

Handbooks

Creating handbooks for your student volunteers

Handbooks are a great way of providing information and guidance to volunteers. This inspiration sheet highlights ideas for content and ways of presenting the information.

Introduction

Many staff and officers spend much of their time doing administration and answering questions from student groups. A handbook can save you time in the long-term as it can answer questions and clarify the students' union processes.

A well-designed handbook offers great opportunity for continuing your brand and establishing your students' union values. It shows the students reading it that they are important and valued. You can also use the document as a way to say thank you, and to highlight what they gain from getting involved with the students' union.

Think about the best way of designing and organising your handbook. It's good to look at any previous documents used by your students' union and note the important information, and it's also beneficial to look at how other students' union organise this document. However don't feel you have to present the information in the same way as your students' union has always done, or in the same way that other SUs do theirs. Don't be afraid to innovate!

The handbook format

Consider what is best for your students and work out how much you have to spend on producing your handbook.

Some ideas for formats are:

- Paper copy for every committee volunteer
- Paper copy one per committee
- Digital handbook with a few paper copies for reference in main SU offices
- Digital handbook on USB drive
- Online – booklet style
- Online – website

If you have environmental policies in place, you may not be permitted to make paper copies. Printed handbooks can also be an expensive method as it requires much printing and will need to be reproduced each year.

What to include:

Your handbook should reflect the information that your students need to perform their role.

Topics that could be covered include:

- **Constitution/rules & regulations** – if you have this for student groups you could include it and include explanatory notes to help them to understand it.

- **People** – the staff and officers that they need to know to perform their role.
- **How-to guides** – step-by-step instructions to perform tasks such as booking rooms/planning events/performing risk assessments.
- **Frequently asked questions** – consider all of the most commonly asked questions and if there is a standard answer, include this in the handbook.
- **Key dates** – the important dates and deadlines that they need to know.
- **Affiliation** – explain why it is beneficial to be an affiliated club/society/group.

Contents

This inspiration sheet contains content from:

- Queen's University Belfast Students' Union
- University of Brighton Students' Union
- University of Staffordshire Students' Union
- University of Westminster Students' Union

If you have any questions about this guide or would like to suggest any amends please contact rosie.hunnam@nus.org.uk.



University of Brighton Students' Union

About

This case study is about the Brighton SU Societies Handbook, which offers everything student society committees need to know about running their society from committee roles to applying for funding to booking a room or tips for organising an event.

[The handbook can be found here.](#)

The idea

Since employing a dedicated Societies Coordinator a few years ago, the number of societies has increased and we found that many students were coming in asking the same questions. As a multi-campus university, it was sometimes difficult to field all the enquiries and make sure that the right information is disseminated. It became clear that along with some committee training, some kind of universal reference document was needed which could easily be handed out by staff members which explains how to get the best out of the support the SU can offer for a society. There were also the regulations and procedures relating to finance, health and safety, room bookings which we wanted to make sure they were aware of.

Development stages

The Societies Handbook covers:

- The benefits of starting a society
- How to start a society
- Committee positions and suggested 'job descriptions' for each role
- Funding and how to apply
- What 'Societies Federation' at Brighton SU is

- Ideas for fundraising
- Booking facilities at the university
- Planning an event
- Health and safety
- SU financial regulations
- Useful contacts

There was already some existing guidance on running an event written by an Activities Sabbatical officer in the past, so I brought this up to date and put it in the handbook. I identified some key health and safety issues by liaising with our Sports division and adapting their procedures for our purposes. It started as a documented printed in black and white by us on a printer, but we think making it into an attractive, colourful booklet definitely appeals to students in that they'll actually want one and read it! Putting everything into one 'handbook' also seemed much simpler than making lots of different handouts for different society activities – we wanted it to be an ultimate reference guide.

Because societies are a constantly growing, evolving and developing area the handbook is currently updated every year. While there are some societies that sustain themselves from year to year, we also find there are new ones that come and go all the time bringing lots of new challenges! As such, the timing of publishing the handbook and making sure it's accurate is pretty key as being a paper printed document it can't be updated immediately like the website!

One of the issues at Brighton SU is that we currently only use external designers so liaising with a designer was sometimes time consuming

and it was difficult to get across the idea of what we wanted to someone not directly affiliated to the organisation. I'd just advise to be as clear as possible on what you want from the outset, liaise with your marketing and communications department on what designers expect in terms of a brief, and proof-read meticulously! (there are a few errors in last years which we are aiming to rectify this year)

Indicators of success

The handbook has made a difference because, as a multi-campus university, I cannot always be there when students have an enquiry. It is a useful reference guide for SU staff at each campus to give to societies and answer many of the frequently asked questions they might have. It saves a lot of time for staff and answers many of the frequently asked questions. It has been introduced at the same time as a more structured programme of training for society committees so both things together have helped. We haven't done any monitoring of response to the handbook but we do get students coming and asking for a copy so they seem to find it useful and like it!

