwise stated in the committee overview, the chair of the committee holds the casting vote
  - 47.5.2 This does not prevent the chair from voting as a matter of course
- 47.6 Casting votes will be required when the committee voting is tied. The chair does not have to exercise their casting vote for the same option that they voted for in the first round of voting

48. General Procedure

- 48.1 All committee members, attending members and visitors are expected to defer to the chair of the committee at all times
- 48.2 The chair has the authority to exclude anyone attending a committee meeting if they feel their continued presence is detrimental to the working of the committee.
- 48.3 Voting committee members may not be expelled from committee meetings.
- 48.4 At the first meeting of each committee each academic year the chair shall agree and document the following
  - 48.4.1 Proposed frequency of meetings
  - 48.4.2 Deadline for submission of agenda items
  - 48.4.3 Timescale for distribution of agendas and minutes
  - 48.4.4 Co-opting of members (if applicable)
  - 48.4.5 Procedure for publishing minutes
- 48.5 Every committee shall have formal minutes taken, which shall contain as a minimum
  - 48.5.1 The time, date and location of the meeting

- 48.5.2 The attendance of the meeting (indicating the membership, those who did not attend and those who presented apologies)
- 48.5.3 A record of decisions taken at that meeting
- 48.6 Minutes may be published before approval at the subsequent meeting providing they are clearly marked 'draft' as long as this is agreed by the committee as per rule 64.4.5
- 48.7 Quoted meeting frequencies are the minimum, committees may meet more frequently.
- 48.8 Terms of reference are the areas in which the committee may operate
- 48.9 Committee duties are the areas in which the committee must operate
- 48.10 Meeting frequency definitions
  - 48.10.1 Semester is the teaching period defined by the University calendar (two per annum)
  - 48.10.2 Term is the calendar period defined by national holidays (normally three per annum)
- 48.11 Any member has the right to present an item to any committee with exceptions detailed in 64.12 and 64.13 providing they satisfy the requirements for submission as agreed by the committee at the first meeting of each year

- 48.12 Submissions to the Executive Committee are detailed in byelaw 12
- 48.13 Member submissions to the Board of Trustees shall come from the Annual Members Meeting
- 48.14 All committee submission requirements shall be made clear to all members
- 48.15 Committee submission requirements must not be used as a barrier to members wishing to raise issues for discussion, and it is expected that committee chairs exercise an appropriate degree of flexibility in this area.
- 48.16 Each committee shall agree a prescribed format for submissions from committee members if required at the beginning of each academic year.
- 48.17 Voting committee members are expected to take due regard to advice provided by non-voting in attendance members.
- 48.18 Decisions taken by the committee contrary to the advice provided as per rule 64.17 must be clearly stated in the minutes to this affect
- 48.19 Any committee member wishing to resign their position will do so in writing to the chair of the committee
- 48.20 If the chair of the committee wishes to resign, then they will do so in writing to the chair of the superior committee

48.21 Committees which do not contain a procedure for vacant positions will decide collectively whether or not to fill the position or continue until the next scheduled election with the position unfilled

48.22 Should a resignation result in the remaining positions being less than the stated quorum required, then the position must be filled as per byelaw 5

49. Procedural Motions

49.1 A motion on how the meeting proceeds can be proposed by any member of the meeting at any time apart from during a vote.

49.2 Procedural motions shall require a simple majority to pass

49.3 Procedural motions may not be applied retrospectively

49.4 The following procedural motions shall be available

49.4.1 No-Confidence in the Chair

(a) If a committee member feels the provisions of byelaw 64.4 has not been met

(b) The Chair is demonstrating undue bias during a debate

49.4.2 Deferred vote

49.4.3 If a committee member wishes to defer voting on an issue until the next available meeting

49.4.4 Exclude Member

- (a) Any non-committee member may be removed from the meeting

49.4.5 Request for a secret ballot

49.4.6 Request for a card vote whereby all full members must produce valid identification to vote

49.4.7 Refer issue to another body (such as the board of trustees)

49.4.8 To vote on any proposed motion in parts

49.4.9 Adjournment

50. **Ultra Vires\***

- 50.1 Committees may not discuss any item which is beyond the scope of the charitable objects or powers of the Union.



## Worked Examples

These examples cover a committee which has a voting membership of 10. Unless specifically stated in the committee overview, it is only the members listed (not those *in attendance*) who can vote. For some committees, such as Societies Standing, this figure will have to be specifically calculated each time as the number of societies which are ratified and active (i.e. not dormant) may change from month to month.

### Example 1.

At the meeting start time 5 members of the committee are in attendance. *Quorum is 50%+1, so the quorum for this committee is 6, with only 5 at the meeting, the committee is not quorate and **no decisions may be taken***

### Example 2.

8 members of the committee are in attendance.

A vote is held and the vote is 5 in favour and 3 against.

*The committee is quorate, and there has been a clear majority, the decision of the committee is **in favour, and is valid.***

### Example 3.

All 10 members of the committee are in attendance.

A vote is held and the vote is 5 in favour and 5 against, the chair votes in favour.

*The committee is quorate, and the vote is split. The committee chair is then asked to use their casting vote.*

The chair of the committee casts their vote against.

*Despite voting in favour during the vote, the chair decides to cast their vote against. The committee has therefore had a valid vote **against.***

### Example 4.

All 10 members of the committee are in attendance.

A vote is held and the vote is 4 in favour, 1 against and 5 abstentions.

*The committee is quorate, the five abstentions have no effect on the outcome of the vote, therefore the vote is **valid and in favour***

Number of votes required to pass = Voting members present divided by 2 plus 1

## Ultra Vires Guidance

The Union is a charitable membership organisation that exist to advance the education of students, including by representing the interests of students and helping to ensure that they benefit from a broad and rich educational experience outside of the lecture hall.

As we are a registered charity, we must abide by charity law.

**We cannot use our resources to campaign on an issue that does not affect “students as students”.**

It is not lawful for a us to commit resources to campaigning on an issue that affects students but only because they are people in the community like everyone else. To do so would mean the students’ union was acting outside its charitable objects, which is sometimes called acting ‘ultra vires’ (ultra vires just means ‘outside the powers’ in Latin).

Crucially, this principle only relates to campaign action. It does not mean that the students’ union cannot facilitate debates on wider issues which do not directly affect students as students; in fact, as an educational charity this debating role will be central to the union’s core purposes. If these debates reach a resolution, the union can take an official position on any issue (including those where it would not be allowed to campaign on the issue). This is sometimes called ‘reaching a corporate conclusion’. So even where an issue does not meet the test of directly affecting students as students, the union can lawfully do any of the following things:

- Host a fair and balanced debate involving students and/or guest speakers on any issue
- Provide fair and balanced information to its members on any issue
- Adopt resolutions on any issue through its formal democratic structures.
- Communicate any resolutions decided on by those bodies to its members
- Represent positions taken to the university or college

### **We must maintain neutrality when it comes to political parties**

We don't have to be neutral on issues (subject to the rules set out above, we can take positions on any issue, and campaign on some issues), but we do have to be neutral when it comes to party politics. This means that the union cannot support or oppose any political party or candidate. Nothing prevents members of a students' union, including its elected officers, from personally and actively supporting or opposing political parties or candidates. It is also permissible for individual members to organise themselves in groups outside of the union's structures to support or oppose parties or candidates, as long as such groups raise their own funds to do that and do not represent themselves as being affiliated in any way to the students' union (including on social media). Where paid sabbatical officers are involved, a students' union should ensure that the officers are not using their paid time to support a political party. They also should not use property of the students' union to provide such support, such as computers and office space.

### **We cannot give money to other organisations to do things that they we not allowed to do themselves**

We can't donate or allow our funds to be used to support campaigning on an issue that would be outside of our charitable objects (because it does not affect the education or interests of students), or for partisan political purposes. Nor can we establish or fund a student society to campaign on an activity that the union itself would not be allowed to campaign on.

In practice, the protection against Ultra Vires will sit with the officer trustees, and especially the Union Chair who is required to take advice from staff on the suitability of any Union action considering this guidance and law.

# **Conflict of Interest Policy**

## **Overview**

For the purposes of this policy a conflict of interest is defined as “a conflict between the private interests and the official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust”. This policy is intended to give the membership of the Students’ Union full confidence that decisions taken in their name are guided solely by their interests and not for personal or group gain, influence or profit. The fact that the Students’ Union has adopted such a Policy does not in any way cast doubt on the integrity of officers and staff. Rather it recognises that the Students’ Union wishes to give a great deal of freedom to employees to engage in external and internal activities, but in so doing needs to put in place a mechanism to protect its members from reputational damage and other liabilities.

The law states that trustees cannot receive any benefit from their charity in return for any service they provide to the charity unless they have express legal authority to do so. "Benefit" includes any property, goods or services which have a monetary value, as well as money.

It is the potential, rather than the actual, benefit from which the conflict of interest arises which requires authority. In order to avoid a breach of trust and to ensure transparency, authority is required where there is a possibility of benefit. This will avoid accusations of impropriety, which could in turn have a damaging effect on the Union's reputation.

**General provisions for the management of conflict of interests in the board of trustees are detailed in Articles 58, 59 & 60**

The Trustees, Officers, Staff and Committee Signatories of the Union are expected to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life as defined by the Nolan Committee

## **The Declaration of Interests**

Accordingly, we are asking trustees and officers to declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in the Union. A declaration of interests form is provided for this purpose. To be effective, the declaration of interests needs to be updated at least termly, and also when any changes occur.

If you are not sure what to declare, or whether/when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the chief executive or HR manager for confidential guidance.

This register of interests shall also be used to record all gifts of value over £20 received by the trustees and officers.

Interests and gifts will be recorded on the Union's register of interests, which will be maintained by the chief executive. The register will be accessible by all members.

