

Bye-Law 1: Democratic Processes

(Updated April 2024)

Background

1.
 - 1.1. In accordance with the Articles of Association, this Bye Law must include details of the composition and processes for the following:
 - 1.1.1. Referenda;
 - 1.1.2. General Meetings;
 - 1.1.3. Union Council;
 - 1.1.4. the Student Officer Committee; and
 - 1.1.5. the Management Committee.
 - 1.2. Any additional democratic processes may be included in this Bye-Law in accordance with Clause 69 of the Articles of Association.

Referenda

- 1.3. A Referendum may be called on any lawful issue, in accordance with the Articles of Association and these Bye-Laws, by:
 - 1.3.1. A resolution of the Trustees
 - 1.3.2. A resolution of the Student Officer Committee
 - 1.3.2. A majority vote of Union Council;
 - 1.3.3. A Secure Petition signed by at least on thirtieth of the ordinary members within 30 calendar days of its formation. A Secure Petition shall be defined as “a written request to the Union from ordinary members, which shall be fixed in a pre-arranged place or places or held securely on-line, and shall state the name, school and year of each signatory”.
- 1.4. Subject to Clause 69 of the Articles of Association, a resolution may only be passed by Referendum if at least one thirtieth (3%) of the ordinary members cast a vote in the Referendum and a majority of the votes cast are in favour of the resolution.
 - 1.4.1. If a resolution being decided upon by referendum includes an amendment to the byelaws or Articles of Association, a two thirds majority of votes cast must be in favour of the resolution in order for it to be passed.
- 1.5. Referenda shall be conducted in accordance with the Articles of Association and Bye-Law 5: Election Regulations Pursuant to the Articles of Association, with the addition that after campaigning has begun but before voting is open, a General Meeting must be held for 6 the purpose of debate, but not to vote, in accordance with the following conditions:
 - 1.5.1. The meeting shall be chaired by the Chair of Union Council or in their absence by an ordinary member
 - 1.5.2. appointed to do so by the Student Officer Committee;
 - 1.5.3. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for choosing the venue or venues to be used for the general meeting.
- 1.6. A general meeting shall be called with at least 7 clear days’ written notice. The notice calling a general meeting shall specify the place, day and time of the meeting and the business to be transacted.
- 1.7. Every ordinary member shall have the right to attend and speak at general meetings. Subject to Clause 55 of the Articles of Association the ordinary members may set Policy by Referenda. Policy set by Referenda may overturn Policy set by the Union Council.

- 1.8. Should a referendum be held in which only subset of the membership shall be eligible to vote, the rules in byelaws 1.3-1.6 shall apply, save for the following adjustments:
 - 1.8.1. Only ordinary members of the relevant subset of the membership will be eligible to vote in the referendum
 - 1.8.2. Only ordinary members eligible to vote in the referendum will have the right to attend and speak at General Meeting for that referendum
 - 1.8.3. A turnout requirement proportionate to the number of students who are part of, or who self-identify into the respective subset of the membership shall be determined by the Returning Officer.
- 1.9. A referendum of a subset of the membership may be called where only the following students are available to vote:
 - 1.9.1. Self-defining LGBT+ students
 - 1.9.2. Self-defining women students
 - 1.9.3. Self-defining disabled students
 - 1.9.4. Self-defining ethnic minority students
 - 1.9.5. Mature students
 - 1.9.6. International students
 - 1.9.7. Postgraduate students.
- 1.10. A referendum of a subset of the membership may be called by Union Council following a recommendation from the relevant Liberation Society or Assembly

Union Council

- 1.11. The Union Council shall have the following powers:
 - 1.11.1. to represent the voice of ordinary members,
 - 1.11.2. to, subject to the Articles of Association and these ByeLaws, determine Union Policy or Staff Policy on any lawful matter not determined by a Referendum within the last three years, consistent with the Articles of Association and these Bye-Laws;
 - 1.11.3. to co-ordinate representations made on behalf of the members through School Boards, Joint Staff/Student Committees, University Committees, and any working groups created by Council;
 - 1.11.4. to oversee and approve the appointment of student members of the Trustee Board and its sub committees and to approve the arrangements for the election or appointment of members to University Boards, Committees and Working Groups.
 - 1.11.5. to approve the Constitution of any new student opportunity group or any alteration to Constitution of an existing club, society or peer support group or to delegate this power to any other committee (preexisting or created by Union Council);
 - 1.11.6. to review the Articles of Association at such times as it deems fit and may propose amendments to it, for submission to the University Council, provided that any proposed alteration receives the support of a two thirds majority of the members present and voting and the approval of the Trustee Board;
 - 1.11.7. to, for the purpose of accountability, receive and consider regular reports from the Trustee Board and the Student Officer Committee (and their sub committees) on the general and financial affairs of the Union and on actions taken by the bodies since previous Union Council meetings
 - 1.11.7.1. This must include a summary of instances where policy and motions passed through Union Council have been discussed, amended, or prevented from being implemented (as stated in clause 55 of the articles of association, and bye-law 1.47) with a full explanation given as to why these decisions were made