As well as the societies handbook we also have a societies leaflet which is in a similar design. This is a smaller folded leaflet at SU receptions which is more for casual visitors interested in joining a society or starting one. The handbook is a more comprehensive document for society committees.

Further information

For more information about this, please contact [Stella Sims](#) at the University of Brighton Students' Union.



Queen's University Belfast

Students' Union

About

The idea for the online handbook was to modernise the way clubs and societies received information regarding their role as a committee member of a club or society. It is also helpful for potential new clubs and societies to see what is involved in being on committee.

The introduction had also cut down footfall to the clubs and societies office due to the fact that all information and paperwork could be found via the handbook online.

[The handbook can be found here.](#)

The idea

Since the introduction of a clubs and societies coordinator role in 2010 the clubs and societies coordinator has audited all areas relating to the delivery of clubs and societies. Work has been on-going each year to develop and enhance all administration programmes relating to clubs and societies in order to modernise systems at the same time as making the role of being a club or society committee member less time consuming so that they are free to concentrate on their studies and enjoy their time in a club or society.

Previously the handbook was presented each year as a brochure that was distributed to all clubs and societies at the annual club and society training days. This then progressed to a pdf on a USB pen. The USB pens would be provided by an external partner each year. The two previous methods involved a lot of labour

and the handbooks became dated each year. We then decided that the best format was an online handbook that would be available at the click of a button and could be kept up to date throughout the year as the online version was easily amendable through our marketing team's support.

Development stages

I would highly recommend this. It can be easily amended, can be accessed online and is there as an ongoing tool at minimal cost (staff time) to set up.

We are happy with what we have produced and any changes that we have needed to make have been done since its introduction online.

The biggest difficulty we had was meeting the deadline that we had set and getting support from our staff in the marketing and design team to juggle a heavy workload in order to deliver the online booklet in advance of the target launch date.

Indicators of success

Well for starters the welcome and positive feedback from NUS has shown that it has worked and we are delighted to be used as a benchmark for others and are only too happy to support.

The online handbook has cut down on footfall and general queries as most answers are now available online. This means that we have more

time for answering more complex queries and are able to offer better support in person.

We didn't specifically measure the impact and this is an area we can explore, however we have noticed decreased footfall relating to queries answered in the handbook.

Further information

Our aim within Queen's Students' Union is to 'modernise' all areas of administration relating to clubs and societies. We have introduced two compulsory annual training events. One in May for new incoming committees to attend to gain information on financial, purchasing, health and safety, insurance and Students' Union protocol.

This will help students prepare over the summer for developing the club or society for the beginning of the new academic year. In October our training is then focused on areas such as enterprise, employability, volunteering, sports, democracy and marketing.

We have also gone down the route of having all clubs and societies members sign up via our online system at Freshers' Fair. As a result sign ups have went from 4,500 members signed up at Freshers' Fair in 2012 to 8,700 in 2013. We have introduced a simple method of a system were all students that come along just add their student number to a page that is open on a laptop and they are signed up.

Further to our modernisation we have implemented an online system were clubs and societies apply for their recurrent grants online and also submit and annual development plan via the online content management system also.

For more information about this, please contact [David Bradley](#) at Queen's University Belfast Students' Union.

University of Staffordshire Students' Union

About

The online Student Groups Committee handbook tool allows committees access to all the questions, forms, templates, etc. and has made our committee training process much easier.

[The handbook can be found here.](#)

The idea

The Handbook is a 'one-stop shop' for all of our committee members. We first worked with a small focus group of outgoing committee members to decide on what were the most frequently asked questions, most accessed documents and most used areas. This was then developed further into an online tool.

Development stages

The handbook is developed depending on the feedback given to us by outgoing committees. We address the varying issues and forms that new members may need. We are also looking at including some of the mock up pre-filled forms, so students have access to how the form needs to be filled-in. Particularly, we are considering this for documents that aren't ours, like DBS, insurance documents, etc.

Additionally this has now been improved to incorporate our student volunteers and our student media.

Further information

For more information about this, please contact [Jonathan Pace](#) at the University of Staffordshire Students' Union.

University of Westminster Students' Union

About

The 'Society Handbook and Registration Paperwork' is a thorough and complete guide for individuals looking to start up a student society.

The idea

The Handbook and Registration Paperwork covers topics such as funding allocation, external speakers, room bookings, health and safety and committee members. It also gives advice and contact details for various key depts. and staff members within the Union.

Further information

You will find the handbook attached in the next few pages.

