

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**BUSU exists to represent its members and provide them with services, support and opportunities for development to enable them to maximise the benefits of their overall student experience.**

## **CORE CONSTITUTION**

### **1. Name**

- 1.1. There shall be a Students' Union in the name of the University of Bath Students Union, BUSU. Throughout this document the organisation will be referred to as the Union or BUSU.
- 1.2. A Students' Union is defined in the Education Act 1994 as "A representative body, whose principle purposes include representing the generality of students at an establishment in academic disciplinary or other matters relating to the government of the establishment".
- 1.3. BUSU derives its charitable status from the University of Bath, our parent establishment.

### **2. Aims and Objectives**

We set out to achieve the Mission Statement with the following aims:

#### **2.1. Representation**

To ensure the student voice is heard where decisions are taken that affect them. We do this by providing effective advice and representation of the needs and interests of all students, on both an individual and collective level.

#### **2.2. Participation**

To encourage the widest possible participation of members in a broad range of athletic and other Union activities and services and provide opportunities for them to develop their skills and abilities.

#### **2.3. Equal Opportunities**

To create an environment in which all individuals and groups are free to partake in activities and are free from discrimination, harassment and intimidation on Union premises or in events or activities organised by the Union through the promotion of progressive policies and practices.

#### **2.4. Communication and Information**

To use a variety of media to ensure students are informed of all issues, both locally and nationally, which might affect them.

## **2.5. High Quality Staff**

To provide job satisfaction, good working conditions and personal development to those employed within an agreed set of values.

## **2.6. Community Focus**

To foster and promote positive links within the University with the local and national community and with other colleges and universities.

## **2.7. Welfare**

To provide information and support services around welfare issues which affect students and to assist students overcome difficulties which may arise during their time at University.

## **2.8. A Social Conscience**

By taking account of ethical and environmental concerns and in all our activities.

## **2.9. Commercial Services**

To provide high quality affordable services which take into account students' needs and expectations.

## **2.10. Quality Assurance**

To ensure that we continually strive to improve the quality of our services and operations in response to changing patterns of demand

## **2.11. Financial Probity**

To conduct all affairs with financial probity

## **3. Membership**

There shall be the following categories of membership, details of which are set out in Appendix 10 - **Membership of the Union**.

Ordinary membership  
Associate membership  
Honorary Life membership  
Life Membership (discontinued)

## **4. Major Union Officers**

The Sabbatical Officers of BUSU shall be the major officers of the Union. They shall be elected in accordance with the election regulations and paid an allowance as laid down in their terms and conditions. These officers shall have shared and individual

responsibilities as trustees of the Union as laid down in the regulations of the 1994 Education Act. They shall be the only trustees of the Union. The term of office for Sabbatical Officers shall be no more than 2 years as required by section 22(ii) Part (f) of the Education Act 1994 although the actual term may be less in accordance with Union policy.

## 5. Union Government

5.1. All government of the Union shall be in accordance with the **Core Constitution** and its appendices.

5.2. The Union shall have the following key decision-making bodies which are in the following order of authority.

The Referendum  
The Annual General Meeting  
The Union Council  
The Union Executive

### 5.3. The Referendum

A Referendum may be held on any matter and shall be called and conducted in accordance with the **Meetings Guidelines** (see Appendix 7)

### 5.4. The Annual General Meeting

5.4.1. There shall be one Annual General Meeting (AGM) per year and it shall be run in accordance with the **Meetings Guidelines** (see Appendix 7)

5.4.2. Core Functions of the AGM shall be to:

- discuss and approve the Union's budgets and accounts
- review policy created by Union Council and approve or overturn decisions made
- amend the Core Constitution and its appendices
- receive annual progress reports from Union Executive Officers

5.5. A General Meeting (GM) can be called to make updates to the Core Constitution by a 2/3 majority of SU Council or a petition of 100 ordinary members of BUSU submitted to the SU President and it shall be run in accordance with the **Meetings Guidelines** (See Appendix 7)

### 5.6. The Union Council

5.6.1. The Union Council shall meet at least 7 times per year and shall be run in accordance with the **Meetings Guidelines** (see Appendix 7)

5.6.2. Core functions of the Union Council shall be to:

- decide policy for the Union
- approve and review the strategic plan

- hold the Union Executive to account through regular reporting and planning
- establish Working Groups to examine specific policy issues in further detail and receive policy recommendations from these Working Groups
- elect delegates to meetings and conferences of NUS except NUS Annual Conference where the delegates will be elected according to the election Guidelines
- elect members to designated University committees
- agree affiliations to external organisations
- amend appendices to Core Constitution except the **Finance Regulations** (Appendix 2), **Election Regulations** (Appendix 3) and **Opting-out of Union Membership** (Appendix 11)