## **Data Protection**

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998. Data will be processed only to ensure that trustees and officers act in the best interests of the Union. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

## **Decisions taken where a Trustee or Officer has an Interest**

In the event of a committee having to decide upon a question in which a trustee or officer has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, with a simple majority required. A quorum must be present for the discussion and decision; interested parties will not be counted when deciding whether the meeting is quorate. Interested committee members may not vote on matters affecting their own interests.

### **Provision of goods and services**

Where a trustee or officer is connected to a party involved in the supply of a service or product to the charity, this information will also be fully disclosed in the annual report and accounts.

### **Officer Trustees**

1. Officer trustees shall have a defined benefit in their dual status as both trustees, and paid employees of the Union
2. The financial benefit available to officer trustees shall be agreed with the majority of trustees who receive no benefit in conjunction with the Chief Executive
3. No further benefit will be available to officer trustees beyond the agreed amount agreed with the board of trustees

Independent external moderation will be used where conflicts cannot be resolved through the usual procedures.

### **Conflicts relating to general committee membership**

Where a committee member has a general conflict of interest in the outcome of a committee decision (e.g. membership of a society). This will be declared at the beginning of that agenda point, or as soon as practical during the meeting. Byelaw 61 will be observed in this instance.

# **The seven principles of public life**

## **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

## **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

## **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

## **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

## **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

## **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.



## **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

# Committee Definitions

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Each committee in the Union has a purpose, some of them are for governance (the Trustees), some are operational (e.g. Management committee), and some are political (e.g. Executive). The committee structure has a hierarchy, with all students at the top.

Each definition is presented in the same format.

1. The Overview  
This should explain roughly why the committee is there, and what they are supposed to do
2. Responsible To  
Which committee does this report in to
3. Responsible For  
Which committees report into this one
4. Terms of reference  
Areas in which the committee *can* operate
5. Membership  
The voting members of this committee, and who remain in *closed* session
6. In attendance  
Those who are normally part of the committee process, and remain in the committee when in *private* session
7. Committee Duties  
Things the committee *must* do
8. Meeting frequency  
The minimum amount of time the committee must meet

# **General Meeting**

## **Overview**

The general meeting has the overall control of the Students' Union; the board of trustees are answerable to the general meeting.

The general meeting is detailed in Articles 16-31 of the core constitution.

## **Responsible for**

Board of Trustees (Trustees' Meeting)

## **Responsibility for committee**

The Chief Executive is responsible for enabling a general meeting in accordance with Articles 16-31 of the core constitution.

**This is not to be confused with the Annual Members Meeting**

# **Board of Trustees (Trustees' Meeting)**

## **Overview**

The board of trustees have responsibility for the direction and oversight of the Students' Union. The procedures for Trustees Meetings are detailed in articles 47-59 of the core constitution. Membership and operation of this meeting is governed by these articles and may not be altered as per the procedure for amending byelaws. The chair of this committee holds a casting vote. Quorum for this committee is detailed in Article 54.2

## **Responsible to**

General Meeting

## **Responsible for**

1. Disciplinary and Complaints
2. Referenda
3. Health & Safety Committee
4. Annual Members Meeting
5. Finance Committee
6. Executive Committee
7. Democracy Committee

## **Terms of Reference**

1. Agreeing the strategic direction for the Students' Union
2. Governance of the Students' Union
3. Evaluating the performance of the Students' Union against the agreed strategy
4. Overall control of all finances
5. Oversight of subsidiary companies and associated boards of directors
6. Appointment and direction of the Chief Executive

7. Membership of the board of trustees (as per articles 37.6, 37.7, 39, 41)

## **Membership**

1. President (Chairperson)
2. Deputy Chairperson (External Trustee)
3. VP Voice
4. VP Activity
5. VP Support
6. VP Community
7. Union Chairperson
8. External Trustee
9. External Trustee
10. External Trustee
11. Student Trustee
12. Student Trustee
13. University Trustee

## **In Attendance**

1. Chief Executive
2. Deputy Chief Executive

## **Committee Duties**

1. Agree annual & long term strategic plan
2. Review quarterly results against plan
3. Prepare annual subvention request
4. Arrange the Annual Members Meeting
5. Receive reports from subordinate committees, issue guidance and instructions
6. General duties as defined in the Articles and relevant laws

**Frequency of meetings**

Four meetings per year

# **Annual Members Meeting**

## **Overview**

The annual members meeting fulfils many of the obligations as set out in the 1994 Education Act. The format and duties of the AMM is detailed in the core constitution under article 15

## **Responsible to**

Board of Trustees (Trustees' Meeting)

## **Responsible for**

## **Committee Membership**

Any full member is entitled to attend and vote. The meetings shall be chaired by the Union Chairperson

Any member of the Union may be in attendance

# Partnership Group

## Overview

The Union/University strategy group is included in these byelaws for information only. This is a University committee intended to be the official forum for discussion between the University and Students' Union on non-representative matters. Meeting membership, format and timing is arranged by the University

## Responsible to

Board of Trustees (Trustees' Meeting)

## Responsible for

Campus Catering Management group

## Committee Membership

1. Provost
2. Vice-Provost
3. CFO
4. Director of Business Services
5. President
6. University Trustee
7. VP Voice
8. VP Activity
9. VP Support
10. VP Community
11. Chief Executive
12. Deputy Chief Executive



# Democracy Committee

## Overview

The democracy committee will have remit of ensuring there are free, fair and representative elections within the Union, and promote democratic involvement between the membership and the Union. This committee also acts as the final internal adjudicator of election issues, and is the sole committee to deal with election anomalies wherever they occur within the Union structure.

## Responsible to

Board of Trustees (Trustees' Meeting)

## Responsible for

1. Final election appeals & complaints

## Terms of Reference

1. Oversight of all elections
2. Oversight of all referenda
3. Responsibility for governance reviews
4. Responsibility for byelaw amendments
5. Appointment of Returning and Deputy Returning officers
6. Miscellaneous activities relating to democratic representation

## Membership

1. Union Chairperson (Chairperson)
2. President
3. Voice Zone member 1
4. Voice Zone member 2
5. 1. External Trustee (required for duties 1 & 6)
6. 1. Co-Opted member

## In attendance

1. Chief Executive

2. Student Voice Manager
3. University Secretary (or nominated representative)

### **Committee Duties**

1. Review election rules annually
2. Timetable democracy events
3. Review Student Forum business prior to each Forum
4. Appoint returning officers
5. Confirm election results
6. Meet on an ad-hoc basis to hear election complaint appeals

### **Frequency of meetings**

Minimum of once per year

# Health & Safety Committee

## Overview

The health & safety committee has oversight of all Union activities to ensure the safety of these activities, as well as legal compliance. This committee has the authority to instruct that any activity ceases, or is significantly altered should they feel there is an unacceptable risk in the activity. This committee is also responsible for ensuring all activities are risk assessed, and that those risk assessments are both meaningful and realistic. This committee will review safety performance, set policy and recommend standards based on these reviews. This committee may not meet in a closed session

## Responsible to

Board of Trustees

## Responsible for

## Terms of Reference

1. To agree and review the Students' Union health & safety policy
2. To provide recommendations for implementation of the policy
3. To review health & safety training provision
4. To review and make recommendations to ensure compliance with Health and Safety legislation
5. To report bi-annually to Board of Trustees
6. To set standards for health & safety performance

## Membership

1. Chief Executive (Chair)
2. President
3. VP Activity
4. VP Community

5. Sports Standing Co-Opt
6. Societies Standing Co-Opt

**In attendance (as required)**

1. Student Activities Manager
2. Operations Manager
3. Technical Manager

**Committee Duties**

1. Review health & safety performance against target
2. Review accident forms and risk assessments since previous meeting and issue recommendations
3. Ensure all activities are covered with relevant risk assessment
4. Disseminate guidance on compliance with appropriate legislation

**Frequency of meetings**

Twice per semester

# Finance Committee

## Overview

The finance committee has delegated authority of control of Union finance from the budgets agreed by the board of trustees. The finance committee is the body who controls the medium term finances of the Union, with the board of trustees setting the long term strategy, and the chief executive in conjunction with the finance manager controlling day to day finance operations. The committee are responsible for ensuring the management of Union finance is in line with the board expectations.

## Responsible to

Board of Trustees

## Responsible for

Management Committee

HR Committee

## Terms of Reference

1. Control of monthly finance management reports
2. Union investment strategy
3. Ownership of financial procedures
4. Preparation of annual subvention request
5. Compliance with the financial memorandum
6. Annual Audit
7. Procurement
8. Ownership of the Risk Register

## Committee Membership

1. President (Chair)
2. VP Voice
3. VP Activity

4. VP Support
5. VP Community
6. Union Chair

### **In attendance**

1. Chief Executive
2. Deputy Chief Executive
3. HR Manager
4. Student Voice Manager
5. Student Activities Manager
6. Support Manager
7. Entertainments & Venue Manager

### **Committee Duties**

1. Monitor monthly financial results and approve action if necessary
2. Hear grants requests deferred from grants committee
3. Review Risk Register quarterly
4. Recommend appointment of auditors to AMM

### **Frequency of Meetings**

Quarterly

# Management Committee

## Overview

The management committee controls the mid-term operations of the Union services; this committee is responsible for providing the direction for the day to day management that will enable the long term strategy as agreed by the board of trustees.