For more information about this, please contact [Harry Dodd](#) at the University of Westminster Students' Union.



UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

STUDENTS'
UNION

WWW.UWSU.COM

Society Handbook and Registration Paperwork

Academic Year 2013/14



UWSU Sports and Activities Office
Room B33, 309 Regent Street
London, W1B 2UW

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A Statement from the UWSU

The University of Westminster Students' Union (UWSU) is fully committed to both support and represent its members in order that they enjoy a fulfilling and healthy learning and social experience throughout their course of study.

UWSU oversees a wide range of activities and services. One of the areas it is responsible for are student societies.

We are committed to enabling all students to participate in societies that reflect their interests including the arts, culture, heritage and faith to mention just a few.

In order that UWSU can ensure that the management of societies is as comprehensive, well organised and as safe as possible, we require all presidents of established societies to re-register, new societies to register for the first time and all students who wish to join societies to register their interest.

For academic year 2012/13 we require all student societies to re-register with the Students' Union.

This handbook is designed to guide you through that process if you already have an established society in operation or if you wish to set up a new one.

It is non-negotiable to continue your society without re-registering it for the coming year.

Re-registering your society or starting a new society

UWSU already oversees a wide range of over 100 societies for you to get involved and participate in. If your preferred area of interest is not currently provided, however, there is nothing to stop you setting up your own society made up of members with similar interests.

We want the process of registering or re-registering a society to be as easy as possible but there are some things you will need to do before you can operate as a society supported by the University of Westminster Students' Union.

All societies are required to have elected officers. Normally this will be a Chairperson or President, a Treasurer and a Secretary. So, if you set up a new society the first thing that will need to happen is that an election is held to elect the key officer roles. You will also need to be sure that you have enough prospective members to hold an election. **The minimum requirement for any society is 10 members.**

All [existing] societies are required to have completed the following:



1. **Society Registration Form** including your society's aims, equal opportunities agreement, data protection agreement, monitoring agreement, officer details and further information about the society;
2. **Membership Forms**, monitoring form and register;
3. **Financial Regulation and Forecast Form**;

And to have in place a:

4. **A Constitution** (we have provided a sample to help you).

Any proposed societies must complete the University of Westminster Students' Union "request to set up a society" form, and if successful will need to complete the paperwork required of existing societies, point's 1, 2, 3 and 4 above.

All the forms are contained in the appendices for you and upon completion are to be either handed in to the SU activities office at Regent Street campus or emailed to:

Harry Dodd at h.dodd1@westminster.ac.uk

AND

Andita Santoso at a.santoso@westminster.ac.uk.

The University of Westminster Student Union and Society Governance

Student participation in societies is a cornerstone of the learning experiences gained through university education.

The Students' Union views Student Societies as a priority and is striving to make that element of its services to students of real value in terms of educational and personal development outcomes.

For the academic year 2013/14, society governance is managed by Harry Dodd and Andita Santoso, whose contact details are above. They are responsible for reviewing society applications for funding or otherwise and will lead the process of society [re-]registration.

Please note that a period of at least two weeks is required for funding applications – bear this in mind when planning events.

All Societies which are ratified to operate under the name of the University of Westminster Students' Union are required to adhere to the operating guidelines contained here. All societies which are affiliated to the Students' Union **do not necessarily** represent the views and opinions of the Students' Union.

If your society is not successful in achieving affiliation to the Students' Union it can still operate but the Students' Union will not book rooms or provide funding.

Conduct of Clubs and Societies

All societies must abide by the following:



The Sports/societies department seeks to provide activities which users find pleasant, safe and enjoyable to take part in, and in which users can achieve their sporting, recreational activity and exercise goals. Users of the facilities are therefore expected to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. All clubs and societies must hold properly and fairly conducted annual elections for any named posts within that club or society, and abide by UWSU financial procedures;
2. Officials of clubs and societies must be full members of UWSU (i.e. currently enrolled students of the University of Westminster);
3. **Meetings of clubs and societies must be open to all full members of UWSU;**
4. All clubs and societies must possess mission statements (Aims and Objectives, attached);
5. All clubs and societies must be aware of and abide by the UWSU Equal Opportunities Policy;
6. All clubs and societies claiming affiliation with the UWSU must be approved and registered;
7. All clubs and societies must provide an inventory of all equipment in their possession every academic year on request;
8. Every active club and society must be represented at all UWSU General Meetings and/or have a member of the club or society represent them;
9. Users should treat facility staff and fellow users with courtesy and respect, recognising that the facilities are used by people from a variety of different backgrounds and cultures;
10. Users should treat equipment and all other facilities with respect and use equipment and facilities in an appropriate manner;
11. Safety regulations relating to facilities and individual activities should be observed at all times. Users should be aware of safety procedures in relation to their sport or form of exercise and should seek to observe these procedures, not least when they affect the safety of fellow users or participants;
12. If shared facilities are busy, users should seek to make facilities available as soon as possible to those waiting. At the same time, those waiting should be prepared to wait for a reasonable period or use alternative facilities until their chosen facility becomes free. Any disagreements should be referred to the Sports and Activities department of the Students' Union;
13. Users should wear appropriate dress and use the correct equipment for the activities being undertaken;
14. Any attempt to make use of the facilities without paying the appropriate charge will be viewed as a disciplinary offence and may lead to action under the procedures defined below;
15. Any significant damage to facilities or equipment caused by irresponsible behaviour will be viewed as an offence and may lead to action under the disciplinary procedures defined below;
16. **Discrimination towards facility staff or fellow users on the grounds of race, sex, religion or disability will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action under the procedures defined below;**

