

Newman Students' Union
Bye Law E: SOCIETIES

Overview

This Bye Law outlines the rules and regulations of all societies affiliated to the Students' Union. The provision of societies is to provide development opportunities for their members through the activities they do.

Structure of Societies at Newman Students' Union

- 1) All affiliated societies shall be considered fully a part of Newman Students' Union and are subject to the Union's governing documents, as well as to rulings of the Officer Trustees, Student Council, Referenda, and the Board of Trustees.
- 2) All societies will have a constitution based on a standard constitution provided by the Union and which must not be amended in a way that is not in line with the values or rules of the Union or its governing documents.
- 3) Societies do not have a formal representative function with the Union but are a means for students to enjoy common interests.
- 4) Membership of Union-affiliated societies shall be as set out in Bye Law A. Associate and Honorary members of the Union will not make up more than 15% of members of any one society.
- 5) The Union reserves the right to deny membership of societies to any Member of the Union. That member may have a right of appeal, in accordance with the Union's Code of Conduct which is available on the Union's website.
- 6) Societies will be allocated into the following categories, whether they are deemed to be a Developing Society or Affiliated Society:
 - a) Academic Societies
 - b) General Interest Societies
 - c) Faith and Cultural Societies
 - d) Charity and Volunteering Societies
- 7) There will be an annual membership process to join an individual affiliated society. Where there is a fee for membership, the fee will be set annually by the society committee.
- 8) Where a fee for membership is charged, Societies must make clear to prospective members what is included within the price of the group's membership fee and, as far as practical, outline any additional costs that might be incurred.

Creation and Affiliation of Societies

Developing Societies

- 9) Students who wish to form a society will register their interest with the Newman Students' Union Vice-President either in person in the Students' Union office or via email.
- 10) Societies which are being launched by students (and therefore do not have an elected committee) will be identified as a Developing Society. They will consist of at least one founding member who will act as the Society Chair, and at least one other member.
- 11) The students will be invited to attend an appointment with Newman Students' Union Vice-President, where they will collaboratively build a society constitution which will cover the following non-exhaustive list of topics:

- a) the name of their society;
 - b) the aims and objectives of the society;
 - c) the founding member(s) of the society who shall form the committee;
- 12) Upon a constitution being agreed, it will be presented to the Community & Wellbeing Committee for confirmation of the establishment of a Developing Society, during which the proposed Developing Society Committee will be invited to attend and present.
- 13) Societies that are not approved by the Community & Wellbeing Committee can appeal in writing to Student Council.
- 14) Where it is agreed the Developing Society will form, the Developing Society will agree a constitution, to include any amendments suggested by the Community & Wellbeing Committee, with the Students' Union including:
- a) An agreement to abide by the regulations outline within this Bye Law; and
 - b) An agreement to abide by Newman Students' Union, Societies Code of Conduct, which can be accessed on the Union Website.
- 15) Compulsory training shall be scheduled with the Society Committee Members, and upon completion they will be operational.
- 16) Developing Societies approved by the Community & Wellbeing Committee will be considered as pending affiliation and will have the same rights and responsibilities as fully affiliated societies during their set up period.
- 17) Developing societies will recruit at least five members, and elect a committee towards the end of the academic year to become a ratified society, and be subject to the general regulations without special caveats and no longer have access to any societies start-up funding.

General Regulations for Affiliated Societies

- 18) Affiliated societies, and those pending affiliation are entitled, through their committee to:
- a) Make an application to Union Society Development Funds;
 - b) Staff expertise and support;
 - c) Use of Union and University Facilities; and
 - d) Reasonable use of resources.
- 19) All societies affiliated to the Union shall have a committee that will be made up of a minimum of a:
- a) Chair; and
 - b) Treasurer (who shall act as Deputy Chair)
- 20) The Union recognises that societies may require additional committee members. Additional positions will be agreed on an annual basis with the Vice-President or their nominee. All additional roles must be agreed with the Union and the Union reserves the right to limit the number of roles a committee has.
- 21) All society committees are responsible for:
- a) The running of the society, ensuring it works towards its aims and objectives.
 - b) Working with relevant Union staff members and the Vice-President to ensure the society remains financially solvent.
 - c) Promoting the society to attract new membership.
 - d) The smooth running of any social events and activities.