## Responsible to

Finance Committee

## Responsible for

Transport Committee

## Terms of Reference

1. Oversight of all student facing Union services
2. Implementation of service strategy
3. Review of member feedback on Union services
4. Recommendations for action from feedback

## Committee Membership

1. President (Chair)
2. VP Voice
3. VP Activity
4. VP Support
5. VP Community

## In attendance

1. Chief Executive
2. Deputy Chief Executive
3. HR Manager

## Committee Duties

1. Arrange annual member research into Union services

2. Provide direction as to the service levels required from each area
3. Review member complaints and issue guidance

### **Frequency of meetings**

Quarterly



# **Transport Committee**

## **Overview**

Provision of transport for student activities, through the in house fleet, hired vehicles, and public transport. Control of maintenance and proposed renewal of transport assets. Policies regarding expense reimbursements and charges for student activities transport usage. Policy of transport usage by third parties. The committee is also responsible for the provision of transport insurance and training of Union drivers

## **Responsible to**

Management Committee

## **Responsible for**

## **Terms of Reference**

1. Minibus Policy
2. Transport provision
3. Fleet maintenance & renewal
4. Transport policy for students & staff

## **Committee Membership**

1. VP Activity (Chair)
2. VP Community
3. Team Surrey Chair
4. Surrey Societies Chair

## **In attendance**

1. Finance Manager
2. Operations Manager
3. Activities Manager

### **Committee Duties**

1. Agree transport policy and review annually
2. Propose fleet renewal requirements to Finance Committee
3. Oversee fleet maintenance
4. Publish a minibus users handbook

### **Frequency of meetings**

Quarterly

# **Human Resources Committee**

## **Overview**

The HR committee exists to guide the HR strategy to achieve the HR strategy as agreed by the board of trustees. The committee will be guided by current HR best practice as well as prevailing conditions and staff feedback. The HR committee will also consider the business plan, and any adverse or favourable conditions that may require action to achieve the plan.

## **Responsible to**

Finance Committee

## **Responsible for**

### **Terms of Reference**

1. HR Policies
2. The Staff Handbook
3. FT & PT staff recruitment
4. Formal and Informal staff consultations

### **Committee Membership**

1. President (Chair)
2. VP Voice
3. VP Activity
4. VP Support
5. VP Community
6. Co-opted member of Executive Committee

### **In attendance**

1. Chief Executive
2. HR Manager

### **Committee Duties**

1. Review new legislation and agree policy for compliance
2. Agree posts available for recruitment
3. Arrange part time recruitment process
4. Oversee part time training process
5. Respond to staff feedback

### **Frequency of meetings**

Quarterly

# **Executive Committee**

## **Overview**

The executive committee is the prime committee for political leadership of the Students' Union. The committee differs from the board of trustees in leading policy and opinion on behalf of the Students of the University of Surrey. Policy and opinion is based on the views garnered from Students' Voice Forums, the Annual Members Meeting as well as the opinions of the elected members of the committee.

## **Responsible to**

Board of Trustees

## **Responsible for**

Zone Committees

## **Terms of Reference**

1. Political Policy
2. Representative issues
3. Organisational Opinion

## **Committee Membership**

1. Union Chairperson (Chair)
2. President (Deputy Chair)
3. VP Voice
4. VP Activity
5. VP Support
6. VP Community
7. Voice Zone Member 1
8. Voice Zone Member 2
9. Team Surrey Chair
10. Surrey Societies Chair
11. Support Zone Member 1

12. Support Zone Member 2
13. Community Zone Member 1
14. Community Zone Member 2

### **In attendance**

1. Chief Executive
2. Zone Administrator
3. Liberation Committee Rep 1
4. Liberation Committee Rep 2
5. Liberation Committee Rep 3
6. Liberation Committee Rep 4

### **Committee Duties**

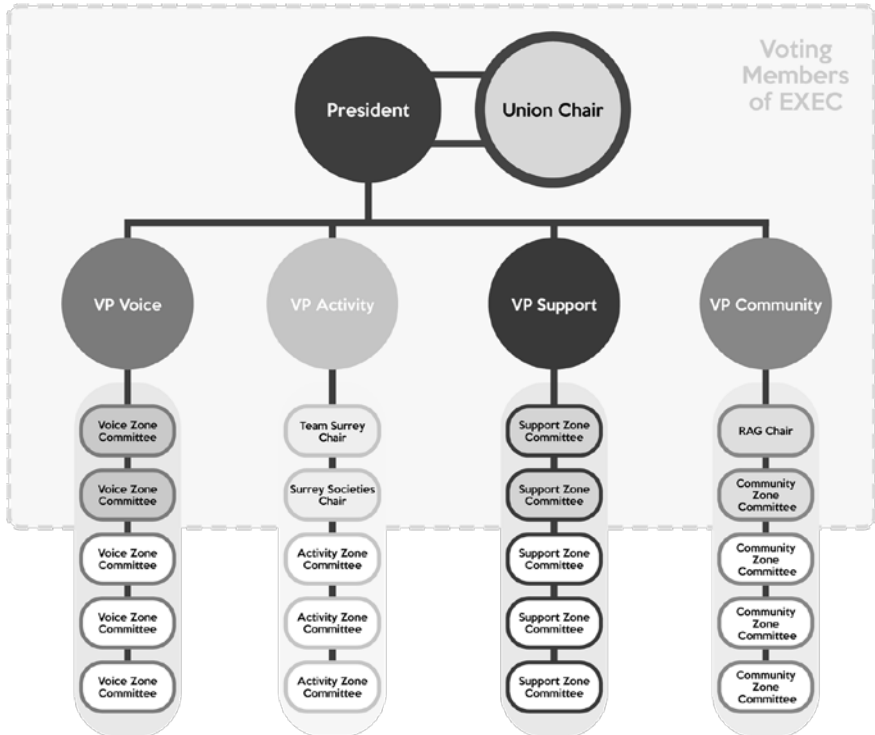
1. Vote on policy presented by members and zones

### **Frequency of meetings**

Monthly (Term time)

# Zone Committees

The zone committees perform almost all of the Union work, and have control of almost all the Union resources. Each zone is headed by a Vice-President and the remaining members are elected from a pool of candidates. The top five candidates become zone members (three in the case of Activity), and from that five the top two become exec members



# Voice Zone

## Overview

This is the zone for students who have something to say, listening to our members and making their voice heard. This is the zone that looks after the student opinion on the issues that have an impact on your student life. This zone will promote the results of major student surveys, such as the NSS and 'Shape Your Surrey', and will lobby the University – through the course rep system, which will also be resourced by this zone, to create the changes students want to see at Surrey. This zone will also be responsive to national student political issues, such as tuition fees and government funding of Higher Education, and will be responsible for feeding the Union's executive with student views and opinions of these matters, so that policy can be driven from grassroots level. The Vice President within this zone will have overall responsibility for ensuring that all students are able to engage with Union democratic processes, from running in elections to taking part in AGMs for a club or society.

## Responsible to

Executive Committee

## Responsible for

Course Rep Assembly

## Terms of Reference

1. Voting
2. Surveys & Feedback (internal)
3. Special Interest Campaigns
4. Course Reps
5. Course Rep Elections
6. Surrey Decides
7. AGMs & EGMs
8. Referendums



9. NUS
10. Feedback to external bodies (e.g. local council etc.)

### **Committee Membership**

- VP Voice (Chair)
- 5 X Voice Zone Members

### **In attendance**

- Student Voice Manager
- Zone Administrator

### **Committee Duties**

1. Debate student submitted motions

### **Frequency of meetings**

Monthly (Term Time)

# Activity Zone

## Overview

This is the zone for students doing things, taking part in activities, playing sport, society activity and more. This zone encourages students to take part in extracurricular activities and engage in development activities to further themselves and their careers. If students want to do something, then this is the zone to make it happen

## Responsible to

Executive Committee

## Responsible for

1. Sports Standing
2. Societies StandingTerms of Reference
1. Sporting Activity (Union contribution)
2. Accessibility of Sport
3. Society Activity
4. Activity infrastructure

## Committee Membership

VP Activity (Chair)  
Surrey Societies Chair  
Team Surrey Chair  
3 X Activity Zone Members

## In attendance

Student Activities Manager  
Zone Administrator

## **Committee Duties**

1. Debate student submitted motions
2. Approve zone finance requests
3. Approve zone ratification of new societies

## **Frequency of meetings**

Monthly (term time)

# Support Zone

## Overview

This is all about helping students, as well as enabling students to help each other. The support zone is there to look out for students during the times when things go wrong and make sure there are resources in place to help. This zone is all about students who want to help other students, create a caring campus, and promote wellbeing.

## Responsible to

Executive Committee

## Responsible for

## Terms of Reference

1. University provided support services
2. Union provided advice
3. Wellbeing
4. Wellbeing and Support campaigns
5. Training

## Committee Membership

VP Support (Chair)

5 X Support Zone Members

## In attendance

Student Support Manager

Zone Administrator

## Committee Duties

1. Debate student submitted motions

**Frequency of meetings**

Monthly (Term time)

# Community Zone

## Overview

The student community takes many forms, and students are part of several diverse communities while they are studying at Surrey – from the community of flatmates in their first year, to the community of neighbours when they move into private rented accommodation, to the community they form when they join and new club or society. The Students' Union plays a central role in bringing communities of students together, and supporting them as they develop. The community zone is here to bring students together, to socialise and meet others.

## Responsible to

Executive Committee

## Responsible for

RAG Committee

## Terms of Reference

1. Entertainment
2. Freshers Week
3. Fundraising
4. Community Life
5. External Relations

## Committee Membership

VP Community (Chair)  
5 X Community Zone Members

## In attendance

Entertainments & Venue Manager  
Zone Administrator

## **Committee Duties**

1. Debate student submitted motions

## **Frequency of meetings**

Monthly (Term Time)

# Liberation Committee

## Overview

The Students' Union recognises that liberation groups can often feel isolated and separate from the general student body, this committee is designed as a forum for support, debate and discussion for liberation issues and how the Union represents them. The liberation committee can be seen as an enhancement to the zone committees, and each zone is encouraged to engage positively with the committee during their work. The liberation committee does not exist to replace the functions of the zone committees for any of the liberation groups listed.

