

CODE OF PRACTICE

(IMPLEMENTING SECTION 22 OF THE EDUCATION ACT 1994 IN RELATION TO STUDENTS' UNIONS)

Section 22(3) of The Education Act 1994 requires universities to issue a Code of Practice setting out the manner in which the requirements of sections 22(1) & (2) of the Act, relating to the organisation and activities of the Students' Union, are put into effect. This document constitutes the Code of Practice.

Requirements of Section 22(2)	Compliance Measures
(a) The union should have a written constitution	<p>The Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Roehampton Students' Union (RSU) were approved by the University Council on 8 March 2010. This represents the Union's written constitution.</p> <p>Part 1 of the Articles sets out the key constitutional provisions and more detailed procedures of a constitutional nature are set out in the RSU Bye-Laws.</p>
(b) The provisions of the constitution should be subject to the approval of the governing body and to review by that body at intervals of not more than five years.	<p>The University is required to review the provisions of the Union's Articles of Association the "Articles" at intervals of not more than five years. The University Council approved the Articles in March 2010 and will review them during the 2014/15 academic year.</p> <p>Article 9 requires the approval of the University Council for any amendments to the Union's Articles of Association.</p>
(c) A student should have the right: (i) not to be a member of the union, or (ii) in the case of a representative body which is not an association, to signify that he does not wish to be represented by it, and students who exercise that right should not be unfairly disadvantaged, with regard to the provision of services or otherwise, by reason of their having done so.	<p>Article 11 and Bye-Law 6 state that students may opt out of Union membership by giving notice in writing.</p>
(d) Appointment to major union offices should be by election in a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote.	<p>Article 32 stipulates that Officer Trustees should be elected by secret ballot.</p>

Requirements of Section 22(2)	Compliance Measures
<p>(e) The governing body should satisfy themselves that the elections are fairly and properly conducted.</p>	<p>Article 32 and Bye-Law 7 set out the process for elections to be fair and properly conducted, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the appointment of a Returning Officer by the Trustee Board and • this appointment is ratified by the Student Union Council and the member of the University's Senior Management Team responsible for liaising with the SU • after the elections a formal report is submitted to the Secretary to the University Council • the report details that the election process was conducted in accordance with the regulations and state the results of the elections process <p>The University Council receives confirmation of Union election procedures and results.</p>
<p>(f) A person should not hold sabbatical office, or paid elected union office, for more than two years in total at the establishment.</p>	<p>Article 32 states that a person may hold a sabbatical post for a term of one year and may serve a maximum of two years if re-elected.</p>
<p>(g) The financial affairs of the union should be properly conducted, and appropriate arrangements should exist for the approval of the union's budget, and the monitoring of its expenditure, by the governing body.</p>	<p>The financial affairs of the union are properly conducted in accordance with the Articles of Association and the Bye-Laws which ensure conformity with the requirements of the Charities Commission and Companies House.</p> <p>The Students' Union has a dedicated Finance Manager who is paid and appropriately qualified and whose sole responsibility is to manage the finances of the Union.</p> <p>The Budget of the Students' Union is subject to approval by the University's Finance & General Purposes Committee.</p> <p>Annual accounts are drawn up and audited externally.</p>
<p>(h) Financial reports of the union should be published annually or more frequently, and should be made available to the governing body and to all students, and each such report should contain, in particular, a list of the external organisations to which the union has made donations in the period to which the report relates, and details of those donations.</p>	<p>The Annual Financial Statements of the Students' Union are received by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.</p> <p>The audited accounts are available online or on request.</p> <p>Details of any donations are contained in the Financial Statements.</p>

