

By-law 5 Societies

Introduction:

This By-law applies to all SU-affiliated societies.

The Students' Union and the University of Hertfordshire do not recognise any student societies that are not affiliated with the Students' Union. Events organised by unaffiliated groups will be considered unauthorised and will not receive any support from the SU.

Definitions

Academic Society

These are societies that are directly aligned to a course / programme run at the University of Hertfordshire. These societies are also auto enrolled which means that students are automatically given a free membership to the society if they are studying on that course / programme. Students can choose to opt out of their membership by emailing societies@hertssu.com. Students that are not studying on an aligned course / programme may also purchase a membership to any academic society.

Non-academic Society

These are societies that are extra-curricular, and do not directly align with your course of study. Non-academic societies fall into one of the following categories; Active, Cultural, Faith and Equality, Political, or Special Interest. These societies are membership based, and students must opt-in by purchasing their membership through the Students' Union Website.

1. Affiliation

- 1.1. For a society to be formed, an **affiliation form** must be submitted to the Students' Union and approved by a relevant member of Students' Union Staff.
- 1.2. The proposed committee must meet with a relevant member of Students' Union Staff. If the proposed society is related to a faith or religion, the meeting may also include the University of Hertfordshire Chaplain.
- 1.3. The proposed society's application must:
 - 1.3.1. Clearly state the aims and objectives of the proposed society.
 - 1.3.2. Declare three current University of Hertfordshire students who will form the committee. They must fill the following roles: Chair, Treasurer and Inclusion Officer.
 - 1.3.3. Explain how the proposed society is different to any current active societies, how it will benefit students and what activity they plan to carry out for the year.
- 1.4. Once approved, the committee is required to complete the relevant documentation within 15 working days of affiliation. Their affiliation will not be processed if the committee does not complete this documentation within the 15 working days.
- 1.5. If the society affiliation is not approved, the students have the right to appeal, in writing within 10 working days.
- 1.6. Only societies that are approved following the above procedure will be affiliated with the Students' Union.

- 1.7. The society may obtain other affiliations, such as membership of a relevant national body. However, this must not interfere with the society's compliance with Students' Union policies and practices.

2. Maintaining Affiliation

- 2.1. Societies will continue to be affiliated with the Students' Union for as long as they have a committee. When a committee of at least 3 members cannot be formed after 3 rounds of elections, the society will become inactive. In order to maintain affiliation societies must:
 - 2.1.1 Be able to demonstrate the society is working towards its core aims and objectives, based on its constitution.
 - 2.1.2 Providing up to date information to the Union upon request.
 - 2.1.3 Be an active member of the committee by taking part in meetings and responding to messages from other committee members, society members and the Students' Union.
 - 2.1.4 Attends at least 1 development meeting per semester with the Students' Union.
 - 2.1.5 Not break the regulations of the SUs **Code of Conduct.**
 - 2.1.6 Have all society events be approved, any events that are not approved and are carried out, may result in disciplinary.
 - 2.1.7 Attend compulsory training within six weeks or the start of the next Semester, whichever is sooner.

3. Committee

- 3.1. The committee will be composed, originally, of three current UH students in the following positions:
 - 3.1.1. Chair
 - 3.1.2. Treasurer

3.1.3. Inclusion Officer

- 3.2. The committee may introduce up to three additional roles to support the compulsory committee positions. To do this, the society must have at least 20 active members. Each new role must have a clear role description, be included in the Society Constitution, and be approved by the Students' Union before being implemented.
- 3.3. The committee will take up their committee positions on the final day of the university semester of the previous academic year (normally the first working day in June) or from the point of affiliation (for new societies only).
- 3.4. Committee members will serve a term of one academic year and may seek re-election if a registered student at the University of Hertfordshire the following academic year.

4. Election of the Committee

- 4.1. All committee members must be elected online through www.hertssu.com. Anyone who has not been elected through this official process will not be recognised as a committee member of the society.
- 4.2. Voting will be via the Single Transferable Vote system.
- 4.3. Only full members of the society are eligible to stand and vote in Society Committee Elections and must have been a member of the society before the close of nominations.
- 4.4. Eligible students can only stand for one position per society. Students may be a committee member for more than one society, but no more than 3 societies.