## Responsible to

The zone committees (advisory)

## Responsible for

## Terms of Reference

1. Liberation issues referred from the zone committees
2. Feedback raised through the committee members

## Committee Membership

1. President (Chair)
2. Voice Zone Member
3. Activity Zone Member
4. Community Zone Member
5. Support Zone Member
6. LGBT+ Students member
7. Trans & Non-Binary member
8. Female students representative
9. Person of Colour (POC) Students members
  - a. Asian
  - b. Arabic



- c. Black
- 10. Disability, Neurodiversity, and Chronic Illness
- 11. Non-UK Students member

## **In attendance**

## **Committee Duties**

- 1. Debate motions referred from zone committees

## **Frequency of meetings**

Once per semester

# **Student Voice Forum**

## **Overview**

The academic rep assembly is the forum for elected course representatives to come together and discuss issues in their course, department and faculty. This is an informal assembly designed to spread information between the reps from different faculties rather than a formal decision-making body.

## **Responsible to**

Voice Zone

## **Responsible for**

## **Terms of Reference**

All academic and student experience matters

## **Committee Membership**

VP Voice (Chair)  
All elected course representatives  
Community Reps  
Liberation Committee Members  
Group representatives

## **In attendance**

Invited guests as required

## **Committee Duties**

## **Frequency of meetings**

Once per term

# **Sports Standing Committee**

## **Overview**

The Sports Standing Committee exists to support the VP Activity and Team Surrey Chair with sporting matters, and to raise issues relating to student sport. The full standing committee (voting members) consists of representatives of each sports club (both Team Surrey and Union Sports Clubs), each club is allowed one vote on the full standing committee.

## **Responsible to**

Activity Zone

## **Responsible for**

Team Surrey Strategy Group (Union Participation)

## **Terms of Reference**

1. Team Surrey
2. Sports club administration
3. Sports finance

## **Committee Membership**

1. VP Activity
2. Team Surrey Chair (Chair)
3. Representatives for each Sports club

## **In attendance**

1. Activities Manager

## **Committee Duties**

1. Ratify new sports clubs

## **Frequency of meetings**

Three times per semester

# **Societies Standing Committee**

## **Overview**

The societies standing is the forum for all society representatives and signatories to come together and discuss the society issues. Membership of the full standing committee is open to committee members from all constituted groups (non-Sports). Each group may have one vote on the full standing committee.

## **Responsible to**

Activity Zone

## **Responsible for**

## **Terms of Reference**

1. Society budgets
2. Oversight of Union societies and groups (non-sports)
3. Creation of new societies
4. Union policies governing societies

## **Committee Membership**

1. VP Activity
2. Surrey Societies Chair (Chair)
3. Representatives for each society

## **In attendance**

1. Activities Co-Ordinator

## **Committee Duties**

1. Ratify new society requests

**Frequency of meetings**

Three times per semester

# Nightline Committee

## Overview

Nightline is a confidential, non-advisory listening service for students run by students, derived from the service offered by the Samaritans. All listening volunteers (with the exception of committee members) must be anonymous; nobody outside of Nightline should know of their role. The Committee exists to ensure that the service operates true to the five core values, that the service is consistently run and to drive the development of Nightline.

## Responsible to

Support Zone

## Responsible for

### Terms of Reference

1. Providing a listening service at nighttime to all Surrey students
2. Recruiting and training listening and publicity volunteers
3. Raising awareness of the service through promotional materials and events
4. Ensuring all volunteers are fully supported and their welfare protected
5. Ensuring the content of all Nightline calls never leaves Nightline

### Committee Membership

1. Service Co-ordinator 1
2. Service Co-ordinator 2
3. Support Co-ordinator
4. Training Officer 1
5. Training Officer 2
6. General Secretary
7. Treasurer
8. Social Secretary 1

9. Social Secretary 2
10. Technical Support Officer
11. Rota Officer 1
12. Rota Officer 2
13. Publicity Officer 1
14. Publicity Officer 2
15. Fundraising Officer
16. Marketing Officer

### **In attendance**

1. Student Support Manager
2. Support Co-ordinator

### **Committee Duties**

1. Ensuring terms of reference are met
2. Keep the Support Zone informed of progress
3. Electing a new committee prior to the end of the academic year

### **Frequency of meetings**

Monthly (term time)

## Part 8. Complaints Procedure

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The following procedure outlines the formal method for resolving complaints.

The Union is committed to considering and investigating complaints from students. The Union emphasises the importance of seeking a resolution through discussions at the earliest opportunity. Despite the Union's efforts to resolve complaints, students are advised that there is no guarantee that the remedy they are seeking will be provided.

If a student requires this process in a different format as part of reasonable adjustments, then please get in touch via Alan Sutherland at [a.sutherland@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:a.sutherland@surrey.ac.uk)

### Introduction and Scope

For the purpose of process, a student complaint is defined as:

*“an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about the Union’s action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by, or on behalf of the Union, where a student is seeking a certain outcome or remedy”*

**This process happens in three stages:**

- Early Resolution Stage
- Formal Complaint Stage
- Panel Review Stage

**Complaints can be made about the following:**

- The quality of facilities, resources or services provided directly by the Union



- Misleading or incorrect information in promotional material
- Complaints involving other organisations or contractors providing a service on behalf of the Union
- The behaviour or conduct of Union staff

**This complaints procedure cannot be used to complain about:**

- Provision or delivery of academic, administrative or other services delivered by the University (Please see the University Complaints Procedure about this)
- Services provided by third parties, not on behalf of the Students' Union
- The political or policy performance of an elected officer, committee member or other office holders
- Complaints regarding the elections (see election rules)

If the complaint is regarding Union Disciplinary action, then please be aware that your complaint may be suspended pending the completion of the disciplinary.

Students will not be subjected to discriminatory treatment or victimisation as a result of making a complaint and all complaints will be handled the same, regardless of who is complaining.

Former students should commence the process from the Formal Stage.

Where a group of students wishes to make a common complaint, they may do so by making a single formal complaint that each sign.

Members have the right to complain directly to the University of Surrey if they do not wish to use this complaints procedure.

Anonymous complaints will not normally be accepted; complaints that are not made openly cannot be investigated in keeping with the principles of natural justice.

Third-party complaints are not accepted unless the third party is acting as the complainant student's representative and the student has authorised such representation in writing.

A complaint will not be considered where the substance of the complaint can be shown to relate to a matter that has already been the subject of a complaint by the student that is either in progress or has already been concluded.

The Union will not normally review a formal complaint about something which has already been, or is currently, the subject of legal proceedings in a court or tribunal unless those proceedings have been put on hold.

## **Time Scales**

The Union's Procedure for complaints is designed to tackle the source of a complaint quickly so that it does not detract from a student's studies or experience. Hence, this Procedure emphasises the importance of early approaches to achieving immediate resolutions to difficulties. It makes specific provisions for such approaches at the beginning of the process.

A student wishing to make a complaint should do so at the time, or as soon as possible after, they experience poor service or support. The Union would normally expect a student to make a complaint within three months of the incident, event or main issue occurring. This is because it is usually very difficult to pursue and resolve a complaint after a significant period of time has passed. However, the Union understands that at times this may not be possible.

Therefore, if a complaint is submitted more than three months after the timeframe, the student must provide good reasoning as to why with supporting evidence.

The Union endeavours to complete the processing of a formal complaint and any associated review (Stage 2 and Stage 3) within 90 calendar days. This timeframe requires students to meet any Union deadlines for the submission of material.

If for good reason, such as the availability of essential witnesses, the Union needs to extend the timeframe, the student will be notified and kept regularly informed of the progress of the complaint.

### **Burden of Proof**

When making a complaint or a request to review a complaint outcome it is for the student to show how the circumstances of which they have complained have affected them.

### **Standard of Proof**

The standard of proof applied is that of the balance of probability; that it is more likely than not something was or was not the case.

### **Early Resolution**

To resolve concerns as quickly as possible, students are expected to try and resolve complaints locally with the relevant Zone or Department, in the first instance. A student making a complaint will find it helpful to keep a note of the attempts they have made to have the matter addressed, when they made approaches, and to whom they spoke.

**The first point of contact may include one of the following people:**

- Matters concerning staff behaviour: [c.royle@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:c.royle@surrey.ac.uk)
- Matters concerning support services: [z.wilkes@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:z.wilkes@surrey.ac.uk)
- Matters concerning sports and society activity: TBC
- Matters concerning volunteering: [l.handy@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:l.handy@surrey.ac.uk)
- Matters concerning Rubix and events: [jade.johnson@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:jade.johnson@surrey.ac.uk)
- Matters concerning course reps: [katherine.phillips@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:katherine.phillips@surrey.ac.uk)
- Matters concerning social media or promotional material: [l.lynch@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:l.lynch@surrey.ac.uk)

If students are unsure of who to contact regarding their complaint, please email Alan Sutherland at [a.sutherland@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:a.sutherland@surrey.ac.uk) for advice.

Early Resolution Student Complaint responses will be sent to the student via email within 10 calendar days of acknowledgement of the complaint.

**Responses may include the following:**

- Providing information, advice and explanations
- Suggesting solutions
- Apologies and resolution
- Referral for mediation and/or conciliation
- Referral to other appropriate support services
- Referral to the Formal Student Complaints procedure

If it is not possible to resolve the complaint locally at Early Resolution or if the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of their early resolution complaint and believes that the matter has not been properly addressed, then students can submit a formal complaint. **In this case, a formal complaint must be submitted within 3 calendar months of the early resolution response email.**

The Union also recognizes that there can be exceptional circumstances where it may not be appropriate to raise the matters locally (for example if the

complaint involves complex, multiple issues or where the complaint relates to the conduct of staff or other students). In such cases, students should submit a formal complaint, within 3 calendar months of the date of the event or when the issue of the complaint occurred.

