

STUDENT SOCIETIES EXECUTIVE CONSTITUTION

Mission Statement

Student societies aim to provide an outlet for students with a common interest to join together.

1. Name, Aims and Organisation

- (a) The full name of the Sub Council shall be the “NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY STUDENT SOCIETIES, EXECUTIVE OF THE STUDENTS’ UNION OF NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY” hereinafter referred to as Student Societies.
- (b) The composition, work and organisation of student societies shall be regulated by this Constitution and by the Constitution of the Students’ Union. In the event of a conflict of meaning between the two, the latter shall have precedence.
- (c) The aims of Student Societies shall be:
 - (i) To facilitate, promote, represent and control all activities of the members of Student Societies.
 - (ii) To provide a recognised means of communication with other bodies on matters connected with Student Societies.
- d) Student Societies will be overseen on a day to day basis by the Activities Officer (with the help of the Societies Executive Committee) who is directly answerable to the Trustee Board.
- e) The Societies Executive Committee shall assist the Activities Officer in allocating funding for societies, both through ordinary grants and through special grants.

2. Membership

- (a) Ordinary membership
 - (i) Membership of any student society will be open to any student of Newcastle University.
 - (ii) Membership of any student society will be open to any member of staff of Newcastle University.

3. Student Societies Executive Committee

The Student Societies Executive Committee shall assist the Activities Officer in managing the general business and policy of Student Societies.

- a) The Executive Committee shall have the following voting members:
 - Activities Officer (Chair)
 - Secretary
 - Course and Careers Rep
 - Hobbies and Interests Rep
 - Religious and Cultural Rep
 - Representative Committee Rep
 - Volunteering and Fundraising Rep
 - General Interest Rep
 - New Societies Rep (a new society is classed as a society that has been ratified within the last 12 months)
 - Any unfilled vacancy may be filled by an open member
- (b) The quorum for the Societies Executive Committee shall be 5 members.
- (c) The Societies Executive Committee shall assist the Activities Officer in allocating funding for societies, both through ordinary grants and through special grants.
- (d) Individual members of the Executive Committee will be answerable to the Executive Committee as a whole.

- e) Executive Committee shall meet at least once a month during term time. Three members of Executive Committee will be granted seats on Union Council.
- f) The Societies Executive committee reports to the Societies Forum which in turn reports to Union Council.

4. Societies Annual General Meeting

Societies AGM shall oversee the general business of Student Societies and shall determine policy. Clause 1-(f)

- (a) The members of the Societies AGM shall be:
 - i) The Activities Officer
 - ii) 2 student members of each ratified society at the Students' Union
- (b) The purpose of the Societies AGM shall be to ensure the proper running of societies at the Students' Union, and to discover and address any problems or issues which may arise.
- (c) The Societies' AGM shall elect eight representatives through the single transferable vote system to form the Societies Executive Committee. Any society officer is eligible to stand for positions on Societies Executive Committee. To ensure a broad and representative spectrum of societies, each society can only have one member to be on Societies Executive Committee. Three of these representatives shall also represent the Societies Executive at Union Council, elected by Societies Executive Committee.
- (d) The Societies AGM must report to Students' Union Council as and when policy is added or changed.
- (e) Each ratified society shall hold 2 votes

5. Ratification and Deratification of Student Societies

- (a) All student societies of the University may apply to be officially ratified by Societies Executive Committee.
- (b) No student society may use the title 'Newcastle University' if it has not been ratified by Societies Executive Committee and any student society deratified by Societies Executive Committee must immediately cease to use this title upon deratification.
- (c) Before a student society can be ratified the following criteria must be met:
 - i) The society must have 15 paid members including all officials of the society.
 - ii) The Aims and Objectives of the proposed society must be in line with NUSU Constitution, Policy Document, Code of Practice and Ethical Values.
 - iii) The University/Union must have sufficient facilities (including storage) for the society to be successful.
 - iv) There must not already be in existence a society with similar aims and objectives.
 - v) The society must be open and accessible to all students and staff of Newcastle University.
 - vi) The society must not conflict or disadvantage any other areas of the Union (Go Volunteer, Into School, etc .)
 - vii) There must be no health and safety or welfare concerns or implications over the ratification of the society
 - viii) The society must demonstrate a benefit to its members and the student body
 - ix) The society must display sustainability and be able to attract and retain members
 - x) The society must be financially viable and sustainable
 - xi) The society must not be affiliated to or an integral part of an outside body that makes claims to monies held in any society account, the exception being affiliation or membership fee