- 1.11.8. to make, repeal and amend these Bye-Laws jointly with the Trustees in accordance with Clause 69 of the Articles of Association. A two-thirds majority of votes cast must be cast in favour of a resolution which seeks to make, repeal or amend these byelaws in order for it to be passed and for the creation, repeal or amendment of the byelaws to occur.
- 1.11.9. to pass a motion of Censure or Commendation on any member of the Trustee Board, member of the Student Officer Committee, member of the Democratic Procedures Committee or member of Union Council, including the Chair of Council.
- 1.12. The council shall consist of:
 - 1.12.1. the Chair, who shall only have a tie breaking vote, and whose sole duties and powers shall be to chair the Meetings of Council and General Meetings and prepare, in conjunction with the Chief of Staff, the agenda for such meetings;
 - 1.12.2. members of the Student Officer Committee;
 - 1.12.3. members of the Student Officer Committee subcommittees;
 - 1.12.4. the School Convenors from each School of Study elected by and from their number;
 - 1.12.5. one first year undergraduate student, one second year undergraduate student, one other year undergraduate student, one postgraduate research student and one postgraduate taught student from each School of Study elected by their peers;
 - 1.12.5.1. Where one or more Schools have integrated into a single School, the rep allocation shall remain at the pre integration levels.
 - 1.12.5.2. The allocation for the School of Health Sciences shall be:
 - three places for Nursing and Midwifery students;
 - three places for Allied Health Profession students;
 - one place for Pre-registration PG students;
 - one place for Post registration students;
 - and two open places.
 - 1.12.6. one representative of each ratified club, society or peer support group of the Union elected by and from members of the club, society or peer support group;
 - 1.12.7. the Faculty Convenors from each Faculty elected by and from their number;
 - 1.12.8. up to six members co-opted by resolution of Union Council following their appointment by the Union Council to membership of a University Committee or their appointment by the Student Officer Committee to serve on one of its advisory committees;
 - 1.12.9. one representative from INTO Norwich elected by their peers;
 - 1.12.10. One representative elected from the John Innes Centre Student Voice Committee (SVC) and the Institute for Food Research Student Forum (IFR SF) respectively.
 - 1.12.11. Five members elected from each Liberation Society and Assembly.
 - 1.12.12. A student member from each of the Student Officer Committee Sub Committees with the exception of the Education Sub Committee whose representatives will be appointed under Bye Laws 1.12.3 and 1.12.6; a representative from each major Student accommodation cluster on campus.
 - 1.12.13. An ordinary meeting of Union Council shall be held no less than seven times in an academic year. The first meeting in each semester to be held within four weeks of the start of the semester.
 - 1.12.14. A meeting of Union Council may be called by the Trustee Board, Management Committee, Student Officer Committee or by a petition of twenty members of the

Union Council presented to the Chair of Council. The meeting must be held within seven working days of receipt of the petition.