17. Physical intimidation or violence towards facility staff or fellow users is entirely unacceptable and may lead to action under the disciplinary procedures defined below;
18. The department reserves the right to request a medical certificate if they are concerned that exercise may be detrimental to the individual's health or if their physical status has changed since completion of the membership form.

Disciplinary Procedures



Users are required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the above Code of Conduct. Where users breach this general requirement, the relevant departmental Head of the UWSU Sports and Activities or his/her nominated Depute is authorised to deal with disciplinary matters and to take any of the following actions:

- Warning to Captain/President of Club/Society or the individual involved as to further conduct;
 - Immediate expulsion of users from premises pending investigation of incidents;
 - In the case of a Society/Club breach; suspension of Society/Club activity, status and support for up to one academic year (club will be permitted to re-register in the next academic year or in the case of a shorter punishment will be immediately re-instated at the end of the term of punishment), as well as an internal review into the liability of the existing Chairperson/President/Captain run by a Union appointed panel;
 - In the case of an individual breach; suspension from any of the sports/society activities operated by the Students Union for a period up until the end of the academic year (with no refund of subscription or usage charges).
- **Appeals against such actions taken by relevant departmental Head or his/her nominated Depute of the UWSU Sports and Activities will be considered by the Students' Union sabbatical officers.**
 - Where UWSU Sports and Activities Department considers the matter in question to be of a more serious nature, further action may be taken. In the event of such action being taken, the relevant departmental Head of the UWSU Sports and Activities department or his/her nominated Depute has the authority to exclude the user(s) in question from using the facilities until a case is heard.
 - In signing up to any club and paying the membership (if applicable) you adhere to the above code of conduct.

Equal Opportunities Statement

All societies must agree to the following Equal Opportunities Statement in order to be affiliated with the UWSU and subsequently receive support and funding:

- i) The UWSU seeks to encourage a community in which all individuals may contribute as fully as possible without fear of unfair and discriminatory attitudes and practices. Societies too must follow this mantra.



- ii) In order to ensure that there is a positive atmosphere, this Union seeks to create and sustain a welcoming environment for all of its users both in and outside of the Union's premises. Societies should seek to be welcoming to all members, existing and new.
- iii) All Students' Union Clubs and Societies must be open to **all** members of the UWSU. All publicity and literature produced by societies must be in accordance with the Students' Union Equal Opportunities Policy as outlined here and be sensitive to the Union's diverse membership. **All information provided by societies must be given with an English translation.**
- iv) All society events, elections and communications must be conducted in line with the Students' Union Equal Opportunities Policy and Code of Practise.

Health and Safety Compliance

All Clubs are required to observe the **UWSU Health and Safety Policy and procedures** as outlined:

- The SU Sports department recognises that there will be differences between individual sports/activities policy and standards. Club members must to adhere to their own sport's governing body regulations in such matters. If the sport has a national governing body, then individual clubs must affiliate to it.
- The safety of club members is paramount. **Clubs must make Health and Safety their absolute priority.**
- Whilst it is recognised that individuals must and should take responsibility for their own safety, club officials must strive to ensure that members are not put at risk.
- In order that you are aware of who is present at any sporting event/activity, **please ensure that the membership register is completed.** This is particularly important in relation to anyone attending who may have health conditions that you need to be aware of.
- **All activities undertaken by the club must have a risk assessment.** We strongly recommend that clubs and societies use the Health and Safety Executive "Five Steps to Risk Assessment" which includes a form for completion. A risk assessment must be undertaken before any sporting or other activity can take place and a copy of which must be provided to the UWSU relevant departmental head within the Sports and Activities department.