6. Ratifications will be presented to Societies Executive Committee by the Activities Officer

- (a) A ratified society must have a constitution approved by the Societies Executive Committee.
- (b) The constitution of a ratified society must contain:
 - (i) The aims and objectives of the society
 - (ii) The titles and duties of officers of the society
 - (iii) The membership of the committee(s) of the society
 - (iv) The procedure for election of officers and committee members of the society
 - (v) The procedure for amendment of the constitution of the society by its membership
 - (vi) Such other regulations or provisions which the society deems appropriate to ensure the fair and democratic operation of the society
- (c) No alteration may be made to the constitution of ratified societies without the consent of the Societies Executive Committee
- (d) No alteration to the Aims and Objectives of ratified societies may be made without the consent of Societies Executive Committee.
- (e) A copy of each society's constitution must be lodged with the Activities Office
- (f) A list of each society's officers and their contact details must be lodged with the Activities Office. This must include the email address, mobile telephone number and signature of each elected officer. A form is available for this purpose from the Activities Office.

7. Officers of Student Societies

- (a) All societies ratified by Societies Executive Committee must elect their officers for the following academic year in the second semester.
- (b) All officers of student societies must be registered student members of the University.
- (c) Full results of the officer elections must be forwarded to the Activities Office immediately the result is known.
- (d) The officers of student societies will be held liable for any debts incurred by the society.
- (e) There must be at least three elected officers:
 - (i) a President or Chairperson
 - (ii) a Secretary
 - (iii) a Treasurer
- (f) Other officer positions must first be created in the student society's constitution before any election for the said positions takes place.
- (g) Officers must be elected at a General Meeting of the student society, of which 14 days' notice must be given to the entire membership. The quorum for such a meeting is 25% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is the most.
- (h) All presidents, secretaries, and treasurers of student societies are required to attend Student Society Training which will be arranged by the Activities Officer. This shall take place in September of each year before Freshers' Week.

8. Dismissal and Resignation of Officials

- (a) No official shall be deemed to be dismissed unless they receive during their term of Office a vote of "No Confidence" from their Executive Committee, NUSU Scrutiny Committee, Students' Union Council, Societies Executive Committee or as a result of the NUSU Disciplinary Process
- (b) A dismissed Officer has the right to appeal with 14 days and may submit themselves to an intra-society vote to confirm or overturn the dismissal. Such vote shall be conducted in consultation with the Societies Executive Committee in accordance with the rules outlined in the 'Societies Appeal Guidance Document'

- (c) The resignation of an official shall not be of effect unless given in writing to the Society President and until accepted by the relevant society's Executive Committee.

9. COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY

- a) Any complaints against a Society member should be referred to the Society Committee to conduct an investigation, and take appropriate action. Support will be provided by the Activities Officer or NUSU staff, if required.
- b) Any complaint against a society committee or society as a whole will be referred to the Society Executive Committee