- 4.5. If a student is elected into the position but is then unable to retain their student status the following academic year, they will be removed from their position.
- 4.6. Another election may be run independently for that society as agreed with Hertfordshire Students' Union.
- 4.7. If a position remains unfilled after the Society Committee Elections, or becomes vacant during the academic year, another election may be held, at the discretion of the Students' Union, to fill it as soon as possible. The result of the election will then determine the student who will permanently fill the position.
- 4.8. All society members must adhere to the Society Committee Election Rules. Anyone found to be breaching the rules will be subject to investigation by the Students' Union.

5. Disqualification, Resignation and Removal of a Committee Member

- 5.1. The position of a committee shall be vacated if evidence is provided and proven to be true to the Students' Union, with regards to any of the following:
 - 5.1.1. The student is no longer a member of the Students' Union.
 - 5.1.2. The student resigns from their position.
 - 5.1.3. The committee member in question does not perform the responsibilities detailed in this by-law or the society's constitution.
 - 5.1.4. The student violates **By-Laws, Code of Conduct or policies.**
 - 5.1.5. The member failed to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and not within the values expected as a member of

Herts SU. The behaviour expected is outlined in the Code of Conduct for Union Members.

5.1.6. Financial misappropriation.

5.1.7. Theft of, or failure to declare whereabouts of equipment.

5.1.8. Not providing up to date information to the Union upon request at the detriment of the society.

5.2. All society committee members must respond to email correspondence from the Union within 10 working days before they are issued with a formal warning that the committee may be disbanded.

6. Disaffiliation of a Society

6.1. A society will only formally be closed because of one of the following:

6.1.1. They have failed to elect at least 2 committee members for the following academic year after three failed attempts.

6.1.2. The committee decides to close. There must be a three-quarter majority of the society committee in support of this decision for it to be accepted. The committee must inform the Students' Union if they wish to close their society.

6.1.3. As a result of a decision made by the Students' Union regarding society misconduct.

6.1.4. The items outlined in 2.0 cannot be met.

6.2. When a society is formally disaffiliated, it will become an 'inactive society' for a maximum of 2 years.

6.3. If the society is no longer able to operate, all assets both physical and financial will be stored by Hertfordshire Students' Union for 2 years.

These assets will be returned to the society upon affiliation. If the

society is not re-started within 2 years of its closure, the assets will become the property of the Students' Union.

- 6.4. Assets acquired by the Students' Union from a closed society will be used to benefit societies more broadly.
- 6.5. Should a society be disaffiliated during an academic year, members of the society are entitled to a full or partial refund where society funds are available.

7. Membership

- 7.1. Full membership of a society is open to any full member of Hertfordshire Students' Union upon payment of the membership fee. Society committees can set a free membership, however students must still sign-up to join the society through the Herts SU website.
- 7.2. Only full members are entitled to participate fully in elections and meetings.
- 7.3. Society memberships are to be decided on an annual basis in agreement with the Students' Union. The society must state this in their Society Constitution. Membership fees will be set annually at the start of the academic year and/or once affiliated. Membership fees cannot be changed until the start of Semester B when they can be reduced to half the original membership fee.
- 7.4. The three core society committee members will receive a free membership to their society.
- 7.5. On the basis that society funds are available, students may be eligible for a full or partial refund of a society membership because of, but not limited to, the following reasons:

7.5.1. The student can prove that the committee has not been in contact with them.

7.5.2. The committee is not adhering to the constitution.

7.5.3. The committee disbands and the society becomes inactive.

7.5.4. This is not an exhaustive list, and final decision will sit with Hertfordshire Students' Union.

8. Society Constitution

8.1. A society must have a Society Constitution to be affiliated with the Students' Union. This is the framework by which a society exists. The society must adhere to what is stated in their Constitution.

8.2. Every academic year, the Society Constitution must be reviewed, signed, and submitted to the Students' Union by the deadline stated. Failure to submit a Society Constitution may result in disaffiliation. The Society Constitution must have the approval of the Students' Union.

8.3. The Society Constitution must include:

8.3.1. The name of the society.

8.3.2. The society's aims and objectives.

8.3.3. Membership fees.

8.3.4. Committee role descriptions.

8.3.5. Signatures.

8.4. Amendments to the constitution can be proposed to the Students' Union. Amendments must have the approval of at least a three-quarter majority of the society committee to be considered. Amendments are subject to the approval of the Students' Union.