### **Formal Complaint Stage**

Where the complaint has not been resolved or satisfactorily dealt with locally, or where it is not appropriate to be considered locally, then a student can submit a formal complaint. Students will be expected to provide details of their efforts to resolve the matter locally at early resolution and attach any relevant correspondence or provide reasons why it was not appropriate for their complaint to be considered locally.

All formal complaints should be made to the Union Complaints Office using the online Student Complaint Form, which will be sent to a student at the end of the early resolution or is available on the website. Former students should state why the complaint was not raised during the time they were a student.

**Formal complaints should be made within three calendar months of the date of the early resolution outcome or when the event or the issue of the complaint occurred.**

If a complaint is submitted outside the advertised deadlines, then the complaint will be deemed out of time and the Union reserves the right not to progress the complaint any further.

Students should complete all sections of the complaint form, clearly and concisely, describing their concerns and summarising the key events with relevant dates.

Incidents and events that occurred outside of the three-month deadline will be deemed out of time and will not be investigated.

Failure to complete all sections of the form clearly and concisely may lead to a delay in responding to the complaint, or the complaint not being progressed.

Students need to provide appropriate and relevant evidence to support any allegations they make (evidence may include signed witness statements, letters, emails and any other relevant information). The Union cannot always guarantee the return of original documents so we do ask that only copies be sent to us. Students should retain copies of the complaints form and any documentary evidence they submit.

The student is asked to state the remedy they are seeking through making their complaint.

### **A remedy might take the form of:**

- An apology
- Official acknowledgement that poor service was provided and a statement of how the Union will make recompense (for example, by refunding charges for a service or facility that did not work as it should have done)
- Agreement to review or amend how the Union provides a service or conducts a procedure

Complaints will be acknowledged within three working days of receipt.

### **This acknowledgement will include:**

- The name of the complaint handler
- Contact details of the complaint handler
- The next steps of the process

All efforts will be made to ensure that the Complaint Handler has had no previous involvement in the matter. Where this is not possible, the Union will consult with the student in selecting a Complaint Handler.

A student may request an alternative Complaint Handler.

A student making a formal complaint should retain a copy of their completed complaint form, any evidence submitted with it, and their covering letter for future reference.

Where the Complaint Handler has requested the student to provide additional information and the student has failed to provide the necessary information within 10 working days of receiving the request, the student will be sent a further reminder and warned that their complaint will be closed if a response is not received within a further calendar month.

Where a complaint concerns the behaviour of members of staff, the Complaint Handler will seek advice from the Union's Human Resources Department on how to handle that aspect of the complaint. This may result in the complaint being referred to the Human Resources Department for consideration under the relevant HR policies and procedures

Where a complaint includes allegations that a student's personal data has been misused by the Union in whatever manner, the Complaint Handler will seek advice from the Union's Data Protection Officer (DPO). This may result in that aspect of the complaint being considered and concluded by the DPO

Within five working days of being allocated a complaint, the Complaint Handler invites the student to a meeting. The student may be accompanied by a friend or representative.

**The purpose of this meeting is to:**

- Set out how the Union's complaint procedure works

- Explore and establish the focus of the student's complaint
- Establish whether it is possible at this stage for the Union to provide a remedy for the matter that is the focus of the complaint.

The meeting may either be in person or via teams. The student has the option to decline the meeting, in writing, although the student should be aware that this might make it more difficult for the Complaint Handler to explore the complaint fully.

The Union's procedures are not legal procedures. Where a student insists on legal representation at a meeting the Union will similarly require that it is legally represented. In these circumstances, it may take longer to convene the meeting.

Following the meeting between the Complaint Handler, the student, and any accompanying friend, the Complaint Handler sends a note of the discussions to the student within five working days. The note summarises the student's complaint, any remedies that have been suggested, whether they were accepted or rejected or whether additional investigation is required. A copy of this note is retained by the Complaint Handler for their records and any subsequent proceedings or panel.

If it is not possible to come to a remedy at the meeting, the Complaint Handler will investigate the complaint further. After making any necessary enquiries, the Complaint Handler will come to a view as to whether or not the Union can provide a remedy for the student's complaint. The outcome of the further investigation will be communicated to the student in writing normally within 30 working days of being allocated the complaint.

If the Union can't provide a remedy for the student's complaint the Complaint Handler will explain why this is so, and offer suggestions for alternative courses of action



**Possible remedies open to the Complaint Handler are -**

- Those available at the Early Resolution stage
- Financial compensation due to a clear financial impact
- Financial compensation due to distress and inconvenience (this can only be authorized by the Chief Executive and President)

Upon receipt of the Complaint Handler's report, either following the first meeting or after further investigation, the student has 10 working days to respond and either accepts or rejects the outcome. Where the student confirms that they are content, or will not be taking the matter forward, the Complaint Handler writes to the student to confirm that the matter is closed. If a student does not accept the report the student may request a Complaint Review Panel.

Where the student does not acknowledge receipt of the Complaint Handler's report or does not otherwise respond within 10 working days, the Complaint Handler will write to the student to state that the matter is closed.

**Complaint Review Panel**

A request for a Complaint Review Panel must be submitted within 10 days of receiving the Complaint Handlers report.

Complaint Review Panels are convened by the Chief Executive, other than when the Chief Executive is the focus of the complaint. When this is the case, the Complaint Review Panel may be organised by the Deputy Chief Executive.

When requesting that a formal Complaint Review Panel is convened the student is required to show that they have evidence to demonstrate that one or more of the following grounds applies:

- That the Complaint Handler failed to follow the Unions' regulations and/or procedures or failed to follow them with due care
- That the Complaint Handler has shown bias or prejudice towards the student in the way that they have handled the complaint
- That the Complaint Handler has found that the student's complaint was justified but the remedy suggested was not reasonable
- That relevant new evidence has become available that should be considered and there are valid reasons why it was not presented earlier
- That the decision of the Complaint Handler was unreasonable and/or the outcome was not proportionate in all the circumstances

The membership of a Complaint Review Panel comprises three members of staff from the pool of trained panel members as follows:

- Board of Trustees member
- A member of Union Staff
- An elected officer

Another member of Union staff is in attendance as Secretary to the Panel.

When convening a Complaint Review Panel, the Union will write to the student, normally within 10 working days of the request, to confirm that the Complaint Review Panel will take place. The student does not attend the Panel, unless requested.

**The Union will write to the student with:**

- Information about the proposed membership of the Panel that will meet to review their complaint
- The date proposed for the meeting
- An outline of the procedure the Panel will follow
- A copy of the documentation to be considered by the Panel

The Complaint Review Panel may request to meet the Complaint Handler to assist the panel with evidence and information, but the Complaint Handler does not participate in the Panel's private discussions.

The Complaint Review Panel may request to meet the student to assist the panel with evidence and information. In which case the student may be accompanied by a friend who may be another student. Where a student insists on legal representation at the Panel meeting the Union will similarly require that it is legally represented. In these circumstances, it may take longer to convene the meeting.

Where new evidence is provided as a result of the Complaint Review Panel meeting either the Complaint Handler or the student this evidence will be shared with the other party and the service area if relevant.

A Complaint Review Panel should satisfy itself that it has sufficient information from all sources to determine whether the Complaint Handler process has followed the Union's procedure with due care, whether the Complaint Handler has shown bias or prejudice, and whether the remedy proposed was reasonable. A Complaint Review Panel may decide that it needs more information before coming to a decision. In which case the Panel will adjourn until the required information has been provided.

**A Complaint Review Panel may come to one of three findings:**

1. That the complaint should be upheld, and a remedy suggested. The panel will be able to select a remedy from any of the remedies outlined at both the informal and formal stages.
2. That the complaint should be rejected but the relevant manager asked to suggest where a service or a facility might be improved.
3. That the complaint should be rejected.

Following the meeting of a Complaint Review Panel, the Secretary conveys the findings of the Panel to the student and all relevant parties in writing within five working days. Where the Panel has made recommendations that a matter is referred to the Union's Human Resources Department the letter to the student states that fact but provides no further or personal information.

If having exhausted the Union's complaints procedure, or being otherwise unhappy to use the internal complaints procedure, the complainant is still not satisfied; the student has the right to ask the University to review that complaint independently. Such complaints should be submitted in writing to the University Secretary. The Council of the University may appoint an independent person to investigate and report on the complaints. In that event, the investigating officer shall report to the Council.

The decision given by or on behalf of the Council shall be final.

The Union will cooperate in implementing promptly any remedial action recommended by Council.

### **Learning from Complaints**

A summary report of complaints will be presented to the Board of Trustees annually.

An overview of complaints will be included in the annual report.

The Chief Executive will be responsible for maintaining a record of complaints for precedent-setting.

# Part 9. Discipline

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## **Introduction and Scope**

**The Union disciplinary regulations apply to the following students:**

- Those registered on the Foundation Year and award-bearing programmes delivered by the University; this includes new students who have been through the online registration process and have yet to complete the main registration process
- Students on their Professional Training Year
- Those registered to study for the award of academic credit delivered by the University
- Those registered to study for non-credit bearing modules/courses and non-award bearing programmes delivered by the University
- Those registered as a student with another organisation operating in collaboration with the University and using University facilities, for example, Surrey International Study Centre (SISC)

For the purpose of these regulations, a student may also refer to a group of students, as well as a club or society student group. Clubs or Societies going through disciplinarys may be treated as a collective or as an individual, based on the discretion of the investigating officer.

