

# SLC Policies (SS09)

## **Students' Union Constitution**

The constitution has three parts:

The Policy

The Procedures

The Job Descriptions for the Executive Post

**Last reviewed: June 2014**

# SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

## STUDENTS' UNION POLICY

### **1. Name.**

There shall be a Students Union, the name of which shall be "South Leicestershire College Students' Union". For the rest of the document it will be referred to as the "SU".

### **2. Aims.**

To represent the interests of the students of South Leicestershire College to the Corporation, College management, local and national government and the other relevant authorities.

- 1) To advance the education of its members.
- 2) To promote the general welfare of students.
- 3) To organise and encourage recreational and social activities for students.
- 4) To support Equality and Diversity and promote it in the College.
- 5) To actively oppose prejudice and discrimination between students in the College.
- 6) To encourage students to apply for a SU card.

The SU will pursue its aims with a positive inclusion of the diverse needs of all students at its heart. This will include not only a firm commitment not to discriminate against a student or group of students on any grounds, but to embrace that difference and celebrate that diversity.

### **3. Membership and members rights.**

All enrolled students at South Leicestershire College shall be members of the SU unless they relinquished their membership in accordance with the 'opt-out' regulations. Members of the SU shall have the following rights:

- 1) To attend and speak at all SU Committee and General meetings.
- 2) To vote at General Meetings and the Annual General Meeting.
- 3) To stand and vote in SU elections.
- 4) To participate in SU activities and use SU facilities.

### **4. Student Union Executive Committee.**

There shall be a Executive Committee made up of the President (who will also represent the SU on the College's Governing Body), Treasurer, Vice-President, Secretary, Social Secretary, Faculty Representatives and any other posts as deemed necessary by the serving Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall meet formally on a bi-monthly basis between SU Committee meetings.

The Executive Committee shall be responsible for:

- 1) Responding to issues that arise between SU Committee meetings.
- 2) Ensuring that the SU Committee and SU as a whole are running smoothly and in accordance with the constitution.
- 3) Drawing up the agenda for SU Committee meetings.

## **5. Student Union Committee.**

The SU Committee shall consist of the executive committee (above) and representatives appointed from each student group:

The members of the SU Committee shall perform their duties in line with this policy and their Job Descriptions (see Job Descriptions below).

The SU Committee shall be responsible for deciding and organising the SU's activities and carrying out decisions made by General Meetings.

The SU Committee shall meet at least bi-monthly; the quorum shall be 15 members of the SU Committee. All SU Committee meetings shall be open for all students to observe and speak, however only elected SU members may vote.

In the event of a member not being able to attend a meeting, they must give a notice to either a member of the SU Executive Committee or a designated member of the College Learner Support Services Team.

In the event of an officer failing to attend three consecutive meetings without presenting apologies to either a SU or a member of the Learner Support Services Team, then they shall at the discretion of the SU President, in consultation with the designated member of the College Learner Support Services Team, be deemed to have resigned and a replacement shall be sought.

Any executive officer wishing to resign must do so in writing to the SU Executive Committee: a replacement shall then be sought in accordance with the Election Regulations.

## **6. Student Union Committee Duties.**

An executive officer deemed not to be fulfilling their duties in line with the Job Description or to have acted in a grossly incompetent way, may be removed from office by a vote of no confidence with a two-thirds majority at an SU Committee meeting. A replacement shall then be sought in accordance with the Election Regulations.

All SU Committee members must attend meetings relevant to their Job Description. There is an expectation that all the SU executive officers should attend as many meetings as possible. Up to four Learner Support Services staff members will be designated as Student Liaison Officers (SLOs) to assist the SU and they will support the SU Committee throughout each term of office.

## **7. Student Governors.**

There shall be two Student Governors to serve on the South Leicestershire College Corporation. One is expected to be the elected President, the other drawn from the general student body.

The SU President shall inform the Clerk to the Corporation of its nominees in writing. The nominations shall pay due regard to the need for diversity in representation as regards relevant College Single Equality Scheme, campus and mode of attendance.