Publicity Policy

- **Only affiliated UWSU clubs/societies are permitted to use the student's union logo on publicity.** Publicity materials must be approved by the UWSU relevant departmental head within the Sports and Activities department.
- **All publicity materials must display the Students Union logo otherwise they will be removed by university staff.**
- Publicity materials must be removed once the event has passed; this is the responsibility of the society president/chair.
- If a club wishes to put up posters in University departments, they must obtain permission from each individual department in advance.
- Breaches of this publicity policy may result in disciplinary action.



Celebrating Success

All societies and sports teams are encouraged to celebrate their success stories through making effective use of the UWSU communications department, including Smoke TV, Radio, the QH Newspaper and other means. For more information on making use of these facilities, please contact Sophie Misrahi on s.misrahi1@westminster.ac.uk.

Fresher's Fairs

- All societies and sports teams should be present at the Freshers' Fairs;
- It is the responsibility of the society president/chair or sports captain to be at each fair early in order to organise their table - It will not be done for you and you may lose your promotional area.
- If the captain/president cannot be present, you should organise another member of the team to come to the fairs to represent the club.
- You are required to organise your own promotional material in advance of each fair. Facilities such as printing and lamination can be accessed at the Sports and Activities Office (Room B33, Regent Street Campus)
- Please make sure that there is always someone at your table in order to give information to anyone who requires it. It is **NOT** the responsibility of other societies/teams to do this for you.
- It is the responsibility of the entire team/society to pack up all equipment and to also clean up any mess they have made during the day. Rubbish bags will be provided to you for you to clean up your area.

Room Booking

- To book a University room the "Room Booking Form" must be completed online by following the 'Societies' and 'Book a Room' tabs on the UWSU.com website (or - www.uwsu.com/societies/book-a-room);
- **All requests for rooms must be submitted a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the meeting or event.**
- During the Room Booking process, you must confirm how many external guests you will be expecting at your event - if any. **Once your request has been confirmed, you must submit a full list of names of your expected guests to roombooking@su.westminster.ac.uk at least 48 hours prior to your event.**
- If you have any queries, please e-mail roombooking@su.westminster.ac.uk.

External Speakers



- ALL external speaking guests must be approved by the University Interfaith Adviser, Yusuf Kaplan, **irrespective of the nature of the talk.**
- Please contact Yusuf to discuss this **at least two weeks prior to the event:**

Yusuf Kaplan
Interfaith Adviser
Academic Services
University of Westminster
Tel: 020 7911 5000 ext 65794
Y.Kaplan@westminster.ac.uk

UWSU Website

It is the intention of the Students' Union that the UWSU Website is the primary point of access to information for Students' Union members. Therefore we will require you to complete a template form which will then be used to describe your society and how students can get involved on the UWSU website.

Faith Based Societies

All faith based societies are required to meet with the University Interfaith Adviser. Faith based society chairpersons/presidents **must** arrange to contact with the Interfaith Adviser for the purpose of openly discussing the aims of the society and any subsequent or planned events. In the case of invitations to external visitors and speakers this **must** also be discussed with the Interfaith Adviser prior to the event being held and can only go ahead with his agreement. Please contact:

Yusuf Kaplan
Interfaith Adviser
Academic Services
University of Westminster
Tel: 020 7911 5000 ext 65794
Y.Kaplan@westminster.ac.uk

If you require clarification on whether your society would be deemed to be faith based please contact the Interfaith Adviser, details above.



Funding for your society

The University of Westminster Students' Union is committed to supporting societies to achieve their aim. Funding for sports/activities is at the discretion of the relevant departmental head within the Sports and Activities department according to requirements and budgets of the particular sports team or society activity and in line with overall UWSU budgets. This is reviewed annually.

Whilst the UWSU is fully supportive of Society activity, there are obviously limitations to the financial support we are able to give. Where possible, all clubs and societies will be allocated the basic requirements in order to train, compete and meet. Applications for "match" funding can be made using the application form in the appendix or by downloading it from the website. Any challenges to this process should be made in writing to the president or to the relevant departmental head within the Sports and Activities department.

Please use the application for funding contained in the appendix or download from our website.

Please allow at least two weeks prior to funding applications to be considered.

Note that it is not permitted for Societies to have their own bank accounts. All income generated either through subscriptions/membership fees and **events must be given to the Students' Union.** It will be held in trust, ring-fenced and recorded in budgets and will be available to Society officers for specific purposes (e.g. events, celebrations, awards, trips etc.).

Appendices

Society Registration Form



Society Name:

Aims of the Society:

Carefully consider this statement of the society's aims as anything outside of these aims will not be supported or funded by the Union. Your aims should be precise, relevant and practically achievable. For example: please do not state that you intend to hold events, you must state specifically what sort of events.



Number of members at present:

Date of election meeting:

Number of members present:

Method of voting:

Show of hands?

Secret ballot?

Have you adopted the standard society constitution?