Requirements of Section 22(2)	Compliance Measures
<p>(i) The procedure for allocating resources to groups or clubs should be fair, and should be set down in writing and freely accessible to all students.</p>	<p>Resources are made available in the budget for Clubs and Societies. Individual Clubs and Societies submit budgets/requests to the Union.</p> <p>The sabbatical team reviews submissions and will allocate funding considering the necessary expenses of the clubs and societies, and their membership levels and activities.</p> <p>The review is then submitted to the Students' Union Council for approval. Bye-Law 9 sets out the provisions for the funding of Clubs and Societies.</p>
<p>(j) If the union decides to affiliate to an external organisation, it should publish notice of its decision, stating the name of the organisation, and details of any subscription or similar fee paid or proposed to be paid, and of any donation made or proposed to be made, to the organisation, and any such notice should be made available to the governing body and to all students.</p>	<p>This information is available to the University and to students online.</p> <p>Information about affiliations is made available on the Students' Union website.</p>
<p>(k) Where the union is affiliated to any external organisations, a report should be published annually or more frequently, containing a list of the external organisations to which the union is currently affiliated, and details of subscriptions or similar fees paid, or donations made, to such organisations in the past year or since the last report, and such reports should be made available to the governing body and to all students.</p>	<p>An annual report is made to Council, normally in the Autumn term in conjunction with the Financial Statements of the Students' Union, containing a list of the external organisations to which the union is currently affiliated, and details of subscriptions or similar fees paid, or donations made, to such organisations since the last report. The contents of the report will be made available to all students by the Students' Union.</p>
<p>(l) There should be procedures for the review of affiliations to external organisations, under which the current list of affiliations is submitted for approval by members annually or more frequently, and at such intervals of not more than a year as the governing body may determine, a requisition may be made by such proportion of members (not exceeding 5%) as the governing body may determine, that the question of continued affiliation to any particular organisation be decided upon by a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote.</p>	<p>The Students' Union is required to conduct an annual review of its current list of affiliations. The proposed affiliations will be detailed at the Annual Members' Meeting.</p> <p>Bye-Law 2 provides that a petition signed by 5% of the full membership of the Union may call for a referendum.</p>

Requirements of Section 22(2)	Compliance Measures
<p>(m) There should be a complaints procedure available to all students or groups of students who are dissatisfied in their dealings with the union, or claim to be unfairly disadvantaged by reason of their having exercised the right referred to in paragraph (c) above, which should include provision for an independent person appointed by the governing body to investigate and report on complaints.</p> <p>(n) Complaints should be dealt with promptly and fairly and where a complaint is upheld there should be an effective remedy.</p>	<p>A complaints procedure is outlined in Bye-Law 8. Initially the complaint will go to the President or one of the Officer Trustees. If the complainant is not happy with the response a Complaints Panel will be assembled. If the complainant is still not satisfied, the complaint will be considered by the Registrar & University Secretary and, ultimately by an independent person appointed by the governing body.</p> <p>The complaint timelines and remedies are outlined in Bye-Law 8.</p>
<p>(3) The governing body of every establishment to which this Part applies shall for the purposes of this section prepare and issue, and when necessary revise, a code of practice as to the manner in which the requirements set out above are to be carried into effect in relation to any students' union for students at the establishment, setting out in relation to each of the requirements details of the arrangements made to secure its observance.</p>	<p><i>The Code of Practice was approved by the University Council on 11 March 2013 and by the Students' Union Council on 26 March 2013.</i></p> <p><i>The approved Code of Practice is published on both the University and RSU websites.</i></p>
<p>(4) The governing body of every establishment to which this Part applies shall as regards any students' union for students at the establishment bring to the attention of all students, at least once a year:- (a) the code of practice currently in force under subsection (3); and (b) any restrictions imposed on the activities of the union by the law relating to charities</p>	<p>At the start of each academic year the governing body liaises with the Union to distribute an email to all students to introduce them to Roehampton Students' Union. This email contains a summary of the Students' Union, a link to its website, a link to the Code of Practice and provides an opportunity for them to register to the mailing list.</p>
<p>(5) The governing body of every establishment to which this Part applies shall bring to the attention of all students, at least once a year, and shall include in any information which is generally made available to persons considering whether to become students at the establishment:- (a) information as to the right referred to in subsection (2)(c)(i) and (ii), and (b) details of any arrangements it has made for services of a kind which a students' union at the establishment provides for its members to be provided for students who are not members of the union.</p>	<p>The introductory email also contains a link to outline the procedures to opt out of the Students' Union as well as containing information on other support services provided through the Colleges, eg Student Affairs and the Chaplaincy.</p>

Approved by Roehampton University Council: 11 March 2013

Approved by Roehampton Students' Union Council: 26 March 2013