Newly elected Governors may take up post from the start of their term of office.

Should a Student Governor wish to resign they will inform the Clerk to the Corporation and the SU Committee in writing.

In the event of such a resignation, the SU Committee will appoint another member to serve the remainder of the term of office and inform the Clerk to the Corporation of the replacement in writing.

## **8. Equality and Diversity Committee.**

There is an Equality and Diversity Committee within the College.

Up to 4 students representatives are allowed on this committee, nominated by the Student Council.

## **9. Publicity Sub Committee.**

There shall be a Publicity Sub Committee held on a regular basis as is deemed appropriate by the SU Committee.

The Committee shall be made lead by the Social Secretary supported by the Secretary and SLOs.

The Committee's roles will be;

- Regulate the SU notice boards around the College.
- Co-ordinate publicity for all SU events.
- Organise information to update the SUs section on the College website at regular intervals.

The Committee shall be allocated a budget by the Executive at the beginning of each year. All expenditure shall be agreed by a majority of the Executive Committee.

## **10. Other Sub Committees.**

SU Officers where appropriate, may set up a sub-committee or working group to assist them with their job or to help organise a specific event. Help from the designated member of the Learner Support Services may be utilised.

Sub-Committees can consist of both SU Officers and other College students.

The Student Council will also provide representatives to serve on a variety of College committees where spaces exist for student members.

## **11. Annual General Meeting.**

There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the third College term.

This meeting shall be publicised at least 10 working days in advance.

The agenda for the AGM shall include a report from the SU Committee, Forums and Sub Committees on the previous year's activities, including a financial report. These reports shall be open to questions from College students at the meeting.

## **12. General Meeting.**

General Meeting, open to all SU members, shall be organised by the President at the request of the Executive or Council or upon the receipt of the written request of 30 union members. The issue(s) to be discussed shall be made clear in the request.

Notice of the meeting shall be at least 5 working days before the meeting, stating the issue(s) to be discussed.

The quorum for these meetings shall be 30 members.

## **13. Notes.**

Notes shall be taken at all SU Committee meetings, General Meetings and the AGM. Copies of those notes shall be made available to all SU members and be displayed around the College within 10 working days of the meeting.

These notes shall be accepted as a record, with any necessary corrections at the next appropriate meeting. A copy of the notes, if amended, shall be displayed within 5 working days of the meeting.

## **14. Finance.**

The SU shall hold a bank account in the name of the SU. There shall be five signatories:

- The President
- The Treasurer
- Head of Learner Support Services (or equivalent post holder).
- The designated Student Liaison Officer for the Union (SLO)
- A designated College Finance Officer

Cheques shall be signed by one of the executive post holders and witnessed by one of the nominated staff members.

The SU shall receive the income generated from equipment in the Student Lounge, monies received from the sale of NUS cards and any profits made from social activities along with existing savings and any interest received.

The Treasurer along with designated member of Finance shall be responsible to the SU for the

keeping of accounts and shall exercise supervision over the SU finances, subject to the decisions of the SU Committee, the AGM and General Meetings. These accounts shall be open to inspection by any SU member, Head of Learner Support Services and the Principal within one week's notice given to the Treasurer and/or President.

The SU Committee shall publish its budget plan for the forthcoming year by the end of October.

The SU's financial year shall run from August 1st to July 31st. The SU Committee shall publish accounts for the previous financial year by the end of October. The accounts shall be submitted to the College SLOs for approval.

The Treasurer shall provide financial reports for each major activity to the SU and lodge a copy of these with the Head of Learner Support Services.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to authorise expenditure of up to £100. Such expenditure must be ratified as soon as possible at a subsequent SU Committee meeting.

No student under the age of 18 may order goods or services or enter into any contract on behalf of the SU, nor be a party to the authorisation of any such transaction.

The Executive Committee shall control its bank account. All expenditure must be authorised by a meeting of the Executive Committee and duly monitored.