Yes

No

(If no please provide a copy of your modified constitution)

Equal Opportunity Statement

This society complies with the Students' Union Equal Opportunities Policy and does not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origins, gender, marital status, sexuality, disability, class, age, and medical status, political or religious beliefs. This society is committed to the active promotion of equal opportunities and diversity in representing and protecting the interests of all its members.

To accept the above statement please answer yes in the box below.

Yes

No

Monitoring Statement

The Students' Union takes its responsibility for management and oversight of societies very seriously. Key to ensuring that societies operate in line with the values, mission and policies of the Union we reserve the right to make announced and unannounced monitoring visits of



all society meetings and activities. We also request that all members of the society complete an anonymous student monitoring form. This will enable us to see how effective our societies are in terms of reflecting the student population and demographic and helping us to achieve our target for widening participation.

To accept the above statement and your agreement with monitoring visits please answer yes in the below box.

Yes

No

Society Executive Contact Details

Chairperson's details (the person who will manage your elections)

First Name:

Last Name:

Year of Study:

Term time address line 1:

Term time address line 2:

Term time address postcode:

Telephone number:

UoW Email:

Other Email:

Signature:

President's details



First Name:

Last Name:

Year of Study:

Term time address line 1:

Term time address line 2:

Term time address postcode:

Telephone number:

UoW Email:

Other Email:

Signature:

Treasurer's details

First Name:

Last Name:

Year of Study:

Term time address line 1:

Term time address line 2:

Term time address postcode:

Telephone number:

UoW Email:

Other Email:

Signature:

Secretary's details

First Name:

Last Name:



Year of Study:

Term time address line 1:

Term time address line 2:

Term time address postcode:

Telephone number:

UoW Email:

Other Email:

Signature:

Further information about the Society:

How is the Society going to achieve its aim?

How will you measure whether you have met your aims or not?

Which existing Student Societies are you most similar to or likely to overlap with?

How will you go about recruiting students to your Society?

Is your activity accessible to all students including international students and those with disabilities?



What will you society bring to the University of Westminster community? Why should we support you?



Society Membership Form

Name of Society you are joining

Full Name

Student Number

(Term time) Address

Post Code:
Course & Campus

Telephone Number

University Email
Address:

Health – Do you have any medical condition(s) which may affect your participation that we need to be aware of? Please describe.

Medication – are you required to take any medication for your



condition? Please tell us what it is.

Emergency Contact Information

Please provide the name, address and telephone numbers of someone for us to call in case of emergency.

Name:

Relationship:

Telephone Number:





Monitoring Information

It is important for the UWSU to ensure as many people as possible are participating in sport and other activities. It is equally important for us to know that the sports and activities offered are representative of and participated in by a wide range of students from across the university.

Please answer the questions below. **You do not have to give your name and all information stored is for monitoring purposes only.**

Name of Society you are joining				
Today's Date				
Gender (M/F)				
Study Mode (Part/Full Time)				
Campus (R, M, C, H)				
Fees (Home/International)				
Do you have a registered disability? (Yes/No)				
Date of Birth				
Type of Course (Undergrad/Postgrad)				
School (MAD, ABE, WBS etc.)				
Year of Study (1 st , 2 nd ...)				
Accommodation (University, Private, With Parents)				
How would you describe your ethnic background? (Tick as appropriate)	Prefer not to say			
White	British	Irish	Other (please specify)	
Asian or Asian British	Indian	Pakistani	Bangladeshi	Other (please specify)
Black or Black British	Caribbean	African	Other (please specify)	
Chinese or other Ethnic Group	Chinese	Any Other Background (please specify)		



Society Membership Register



Society Name:

Date:

<u>Student Name</u>	<u>Student ID</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Membership paid Y/N</u>	<u>Signature</u>

Society Constitution



Name of Society:



University of Westminster Students' Union
Sports and Activities Office, Room B33
309 Regent Street
London, W1B 2UW

Every society must have a constitution which needs to be submitted to the relevant departmental head in the Sports and Activities office (above).

The writing of your constitution should not be regarded as a 'filling in the blanks' exercise. Careful thought should go into its composition. The clauses will fall under three areas:

1. *The name and aims of the society;*
2. *The compulsory clauses that must appear in your constitution, as given below, and;*
3. *The individual clauses, which will differ according to the size and nature of your society.*

1. Name and Aims

Start your constitution with the following:

- The name of the society shall be "The University of Westminster **[insert complete society name]**".
- The aims of the society shall be
 - **[insert aim];**
 - **[insert aim];**
 - **[insert aim]...**
- The society shall abide by any applicable laws, bye-laws and guidelines of the University of Westminster Students' Union in relation to recognised societies.