- e) Ensuring that the society considers inclusion, equality and diversity in all activities it undertakes.
 - f) The organisation of the society general meetings and committee meetings.
 - g) Writing and circulating minutes of these meetings.
 - h) Updating the relevant Union officers and staff on the society's activities to the Union, as and when required.
 - i) Seeking help and support from Union staff or the Vice-President if they have concerns about their club or society or any of its members.
 - j) Attend progress meetings with the Vice-President at least once a year or as requested, to ensure you have support and sustainable plans.
 - k) Ensuring compliance with data protection legislation.
- 22) Society committees shall be democratically elected into their positions.
- 23) Elections will be conducted under the supervision of the Union.
- 24) Quorum for society committee elections will be 20% of the membership (excluding Associate or Honorary members of the Union).
- 25) Societies are encouraged to hold hustings at a general meeting (a meeting where all members are invited) during the elections period.
- 26) Election to the Committee shall be conducted by single transferable vote in line with the rules laid out in Bye Law 3 Points 37-41 and 45-47. A member of the Union's staff team will act as Returning Officer for society elections.
- 27) The Society Committee shall receive a handover from the outgoing committee.
- 28) The Society Committee shall attend mandatory committee training sessions provided by Union staff to ensure each committee member is aware of their role and responsibilities. Committee members will not be able to continue in their role until the Union is satisfied they have received adequate training.
- a) Society Chairs and Treasurers will be required to complete mandatory data protection training and will be unable to access member names and contact details until they have done so.
- 29) If a Society Committee members fail to complete the mandatory committee training prior to the end of their first semester on the Committee, the committee members will have deemed to have resigned from their role. The Union reserves the right to remove committee members if their engagement with training or the wider role is deemed to be poor or in some way detrimental to the running of the society.
- 30) In the event of a vacancy in the Society Committee, a by-election should be arranged within two weeks to re-elect vacant positions.
- 31) The individual(s) who are deemed to have resigned from their positions through failure to attend training or low engagement with the role cannot stand in the next election.
- 32) The individual(s) may appeal this decision in writing to the Vice-President outlining any mitigating circumstances which impacted upon their ability to attend training. The evidence will be reviewed by the Vice-President within 2 weeks of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Vice-President is final.
- 33) Society members may remove any member of the Society Committee by submitting to Community & Wellbeing Committee a secure petition signed by at least 50% + 1 of their membership following the procedure set out in the Union's Code of Conduct.

- 34) A Vote of no Confidence shall be deemed as a last resort and any member wishing to implement a vote of no confidence should exhaust all other avenues prior to starting proceedings.
- 35) The Community & Wellbeing Committee may reject any petition for a Vote of No Confidence if they feel that all other avenues, such as informal mediation, have not been used first.
- 36) In line with the Union's Code of Conduct the Union reserves the right to remove Committee members from their position through the disciplinary process. Sanctions may include a ban on being able to run for Committee positions in the future.
 - a) In addition, the Vice-President and/or the Union Director reserves the right to remove Committee members from their position at its discretion without going through the disciplinary process if a member is shown to have breached the Code of Conduct by evidence of external investigations including, but not limited to, the University, the Police and/or local authorities.

Membership

- 37) All societies, unless identified as a Developing Society, must have at least five members within six weeks of the Newman Students' Union Welcome Fair, including the committee who run the society.
- 38) Societies whose membership falls below five members for more than one month will be frozen, as per Point 69 or 70 of the Bye Law.

Finance

- 39) No society shall be run for private profit of any of its Members or the Union.
- 40) No society committee member may receive personal or private payment for their services either directly or indirectly by any source.
- 41) No society may hold its own bank account. All funds shall be held with the Union.
- 42) The Students' Union shall set up an Account, within its finance system for each Society. The Chair and Treasurer of each society will be updated on the balance of their account monthly or on request.
- 43) Developing societies will be eligible for a start-up fund, with specific instruction monies should be used to support their society's development.
- 44) Societies can be expected to raise funds through memberships, fundraising and hosting events and activities.
- 45) All affiliated societies must specify two signatories to access those funds and must be:
 - a) Chair
 - b) Treasurer
- 46) Any surpluses from society events will be paid to the Union for use by that group. This must be paid to the Union within 2 working days of receipt by the committee or their nominee.
- 47) Activities that fall outside of the aims and objectives of the society may not be financed from Union or the society's funds.
- 48) No society may commit funds to any expenditure without following the Union's financial procedures which will be made available, annually, on the Union's website and at committee training. No expenditure over £100 should be undertaken without prior consent from the relevant member of Union staff.