Any member of the SU (including Officers), or any other person who orders goods or services in the name of the SU in a manner not in line with these regulations, will be personally liable for the cost of such goods or services.

All NUS Extra Cards should be kept in a locked cupboard in the Student Union Offices. NUS Extra Cards should be issued by a SLO and a trained Student Union Officer.

## **15. Clubs and Societies.**

The SU Committee shall encourage and assist students to establish and run clubs and societies. This is primarily the responsibility of the Social Secretary with support from SLOs.

The clubs and societies shall be formed and administered in accordance with SU and College regulations.

## **16. Union Procedures.**

The SU Committee shall create, develop, review and monitor a series of procedures. These procedures shall cover the detailed implementation of some aspects of this constitution and other issues not covered.

There shall be procedures on at least the following:

- Election Procedures
- Conduct of SU meetings
- Organisation of events (e.g. parties and trips)

- Clubs and Societies regulations

These shall be approved by the student body at an AGM and SLOs.

The SU Committee may change these procedures but details of any proposals for change must be circulated to all SU Committee members at least one week before the SU Committee meeting where it is being discussed.

## **17. Amendments to the Constitution**

This policy can only be amended by a General Meeting or the AGM. All amendments to the policy shall require the support of two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote. If successfully amended the new policy shall be present to the College SLOs for approval.

SU Procedures can be amended by the SU Committee as required. All amendments to the policy shall require the support of two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote.

The SU Constitution should be reviewed by the union and presented to the College SLOs at least once every 5 years.

## **18. Interpretation.**

In the event of a dispute as to the interpretation of any part of the constitution, the ruling of the President and the Clerk to the Corporation shall be sought. In the event of a challenge to the President's ruling, the decision of a General Meeting or AGM shall be final.

## **19. Dissolution.**

In the event of the SU ceasing to exist all money and property of the SU shall be held on trust by the Corporation and used for general benefit of students at the College.

# SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

## STUDENTS' UNION PROCEDURES

### **ELECTION REGULATIONS**

#### SU Officer Elections

1. A ballot shall elect the Students Union Officers in the first term, after the AGM has been held.
2. The new SU will undergo a training and transition period.
3. The term of office shall be one academic year, starting 1st November until 30th June.
4. The designated Student Liaison Officer for the SU (SLO) shall be responsible for the good conduct of elections.
5. The timetable for elections and a copy of the election rules & regulations shall be displayed on SU notice boards at least once a week before the elections process opens.
6. Anyone wishing to stand for a position must collect a nomination form, a copy of election rules & regulations and a job description from the SU or Learner Support Services officer. A nomination must have the signed support of 3 other Union members.
7. No candidate can stand for more than 2 positions. No student can hold more than one position. If a candidate wins 2 positions they must choose one of them. They must state which one they would prefer on their nomination form. If this happens then the second placed candidate is deemed to be the winner.
8. All candidates must return the nomination form to the returning officer along with a manifesto of no more than 250 words by 2pm on the 'close of nominations' day. Nominations shall be open for one week. At least one copy of a candidate's manifesto shall be displayed by the SLO within 3 days of the close of nominations.
9. Candidates may start campaigning as soon as their nomination is handed in.
10. All campaign material including posters, flyers and leaflets etc. (Must be approved by the SLO before distribution).
11. The election shall be by secret ballot in sealed ballot boxes. The ballot boxes shall be open for at least two hours on at least three days during the election week. The SLO shall appoint someone to staff each ballot box whilst the elections are on, who shall ensure that no-one votes twice.
12. Voting will be by the First past the post system – which shall be clearly explained. 'None of the above' shall be a candidate in all elections.



13. In the event of a position not being filled the place shall be advertised and filled by co-option or by-election in line with the procedures outlined below.

14. If the SLO has reason to believe that there has been any malpractice in the conduct of the ballot, they may disqualify a particular candidate or nullify the election at any point up to the official declaration of the winning candidate.