STUDENT SOCIETIES POLICY

10 Finance

- (a) The accounts of all ratified societies will be administered by the Activities Office on behalf of the Activities Officer.
- (b) A ratified student society must have a minimum subscription of £5.00 per member per year.
- (c) Membership fees must be paid into the Students' Union membership account for that student society through the Students' Union website.
- (d) The financial year for all societies is the same as that for the Students' Union.
- (e) If a society is suspended or deratified, any balance left in the society's grant or membership account shall be transferred to the Students' Union society accounts and shall be redistributed to other societies, as agreed by the Societies Executive Committee. All equipment belonging to the society will be entrusted to the Activities Officer. Funds from any society that has been dormant for more than two years will also be transferred.
- (f) Any ratified society can claim a grant from the Students' Union for a budgeted activity which is in agreement with the Aims & Objectives of that society, with the exception of food and drink.
- (g) The procedure for claiming grants will be detailed on the grant form, in the Societies Training Guide and explained by the Activities Officer at the Societies Training in the first semester.
- (h) Grants will be awarded by and at the discretion of the Societies Executive Committee with the assistance of the Activities Officer. The Societies Executive Committee shall determine the level of grant to a society based on a consideration of that society's grant form and the priorities and items of expenditure detailed therein, and on member numbers.
- (i) If a society is not satisfied with the grant received it may appeal to Finance Committee
- (j) Societies may run activities to raise money for charity, provided always that:
 - (i) All donations received are paid into the society's account, where they will be earmarked for disbursement by the society that raised them.
 - (ii) Any event that is held to raise money for charity should endeavour to cover the costs of organising the event out of entrance fees or similar.
 - (iii) The profit at the end of a fund-raising event shall be treated as a donation under (i) above.
 - (iv) For the avoidance of doubt no NUSU grants should be donated to other charities via societies. This is 'ultra vires' activity and falls outside the objects of NUSU as a charity.

[Enacted in accordance with the Education Act 1994 Section 22 (2) (i)].

- (k) The Activities Officer (or, if authorised and in his/her absence, the A.U Officer) shall be authorised to pay or approve payment. The secondary approval for payments will be either the Chief Executive or Director of Finance.

- (l) The Activities Officer shall not approve any payments on a student society grant account that is not accompanied by appropriate proof of purchase (e.g. receipt, invoice), and a copy of the approved grant form
- (m) The Activities Officer shall have the power to freeze a student society's accounts in any case of suspected financial impropriety, breaking of the law or fiscal irresponsibility, pending an immediate investigation by Societies Executive or Scrutiny Committee.
- (n) Any student society shall be suspended, thus having both their membership and grant accounts frozen and all services (e.g. email, website) withdrawn if, in the opinion of the Societies Executive Committee, the society is not complying fully with this Constitution.

10. General Regulations

- (a) Problems and queries shall be directed to the Activities Officer in the first instance (or the Activities office in their absence), then the Societies Executive Committee.
- (b) The elected officers of any society which is alleged to have committed an offence against the NUSU or Societies Constitutions shall be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure as laid down in the NUSU Strategy and Guidance documents. In particular societies shall be responsible for the behaviour of their members at society events
- (c) All members of a society must be treated equally. They must all be given the same opportunity to participate in society activities at the same time, receive the same communications from the society's Executive Committee at the same time, and have access to minutes when posted on the website. The method of communication will be email to the respective members' stipulated email addresses.

TRIP AND ACTIVITY REGISTRATION

- a) ONLY SOCIETY OFFICERS WILL BE ALLOWED TO BOOK TRIPS**
- b) It is essential that we know about all events, meetings and trips that a society has planned. This is to ensure that all risks are assessed.
- c) All societies are required to register their activities with the Activities Office through the website
- d) Any trip which takes place must be submitted to the Activities Office one week in advance of the departure date through the website.
- e) Any trip or activity which takes place outside the UK must be submitted to the Activities Office at least one month in advance of the departure date.
- f) Trip registration forms are available from the Students' Union Website

RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL SOCIETY

Top Tips

- a) READ THE SOCIETIES CONSTITUTION
- b) MAKE SURE KNOW ALL DEADLINES FOR FORMS AND REGISTRATION
- c) KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE SOCIETIES PAGE ON THE STUDENTS' UNION WEBSITE. USE SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS TO YOUR WEBPAGE TO KEEP MEMBERS INFORMED
- d) COMMUNICATION
 - i) CHECK EMAILS EVERYDAY
 - ii) MAKE SURE YOU REGISTER FOR A SOCIETY EMAIL ADDRESS

