



DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES

TITLE: BYE LAW ONE
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APPROVED: STUDENT COUNCIL
(28/05/26)

Document History:

26/11/19 - Council approved updates
27/05/20 - Council approved updates
28/10/20 - Council approved updates
02/11/22 - Council approved updates
01/11/23 - Council approved updates
28/05/26 - Council approved updates

SECTION ONE: PURPOSE OF BYE-LAW

- 1.1 This Bye-law will detail the democratic committees and processes of UUSU; it will reference all committees and councils of UUSU, their membership and powers.
- 1.2 The Trustees and the Student Council shall have the power from time to time to jointly make, repeal or amend Bye-laws and their appendices as to the management of UUSU and its working practices provided that such documents shall not be inconsistent with the Articles of Association.

SECTION TWO: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- 2.1 The membership of the Board of Trustees will be comprised of:
 - 2.1.1 Four student officers agreed by the Student Executive, one of which shall be the President;
 - 2.1.2 Two students, who are full members of UUSU;
 - 2.1.3 Five external appointees.
- 2.2 The process for appointments to the Board for each group will be as follows:
 - 2.2.1 Student officers will be selected by secret ballot at the first meeting of their Student Executive each year;
 - 2.2.2 Students and external appointees will be considered via a process of application and selection, through the Appointments Committee.
- 2.3 The term of appointment for each shall be:
 - 2.3.1 Student officer trustees: 1 academic year;
 - 2.3.2 Student trustee: 1 year from the date agreed by the Appointments Committee;
 - 2.3.3 External trustee: 4 years from the date agreed by the Appointments Committee.
- 2.4 Student trustees can serve a maximum of three terms so long as they are ratified by Student Council for each of the subsequent terms.
- 2.5 External trustees can serve a maximum of two terms, so long as they are still eligible for the position.
- 2.6 Student Officers can serve a maximum of three terms if elected for each of the three eligible years.
- 2.7 All appointments are subject to the approval of Student Council.
- 2.8 The process for the removal and resignations of members of the Board of Trustees are detailed in the UUSU Articles of Association.
- 2.9 The Board of Trustees has the authority to establish and dissolve Committees and Task and Finish groups of the Board whose membership will be outlined in the Terms of Reference, as and when the need arises.
- 2.10 The financial affairs of the Union shall be overseen and governed by the Board of Trustees, with the close support of relevant staff.
- 2.11 Trustees will ensure that the Union adheres to its requirements borne from the Financial Memorandum with the University and guidance from the Charities Commission.

SECTION THREE: STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND PROCESS OF ELECTION

- 3.1 The Student Council will consist of the Student Executive as voting members and as part of their role, and councillors as outlined in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Positions will be filled through a cross-campus ballot and positions will be elected by those constituencies eligible to do so (i.e. by campus). The President will nominate a senior member of staff to oversee and ensure the integrity of the election.
- 3.3 The exception to 3.2 above, will be academic and sports representatives who will be elected through their own structures.
- 3.4 Where positions remain unfilled, positions may be offered to unsuccessful candidates in other constituencies (eligibility withstanding) by the Returning Officer prioritised on the basis of votes received. If positions remain unfilled nominations may be submitted through the President to Student Council. Ratification of nominees will require a 50% + 1 vote in favour , of those members present, to co-opt on said candidates as members. Nominees will be required to attend the meeting of Council at which they are nominated, and members may submit questions to them as to their suitability before voting.
- 3.5 To stand and serve on positions on the Student Council candidates must be an enrolled student of the University at the time of nomination and for the duration of their time in position and will forfeit their seat should they at any time no longer meet these qualifications.
- 3.6 Student Councillors will be elected for a one-year term, beginning from the date of election to the end of semester two as determined in the university calendar.
- 3.7 A student councillor may be removed from their position if they fail to attend two consecutive Council meetings, or meetings that are associated with their Council role, without a valid and approved reason. The removal decision will be taken by a majority vote at Student Council. They shall also forfeit membership of any committees or groups they have gained as a result of their role as a councillor.

MEETINGS

See bye-law 2 for further outline of procedures at Student Council meetings.

- 3.8 Student Council will meet at least twice within both the Autumn and Spring Semesters each academic year in line with the university calendar.
- 3.9 The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Student Council, and any other positions associated with Council membership, will be nominated at the first meeting of the academic year following a Student Council election. Hustings will take place at the first meeting and there will be a democratic secret ballot of all councillors present to determine the holder of these positions for the remainder of the Council term.