Policy Lapse

- 1.13. Policy lapse consists of policies that have passed two academic years or more ago and has not been lapsed before that point.
- 1.14. Policy lapse should take place during the last union council of the first semester, which should include policy to keep, policy precedent, policy to lapse or debate.
 - 1.14.1. Policy to keep means policy that should be readopted as it is still active within the student union's goals and aims.
 - 1.14.2. Policy precedent means policy that is no longer active but forms a core set of the values of the student union. For example, Bookworms at UEA (2062) was adopted into policy precedent.
 - 1.14.3. Policy to lapse means policy that is no longer part of the student union's core values and aims or that it has met its' aims and is now considered out of date.
 - 1.14.4. Policy to debate means policy that is contested in its' values to the student union or policy that any councillor believes should be kept, lapsed or put into precedent.
 - 1.14.5. The process of policy lapse should entail:
 - 1.14.5.1. the chair or Campaigns and Democracy Officer explaining the process of policy lapse, the legal ramifications and what each section involves, followed by a summary of each policy that is being brought forward and its' recommendation by the Campaigns and Democracy Officer. Then the Chair of Union Council should allow any councillors to pull out and move the policy proposed into any of the other sections. The Chair will then allow sufficient time for debate ensuring every single policy is voted on to keep or move to precedent by simple majority. Policy lapse does not require a vote as it will lapse automatically. Councillors may remove policy at any point in the academic year.
 - 1.14.6. The process of policy lapse should be considered by the Democratic Procedures Committee.
- 1.15. All members of Union Council shall be appropriately notified of the time, date and place of a meeting not less than five working days before the meeting and shall be sent an agenda, to their UEA email address, not less than three working days before a meeting. 1.15 Business shall not be conducted by the Union Council:
 - 1.15.1. unless over 40 representatives are present at a meeting; and
 - 1.15.2. if the item under consideration does not appear on the agenda, unless it could not have been placed on the agenda by its close and the meeting votes by a simple majority to accept it.
- 1.16. Meetings of Union Council shall be conducted in accordance with Bye-Law 2: Code of Conduct for Union Meetings.

Student Officer Committee

- 1.17. The role of the Student Officer Committee will be to set out, secure and promote the interests of the student members as from time to time suggested by election and consultation and determined by policy resolution at Union Council.
- 1.18. It shall advise the Board of Trustees of any implications for the allocation and use of resources arising out of its role.
- 1.19. The Student Officer Committee shall be responsible for:
 - 1.19.1. the development and operation of the Union's Priority Campaigns;

- 1.19.2. the representation and campaigning work of the Union;
 - 1.19.3. The implementation and interpretation of Union Policy;
 - 1.19.4. Any other duties set out in the Articles of Association or these Bye-Laws.
- 1.20. It shall consist of:
- 1.20.1. Student Officers as voting members,
 - 1.20.2. the Chief of Staff as a non-voting member,
 - 1.20.3. a member of the Postgraduate Committee as an ex-officio member chosen by their number at the first meeting of the committee and communicated to the chair of the Student Officer Committee
 - 1.20.3.1. If that member is unable to attend a meeting, they may delegate another member of the postgraduate committee to attend in their place, with approval from the Chair of PG Committee

Sub-Committees of the Student Officer Committee

- 1.21. The Student Officer Committee will have sub committees accountable to it that are responsible for specific policy areas. They will act as the day-to-day leadership of that area of the union, carrying out activities, projects, representation and campaigning work and the implementation of policy as delegated by Student Officer Committee.
- 1.22. Union staff may attend meetings of the Sub- Committees at the request of the Committee.
- 1.23. Any conflict as to the respective allocation of roles or duties of the Subcommittees shall be resolved by the Student Officer Committee.

Sub-Committees of the Student Officer Committee: International Students

- 1.24. The International Students Sub Committee shall consist of:
 - 1.24.1. the International (EU) and (Rest of the World) Officers,
 - 1.24.2. representatives from international cultural societies, and
 - 1.24.3. six students (who self- identify as international) elected as a block at least two of which must be in their first year of study and at least three of which must self-define as women or non-binary
- 1.25. The International Students Sub Committee shall coordinate a program of campaigning and activities for related issues.
- 1.26. The program may include:
 - 1.26.1. discussion of the issues that international students are facing,
 - 1.26.2. ideas for campaigns to fix these issues,
 - 1.26.3. discussion of the work of their international officers,
 - 1.26.4. the representation of international students in the SU,
 - 1.26.5. actively represent the opinion of international students in Go global,
 - 1.26.6. international SU and International Student Day

Sub-Committees of the Student Officer Committee: Education

- 1.27. The Education Sub Committee shall consist of the two Education Full Time Officers, the School Convenors, and the Faculty Convenors.

Sub-Committees of the Student Officer Committee: Welfare, Wellbeing and Community

- 1.28. There shall be a Welfare, Wellbeing and Community Committee which shall consist of:

- 1.28.1. the Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer,
 - 1.28.2. a representative from each of the Liberation Groups and Assemblies,
 - 1.28.3. two representatives from Student Accommodation on campus,
 - 1.28.4. two representatives from health & welfare societies,
 - 1.28.5. two from student faith societies and four students elected as a block at least one of which must be in their first year of study and at least two of which must self-define as women or non-binary.
- 1.29. The Welfare, Wellbeing and Community Committee shall co-ordinate a program of campaigning and activities for related issues as outlined in their cycle of business.
- 1.30. The program may include:
- 1.30.1. Seasonal affective disorder,
 - 1.30.2. safety on campus, assessment stress,
 - 1.30.3. estranged students,
 - 1.30.4. World Aid's Day,
 - 1.30.5. Christmas Day on campus,
 - 1.30.6. housing and relationships stress, and
 - 1.30.7. communicating the transition to life after university.
 - 1.30.8. This is not an exhaustive list.