It is expected that students, their representatives and staff will act reasonably and fairly towards each other and will treat the disciplinary process with respect. A failure to respect the disciplinary process may result in a separate disciplinary investigation with the potential for a separate finding of misconduct.

Reasonable adjustments to the processes within these Regulations, including the extending of deadlines for student responses, will be made upon the production by the student of relevant third-party evidence which demonstrates the need for those adjustments.

In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to amend the procedures set out in these Regulations, for example, where strict application of the Regulations would result in substantial unfairness to the student or the student is in some way at risk because of health or disability. Such cases will be rare and each will be treated on its own merits.

### **Managing Student Conduct**

The Chief Executive Officer and President both have joint general responsibility for ensuring the good order of the Union. The responsibility for overseeing and managing student conduct is delegated by both the Chief Executive Officer and the President to:

- An Investigating Officer in respect of initial investigations of misconduct and minor misconduct; and
- Disciplinary Panels and Disciplinary Appeal Panels in respect of major offences which includes complex cases requiring further investigation

For serious and complex cases the initial investigation can also be carried out by the Chief Executive Officer or their Nominee. In cases where there would be a conflict of interest for the named Investigating Officer to investigate an instance of misconduct, the investigation will normally be carried out by the Chief Executive or their nominee.

### **Burden of Proof**

In Union disciplinary matters it is for the Union to show that it is more likely than not that the student committed the misconduct. The burden of proof switches to the student at the appeal stage.

### **Standard of Proof**

The standard of proof applied in Union disciplinary matters is that of the balance of probability; that on the evidence put forward it is more likely than not that something was or was not the case.

### **Timeliness**

The Union's disciplinary procedures will be conducted as quickly as possible and normally within 90 days from the start of the investigation.

### **These procedures will progress as follows:**

- The initial investigation and conclusion of either progression to a panel, minor offence penalty or no action should, normally, take no more than 30 days.



- The panel hearing be conducted and completed more than 30 days after the initial investigation outcome.
- The appeal against either a minor or major offence penalty will be complete after 30 days of the outcome.

The Union's timeframes do not include time frames for if the matter is referred to the University for investigation. These timeframes are outlined in the University's Student Disciplinary Regulations.

### **Misconduct**

**The Union may take disciplinary action where the student's behaviour has affected:**

- a. Another student or Union employee
- b. Members of the public
- c. Others visiting, working, or studying at the University
- d. The reputation of the Student's Union

In addition to misconduct that happens within the Students Union or during Student Union activities, the Union may take disciplinary action in response to misconduct that takes place on the digital environment or when off Union/University premises. For the sake of clarity, this includes misconduct that occurs during club or society trips that take place within the United Kingdom and abroad.

Misconduct is likely to fall into one of the categories below. The examples listed are illustrative and are not exhaustive. Some instances of misconduct may feature in more than one category depending on the circumstances.

1. Actions that cause actual or potential distress or harm (physical or psychological and in person or through any other medium) to other people irrespective of whether or not distress or harm was intended
2. Actions that cause actual or potential damage to property of others
3. Actions that cause actual or potential reputational damage to the Union, including actions that could reasonably be anticipated to bring the Union into disrepute
4. Actions that disrupt the normal operations, and/or safe use of, the Union
5. Action which breaches the Union's Byelaws

Please note that any behaviour that could be categorised as the following will be dealt with under the University's Student Disciplinary Regulations for student disciplinaries:

- Sexual misconduct as described in the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Targeting an individual due to their possession, or perceived possession, of a protected characteristic: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation
- Possession of an offensive weapon/firearm including imitation or replica products
- Dealing of drugs on Union premises

Misconduct will be progressed as either minor or major depending on the severity of the misconduct and with due regard as to whether a minor or major penalty would be proportionate and reasonable for a proven offence.

Examples of minor and major offences can be found in Appendix A. However, the Union reserves the right to consider any allegation of misconduct as major, depending on severity, regardless of its inclusion in the detailed minor offence examples.

The Union reserves the right to escalate an investigation to the University if the potential misconduct is considered to be of appropriate severity.

### **The Disciplinary Process**

If misconduct is suspected, the Union will handle this through the following stages:

1. Initial Investigation
2. Disciplinary Panel
3. Disciplinary Appeal Panel

### **Initial Investigation**

Where the Union becomes aware of possible misconduct under these Regulations an Investigating Officer will be appointed to start an initial investigation.

This investigation will involve, where appropriate:

- Talking to the student under investigation
- Talking to any witnesses
- Talking to those who have raised the potential misconduct
- Gathering any additional evidence available

The student will always be allowed to provide information that they wish to be taken into consideration and to make representations verbally and/or in writing to the Investigating Officer about the possible misconduct identified.

The Investigating Officer will then write to the student informing them of one of the following outcomes:

- No misconduct committed
- Minor Misconduct with a penalty issued
- Possible Major offence or complex case, a recommendation for panel
- Recommendation of escalation to University's Student Disciplinary Regulations

An Investigating Officer is permitted to apply a minor offence penalty (for a list of minor offences see Appendix B), whilst major offence penalties can only be applied by a Disciplinary Panel or a Disciplinary Appeal Panel.

A recommendation of escalation to the University's Student Disciplinary Regulations can only be applied by the Chief Executive Officer.

If the Investigating Officer finds that misconduct has occurred, they should also take into account any of the following when considering which minor penalty should be applied:

1. The student demonstrated insight and/or remorse
2. The student demonstrated honesty and integrity during the disciplinary process
3. The student can provide independent medical evidence to show that, at the time of the misconduct, their health was impaired to such an extent as to impact their ability to distinguish between acceptable conduct and misconduct
4. This is a first offence, or whether there is a previous finding or findings of similar misconduct
5. The student's response to any reasonable warnings or concerns about their behaviour before the misconduct occurring
6. The misconduct was, to any extent, intended or premeditated.

If a finding of misconduct is made due wholly or in part to a student complaint, the reporting party will not normally be provided with details of the Investigating Officer's outcome. However, the reporting party may make a request to the Union for these details and such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

## **Appeal against a decision or penalty imposed by an Investigating Officer**

Students can appeal the decision by an Investigating Officer to apply one or more of the penalties listed above.

When making an appeal against the imposition of a penalty by an Investigating Officer, the student is required to show that they have evidence to demonstrate that one or more of the following grounds apply:

- That the Investigating Officer failed to follow the Union's regulations and/or procedures or failed to follow them with due care
- That the Investigating Officer has shown bias or prejudice towards the student in the way that they handled the matter that led to the imposition of the penalty
- That relevant new evidence has become available that should be considered and there are valid reasons why it was not available to the Investigating Officer at the time they imposed the penalty
- That the decision was unreasonable and/or the penalty imposed by the Investigating Officer was not proportionate in all of the circumstances.

Appeals against a decision and/or a penalty imposed by an Investigating Officer must be made within 10 working days using the relevant form, which can be found on the Union website. Appeals against a penalty imposed by an Investigating Officer that is received by Union are dealt with by the Chief Executive Officer.

If an appeal is received after the 10-working day deadline the student will be asked to provide any good reasons as to why the appeal is late with evidence. The evidence will be considered by the Chief Executive Officer who will determine whether the good reasons are valid. If the Chief Executive Officer cannot decide, the president will be consulted, and a decision will be made. A decision on the validity of the good reasons will normally be made within five working days of receiving the information. If the good reasons are not deemed valid the appeal will not be considered and the penalty will remain in place. If there are valid good reasons the appeal will be accepted, and a panel will be convened or the misconduct dismissed.

### **Disciplinary Panel**

Where an Investigating Officer, having reviewed the information and evidence available to them, considers that the matter requires detailed investigation, or that the misconduct that has been identified might reasonably warrant a major offence penalty, they will recommend that a panel is convened.

Repeated offences, including repetition of a similar minor offence or an accumulation of different minor offences, may be dealt with by the Union as a single matter that merits if proven, imposition of a major offence penalty and these instances will be referred to a panel.

All panels are convened by the Chief Executive Officer or their nominee. The Chief Executive will then review the information and

determine if enough information was gathered during the initial investigation. The Chief Executive can request that the Investigating Officer gather further information as part of the process. During this stage, the student will be allowed to provide any further information or evidence they wish to be considered.

If in the course of their investigation it becomes apparent to an Investigating Officer or the Chief Executive that alleged misconduct may also constitute a criminal offence, they will consult with the University to determine whether the matter has been or needs to be referred to the police and whether to continue with their investigations.

Where the Union can be confident that continuing its internal disciplinary procedures will not hinder or prejudice simultaneous police or criminal proceedings it will allow its disciplinary action to take its course.

### **Membership of Disciplinary Panel**

The membership of a Disciplinary Panel comprises three members from the pool of trained panel members as follows:

- A senior member of Union Staff (Chair)
- A member of Union Staff
- An elected officer

An additional member of staff will be in attendance as Secretary to the Panel

Members of a Disciplinary Panel should have no current professional or personal connection with the student(s).



## **Findings and outcomes of Disciplinary Panel**

**A Disciplinary Panel may come to one of two findings:**

- That no misconduct has been committed
- That misconduct has been committed

Where misconduct has been committed the Panel will then consider what penalty to apply by reviewing whether:

1. The student demonstrated insight and/or remorse
2. The student demonstrated honesty and integrity during the disciplinary process
3. The student can provide independent medical evidence to show that, at the time of the misconduct, their health was impaired to such an extent as to impact their ability to distinguish between acceptable conduct and misconduct
4. This is a first offence, or whether there is a previous finding or findings of similar misconduct
5. The student's response to any reasonable warnings or concerns about their behaviour before the misconduct occurring
6. The misconduct was, to any extent, intended or premeditated

Where a Disciplinary Panel has determined that the misconduct by a student merits a minor offence penalty, the Panel may impose one or more of the penalties listed in Appendix B.