15. In all election disputes the decision of the Retuning Officer (SLO) is final.

### By-elections

1. In the event of the President or Treasurer resigning or being 'no-confidenced' or the position not being filled in the normal elections, a by-election shall be organised by the SLO within one month.

2. The by-election shall follow the same procedure as the normal elections except that the ballot boxes may be open for two days only.

3. Someone elected at a by-election shall hold office until the annual round of elections.

### Referenda (votes)

1. The SLO shall be responsible for the conduction of referenda.

2. Within 7 days of receiving a petition signed by 150 members calling for a referendum a ballot paper will be drawn up by the SLO and the referendum publicised.

3. There will be 7 days allowed for campaigning on the issue.

4. The vote shall be by a secret ballot. The ballot boxes will be open on one day between the hours of 12pm and 2pm staffed by people appointed by the SLO.

5. The decision of the SLO in all matters relating to referenda is final.

### **CO-OPTION PROCEDURE**

1. In the event of any Executive Officers resigning, being 'no confidence' or the position not being filled in the election, the Executive Committee shall co-opt someone to fill the position by holding a co-option meeting.

2. The SU may use their discretion to hold a co-option meeting in exceptional circumstances.

3. The position will be advertised at least five working days before the co-option.

4. Any Student wishing to be co-opted onto the Student Union must fill in a nomination form and get the signatures of 10 other students in support.

5. No SU member may be a signatory on a nomination form.

6. Members of the SU must declare if a student wishing to be co-opted onto the union is a family member or close friend. In case, the SU member will not be able to take part in the voting but may be present at the co-opted meeting.
7. Students wishing to be co-opted must prepare a nomination speech and write a manifesto to present to the SU committee at the co-option meeting.
8. A student must have 75% of the SU committee vote to be co-opted onto the Union.
9. SU Secretary or the President will inform the students of the co-option decision within 5 working days in writing.
10. In the interest of the SU the co-option of the new officers must reflect the diversity of the college.

## **CLUBS AND SOCIETIES REGULATIONS**

1 A club of society shall be recognised by the SU Provided that:

A petition for its formation signed by 10 SU members is presented to the SU Committee.

The club/society presents a constitution with the petition. This constitution is to include:

- The name of the club/society.
- The aims of the club/society (which shall not be contrary to those of the SU).
- Regulations relating to membership eligibility.

This constitution is approved by the SU Committee.

2. The recognition and funding of the club/society may be withdrawn by the SU if the SU receives evidence that the club/society is contravening its constitution.

3. Grants to club/societies shall be fair and based upon:

- The number of students in the club/society.
- How closely the aims of the club/society complement those of the SU as a whole.
- A request by the club/society for a specific amount, which is accompanied by an explanation as to how they propose to spend the grant.

4. The SU committee shall decide upon the level of grant for the club/society after a considered recommendation from the Treasurer, Social Secretary and SLOs.

5. The SU Committee shall allocate a sum within the annual budget for clubs and societies. This will be held by the Treasurer in the SU account.

6. The SU Committee will determine the annual budget for each club or society.

7. Club/Society secretaries will produce receipts for re-imburement of expenses from the SU Treasurer.

8. Where necessary, the SU Treasurer may issue a cheque against an invoice. The Club/Society secretary will be responsible for ensuring the SU Treasurer receives receipt(s) for the amount.
9. The Treasurer will produce annual accounts for expenditure on the clubs and societies as a part of the annual SU account.
10. Club/Societies may apply for an amount in excess of their allocation to finance fund-raising events. Such excess amounts will be determined by the SU Committee.
11. When such an excess is granted, 50% of the profit, after repayments of the excess amount, shall be paid to the SU.
12. The SU Committee reserves the right to waive Clause 11 where funds are being raised for a registered charity.
13. No student under the age of 18 may order goods or services or enter into any contract on behalf of a club or society, nor be a party to the authorisation of any such transaction.