Sub-Committees of the Student Officer Committee: Liberation, Equality and Diversity

The Liberation, Equality and Diversity Committee shall consist of:

- 1.30.8.1. the Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer,
 - 1.30.8.2. a representative from each of the Liberation Societies and Assemblies, and
 - 1.30.8.3. six students elected as a block at least two of which must be in their first year of study and at least three of which must self-define as women or nonbinary.
- 1.30.9. The Liberation, Equality and Diversity Committee shall co-ordinate a programme of campaigning and activities for related issues as outlined in their cycle of business.
- 1.30.10. The programme may include:
- 1.30.10.1. Liberation history months,
 - 1.30.10.2. making UEA inclusive for all,
 - 1.30.10.3. Never OK, and
 - 1.30.10.4. feeding into transforming equality
 - 1.30.10.5. This is not an exhaustive list.

Sub-Committees of the Student Officer Committee: SU Sustainability Working Group

- 1.31. The SU Sustainability Working Group shall consist of:
- 1.31.1. The full-time officer sitting on the UEA Sustainability Committee,
 - 1.31.2. representatives from relevant societies/student groups,
 - 1.31.3. Students representing/attending UEA sustainability implementation teams (aiming for at least one student per implementation team),
 - 1.31.4. Any other interested students.
- 1.32. The SU Sustainability Working Group shall coordinate the following:
- 1.32.1. The Student Sustainability Network,
 - 1.32.2. Collaboration with the UEA sustainability committee and implementation teams,
 - 1.32.3. Collaborative actions, information sharing, event and more within and around the Student Sustainability Network, sustainably interested society and student groups, interested students and more,

1.32.4. This is not an exhaustive list.

1.33. A chair will be elected within the working group, and that chair will vote as the representative of the SU Sustainability Working Group at Union Council.

Sub-Committees of the Student Officer Committee Postgraduate Committee

1.34. There shall be a Postgraduate Committee which shall consist of:

1.34.1. the Postgraduate Officer;

1.34.2. the Campaigns & Democracy Officer;

1.34.3. the Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer;

1.34.4. the Activities & Opportunities Officer;

1.34.5. six members elected by the Single Transferable Vote by the Postgraduate Assembly, at least one of which shall self-define as women and one of which shall self-define as trans or non-binary;

1.34.6. at least two registered as Postgraduate Research Student, and

1.34.7. two open places for postgraduate students;

1.34.8. one part time officer elected by the Student Officer Committee.

1.35. They may all be removed from their place on the Committee by two thirds majority resolution of the Graduate Assembly.

1.36. The Postgraduate Committee shall co-ordinate a programme of campaigning and activities for Postgraduate Students.

1.37. The Postgraduate Committee shall elect a Chair of the Postgraduate Committee from amongst the five members elected from the Graduate Assembly.

1.38. The Chair of the Postgraduate Committee Shall:

1.38.1. Be responsible for preparing the Postgraduate Committee agenda.

1.38.2. Liaise with the Postgraduate Officer on day-to-day operational issues relating to the Graduate Centre, managing the budget, and implementing student feedback.

1.38.3. To be the lead officer with responsibility for non-academic activities relating to postgraduate students.

Sub-Committees of the Student Officer Committee: Sports Executives and Society Executives

1.39. Student Opportunity Groups shall be represented as a sub-Committee of the Student Officer Committee. This shall consist of two Committees which are led by the relevant Activities & Opportunities Officer.

1.39.1. Sports Executives;

1.39.2. Society Executives.

1.40. The Executives roles, responsibilities, description, membership and powers are outlined in bye-law 9

Democratic Procedures Committee

1.41. The Democratic Procedures Committee shall consist of:

1.41.1. the Campaigns and Democracy Officer,

1.41.2. the Chair of Union Council and eight individual Members, at least three of which must self-define as women or non-binary, who shall be elected for a one-year term by Union Council.

1.41.2.1. All current members of the Union will be able to stand at the close of nominations save for Full Time Officers and Trustees.