Note: It is especially important to be as descriptive as you can about the scope of what you hope to achieve as a society. This is to enable the process of recognition by the Students' Union to go ahead as smoothly as possible. Avoid using vague terms such as 'to promote an interest in...' or 'to make students aware of...' without also telling us just how you intend to do this. This is to ensure that your society does not clash with an already existing society; so try to make your aims as clear and precise as possible.

2. Compulsory Clauses

The following points must appear in your constitution in some form; it is easier to simply copy them verbatim:

- Membership shall be open to **all** matriculated students of The University of Westminster;



- Membership shall be at least 75% matriculated students of The University of Westminster;
- All members who are not matriculated students of The University of Westminster shall pay at least 150% of the annual subscription;
- The President, The Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer of the society shall be matriculated students of The University of Westminster:
 - **The President** shall be ultimately responsible for the conduct of the society;
 - **The Chairperson** will be responsible for fair elections on an annual basis;
 - **The Secretary** shall be responsible to the President for the administration of the society;
 - **The Treasurer** shall be responsible to the President for the finances of the society.
- All members must receive at least 14 days notification of the annual general meeting (AGM) and of elections not held at the AGM;
- The society shall also inform the Students' Union Vice President for Activities of the date, time and place of the society's AGM;
- Constitutional amendments shall require a two-thirds majority at a general meeting open to all members - 14 days' notice of which shall be given;
- The society has taken and will continue to take all necessary steps to ensure that our meetings, events and socials are accessible to all, irrespective of any disability;
- The society has ensured and will continue to ensure that it complies with any relevant data protection legislation;
- The society believes that discrimination or harassment, direct or indirect, based on a person's gender, age (except where it relates to licensing laws), race, colour, national or ethnic origins, gender, marital status, sexuality, disability, class, age, medical status, political or religious beliefs or any other irrelevant distinction, is detrimental to the society, the university and wider society **will not be tolerated**.

3. Individual Clauses

These can be as long or as short as they need to be, depending on the nature of your society, and the activities which it intends to pursue. Clearly, it is impossible and pointlessly verbose to cover every possibility here. However, here are a few points to think about:

- *You may wish to specify the tasks of the office-bearers, and create extra positions for specific tasks. Also, it may suit your purposes to have an executive or committee of office-bearers and a few ordinary members. You may want to specify the powers which it has and the frequency of its meetings in your constitution.*



- *If your society is popular and membership grows, you may soon find internal procedural problems arising. While not all will be foreseeable, you should make some provision for voting procedure in your constitution.*
- *Some societies may attract non-matriculated students, which can only be accepted as members according to the rules spelt out above. In addition, you may wish to consider the constitutional position of these people. Should they have full voting power, for instance?*

Don't be put off by what may seem an unnecessarily complicated process; a clear and comprehensive constitution will ensure that your society can operate with the minimum of fuss.

If you are having problems, or if you feel unsure or concerned about the implications of these statements, you may wish to speak to the relevant departmental head in the Sports and Activities office:

Harry Dodd: h.dodd1@westminster.ac.uk

Andita Santoso: a.santoso@westminster.ac.uk

Onye Nkemdirim: o.nkemdirim1@westminster.ac.uk



Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is perhaps the most important element of what it means to take responsibility for being the Chairperson/President of a University of Westminster Students' Union Society.

The safety and wellbeing of students who take part in sports and activities must be the primary concern. So a Risk Assessment is about taking all reasonable precautions and control measures to protect individuals from harm and **to comply with the law**.

What is a Risk Assessment?

A Risk Assessment is simply a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. Workers and others have a right to be protected from harm caused by a failure to take reasonable control measures.

The Students' Union has taken the guidance of the University of Westminster Health and Safety Policy and Procedure and recommends using the guidelines as provided by the Health and Safety Executive for undertaking a Risk Assessment. What follows are the steps you are required to take to assess the risks to participants in sporting activities.

How to assess the risks:

Step 1 - Identify hazard;

Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how;

Step 3 – Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions;

Step 4 – Record your findings and implement them;

Step 5 – Review your assessment and update if necessary.

When thinking about your risk assessment, remember:

- A **hazard** is anything that may cause harm, such as travel to and from a venue, slipping over, glass on a football pitch etc.
- The **risk** is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.



Step 1 - Identify Hazards:

First of all you need to think about how people could be harmed. If you are used to regularly going to a particular place, or area, or doing something repeatedly it is easy to overlook potential hazards, so take time to identify the ones that matter:

- **Walk around** and get an idea of what could reasonably be expected to cause harm.
- **Ask other people** who use the area or do the sport or activity they may have noticed things not immediately obvious to you.
- **Visit the HSE Website** (www.hse.gov.uk). HSE publishes practical guidance on where hazards occur and how to control them.
- Alternatively call **HSE Infoline** (Tel: 0845 345 0055) who will identify publications that can help you.
- If you are using equipment for your sport **check the manufacturers' instructions** as they can be very helpful in spelling out the hazards and putting them in their true perspective.
- Have a look back at the **accident record book** (if there is one) – these often help to identify the less obvious hazards.

Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how:

For each hazard you need to be clear about who might be harmed; it will help you to identify the best way of managing the risk. That doesn't mean listing everyone by name, but rather identifying groups of people (e.g. 'people walking on a wet changing room floor in studded boots', or 'passers-by') In each case identify how they might be harmed, i.e. what kind of injury or ill health might occur. For example 'slipping over on a wet floor'

Remember:

- Some people might have special requirements, e.g. people with a disability, but who are entirely able to participate. Extra thought will be needed for some hazards.
- Members of the public if they could be hurt by your activities.
- If the space you use is shared you must think about how you use it may affect others, and what they do may affect you.
- Ask your colleagues if they can think of anyone you may have missed.

Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions:

Having spotted the hazards, you then have to decide what to do about them. The law requires you to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. You can work this out for yourself, but the easiest way is to compare what you are doing with best practice.



There are many sources of good practice – **HSE’s website** (www.hse.gov.uk), **HSE Infoline** (Tel: 0845 345 0055), and **Workplace Health Connect** (Tel: 0845 609 6006) will all help.

So first, look at what you are already doing, think about what controls you have in place and how what you are doing is organised. Then compare this with good practice and see if there’s more you should be doing to bring yourself up to standard. In asking yourself this, consider:

- Can I/we get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

When controlling risks, apply the principles below, if possible in the following order:

- Try a less risky option
- Prevent access to the hazard
- Organise what you do to reduce exposure to the hazard
- Issue the correct equipment and clothing
- Provide welfare facilities (e.g. first aid and washing facilities)

Improving Health and Safety need not cost a lot; much of it is common sense and thinking carefully about what can be done to minimize hazards and the risks of harm.

Involve your colleagues, so that you can be sure that what you propose to do will work in practice and won’t introduce any new hazards.

Step 4 - Record your findings and implement them:

Putting the results of your risk assessment into practice will make a difference when looking after people and your sports club.

Writing down the results of your Risk Assessment, and sharing them with members encourages you to do this. If you have fewer than 5 members (unlikely) you don’t have to write anything down, though it is useful so that you can review it a later date, if, for example, something changes.

When writing down your results, keep it simple, for example ‘tripping over rubbish: bins provided, people instructed, weekly housekeeping checks’ or ‘slipping on the floor in changing room: mops provided, staff/colleagues ensure floor has no puddles, weekly checks’.

We do not expect a risk assessment to be perfect, but it must be suitable and sufficient. You need to be able to show that:

- A proper check was made;
- You asked who might be affected;
- You dealt with all significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved;
- The precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low; and
- You involved team mates in the process

There is a template at the end of this section for you to print off, complete and use.



You may find that there are a number of improvements that could be made, big and small, don't try to do everything at once. Make a plan of action to deal with the most important things first. Health and Safety Inspectors acknowledge the efforts that are clearly trying to make improvements.

A good plan of action often includes a mixture of different things such as:

- A few cheap and easy improvements that can be done quickly, perhaps as a temporary solution until more reliable controls are in place;
- Long-term solutions to those risks most likely to cause accidents or ill health;
- Long-term solutions to those risks with the worst potential consequences;
- Arrangements for training members on the main risks that remain and how they are to be controlled;
- Regular checks to make sure that the control measures stay in place; and
- Clear responsibilities – who will lead on what action and by when,

Remember, prioritise and tackle the most important things first. As you complete each action, tick it off your plan.

Step 5 - Review your risk assessment and update if necessary

Few things stay the same, Sooner or later you will bring in new equipment, and kit and things may arise that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense, therefore, to review what you are doing on an on-going basis. Every year or so formally review where you are, to make sure you are still improving, or at least not sliding back. Don't let your standards slip.

Look at your risk assessment again. Have there been any changes? Are there improvements you still need to make? Have your members spotted a problem? Have you learnt anything from accidents or near misses? Make sure your risk assessment stays up to date.

When you are running a club it is all too easy to forget about reviewing your risk assessment – until something has gone wrong or it is too late. Why not set a review date for this risk assessment now? Write it down; note it in your diary as an annual event.

During the year, if there is significant change, don't wait. Check your risk assessment and, where necessary, amend it. If possible, it is best to think about the risk assessment when you're planning your change – that way you leave yourself more flexibility.

If you need any help then please ask us to help you. There is also a wealth of information to help you online.