# **SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE**

## **STUDENTS' UNION JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

### **The President**

1. Is responsible for the general administration of the SU's business.
2. Is responsible for the public relations of the SU.
3. Chairs SU Committee meetings, General Meetings and the AGM.
4. Draws up the agenda for SU Committee meetings with the rest of the Executive Committee.
5. Organises/agrees training events for the Executive Committee.
6. Keeps in regular touch with the National Union of Students.
7. Ensures that Union Officers are carrying out their responsibilities.
8. Meets regularly with the Head of Learner Support Services and staff team to discuss the practices and development of the SU with regard to the implementation of the constitution and College Code of Practice for the SU.
9. Is a signatory on the SU's bank account.
10. Organises SU Committee meetings in conjunction with the Secretary.
11. Is a student Governor.

### **The Vice-President**

1. Supports the President with their duties.
2. Will act up as the President if the president is absent or leaves the SU.

### **Treasurer**

1. Is responsible for the finances of the SU as laid out in section 15 of the constitution.
2. Is a signatory on the SU bank account.
3. Operates a petty cash account of £100 which is kept in a locked safe in Finance.

4. Keeps accurate accounts for the SU and arranges for them to be published by the end of October.
5. Ensures that the SU Committee stays within its budget.
6. Prepares and presents a proposed budget for the academic year to the SU Executive Committee.
7. Provides regular, written financial reports to the SU and Head of Learner Support Services.
8. Ensures grants made by the SU to clubs and societies are administered correctly.
9. Works with Learner Support Services to ensure that affiliation fees are paid promptly and accurately.

### **Secretary**

1. To be involved in the ordering of the NUS Extra Cards in conjunction with the SLO.
2. Takes, produces and distributes notes of SU Committee and General meetings.
3. Ensures that an adequate level of stationary is held by the SU Committee.
4. Encourages and supports students to set up clubs and societies in co-operation with the Social Secretary.
5. Takes, produces and distributes notes of SU Executive Committee Meetings.

### **Social Secretary**

1. Encourages students to set up a wide range of clubs and societies in co-operation with the Secretaries.
2. Gives support and advice to students running clubs and societies.
3. Oversees, along with the Treasurer, the financing of clubs and societies.
4. Maintains links with other college's Student Union with clubs and societies and assists in the co-ordination of activities.
5. Works closely with staff members involved in organising/assisting sporting and other clubs and societies.
6. Co-ordinates the organisation of a wide variety of social events as decided by the SU Committee
7. Publicises social events organised by other bodies which students may be interested in.
8. Makes available information about cheap student travel.

## **Faculty Representatives**

1. Attends SU Executive Committee Meetings
2. Attends Faculty Meetings for the Faculty they represent
3. Attends and reports back to Council meetings
4. Acts as link for all course representatives in the faculty on faculty issues.

## **Course Representatives**

1. Attends SU Committee meetings.
2. Works with the President to ensure that the Union's programmes of events/activities are inclusive of students on courses which are under-represented.
3. Channels information from the SU Committee back to students on their course.
4. Represents accurately the views of those in the group being represented.

## **This constitution is approved by the SU Committee.**

### APPENDIX 1 – COMPLAINTS' PROCEDURE.

1. If a student feels that they have been unfairly dealt with by the SU on any matter, or that they have been unfairly disadvantaged by opting out of SU membership, then they shall have the right to complain and to have the complaint dealt with promptly and fairly.
2. First, the complaining student shall present a written complaint to the SU President explaining the problem and outlining any action which the student wished the SU to take. The President shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 1 week and send a formal response to the complainant within 2 weeks endeavouring to resolve the complaint to the student's satisfaction. If the complaint is not satisfied within a further 2 weeks then the student and the SU President shall jointly approach the Learner Support Services team for their advice on the matter. If necessary the complaint will follow the standard Complaints Policy used within the college and any linked Policies.
3. In the event of the complaint being against the President, the complaint shall be addressed to the Vice President. The Vice President will then follow the procedure set out in paragraph 2 adopting the role of the President.
4. In the event of the complaint being by the President against the whole of the SU Committee, the complaint will be investigated by the College SLO and a report given at a General Meeting of the SU.