

Leeds Arts Union

CONSTITUTION OF LEEDS ARTS UNION (AN UNINCORPORATED ASSOCIATION)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Constitution is approved by the Board of Governors in accordance with the requirements of section 22(2) of the Education Act 1994 ('the Act'). The Act requires the governing body of Leeds Arts University ('the University') to have a constitution, the provisions of which should be subject to the approval of the governing body and to be reviewed by that governing body at intervals of not more than five years.
- 1.2 The Act requires the Union to have a written Code of Practice that sets out the requirements of the Act, and how they are operated. It is intended that these documents, and other related documents referenced within them, are to be read and understood in tandem.

2. Name

The name of the organisation is Leeds Arts Union (the 'Union'). The Union is a Students' Union as defined within section 20 of the Education Act 1994, an Unincorporated Association formed to further the general interests and educational purposes of its members. The University provides the Union with funds to help it to meet its objectives.

3. Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The objective of the Union is the advancement of education of students at the University for the public benefit, through the following aims:
 - To promote the interests and welfare of students at the University through representation, support and advice.
 - To be the recognised representative channel between the student body at the University and any other relevant external organisations.
 - To provide social, cultural, and recreational activities, and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its students.
- 3.2 The Union shall function as an equal opportunities organisation and as far as possible will offer equality of opportunity to all students regardless of age, disability, gender and gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, nationality, or religion or belief.
- 3.3 The Union shall implement the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech as established by the University.
- 3.4 The Union shall not affiliate to any political party or religious organisation.
- 3.5 Under the Education Act 1994, the University has a statutory duty to ensure that the Union operates in a fair and democratic manner and is accountable for its finances. The Union and the University work closely together to ensure that the affairs of the Union are properly conducted, and that political bias in decisions about the allocation of resources is prevented.
- 3.6 The Union, and its representatives, shall abide by this Constitution, and the Code of Practice of Leeds Arts Union ('Code of Practice').
- 3.7 The Union shall conduct and manage its own affairs and funds in accordance with this Constitution and the Code of Practice. Annual reports, including annual accounts and external affiliations, shall be presented for approval to the Board of Governors of the University, as outlined in these documents.

4. Membership

- 4.1 All students registered on full-time or part-time courses at the University are automatically full members of the Union unless they decide to cease their membership in accordance with the opt out regulations as detailed in Paragraph 3 of the Code of Practice.
- 4.2 All members of the Union shall be entitled to use the services and amenities provided by the Union.
- 4.3 All members are entitled to stand for and hold Union positions, including those in clubs and societies, providing they meet the criteria outlined in Paragraph 4 of the Code of Practice.
- 4.4 All members are eligible to vote in the Student Elections, as detailed in Paragraph 4 of the Code of Practice.

5. The Students' Union Executive Officer Committee

- 5.1 The Students' Union Executive Officer Committee membership will be made up of elected positions of no more than 12 members, and a minimum of 5 members, which represent the interests of the student body. Core Roles, which are required positions, include:

- Students' Union President
- Student Governor

Other roles outside of Core Roles shall be understood to be Optional Roles.

- 5.2 The Students' Union Executive Officers shall be part time, voluntary positions open to all current members.
- 5.3 The term of office for all Students' Union Executive Officers, with the exception of the Students' Union President, shall run from the end of the academic year of which they were elected until the end of the next academic year. In most cases this will be one year, but in all circumstances will not exceed two years.
- 5.4 If a Students' Union Executive Officer is elected in a by-election their term of office will end at the end of the academic year during which they were elected.
- 5.5 The role of the Students' Union Executive Officers can be found detailed in Paragraph 12 of the Code of Practice. This paragraph outlines the expectations of all individuals holding a post, and failure to demonstrate these undertakings may result in an individual being removed from post.

6. The Students' Union President

- 6.1 The Students' Union President shall be a full-time, paid Sabbatical Officer position open to all members who will have completed their final year of study by the date that they would be expected to take up office. The position will be open to the incumbent President who may serve a second and final year as President, the term of office never exceeding two years.
- 6.2 The role of the Students' Union President can be found detailed in Paragraph 13 of the Code of Practice. This paragraph outlines the expectation of the individual(s) holding this post, and

failure to demonstrate these undertakings may result in an individual being removed from post.