Where a Disciplinary Panel has determined that the misconduct by a student merits a major offence penalty, the Panel may impose one or more of penalties listed under Major or Minor in Appendix B.

The penalty imposed by a Disciplinary Panel takes immediate effect.

Following a hearing by a Disciplinary Panel, the Secretary conveys the findings of the Panel to the student and all relevant parties in writing. The student is informed of their right to appeal against the findings of the Panel within the specified time limit of 10 working days.

A Panel decision remains in force until the outcome of any appeal is known.

Students appealing against the findings and/or penalty made by a Disciplinary Panel do so by completing the relevant form which can be found on the Union website. Appeals must be received by the Chief Executive Officer within 10 working days of the Panel conveying its findings to the student in writing. If the appeal is received on time it will be assigned to the Chief Executive or a nominee.

If an appeal is received after the 10 working day deadline the student should provide any good reasons as to why the appeal is late with evidence. The evidence will be considered by the Chief Executive Officer who will determine whether the good reasons are valid.

If the Chief Executive Officer cannot decide, the President will be consulted and a decision will be made. A decision on the validity of the good reasons will normally be made within five working days of receiving the information.

If the good reasons are not deemed valid the appeal will not be considered and the penalty will remain in place.

**When making an appeal the student is required to show that they have evidence to demonstrate that one or more of the following grounds apply:**

- That the Panel failed to follow the Union's regulations and/or procedures or failed to follow them with due care
- That the Panel has shown bias or prejudice towards the student in reaching its findings or imposing the penalty
- That relevant new evidence has become available that should be considered and there are valid reasons why it was not available to the Panel at the time
- That the decision of the Panel was unreasonable and/or the penalty was not proportionate in all of the circumstances.

**When the Chief Executive Officer receives an appeal against the findings and/or penalty imposed by a Disciplinary Panel they will check whether:**

- The student has identified the grounds on which the appeal has been made
- The grounds are supported by relevant evidence.

Where the Chief Executive Officer considered the appeal does not meet any of the requirements set out above the appeal will be dismissed and the student will be written to explain the grounds for the dismissal and that this communication closes the matter. If an appeal has met the requirements a Disciplinary Appeal Panel will be convened.

### **Disciplinary Appeal Panels**

**Disciplinary Appeal Panels are convened by the Chief Executive Officer.**

The membership of a Disciplinary Appeal Panel comprises three members from the pool of trained panel members as follows:

- A trustee of the Students' Union (Chair)
- A staff member of the Union
- An elected officer

An additional member of staff will be in attendance as Secretary to the Panel.

Members of a Disciplinary Panel should have no current professional or personal connection with the student(s).

**A Disciplinary Appeal Panel may come to one of six findings:**

1. That the findings of the Disciplinary Panel should be confirmed and the appeal dismissed;

2. That there has been a failure to follow the Unions' regulations and/or procedures or to follow them with due care such as to deny the student a fair hearing;
3. That there was bias or prejudice towards the student in the way the Disciplinary Panel reached its findings or in other aspects of the disciplinary procedure
4. That relevant new evidence that was not available to the Disciplinary Panel at the time for valid reasons should be taken into account;
5. That the decision of the Disciplinary Panel was unreasonable and/or that the penalty was not proportionate with the evidence presented in all of the circumstances.

**Where the finding is as in (2), (3), (4) and/or (5) above the Disciplinary Appeal Panel may:**

- Substitute the findings of the Disciplinary Panel with its findings
- Or, where the unfairness to the student is extreme, nullify the findings of the Disciplinary Panel, end the disciplinary procedure.

The Disciplinary Appeal Panel will also consider whether there has been any adverse impact upon the student and whether the Union should provide a remedy.

Following a hearing by a Disciplinary Appeal Panel, the Secretary conveys the findings of the Panel to the student and all relevant

parties in writing. The Secretary's letter also states that it constitutes the completion of the Union's procedures.

It may be appropriate for the Union to reconsider an allegation if new evidence emerges which, for good reason, could not have been obtained at the time.

**In deciding whether it is appropriate to consider an allegation for a second time, the Union will consider:**

- Whether the outcome of the first process has been called into question, and if so, why
- The strength and reliability of the evidence
- The length of time that has elapsed and the effect of this on the reliability of any evidence to be considered
- The severity of the alleged offence
- The impact on the student of undergoing a second misconduct process;
- Whether leaving the matter unaddressed could potentially impact on matters of fitness to practise, or on any obligations, the University has to professional or regulatory bodies in respect of the particular student's character. In these instances, the Union will refer the matter to the University.

Reconsideration of an allegation will only take place in exceptional circumstances and following approval from the Union President.

## Appendix A

<b>Minor Offences</b>	<b>Major Offences</b> <i>(Recommended to Union Panel)</i>	<b>Severe Offences</b> <i>(likely to be recommended to University)</i>
Vandalism such as removal of signs or graffiti	Significant damage to the venue	A severe instance could be referred
Theft of minor items	Substantial theft or from a person's possession	Mugging/violent theft
Verbal abuse to staff or students	Physical assault	Sexual assault/Harassment
		Targeting an individual due to their possession, or perceived possession, of a protected characteristic
	Indecent exposure	A severe instance could be referred
Possession of drugs	Usage of drugs	Dealing drugs

Breaking in/aiding & abetting others to gain entry	Entering the building whilst membership restricted	A severe instance could be referred
		Possession of an offensive weapon
Drunk to the point of removal	Failure to comply with door staff	A severe instance could be referred
	Abuse of Fire and Safety Rules	A Severe instance could be referred
Advertising tickets for sale against instruction	Ticket touting	A severe instance could be referred
Aiding someone to enter a venue or in-person event against Covid guidelines	Entering a venue or an in-person event against Covid guidelines	A severe instance could be referred
	Smoking/vaping in the venue	A severe instance could be referred
Passing of campus card/ID	A significant instance could be referred	A severe instance could be referred



<p>Actions which could have reasonably brought the Union into disrepute</p>	<p>Actions that brought the Union into disrepute</p>	<p>Actions which brought Union and University into disrepute</p>
<p>Irresponsible behaviour on any external trip</p>	<p>Unacceptable behaviour on an external trip</p>	<p>A severe instance could be referred</p>
<p>Interference of a Union Event</p>	<p>A significant instance could be referred</p>	<p>A severe instance could be referred</p>
<p>Disruption with the election process</p>	<p>Tampering with the election process</p>	<p>A severe instance could be referred</p>
<p></p>	<p>Failure to respect the rights of others to freedom of belief and freedom of speech</p>	<p>A severe instance could be referred</p>
<p>Misuse of a position of responsibility</p>	<p>Serious misuse of position of responsibility</p>	<p>A severe instance could be referred</p>

	Fraud or deceit during any internal Union process	A severe instance could be referred
	Dangerous Driving whilst in Union vehicle	A severe instance could be referred
Breaches of Club or Society Code of Conduct	A significant instance could be referred	A severe instance could be referred

## **Appendix B**

### **Minor Penalties:**

- Written warning
- A requirement to offer an apology
- seizure and retention of items for a specified period to maintain the safety and wellbeing of others
- Temporary restriction (up to 6 calendar months):
  - on entrance to trading services
  - on entrance to the University licensed premises
  - of access to Union events
  - of access to University and/or Union sporting facilities
  - on voting
- Temporary exclusion from Team Surrey Club(s)
- Temporary exclusion from training
- Temporary exclusion from participating in Society activities
- Financial penalty only to recover the cost of any vandalism or damage relating to the incident in question
- A fine of up to £200 against the clubs' own funds

### **Major Penalties:**

- Longer temporary (more than 6 calendar months) or Permanent restriction:
  - on entrance to trading services

- on entrance to the University licensed premises
- of access to Union events
- of access to University and/or Union sporting facilities
- on voting
- Permanent exclusion from Team Surrey Club(s)
- Permanent exclusion from training
- Permanent exclusion from participating in Society activities
- Removal from a position of responsibility (Sports club or society committee role)
- Prevention from holding office
- Censure of a member
- Recommendation to the board of trustees that removal from office referendum is held
- Recommendation of the removal of student union membership. *This must be presented to the Board of Trustees who alone have the power to remove full membership*

# Standing Policies

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These are the policies which guide the day to day operations of the Students' Union and are unlike standard policies, they do not expire after three years. No policy may be passed which contradicts, annuls or amends these policies.

## **1 Equality & Diversity Policy Statement**

### Statement of Intent

The University of Surrey Students' Union is committed to creating and sustaining a culture that supports equality and diversity, where members and staff are equally valued and respected. As a member organisation and a provider of employment, we value the diversity of our members and staff. We are committed to providing a fair, equitable and mutually supportive environment for our members and staff. The University of Surrey Students' Union is fully committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective. It's Equality and Diversity Policy is, and will continue to be, reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is compliant with legislation.

This policy applies to all members of the University of Surrey Students' Union community, both members and staff, whether full time, part time, permanent, temporary or casual, on fixed term contracts or part time, to job applicants, to students, current and former members and to visitors to the Students' Union.

### Policy Objective

The University of Surrey Students' Union believes excellence can be achieved through the recognition of the value of every individual. To that end we aim to create an environment that respects the diversity of our members and staff and that will enable them to achieve their full potential,

to contribute fully and to derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the University of Surrey Students' Union.

As a result, we acknowledge the following basic rights for all members, prospective members and staff of our community:

- to be treated with respect and dignity
- to be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices
- To receive encouragement to reach their full potential

Individuals should be treated on their merits as members or staff of the University of Surrey Students' Union. Treatment includes selection, training, education, assessment appraisal and promotion.