9. Finances

- 9.1. A society's finances are stored with the Students' Union.
- 9.2. All of a society's income must be held in the society account with the Students' Union. Under no circumstances will alternative financial arrangements be made.
- 9.3. Under no circumstance should students collect money physically or digitally for tickets, memberships or products associated with their society. All sales must be made in a process as agreed by the Students' Union prior to payment being made.
- 9.4. Societies are financed by money made from membership, product and ticket sales, fundraising, sponsorship, donations, and any other form of income they may receive.
- 9.5. All funds are used in line with the aims and objectives of the Society as defined in their approved Constitution.
- 9.6. We encourage societies to seek out sponsorship for their society. All sponsorships must:
 - 9.6.1. Be approved by the Students' Union before they are agreed.
 - 9.6.2. Adhere to the Students' Union guidelines found [here](#).
 - 9.6.3. Your potential sponsors cannot contravene Hertfordshire Students' Union's policy.
 - 9.6.4. Your sponsorship must not exceed the academic year beyond when it has originally been signed.
- 9.7. Fundraising
 - 9.7.1. If a society wishes to raise money for their own benefit, they must make it explicitly clear to donors that this is

where the raised funds will be going. The raised funds must be paid into the society account as soon as is possible.

9.7.2. If a society wishes to raise money for a charity, it must be channelled through RaG (Raise and Give) via charity buckets or at the official Herts SU JustGiving page. The name and registration number of the charity must be made explicitly visible to donors. The raised funds must be paid into the Students' Union as soon as possible. The Students' Union will forward on the donation accordingly.

9.7.3. No other method of fundraising will be approved. If a student has been found to be using other methods, disciplinary action may be taken, if raised through the societies name.

9.8. Society Spending & Funding

9.8.1. All funds will be used as to always benefit the largest number of members possible. Money can only be used for the benefit of the society.

9.8.2. As an entity of Hertfordshire Students' Union, all societies must adhere to the VAT regulations.

9.8.3. Each academic year, societies can apply for funding. This can be applied for all in one go or at separate occasions across the year. To be eligible to apply for funding:

9.8.3.1. All committee members must attend compulsory society training.

9.8.4. Funds will only be considered for approval if:

- 9.8.4.1. They are used in line with the aims and objectives of the Society as defined in their recognised and approved Constitution.
 - 9.8.4.2. They are used in the interests of all members of the Society.
 - 9.8.4.3. They use the most sustainable item(s) where practical and possible.
- 9.8.5. Society members are eligible to use society funds for reasonable reimbursements such as external guest travel costs, refreshments etc. All items must be approved by the Students' Union prior to purchase.
- 9.8.6. Society members can utilise funding for competition prizes.
- 9.8.7. The Students' Union has the final say over approved items.
- 9.8.8. Society funding will not be approved for the following:
 - 9.8.8.1. Alcohol, where the constitution and event are not tailored to this e.g. wine tasting or a 'cocktail society'.
 - 9.8.8.2. Fuel to attend an event which was not approved by the Students' Union in advance.
 - 9.8.8.3. This is not an exhaustive list, and the final decision sits within the Students' Union.
- 9.9. The Students' Union reserve the right to deny the reimbursement of items that do not adhere to criteria.

10. Society Forum

- 10.1. The society forum is a discussion and feedback space for the committee members of affiliated societies.
- 10.2. Each academic year there will be at least one society forum per semester. At least one member of the society committee must be at each forum to maintain affiliation as set out in 2.0. Disciplinary action may follow if we are not notified in advance.
- 10.3. If a representative is unable to attend due to a valid reason as determined by the Students' Union, the group must make alternative arrangements, such as send a written update or a different member of the committee, or, failing that, apologies before the forum takes place.
- 10.4. The following topics may be discussed at the forum:
 - 10.4.1. Society updates.
 - 10.4.2. Students' Union updates.
 - 10.4.3. Upcoming events.
 - 10.4.4. Any changes that affect societies.
 - 10.4.5. Any upcoming deadlines groups should be aware of.
 - 10.4.6. Any additional topics for discussion that clubs and societies want to discuss.
- 10.5. Action points will be decided within each forum and be circulated to society committee members to be discussed at the next society forum.
- 10.6. Non-engagement with the Society Forum may lead to disciplinary action towards the committee.