3.10 The Clerk of Council will be a relevant UUSU staff member as defined by UUSU. The Clerk shall act as secretary to Student Council and associated bodies. They shall be responsible for taking minutes of any council meetings, drafting and dissemination of all required papers and notifying Student Council and the Chair of any factual Points of Information.

SUBCOMMITTEES

3.11 Student Council will have the authority to form and dissolve sub-committees and task and finish groups when necessary. The following shall be subcommittees of Council:

- 3.11.1 Student Executive (see section 4, below);
- 3.11.2 Student Council Oversight Committee (see section ,below);
- 3.11.3 Sports Management Committee (see Bye Law 4);
- 3.11.4 Societies Management Committee (See Bye Law 5);
- 3.11.5 Networks Management Committee (See Bye Law 9);

3.12 Excluding the Student Executive (who reports at every Council meeting), the chair of these committees will report to Council when necessary.

3.13 The business additional sub committees or task and finish groups (as mentioned in 3.3) will be reported to Council when necessary.

3.14 The Disciplinary Committee will be convened as needed.

SECTION FOUR: STUDENT COUNCIL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

The Student Council Oversight Committee (hereafter referred to as the Oversight Committee) is a student led body guiding the development of Student Council with the power of recommendation. This group will meet a minimum of three times per year in advanced of scheduled Student Council meetings to oversee the work and role of the Student Council and its associated Sub Committees.

4.1 Membership of the committee will include but not be limited to:

- 4.1.1 The Deputy Chair of Student Council;
- 4.1.2 Three additional elected Student Council members;
- 4.1.3 One member of the Student Executive as designated by the Student Executive Committee;
- 4.1.4 The Clerk of Council (Non-Voting)

4.2 The Oversight Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- 4.2.1 Supporting the accountability process for the work of Student Council and its members.
- 4.2.2 Provide an oversight function for the associated sub committees, working groups and operations falling under the remit of the Student Council.
- 4.2.3 To produce an annual report to UUSU identifying areas for improvement in relations to the operations of the Student Council and it's associated groups alongside areas of good practice.

4.3 Student Council Oversight Committee will be a recognised sub-committee of UUSU Student Council.

SECTION FIVE: THE STUDENT EXECUTIVE

The Student Executive will be governed as specified in the Articles of Association and the UUSU standing orders in Bye-law Two. Their role, as defined by our Articles of Association is representation and campaign work, and the implementation of policy and stances. Through collective decision making the Student Executive will also advocate for the rights of members and equity for those who remain underrepresented.

MEMBERSHIP

The Student Executive is the collective name for the committee of the full time Student Officers.

- 5.1 The full-time Student Officers of UUSU shall be:
 - 5.1.1 The President;
 - 5.1.2 The Vice President Sport and Wellbeing¹ ; from academic year 26/27 known as VP Sport
 - 5.1.3 The Vice President Education;
 - 5.1.4 The Vice President Equality and Belonging² ; from academic year 26/27 known as VP Equity and Inclusion
 - 5.1.5 The Vice President Coleraine;
 - 5.1.6 The Vice President Magee;
 - 5.1.7 The Vice President Belfast.
- 5.2 Role descriptions for Officers will be reviewed annually, in addition to specific duties the Student Executive, who are a collective decision making body, accountable and responsible for:
 - 5.2.1 Ensuring that collective representation structures are meaningful in valuing and empowering student opinion in effectively advocating on the issues raised within the student membership. Encouraging member participation in all aspects of UUSU activities;
 - 5.2.2 Furthering the aims and objectives of UUSU;
 - 5.2.3 Developing and implementing the student led policies and stances of UUSU advocating change to relevant stakeholders to create change as appropriate;
 - 5.2.4 Engaging with the membership both in person and within the digital environment, with a view to encouraging student participation and input.
 - 5.2.5 Be the accountable body around raised and identified member campaigns, increasing awareness of the aims of objectives of such.
 - 5.2.6 Submitting their Yearly Plan to the first meeting of Student Council for ratification;
 - 5.2.7 The production of an end of year report outlining the progress against the yearly plan and highlighting achievements whilst in office;
 - 5.2.8 Gathering, analysing and disseminating information regarding the student voice and collective student opinion;
 - 5.2.9 Any other duties deemed appropriate by the President or Student Council.

¹ As of the 26-27 Academic year this role will be revised to be the Vice President for Sport and role descriptions updated accordingly.

² As of the 26-27 Academic year this role will be revised to be the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion and role descriptions updated accordingly.

ELECTION PROCEDURES

This section should be read in conjunction with Bye Law 3.