5.6.3. The Union Council shall have a membership defined in **Appendix 1**

## 5.7. The Union Executive

5.7.1. The Union Executive shall be responsible for the day-to-day running of the Union in accordance to Union Policy. The Union Executive shall also be responsible for drafting the strategic plan. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once a fortnight and shall be run in accordance with the **Meetings Guidelines** (see Appendix 7)

5.7.2. Core functions of the Executive Committee shall be to:

- implement decisions of Annual General Meeting and Union Council and act in the absence of these
- be responsible for drafting and updating the strategic plan
- be responsible for the direction of the Union in accordance with a strategic plan
- have responsibility for those matters referred to in the Union's Staff Protocol concerning Union staff that do not concern the University alone
- receive recommendations and reports from its Action Groups
- establish Steering Groups to assist with the management of the Students' Union
- give support to the Working Groups set up by Council
- draw up policy for discussion at Council

5.7.3. The Sabbatical Officers shall form the Executive Committee

## 5.8. Sub-Committees of Executive Committee

There shall be three sub-committees of Executive Committee; Finance and Commercial Services Committee; Elections Committee and Postgraduate Association Executive

## 5.9. Finance Committee

- 5.9.1. The Union Finance and Commercial Services Committee shall be responsible for the financial affairs of the Union. The Finance and Commercial Services Committee shall meet at least 6 times per year and shall be run in accordance with the **Meetings Guidelines** (see Appendix 7)
- 5.9.2. The core functions of the Finance and Commercial Services Committee shall be to:
- be responsible for drawing up the Union's budget and monitoring expenditure on exceptional items on a regular/ongoing basis
  - ensure that the Union finances operate efficiently and effectively
  - approve items of capital expenditure as set out in **Finance Regulations**
  - review financial procedures and regulations and revise as necessary
  - report to the University Council on Union finances
- 5.9.3. The Finance and Commercial Services Committee shall have a membership defined in the **Membership Guidelines**.

## 5.10. Action Groups

- 5.10.1. Executive Committee shall have several Action Groups that are responsible for making strategy proposals and for assisting in the implementation of strategy and policy.

## 5.11. Academic Council

- 5.11.1. There shall be a forum for all Academic Representatives, Academic Council, which meets before meetings of University Senate.

## 5.12. Student Activity Executives

- 5.12.1. There shall be 9 further Executive Committees that report to Union Executive: Sports Association Executive, Societies Executive, Arts Executive, Media Group Executive, Training and Enterprise Executive, Volunteer Executive, Combined Societies Executive, Support Groups Executive and Academic Executive
- 5.12.2. These shall assist in the co-ordination of student activities

## 5.13. Working Groups

- 5.13.1. Union Council shall set up Working Groups to discuss specific policy issues.
- 5.13.2. Union Council will define the terms of reference for these Working Groups including a timetable when they should report back by.
- 5.13.3. Union Council shall nominate a suitable Chair for each Working Group. Chairs do not necessarily have to be Union Council members.
- 5.13.4. The Vice President (Communications) shall be responsible for publicising the existence of such groups and details of how to become a member.

- 5.13.5. Working Groups shall conclude by making a set of recommendations to Union Council for approval, referral or rejection.

## **6. Finance and Powers**

- 6.1.** The Union shall receive an allocation of funds from the University sufficient in the view of the University Council to enable the Union to pursue its aims and objectives effectively. The Union, through the Union Council, shall ensure that such funds are used only for such purposes as are consistent with the Union's status as a derived educational charity and in accordance with any stipulations made at the time of making the grant.
- 6.2.** The Union acting through the Executive Committee (and Finance and Commercial Services Committee) shall be empowered, in pursuit of its aims and objectives:
- 6.2.1 to open bank accounts in the name of the Union;
  - 6.2.2 to lend monies, invest monies, borrow monies;
  - 6.2.3 to offer its material assets as security;
  - 6.2.4 to enter into indemnities in respect of both UK and overseas bonds;
  - 6.2.5 do all other such things as are necessary for the prudent conduct of its financial affairs as though it were a legal person and subject to no other restriction save any which may be imposed by Union Council;
  - 6.2.6 to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions;
  - 6.2.7 to buy, take on lease or in exchange any property necessary for the achievement of the objects and to maintain and equip it for use;
  - 6.2.8 subject to any consents required by law to sell, lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of the Union;
  - 6.2.9 to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objects or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them;
  - 6.2.10 to appoint and constitute such advisory committees as the Executive Committee may think fit;
  - 6.2.11 to appoint a custodian trustee or holding trustees to hold land and/or investments on its behalf; and
  - 6.2.12 to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the Union's objects.
- 6.3.** The Union acting through the Finance and Commercial Services Committee shall ensure that proper books of account are maintained and that these books shall be audited annually by a public accountant appointed by the AGM.
- 6.4.** The Union acting through the Finance and Commercial Services Committee shall ensure that the annual budget, amendments to the budget, audited accounts and all necessary interim financial reports and proposal are submitted to the AGM for discussion and approval.
- 6.5.** A copy of the Union's budget and the audited accounts shall be given promptly to the University Finance Committee each year.
- 6.6.** The financial year of the Union shall run from the 1 August to 31 July

The organisation of the Union finances and systems of control shall be laid down in the **Finance Regulations** available in Union Reception.