1.42. The Democratic Procedures Committee shall:

- 1.42.1. meet after every Union Council;
- 1.42.2. be responsible for development of and promotion of the Union's democratic procedures, with particular reference to elections and Union Council;
- 1.42.3. advise on and develop the union's Articles of Association and Bye-Laws;
- 1.42.4. structure and run Union Council in such a way as to guarantee the accessibility of proceedings for members;
- 1.42.5. support the Chair and Deputy Chair of Union Council in a voluntary operational capacity during meetings
- 1.42.6. hold open meetings whenever possible;
- 1.42.7. produce a report on its action to; comment on the organisation, rules and procedure of; and recommend improvements to the running of Council and other bodies as appropriate;
- 1.42.8. Support the Chair of Union Council, by advising on matters of process and constitutional interpretation and will be responsible for the receipt and ordering of procedural motions within Union Council.
- 1.42.9. annually report on endeavours designed to meet its duty to structure and run procedures in such a way as to guarantee the accessibility;
- 1.42.10. and elect from their own number a chairperson.

Powers of committees for policy decisions

- 1.43. 'Staff Policy' shall be defined as policy which sets out procedures and guidance which Union staff must abide by, or policy which will affect the terms and conditions of employment for staff.
- 1.44. 'Union Policy' shall be defined as representative and campaigning policy to be implemented by Officers, Trustees, any student representatives and staff.
- 1.45. Union Policy and Staff Policy may be referred to collectively as 'policy'.
- 1.46. For any decision on staff policy:
 - 1.46.1. Student Officer Committee, Union Council, or Referenda may consider staff policy subject to the Articles of Associations and these Byelaws. Any staff policy made this way must not contravene Byelaw 7: Staff Protocol and is subject to approval of the Trustees and consultation with the recognised Trade Unions.
 - 1.46.2. The Trustees have the power to make, amend or repeal staff policy subject to consultation with the recognized Trade Union(s).
- 1.47. For any decision on Union Policy:
 - 1.47.1. Union Council has power to make, repeal or amend Union Policy, subject to the approval of the Trustee Board;
 - 1.47.2. Referenda have the power to make, repeal or amend Union Policy, subject to the approval of the Trustee Board. Referenda have authority over Union Council on any decision to make, repeal or amend Union Policy;
 - 1.47.3. the Trustee Board may override any decision and Policy made by the ordinary members in a Referendum or Union Council in accordance with Clause 55 of the Articles of Association;
 - 1.47.4. Student Officers, Trustees and other student representatives are accountable to Union Council or Referenda for the implementation of Union Policy, and may be removed from their post in accordance with the Articles of Association and these Bye-Laws;

- 1.47.5. Union Staff are accountable to their line managers for the implementation of Policy, and may face disciplinary sanctions in accordance with Staff Policy, the Articles of Association and these Bye-Laws.

School Convenors

- 1.48. There shall be one School Convenor representing each of the Schools of the University of East Anglia elected by and from each School.
- 1.49. They shall:
- 1.49.1. secure the academic interests of the students in the relevant School;
 - 1.49.2. provide a link between the School and the Student Union;
 - 1.49.3. provide support for the development of Academic Societies in their School; and
 - 1.49.4. represent students on School level committees and to School level officials.

Faculty Convenors

- 1.50. There shall be two Faculty Convenors representing each of the Faculties of the University of East elected by and from students studying in that Faculty (one undergraduate and one postgraduate).
- 1.51. They shall:
- 1.51.1. represent the academic needs of the students in the relevant Faculty;
 - 1.51.2. secure the academic interests of the students in the relevant Faculty;
 - 1.51.3. represent students on Faculty level committees and liaise with Faculty staff on academic issues affecting students.
- 1.52. student may not hold the role of both a school and faculty convenor, however is permitted to nominate themselves for both. If successful for both, they must then resign from one of the roles within 5 days and the next successful candidate will be given the role.

Development and Oversight Boards

- 1.53. There will be four Development and Oversight boards (Retail/Catering, Licensed Trade/Live, Advice/Housing)
- 1.54. Their purpose will be to support day to day decision making of Management Committee, oversee work of subsidiary companies, and the Boards in implementing the SU strategy.
- 1.55. They will consist of:
- 1.55.1. The Campaigns and Democracy Officer
 - 1.55.2. An elected student staff member from the area(s);
 - 1.55.3. Six students elected as a block at least two of which must be in their first year of study and at least three of which must self-define as women or non-binary;
 - 1.55.4. Staff (including student managers) as nonvoting members; And
 - 1.55.5. a part time officer elected by the Student Officer Committee.
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