- 5.3 Positions will be elected through a cross campus ballot using the single transferable voting system in the second semester of the academic year.
- 5.4 The rules and regulations governing the elections will be agreed by the Returning Officer.
- 5.5 The Student Executive shall serve for a period of one calendar year from the 1st July to 30th June.
- 5.6 To stand as a Student Officer, candidates must be an Ordinary Full Member of UUSU, as defined within the Articles of Association, at the time of nomination and at the beginning of their term in office or a pre-existing Student Officer who is currently in their first or second term of office.
- 5.7 Any full member of the Students' Union who are deemed by the University as being an active student is eligible for nomination, to propose candidates and to vote in elections, provided that they are a member of the constituency for which that election is being held.
- 5.8 A Student Officer can serve for a maximum of three years as a Student Officer, of which no more than two shall be in the same position.

STUDENT EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

- 5.9 The Student Executive will have an appended terms of reference that it follows which will be reviewed annually.
- 5.10 The Student Executive shall meet formally at least once a month but may meet informally to discuss ongoing operational matters.
- 5.11 The meeting record (minutes) of Student Executive will be shared via the following platforms (Online and to relevant stakeholders) to encourage the ongoing transparency and accountability of SE and Student Council to the wider membership. Some of the meeting record may be redacted or condensed to protect others and meet compliance needs.
- 5.12 The quoracy of the Student Executive will be 50% + 1 of the voting membership.
- 5.13 The President, or their delegate, will be the Chair of the Student Executive.
- 5.14 Student officer vacancies:
 - (a) If a Student Officer resigns, is disqualified or removed from office within the first six months of their term, the vacancy that results on the Student Executive shall be filled in accordance with the Bye-laws;
 - (b) If a Student Officer resigns, is disqualified or removed from office when there is less than six months left of their term of Office the post will remain vacant and the work shared between the remaining student Officers.
 - (c) In exceptional circumstances, Student Council may approve an incoming Officer to commence or offer support pertaining to the vacant role.

FURTHER POINTS

- 5.15 Each member of Student Executive must declare if any conflicts of interest arise and be absent from any part of a meeting that could be discussing issues affecting those bodies.
- 5.16 Any member of the Student Executive cannot be on a committee for any UUSU club or society, or be involved in the running of said club and society unless set out in the Articles of Association or Bye-laws.
- 5.17 Any full member of the UUSU can trigger the relevant complaints procedure for Student Officers or in relation to other members Bye Law 7 outlines the full complaints and disciplinary process for office bearers.

SECTION SIX: REFERENDUM

This section should be read in conjunction with Bye-Law Six and Appendix Four.

- 6.1 A referendum will be the highest democratic decision-making power within UUSU. This means that it may set policy or a stance on behalf of the whole membership, and the policy or stance will supersede any set by Student Council and Student Meeting.
- 6.2 A referendum shall be held on any proposal when the Trustees or Student Council deems it necessary or upon receipt by the President of a request bearing the signatures and student numbers of 1% of the Unions membership of which the outcome of the decision would affect providing the turnout of the Referendum is 3% of the Unions members.

SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT MEMBER MEETINGS

- 7.1 Student Member Meetings are to be held annually and are open to all members to attend. For quorum to be met there must be at least 30 members present.
- 7.2 Procedures for this meeting are detailed within the Articles of Association.

SECTION EIGHT: NUS, NUS/USI, USI AND OTHER EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 8.1 UUSU shall be affiliated jointly to the National Union of Students of the United Kingdom (NUSUK) and Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn (AMLÉ) (formally the Union of Students in Ireland (USI)) and shall pay such affiliation fees as are democratically decided by NUSUK and AMLÉ. This affiliation shall be put to a Referendum as standard every three years or where the referendum process is triggered in line with the relevant Byelaw.
- 8.2 To ensure rounded membership participation and representation at the conferences of NUSUK and AMLÉ Annual Congress and NUS/USI Conference, 50% of places will be reserved for general membership and shall be elected by cross-campus ballot. If positions are not filled through this method, the President shall have the power to co-opt students to the positions as they see fit. The President is a delegate ex-officio.

- 8.3 No delegate sent to any conference and/or organisation as a representative of UUSU shall vote against an active Union policy or position.
- 8.4 If such a situation arises upon which a motion/policy arises which we do not have a Union policy or position and there is no time to seek a mandate from Student Council, the delegate lead will have the decision as to whether to abstain or to afford delegates a free vote on said matter;
- 8.5 Any delegate that finds that they cannot carry out the mandate as set by Student Council must abstain from the vote in question.