

**UUSU Articles Review**

**Overview**

UUSU is governed by its Articles of Association which is the primary document of note by both Companies House and the NI Charities Commission from a statutory perspective. The last set of Articles were adopted at the start of 2020 by these bodies. Good practice would define that a review of the Articles should be undertaken every few years, or as a significant change take place. As a major change, and with potential for impact on one of our objects, the move to the University umbrella for sports prompted a cyclical review.

**Context**

Given that our articles hadn’t been reviewed since 2020, coupled with the significant change, it was defined a thorough review of the document be undertaken over the course of late-2024, into 2025. As the review was committed to standardising the Articles and all the Byelaws that fall under it, the anticipation was this review would take around 12 months to complete. This phase is now complete and under legal review as well as further scrutiny by Student Council and our Board of Trustees.

**Impact of Change for UU Council**

Much of the change is technical in nature and/or a clean-up of the Articles to modernise or adopt more current approaches to legislative needs. On reviewing the Articles and the required changes some of these will have a potential impact on the text within the relevant UU ordinance. Much of the change in the Articles is purely technical, i.e. where a UU ordinance number or section has been updated, this has been reflected within our Articles. However, based on feedback and confusion within the Student membership, we have updated and simplified our definitions of a member of UUSU to reflect these conversations, and this will have a small, but fundamental impact on UU’s own ordinances.

**Drafted Changes & Benefit**

There is no detriment to any student that currently is a member of UUSU. This remains a static definition and figure but the presentation of the information has been updated to reflect a more overt and clear classification. UUSU would not discriminate against any student that is registered to study at Ulster University in Northern Ireland, and further would provide support for any student registered whom may be on placement. As a Union for students, we consider any student within an Ulster programme in Northern Ireland would be afforded membership and fall under our remit and don’t see the associate category as required under this context. Henceforth we don’t require a deconstructed definition for this group. This is now reflected more overtly in our own draft articles and as such would suggest that it is mirrored within the relevant UU ordinance.

In addition to the above, we also feel it is imperative that we offer a clear boundary to where our membership starts and ends. As such we have drafted a clause to be clear that non-NI students under the Ulster University banner are not represented by UUSU as these students are covered by separate support systems and indeed different legal interpretations, including variations within the various relevant Education legislation across nations. Making this more clear, enables us to be equally clear with non-NI students around whom UUSU supports and where the same, or similar, support resides for them within a different governance arrangement.

The specific changes to our Articles, and where this impacts the Ordinances, coupled with suggestive alterations to match across both documents, is detailed below in Appendix 1.

**Appendix 1**

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| **UUSU Articles** | | **UU Ordinance XXXIV** | |
| **Current** | **Redrafted** | **Current** | **Suggestive** |
| Part 2 / Clause 8  8. Members of the Union  8.1 The Members of the Union shall be as follows:  8.1.1 The Student Members,  8.1.2 the Associate Members; and  8.1.3 The Company Law Members. | Part 2 / Clause 8  8. Union Membership  8.1 The Members of the Union shall be as follows:  8.1.1 The Student Members, shall be defined as:  (a) Those students registered to study in Northern Ireland;  (b) Within those noted in 8.1.1 (a) those Students undertaking a placement opportunity.  8.1.2 The Company Law Members.  8.1.3. Students studying at non-NI campuses in the UK are automatically members of the local Students Activities Association (SAA) | Ordinance XXXIV Section 5  (a) The Union shall be comprised of two main categories of members:  i. Ordinary Full Membership shall be accorded to all full time registered students of the University and those part time students registered for a period of 30 weeks in the academic year, whose course of study leads to a recognised award.  ii. Associate Membership may be accorded to the following persons on receipt of such fee as prescribed in the Constitution:  (1) Those part time students ineligible for full membership under Clause 5(a)i.  (2) Occasional students.  (3) Other persons as the Senate may determine within the provisions of Statute II(1).  (b) The Union may extend the privileges of associate membership to staff of the University, employees of the Union and other persons as defined in the Union’s Constitution upon such terms and conditions as the Union may determine. | Ordinance XXXIV Section 5  (a) The Union shall be comprised of two main categories of members:  i. All registered students studying at Ulster University within Northern Ireland.  ii. Any student who may be currently undertaking a placement role whilst enrolled on a UU accredited programme.  (b) Union do not provide membership to students that are not based on a programme with Ulster University in Northern Ireland. |