

**QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST**  
**STUDENTS' UNION CONSTITUTIONAL RULES**

**Rule 9**

**STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 There shall be recognised Student Associations in the Union which shall represent particular groups of students and campaign on general issues relating to those groups.
- 1.2 Student Associations shall be recognised by the Students' Union as representatives of the groups within their remit.
- 1.3 Student Associations shall be Societies as prescribed by the Rules for governance, administrative and regulatory matters, but shall not have constitutions.
- 1.4 The Students' Union shall have processes, procedures, and requirements, to which Student Associations must comply.
- 1.5 Student Associations shall be governed as prescribed in the Rules and be categorised as Student Associations.

**2. STUDENT ASSOCIATION STATUS**

- 2.1 The Council shall have the power to establish or dissolve any Student Association through an amendment to the Rules.
- 2.2 All established Student Associations shall be detailed in the Rules.
- 2.3 A Student Association shall be considered to be an active Student Association if it fulfils the following requirements on an annual basis:
  - 2.3.1 The Student Association operates in accordance with the provisions of the Students' Union Constitution and its Rules.
  - 2.3.2 The Executive Committee members to have formally registered with the Students' Union and authorised any required documentation with an original signature.
  - 2.3.3 The Student Association to have at least two Committee members in post, one being the Chairperson, who have completed all mandatory Club and Society Training arranged by the Students' Union for the current academic year.
  - 2.3.4 The Student Association to have at least two Committee members in post, one being the Chairperson, who have completed all mandatory Students' Union Training arranged by the Students' Union for the current academic year.
  - 2.3.5 The Student Association to maintain a full and accurate list of all Student Members and submit this list to the Students' Union, as required by the Students' Union.

- 2.4 Any Student Association deemed by the Students' Union to not meet the requirements to be an active Student Association shall be deemed to be inactive.
- 2.5 The Executive Management Committee, at its discretion, may determine that a Student Association be deemed inactive, until such time as it is satisfied that the Association fulfils the necessary requirements to be deemed an active Association. The Executive Management Committee may determine that an Association undertake additional actions or adhere to additional terms to maintain active status.
- 2.6 An inactive Student Association may not undertake any activities. An Association shall not be authorised to undertake financial transactions, to apply for funding, to use the facilities of the Students' Union or avail of the rights, privileges or benefits of an Association until such time as the Association is deemed to be active by the Students' Union.

### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1 Any Student Member of the Union shall be eligible to join any Student Association, upon completion of registration with the Association.
- 3.2 Only Student Members of the Union are eligible to join Student Associations.
- 3.3 Student Associations shall not have Associate Members.
- 3.4 Student Associations shall not have honorary members and may not award honorary membership.
- 3.5 Student Associations may not charge a membership fee.
- 3.6 All Student Members shall agree to be bound by the relevant terms and conditions of membership of Societies as approved by the Students' Union.
- 3.7 All Student Associations and their members must comply with the Constitution and Rules and the processes, procedures and requirements stated in the Clubs & Societies Committee Handbook and other such codes of practice and policies as approved by the University and the Students' Union.
- 3.8 It is the responsibility of Association Executive Committee members to ensure that Association members are fully aware of, and comply with, all processes, procedures, requirements, codes of practice and policies laid out by the University and Students' Union.

### **4. THE CHAIRPERSON**

- 4.1 Each Association shall have a Chairperson, who shall be a Student Member of the Union, at the time of their election and for the duration of their term of office.
- 4.2 The Chairperson shall be elected in the second semester in a cross-campus ballot of the eligible electorate, as in Council elections.
- 4.3 The Chairperson shall:

- 4.3.1 Shall lead, direct and coordinate the activity of the Association, accountable to the committee.
  - 4.3.2 Shall be concerned with general issues relating to the group of students represented by the Association.
  - 4.3.3 Shall be responsible for liaison with organisations, both external and internal to the University, which are relevant to the group of students represented by the Association.
  - 4.3.4 Shall represent the interests of the group of students represented by the Association to the Executive Management Committee and the Students' Union Council.
  - 4.3.5 Shall campaign on issues that impact upon the student experience of the group of students represented by the Association.
  - 4.3.6 Shall encourage greater involvement in Union affairs by the group of students represented by the Association.
  - 4.3.7 Shall be recognised by the Students' Union as a lead representative for the group of students represented by the Association.
  - 4.3.8 Shall attend all training required by the Students' Union.
  - 4.3.9 Shall be entitled to attend meeting of the Executive Management Committee, with speaking rights.
  - 4.3.10 Shall be a full voting member of the Students' Union Council.
  - 4.3.11 Shall produce such reports as required to the Executive Management Committee
  - 4.3.12 Shall produce one report to Council in each semester on their activities and the activities of the Association, as required by the Students' Union.
- 5.4 The Chairperson may take a recess from their duties and responsibilities by submitting notice to the Union President, through the Clerk of Council and by issuing notice to the committee of the Association. The notice shall detail the period of any recess. The Students' Union shall maintain regular and appropriate contact with a Chairperson during a period of recess.
- 5.5 In the event of the post of Chairperson taking a period of recess, or resigning from their post, the committee shall elect a committee member to act as Deputy Chairperson. The Deputy Chairperson shall undertake the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson as agreed by the committee. The committee may agree to describe the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson amongst members of the committee. The Deputy Chairperson may attend meetings of the Students' Union Executive Management Committee but may not undertake the Chairperson's membership of the Students' Union Council.
- 5.6 In the event of the post of Chairperson becoming vacant, the Students' Union shall organise a bye-election as determined by the Returning Officer.