## 7. **Property**

7.1. Subject to the provisions of sub-clause (2) of this clause, the Executive Committee shall cause the title to:

7.1.1. all land held by or in trust for the Union; and

7.1.2. all investments held by or on behalf of the Union;

to be vested either in a corporation entitled to act as custodian trustee or in not less than two individuals appointed by them as holding trustees. Holding trustees may be removed by the Executive Committee and shall act in accordance with the lawful directions of the Executive Committee. Provided they act only in accordance with the lawful directions of the Executive Committee, the holding trustees shall not be liable for the acts and defaults of its members.

## 8. **Affiliations and Donations to External Organisations.**

8.1. The Union Council shall determine all affiliations or donations to external organisations and shall report these to the Union's Annual General Meeting. Details of those affiliations / donations will be notified to the University Council and suitably publicised.

8.2. Details of all affiliations to external organisations including the name of the organisations and the affiliation fee in each case shall be included in the Union's Annual Report which shall be available to students and the University.

## 9. **Complaints about the Union and its Officers**

9.1. Any student or group of students who is dissatisfied in their dealings with the Union or wish to complain about an individual officer, the Executive Committee or any member of Union Council shall have the right to do so via the **Complaints Procedure** (Appendix 9). The Complaints Procedure is available in Reception.

9.2. Any complaint about a member of Union staff shall be dealt with in accordance with the **Staff Protocol** (Appendix 5) available in Union Reception.

## 10. **Freedom of Information**

10.1. At all meetings of the Union minutes shall be taken which shall be circulated at the next appropriate and relevant meeting. Confirmed minutes shall be displayed as soon as possible after confirmation. Copies shall be held in the University Library and in the Union Reception.

10.2. A copy of the Constitution, a copy of the Annual Report and any plan for the Union's activities including the budget shall be held in the Union Reception, University Library and Head of Student Services Office.

- 10.3. All meetings of the Union shall be conducted openly within the terms of the **Meetings Guidelines** (see Appendix 7)

## 11. Amendments

- 11.1. AGM shall be the sole body to amend the **Core Constitution** and **Finance Regulations** (Appendix 2)
- 11.2. Union Council shall be competent to amend the Appendices to the **Core Constitution** (with the exception of the **Finance Regulations**, Appendix 2, **Election Regulations**, Appendix 3 and **Opting-out of Union Membership**, Appendix 11). These amendments shall be reported to the subsequent AGM.
- 11.3. All amendments to the Constitution shall require the support of 2/3 of those present and voting at Union Council or AGM.
- 11.4. All amendments to the **Meetings Guidelines** (Appendix 7) shall require a simple majority in support of those present and voting at Union Council or AGM.
- 11.5. Any approved amendments of the **Core Constitution** and **Finance Regulations** (Appendix 2) shall be presented to the University Council for approval.
- 11.6. The Constitution shall be reviewed at least every 5 years from the date of taking effect.

## 12. Indemnity

Every Executive Officer, appointee and member of staff of the Union shall be entitled to be indemnified out of the assets of the Union against all losses or liability which s/he may incur in or about the execution of his or her office or otherwise in relation thereto and no Officer, appointee or member of staff shall be liable for any loss, damage or misfortune which may happen to or be incurred by the Union, in the execution of the duties of his or her office or in relation thereto; provided that nothing in this clause shall affect their liability for the consequences of any negligent or unlawful act on their part.

## 13. Code of Conduct

- 13.1. The Executive Committee shall be required to draw up a **Code of Conduct** which shall be approved and from time to time amended by the Union Council. This shall be displayed in Reception at all times.
- 13.2. All members of the Union shall be required to adhere to this code, particularly when on premises administered, or events organised, by the Union.

## 14. Interpretation

- 14.1. In the event of a dispute as to the interpretation of any part of the Constitution, the ruling of the President shall be sought.

**14.2.** In the event of a challenge to the SU President's ruling, the decision of the Union Council shall be final.

There are also documents which tell us how to run different parts of Union business:

- How the Union Works Appendix 1
- Finance Regulations Appendix 2
- Election Guidelines Appendix 3
- Disciplinary Guidelines Appendix 4
- Staff Protocol Appendix 5
- Job Descriptions of Officers Appendix 6
- Meetings Guidelines Appendix 7
- Clubs and Societies Guidelines Appendix 8
- Complaints Procedure Appendix 9
- Membership of the Union Appendix 10
- Opting out of Union membership Appendix 11
- Student Support Group Regulations Appendix 12
- Postgraduate Association Regulations Appendix 13