11. Guest Speakers

- 11.1. An external speaker refers to a person or organisation that is not part of the Union or university, who is invited to speak at any organisation

event on or off campus. This is inclusive of Alumni Students, and UH staff who are delivering talks on topics beyond their employment contract.

- 11.2. Any student group wishing to invite any external person to the University of Hertfordshire campus for an event must have approval from the Students' Union prior to the proposed event date.
- 11.3. Any student group wishing to invite a guest speaker/lecturer to deliver a talk must submit a **Guest Speaker Request** no later than 15 working days prior to their proposed event date.
- 11.4. All guest speakers are subject to approval from the Students' Union team, who on occasions will liaise with the University.
- 11.5. No external guest/ guest speaker is to be confirmed to come to campus until final approval has been received from the Students' Union.
- 11.6. Should a student group be hosting a regular external speaker, they are able to submit a recurring request via the online form should they wish to do this but must outline content of each event.
- 11.7. All guest speakers must adhere to our Guest Speaker Policy.

12. Student-Led Events

- 12.1. All requests for Tier 1 events (standard room bookings only) must be submitted via the Event Request Form at least 10 working days (within term time) before the proposed event.
- 12.2. All requests for Tier 2 events (this includes but is not limited to events in Seventy7) must be submitted via the Event Request Form at least 15 working days (within term time) before the proposed event.

- 12.3. All requests for Tier 3 events (this includes but is not limited to trips, high profile guests, DJ nights etc.) must be submitted via the Event Request Form at least 21 working days (within term time) before the proposed event.
- 12.4. Room bookings will only be confirmed upon approval from the relevant UH team.
 - 12.4.1. All rooms must be treated with respect and left clean and tidy. If this standard is not met, it may result in disciplinary action.
 - 12.4.2. Any furniture that is moved for the purpose of a society booking must be returned to how it was found, with no disruptions to teaching. If this standard is not met, it may result in disciplinary action.
- 12.5. All room bookings and student-led events must be run through the Students' Union, working with the relevant team to ensure that all plans are compliant with health and safety regulations.
- 12.6. Events run without prior approval from the Students' Union are subject to disciplinary action.
- 12.7. Alcohol must not be consumed in University of Hertfordshire classrooms. Any student-led events that involve alcohol are to be held in The Forum, with full-time staff and security present.
- 12.8. Any requests for DJ nights will be referred to the Forum Management Team and must be run in connection with their existing programme of events.
- 12.9. All society led events must be requested, organised, and communicated by current Society Committee Members who have completed training only. No event request will be accepted or worked upon if society committee members are not involved with the planning process.

12.10. Event tickets are to be sold via the Students' Union website only.

Students who sell event tickets through other platforms will be subject to disciplinary action, as set out in 9.3.

12.11. Society events are to be primarily run for society members only.

Societies may allocate up to 20 non-member tickets per event, in keeping with room capacity and health and safety regulations. These tickets must still be registered for via the Students' Union website.

12.11.1 Students who attend society events for the same society more than 3 times via the non-members ticket are required to purchase a society membership, allowing other students the opportunity to benefit from non-membership offering.

12.12. External Guests are to be confirmed at the discretion of the Students' Union. External Guests at events will primarily fall within the Tier 3 events category.

13. Disciplinary Procedures

13.1 If a student wishes to make a complaint about a society, they should submit a written complaint via email to societies@hertssu.com where a member of staff at Hertfordshire Students' Union will review the complaint.

13.2 Disciplinary action may also be taken at the discretion of Hertfordshire Students' Union against societies due to the following reasons. *Please note this list is not exhaustive.*

13.2.1 The running of unapproved Society Events.

13.2.2 Non-democratic election or appointment of new or vacant committee roles.

13.2.3 Non-attendance at Society Forums, without communication to the Hertfordshire Students' Union Societies Team.

- 13.2.4 Inappropriate use of society funds.
- 13.2.5 Inappropriate use of society social media account.
- 13.2.6 Abuse, violence, or disrespect.
- 13.2.7 Theft or damage of SU equipment.
- 13.2.8 Any breach of the SUs Code of Conduct.

Please refer to the [SU Code of Conduct](#) for the full disciplinary procedure and process.