## **5. COMMITTEES AND ELECTIONS**

- 5.1 Each Association shall have a Committee, with the following posts considered to be Executive Committee positions:
  - 5.5.1 Association Chairperson - Shall lead, direct and coordinate the activity of the Association, accountable to the committee, and undertake other duties at detailed in the Rules.
  - 5.1.2 Association Secretary – Shall have responsibility for maintaining Association records, taking minutes of all meetings of the Association, be responsible for all correspondence of the Association. They shall maintain a record of Association membership, maintain a record of all relevant accounts and passwords for social media, mailing lists and any other relevant data. They shall produce reports as required by the Students' Union.
  - 5.1.3 Association Treasurer – Shall have responsibility for the Association's finances and the maintenance of accounts. They shall provide reports to the committee on the financial standing of the Association and provide a detailed report to the AGM. They shall liaise with the Students' Union on financial matters and shall produce such applications and reports as required by the Students' Union.
  - 5.1.4 Association Postgraduate Representative – Shall represent the views and interests of postgraduate students from the group of students represented by the Association and shall encourage greater participation by postgraduate students in the Association.
- 5.2 Student Associations may restrict eligibility for Executive Committee positions, based on criteria detailed in the Rules and shall record the eligibility category of each member of the Association.
- 5.3 Student Associations may establish Ordinary Committee positions, consisting of committee positions that are deemed to be necessary to carry out the work of the Association. Such positions shall only be valid if established by a decision of the Committee and the registration of the role title and role duties and responsibilities with the Students' Union.
- 5.4 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions, excluding the Chairperson, is derived from the Student members of the Association from the group of students represented by the Association. Candidates must be proposed and seconded by Student Members of the Association.
- 5.5 Eligibility for Ordinary Committee positions is derived from the Student members of the Association. Candidates must be proposed and seconded by Student Members of the Association.
- 5.6 Committee members shall serve a one-year term of office and may seek re-election.
- 5.7 Committee members shall serve no more than two terms of office in a Student Association Executive Committee position.
- 5.8 Committee members shall hold their post from the first working day of July in the year in which they were elected, until the last working day of June in the following year. Committee members elected by means of a bye-election shall hold their post from the date of their election until the last working day of Jun the following year. A committee

member-elect shall commence in post immediately when a vacancy arises in the post to which they are elected.

- 5.9 No member of the Students' Union Executive Management Committee shall hold a committee position on any Student Association committee.
- 5.10 Elections for committee post, excluding the Chairperson, shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules for Club and Society elections, as prescribed in the Rules. Election Courts shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules for Club and Society Election Courts.
- 5.11 Elections for the post of Association Chairperson shall take place in accordance with the Election Rules of the Students' Union.
- 5.12 Association committee members are required to attend mandatory training arranged by the Students' Union.
- 5.13 Student Associations may establish sub-committees in accordance with the Rules, to meet the requirements of the Association and at the discretion of the committee.
- 5.14 Ordinary committee positions (non-voting) can be filled by the committee by means of co-option.
- 5.15 Any Executive or Ordinary Committee member failing to attend a committee or Association meeting on three consecutive occasions without submitting apologies shall ordinarily be deemed to have resigned their post.
- 5.16 The committee shall meet at least twice during each term. The quorum for meetings of the committee shall be 40%.

## **6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS AND EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 6.1 Each Student Association shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) at which the committees of the Association, excluding the Chairperson, shall be elected.
- 6.2 The AGM shall take place within a time period specified by the Executive Management Committee and may permit an AGM, including elections, to take place via electronic means and may detail and associated processes for meetings and elections.
- 6.3 Student Associations shall conduct Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) as required to fill vacant committee positions. EGMs shall be conducted in accordance with the Rules for AGMs, as appropriate.
- 6.4 The Students' Union Executive Management Committee shall specify the voting system to be used for elections, as prescribed in the Rules.
- 6.5 The Chairperson shall be responsible for conducting and chairing the AGM, in accordance with the Rules.
- 6.6 Only Student Members of the Association may participate, and vote, in AGMs, EGMs, and elections.
- 6.7 The Committee shall present reports at the AGM on the activities of the Association activities for the academic year.