7. Annual General Meeting

- 7.1 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held once in each academic year, in accordance with Paragraph 10 of the Code of Practice.
- 7.2 Union members will be given at least 14 days' notice of the place, time and date of the meeting, and the general nature of the business to be transacted.
- 7.3 The AGM shall be held at such a time and place as the Students' Union Executive Officer Committee shall think suitable to allow the maximum number of members to attend.
- 7.4 Business to be transacted shall include:
 - 7.4.1 Ratification of the minutes of the previous AGM.
 - 7.4.2 Receiving the annual accounts of the Union for the previous financial year.
 - 7.4.3 Approving the list of affiliations of the Union.
 - 7.4.4 Open questions to Students' Union Executive Officer Committee Members.
- 7.5 The quorum for the AGM shall be 16 members, which can include the Students' Union Executive Officers and must include the Students' Union President unless in extraordinary circumstances as per clause 10.10 of the Code of Practice.
- 7.6 AGMs will follow the procedures outlined in Paragraph 10 of the Code of Practice.

8. Students' Union Executive Officer Committee Meetings

- 8.1 The Students' Union Executive Officer Committee will meet at least 3 times a year.
- 8.2 Additional Committee Meetings may be called by the Students' Union President. Committee members must receive notice of meetings at least 7 days before the meeting.
- 8.3 Students' Union Executive Officer Committee Meetings will follow the procedures outlined in Paragraph 9 of the Code of Practice.
- 8.4 All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement that everyone present can agree to.
- 8.5 If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. The Chair of the meeting shall not vote. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the Chair shall have the deciding vote.

9. Student Executive Forums

- 9.1 Student Executive Forums shall be attended by the Students' Union Executive Committee, the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education, the Head of Marketing and Communications, the Student Liaison Officer and the Vice-Chancellor's Secretary.
- 9.2 The Student Executive Forum shall meet 3 times per academic year.

- 9.3 The Student Executive Forum shall provide an opportunity for the Students' Union Executive Committee to present updates to the Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education, and to represent the student voice through communication, consultation and discussion.

10. Removal from Office

- 10.1 The Students' Union President, or any elected member of the Students' Union Executive Officer Committee may be removed from office by a resolution of the student body that appointed them. The resolution shall be submitted for a referendum in accordance with the process as detailed in Paragraph 11 of the Code of Practice and shall specify that there is no confidence in the person elected to the role.
- 10.2 If a resolution of no confidence is carried, the resignation of the Students' Union President or elected member of the Students' Union Executive Officer Committee will take effect immediately and the vacancy shall be filled through a by-election as outlined in Paragraph 4 of the Code of Practice.

11. Societies

All recognised Union societies shall be formed and administered in accordance with Paragraph 6 of the Code of Practice.

12. Affiliations to External Organisations

- 12.1 External affiliations include any form of membership or formal association with external organisations undertaken by the Union.
- 12.2 External affiliations, including approval of proposed new affiliations and annual publication of current affiliations shall be administered in accordance with Paragraph 7 of the Code of Practice.

13. Finance & Indemnity

- 13.1 Union funds must be used only for the purposes which are permitted by this Constitution and the Code of Practice, and which promote the charitable aims and objectives of the Union.
- 13.2 The Union budget and annual accounts shall be submitted to the University's Board of Governors by the Student Liaison Officer. The Board of Governors will be responsible for the overall approval of the budget and annual accounts.
- 13.3 Finances, including financial reporting, shall be administered in accordance with Paragraph 5 of the Code of Practice.

14. Complaints Procedure

Any complaints about the Union, the Students' Union President, or the Students' Union Executive Officers shall be dealt with according to the process outlined in Paragraph 8 of the Code of Practice.

15. Constitutional Amendments

- 15.1 This Constitution and the Code of Practice must be reviewed by the University's Board of Governors at least every 5 years.

- 15.2 This Constitution and Code of Practice, and any suggested amendments, revisions or updates are to be approved by the University's Board of Governors. Any such changes shall not be valid unless and until approved by the Board of Governors.

16. Interpretation

In the event of a dispute as to the interpretation of any part of the Constitution or Code of Practice, the ruling of the Students' Union President shall be sought. The Students' Union President will consult with the Student Liaison Officer and, where necessary, seek advice from the Compliance Officer for consideration.

17. Winding Up

If the Union is wound up or dissolved, and all debts have been satisfied, any money or property remaining will be held by the University in trust for the purposes of a Students' Union that represents the students of the University.