- 49) The Union can freeze any society's account if its committee members have not adhered to the Union's procedures or whilst an investigation is undertaken.
- 50) If a Developing Society does not meet affiliation criteria, following their set-up period, their accounts shall also be frozen.
- 51) All expenditure must be authorised by the Union's budget holder for the relevant society, typically the Vice-President.
- 52) All affiliated societies shall have the right to apply to Society Development Fund for financial assistance for use within that academic year, as long as the activity does not contravene charity legislation related to educational charities. Societies will be informed annually of the procedure for applying for grants, how the money will be distributed fairly and a mechanism for appeal, in line with the Union's obligations under the Education Act (1994).
- 53) Any continuing society that fails to reach the required membership numbers within six weeks after the Welcome Fair, or its equivalent, will not be able to spend any remaining Development Fund grant, pending required membership.
- 54) All funding remaining in the Development Fund budget at the end of the academic year shall be reinvested in the Union Society Development Fund for the following academic year.

Sponsorship and Promotion of Societies

- 55) All society communications including leaflets, tickets, posters and publications shall carry the name of the group and the Union's logo.
- 56) The Union's societies shall be entitled to seek sponsorship from external organisations to supplement their income, but in doing so, societies must take care to ensure that other external contracts held by the Union, as well as the Union's values and charitable status, are not infringed. No affiliated society may receive sponsorship from a UK registered political party.
- 57) The Union's societies must consult the Vice President or the Union Director before entering into any contract for sponsorship to ensure they adhere to the above. The Trustee Board shall have the final say on any contracts entered into by the Union or by affiliated Union societies.
- 58) The Union's societies must not directly or indirectly promote organisations that are prohibited by Union Policy.
- 59) Any affiliated society wanting to undertake fundraising activities, whether to generate income for themselves or to raise funds for a charity, must do so only with the prior consent of the Vice-President.

Property Regulations

- 60) Union affiliated societies assets (e.g. kit, equipment) and funds are the property of the Union and should be treated as such.
- 61) The assets of a society may only be used to further the aims and objectives of the society and the Union.
- 62) Societies are responsible for maintaining an up-to-date inventory of all equipment and kit which should be submitted to the Union upon request.
- 63) Failure to submit an up-to-date inventory may result in disciplinary action being taken against the society.
- 64) Societies are responsible for ensuring the safety of equipment or kit during use and storage.

- a) Storage of equipment and kit must not compromise any insurance arrangements provided by the Union.
- 65) The Community & Wellbeing Committee may require society committees to account for any inappropriate conduct concerning equipment or kit.
- 66) Any loss or damage to equipment or kit should be reported to the Union as a matter of urgency.
- 67) In the event of such damage or loss being disclaimed by insurance or where no insurance exists, the Union shall consider the case and investigate the cause. This may result in invoking the Union's disciplinary procedures, for example, if the damage or loss was due to negligence. All disciplinary matters will be dealt with in accordance with the Union's Code of Conduct.

Frozen and Disbanded Societies

- 68) A frozen society will not be able to operate events, activities or meetings and are prevented from spending any funds held in their society account.
- 69) The Union shall pursue two stages in freezing a society:
 - a) Stage One – A society is partially frozen for one academic month, with no access to funding, until they have resolved the issue.
 - b) Stage Two – If after one academic month the society has failed to resolve their issue, the society becomes fully frozen where their society account funds are also frozen for a maximum of one year.
- 70) The Community & Wellbeing Committee have the right to freeze a Society for the following reasons:
 - a) The society does not have a full committee (at least two committee members, or one if a developing society);
 - b) The society does not have a Chair or Treasurer;
 - c) The society committee fails to attend mandatory training;
 - d) There are less than five registered members of the Society; and
 - e) A Society fails to follow their constitution, the Students' Union policies and Code of Conduct.
- 71) Once a Society has been frozen, the society will be linked to our Restart a Society initiative for a maximum period of one year. During this time, Newman Students' Union can recruit another committee to take over the running of the society.