- 6.8 At the AGM, the committee of the Association shall read their reports of the Association's activities for the academic year, and election of a new Committee shall take place.
- 6.9 No one shall be admitted to membership less than fourteen clear days before an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General meeting.
- 6.10 Notice of the AGM shall be issued at least fourteen clear days in advance. Notice should be given through posting on the Association's social media account, the Students' Union website, and by direct email to members of the Association, stating the date, time, location of the AGM, the committee positions open for election and any relevant deadlines.
- 6.11 The AGM shall be scheduled at a date and time to maximise attendance from the membership.
- 6.12 Notice must be posted of the matters to be considered at the AGM, no later than three days prior to the meeting. Notice should be given through posting on the Association's social media account, the Students' Union website, and by direct email to members of the Association.
- 6.13 There shall be no quorum for AGMs or EGMs.
- 6.14 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association may be called by means of a signed petition comprising twenty percent of the Student Membership of the Association. Any such petition shall provide full details of the matters to be considered at the EGM. Only matters included in the petition may be considered at the EGM. At least ten clear days' notice of the EGM shall be issued, through the mechanisms required for AGMs.

## **7. FINANCE GRANTS AND FUNDING**

- 7.1 Student Associations shall have the right to make applications for funds to the Students' Union in accordance with the processes, procedures and deadlines as determined by the Students' Union.
- 7.2 Student Associations shall have the right to make applications for funds to the University and to external bodies, subject to the prior approval of the Executive Management Committee.
- 7.3 Student Associations shall receive an annual budget allocation to be determined by the Executive Management Committee.
- 7.4 Student Associations may not apply for Club and Society Recurrent Grant Funding from the Students' Union.
- 7.5 Student Association may not undertake fundraising activities for third parties, including external organisations.

## **8. CONDUCT, COMPLAINTS AND MEMBER RELATIONS**

- 8.1 All formal complaints concerning the activity of a Student Association, or concerning the activity of a committee member, or other authorised officer of a Student Association representing that Student Association, shall be made to the Director of the Students' Union.
- 8.2 The complaints and conduct procedures laid out in the Rules for Clubs and Societies shall apply to Student Associations.
- 8.3 The Student Complaints Procedure and the University's Conduct Regulations apply to all Student Members.

## **9. PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND ACTIONS**

- 9.1 A Student Association shall not make any public statement (which shall include any statement on the worldwide web or social media) on behalf of the Association, unless such a statement complies with the terms and spirit of the Students' Union Constitution.
- 9.2 A Student Association, Chairperson, committee member, other officer, or anyone acting on behalf of an Association may not make any public statement on behalf of Queen's Students' Union without the prior approval of the Union President.
- 9.3 Neither the Union President nor the Students' Union shall be responsible for the actions or opinions of any Student Association.

## **10. ESTABLISHED STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS**

- 10.1 Disabled Students' Association
  - 10.1.1 The Disabled Students' Association shall represent students who self-define as being disabled.
  - 10.1.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be restricted to students who self-define as being disabled.
- 10.2 Environmental Action Students' Association
  - 10.2.1 The Environmental Action Association shall be to represent students' interests on issues relating to the environment, sustainability, and ethical trading.
  - 10.2.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be open to all Student members of the Association.
- 10.3 Ethnically Diverse Students' Association
  - 10.3.1 The Ethnically Diverse Students' Association shall represent students who self-define as being from an ethnically diverse background.
  - 10.3.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be restricted to students who self-define as being from an ethnically diverse background.
- 10.4 International Students' Association

- 10.4.1 The International Students' Association shall represent International Students, as defined by the University.
- 10.4.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be restricted to International Students, as defined by the University.
- 10.5 Irish Language Students' Association
  - 10.5.1 The Irish Language Students' Association shall represent Irish language speaking students.
  - 10.5.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be open to all Student members of the Association.
- 10.6 LGBT+ Students' Association
  - 10.6.1 The LGBT+ Students' Association shall represent students who self-define as being a member of the LGBT+ Student Community.
  - 10.6.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be restricted to students who self-define as being a member of the LGBT+ Student Community.
- 10.7 Mature and Part-Time Students' Association
  - 10.7.1 The Mature and Part-Time Students' Association shall represent Mature Students, as defined by the University, and Part-Time Students, as defined by the University.
  - 10.7.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be restricted to Mature Students, as defined by the University, and Part-Time Students, as defined by the University.
- 10.8 Student Parents' and Carers' Students' Association
  - 10.8.1 The Student Parents' and Carers' Students' Association shall represent Student Parents and Carers.
  - 10.8.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be open to all Student members of the Association.
- 10.9 Trans Students' Association
  - 10.9.1 The Trans Students' Association shall represent students who self-define as being a member of the Trans Student Community, including Transgender, Non-Binary, Intersex and Questioning Students.
  - 10.9.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be restricted to students who self-define as being a member of the Trans Student Community.
- 10.10 Women Students' Association
  - 10.10.1 The Women Students' Association shall represent students who self-define as being Women Students.



10.10.2 Eligibility for Executive Committee positions shall be restricted to students who self-define as being Women Students.