These rights carry with them responsibilities and the University of Surrey Students' Union requires all members of the organisation to recognise these rights and to act in accordance with them in their dealings with other members of the Students' Union. The University of Surrey Students' Union will comply with all relevant legislation and good practice.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status or pregnancy and maternity).
- Meet the legal duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation
- Ensure Equality and Diversity issues are fully integrated into the mainstream of the University of Surrey Students' Union policy and working practices

- Provide a framework to identify and amend any University of Surrey Students' Union policies or practices that might discriminate against those who share a protected characteristic:
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Gender Reassignment
  - Marriage and Civil Partnership
  - Pregnancy and Maternity
  - Race
  - Religion and Belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual Orientation
- Ensure equal opportunity for members of the University of Surrey Students' Union to full range of Students' Union services which meet their needs
- Make more effective use of talent in the workplace
- Work with staff and members to raise awareness of how our policies and practices can impact on others
- Communicate and raise awareness of the role of staff and members in minimising and challenging inappropriate behaviour or practices
- Create a positive and welcoming environment for visitors to the University of Surrey Students' Union.

## Responsibility

Ultimate responsibility for the effective implementation and development of this policy lies with the Board of Trustees, who will be responsible for overseeing the development and application of the policy. The University of Surrey Students' Union expects all its staff and members to take personal responsibility for familiarising themselves with this policy and to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times to respect equality of opportunity for all staff, members, applicants and visitors. The University of

Surrey Students' Union regards any breach of this policy by any employee(s) or member(s) as a serious matter to be dealt with through its agreed disciplinary procedures, which may result in disciplinary action. All new employees will be required to undertake Equality and Diversity training as part of their probationary period.

## **2 Environmental Policy**

The Students' Union recognises climate change is real and that the misuse of natural resources as well as output of carbon dioxide is a primary cause

The Union will operate in an energy efficient manner at all times and actively seek ways to reduce energy consumption

The Students' Union shall seek to improve its environmental performance year on year as technology allows

All relevant legislation and directives shall be complied with both in letter and spirit

We shall engage at all levels with the University of Surrey regarding environmental matters

All sabbatical officer shall consider ethical and environmental issues in their respective representation roles

Traded Services shall be responsible for the supervision of equipment control (e.g. vacation closedown)

Union buildings shall only use heating and/or cooling provided by the building infrastructure. Portable heating and cooling shall only be used on the instructions of the estates dept.



### **3 Code of Practice for Responsible Drinking.**

#### **General principles**

Ethical and Environmental principles are at the core of the Union's values and this is reflected in Unions' promotional activity. As a result, the Union will not undertake marketing and promotional activity which is considered to be offensive or demeaning to either gender or to any race, religion, and culture or minority group.

USSU is proud of its longstanding commitment to such principles and is committed to showing a greater degree of sensitivity to such matters than many other organisations. This can mean what is deemed appropriate in other environments is not appropriate in the Students' Union environment.

#### **Responsible drinking**

USSU recognises that Alcoholic beverages are the predominant part of the Union's commercial activity. Equally, we recognise that they represent an important part of Students' experience of University life. However, USSU also recognises that:

Alcoholic beverages may be consumed irresponsibly, creating problems for the individual and for society as a whole.

We have a responsibility to ensure that we market and promote alcohol responsibly.

#### **Marketing code**

Compliance with laws and regulations

All Commercial Services marketing activities will be in keeping with both the letter and the spirit of all applicable national laws.

#### **Commercial Services promotional policy**

USSU will ensure that drinks promotions will encourage responsible consumption by those adults who choose to drink and will not support activities which encourage excessive consumption.

All promotional activity will comply with the Portman Group policy on commercial communications and should therefore avoid:

- Association with anti-social behaviour
- Purchase or sale to under 18's
- Appealing particularly to under 18's rather than adults
- Suggestion of sexual success or prowess
- Association with illicit drugs
- Encouragement of illegal, irresponsible or immoderate consumption

### **Unacceptable promotional activity**

In addition to activity which is not in line with our General Principles, the following promotional activity are not acceptable;

Any promotional activity which implies drinks being 'downed in one' or which incentivises speed drinking

Promotions that involve drinking games

All inclusive promotions – including large quantities of, or all drinks, in the admission fee

Any promotion that involves an initial payment to obtain reduced price alcohol for a sustained period

Promotional activity which includes cars in any way, including cars as prizes

Links with any tobacco related products in promotions e.g. match boxes, cigarette lighters, ashtrays etc.

Promotions which refer to the effects of intoxication in any favourable way, e.g. referring to consuming alcohol to recover from previous over-indulgence, or glamorising excessive or irresponsible drinking

Use of image/symbols/characters or persons in promotional material that appeal to those under the legal purchase age

Direct or indirect references to drug culture or illegal drugs

Association with violence or anti-social behaviour

Activity which presents abstinence in a negative light

Sampling activity involving staff under the age of 18

Sampling activity which offers more than 1.5 units of alcohol per person

## **4 Staff/Student Protocol**

### PREAMBLE

1.1 The University of Surrey Students' Union is established as a collective self-governing organization of its members.

1.2 Central to the resources of the Students' Union are the employed staff that provide continuity, professional advice, managerial expertise, and the day-to-day operation and implementation of policy.

1.3 The purpose of protocol arrangements is to clarify the relationships between students, their elected representatives and members of the staff.

### OBJECTIVES

It is the objectives of this protocol to ensure that:

2.1 The Students' Union complies with all current employment legislation.

Individual members of staff are protected from breaches of confidentiality in respect of personal matters and to ensure that only the Students' Union Management Committee deals with contractual matters.

The Students' Union is protected from any interference by the employees in the conduct of governance of the Students' Union.

The Students' Union is committed to the effective implementation and maintenance of anti-discrimination and equal opportunities policies in respect of all its personnel practices.

The Students' Union strives to develop and maintain sound employment practices and good staff relations.

### 3. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Human Resources Committee shall be solely responsible for all matters relating to the recruitment, selection, appointment and terms and conditions of staff.

The Human Resources Committee shall consider such matters in the strictest confidence.

#### 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNION STAFF

The employed staff of the Students' Union shall not participate in the democratic processes of the Students' Union, except for the purposes of administration and logistical support, or advise in their area of work with the permission of the chair.

Staff shall not exercise a vote in any meeting organized under the auspices of the Constitution of the Students' Union, except for the Health and Safety committee.

Staff members shall advise elected officers of the Students' Union on any matter that is within their area of work, but shall not seek in any other way to influence policy decisions.

Staff shall not take part in any public discussion of Students' Union policy, nor knowingly give public expression to views that are contrary to the policies of the Students' Union.

Staff shall not comment to representatives of the media, which shall include the student media, in relation to Students' Union policy without the prior authority of the President. This shall only apply when staff speaks in their capacity as a Students' Union employee.

Staff shall not enter into discussion with members of the Students' Union as to the performance of an officer of the Students' Union. Any issues concerning the performance of an officer should be raised directly with the Union President, CEO or Human Resources & Staff Development Manager

With regard to part time members of staff, who are also students of the University, then the onus of responsibility placed on staff by this agreement shall override the privileges of Union membership.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENTS' UNION

5.1 The elected officers of the Students' Union shall share a collective and individual responsibility to ensure the discussions on matters relating to the performance or conduct of members of staff shall only take place at meetings of the Senior Management.

The responsibility shall include ensuring that such matters are not addressed in any articles, correspondence or other similar publications produced under the auspices of the Students' Union, except where an overriding public interest can be demonstrated (detecting or exposing crime or a serious misdemeanour).

## STUDENT STAFF

Students may be employed as staff of the Students' Union to carry out specific duties within the Union's employment structure. The Human Resources Committee shall determine the procedures for the recruitment and selection of such staff.

Students so employed may only raise complaints about their employment through the line management structure.

6.3 Students employed as staff on a temporary basis shall enjoy the full rights and benefits of membership of the Students' Union, provided they are a member of the Students' Union.

Student staff shall not raise any matters in relation to their individual employment with the Students' Union at any meeting held under the auspices of the Students' Union Constitution or in any public forum or meeting.

## PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS ABOUT STAFF

7.1 Any full member of the Students' Union who has cause for complaint on a matter relating to any individual or group of staff employed by the Students' Union shall raise the matter with the President.

7.2 The President shall raise such matters with the HR Manager and CEO of the Students' Union. The complaint shall be investigated and the President shall advise the student raising the complaint of the result of the investigation.

7.3 If, as a result of the investigation of a complaint, action is required with regard to the conduct of a member of staff then the matter shall be referred through the Staff Disciplinary Procedure.

## PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS BY STAFF

8.1 Any member of staff having cause to complain about the conduct or behaviour of a student shall raise the matter in confidence with the HR Manager and the CEO of the Students' Union.

8.2 The HR Manager and the CEO of the Students' Union shall raise the matter with the President. The complaint shall be investigated and the HR Manager and CEO of the Students' Union shall report back to the staff member.

8.3 If, as a result of the investigation of a complaint, action is required with regard to the conduct of a particular student then the matter shall be referred through the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

## FRIVOLOUS OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

A frivolous or vexatious complaint is excluded from this policy.

A frivolous complaint is generally defined as one that is baseless and completely without merit.

A vexatious complaint is generally defined as one that has no reasonable grounds and is made in bad faith.

This exclusion does not apply to a complaint that has been made in an application to a court or tribunal, as those bodies have their own bases for excluding or striking out improper actions.

#### DISCIPLINE AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

This protocol agreement does not affect any employee's rights to process under the Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures of the Students' Union.



**5. No Platform Policy.**

1. This Union condemns racism and fascism in every form;
2. This Union refuses a platform at all Union-run events to groups and their members that are known to incite racial hatred;
3. This Union refuses the attendance of a Union speaker at any events where a group or member known to incite racism hatred is expected to speak

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