

Societies

Affiliation of Societies

There shall be a model Society constitution endorsed by Societies Executive Committee.

A group shall be considered for affiliation after first meeting with the Union and then notifying the Union that it wishes to proceed through the following formal process:

1. The prospective-Society shall provide the Union with a Constitution. This must include:
 - i. The Society's Name, Aims, and Objectives.
 - ii. The provisions, including quorum, for a General Meeting of the Society.
 - iii. The Society Committee's composition and election process.
 - i. The Committee must include the responsibilities attributed to Chair, General Secretary, Treasurer and Wellbeing Coordinator in the Union's Model Constitution, though these responsibilities may be attributed to different positions where appropriate.
 - ii. The election process must be in line with the voting system detailed in the *Elections* byelaw.
2. The Union shall determine whether the Constitution meets the following three conditions:
 - i. It details Aims and Objectives which are legally compliant for the Union to advance.
 - ii. It does not at any point directly contravene the Union's *Articles of Association*, *Byelaws*, or *Guidance Documents*.
 - iii. It details Aims and Objectives which are distinct in meaning from any existing formally recognised group or any prospective-group currently protected under this affiliation process.
3. The Union's verdict shall be presented, along with an allocated group-type, to Societies Executive Committee who shall ratify whether or not they are content that the process so far has been followed.
 - a) If ratification occurs the process shall advance to point 4.
 - b) If ratification does not occur point 2 shall be repeated.
 - i. If ratification does not occur a second time this may be elevated by any involved party to the Appeals process detailed in this Guidance Document.
4. Depending upon the nature of the Union's verdict either of the two follow:
 - a) If the Union's verdict is that the Constitution does meet the three conditions, Societies Executive Committee's ratification provisionally confirms the affiliation of the group on the condition that the rest of this process, from point 5, is completed.
 - b) If the Union's verdict is that the constitution does not meet the three conditions the group's affiliation request is formally rejected and this process ends.
5. Based upon the allocated group-type, the group shall meet three tailored conditions:
 - i. The group has x Members.
 - ii. The group has x Committee Members.
 - iii. The group has x affiliation fee.
6. Upon formal receipt by the Union of all requested compliance documentation the group shall become a Society.

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- i. Societies Executive Committee shall be notified.
- ii. The new Society shall be introduced at the next Societies Council and this shall be formally noted.

A group is protected in this process from the point of initial formal submission to rejection or 6 calendar months following the provisional confirmation of Societies Executive Committee. Following this should another group with a similar Name, Aims, or Objectives attempt to affiliate after this time they shall not be blocked by this similarity.

Lapsing of Societies

Societies shall become lapsed if

- i. They fail to fulfil the required compliance documentation requested by the Union in an appropriately timely manner.
- ii. They fail to fill the necessary Committee Positions agreed for their group-type.
- iii. They fail to maintain necessary the number of members agreed for their group-type.

The Union shall ensure that reasonable provision is put in place to support Societies not to lapse.

A Society shall cease to be lapsed upon the Union's confirmation to the Society that the Union is satisfied that the above three criteria are now being met.

Suspension of Societies

The Union may suspend a Society if they fail to comply with the Union's regulations including compliance breaches, governance breaches, or Code of Conduct breaches.

The Union may reinstate a suspended Society's affiliated status when it is content the Society has appropriately addressed its previous actions.

Disaffiliation of Societies

A Society shall become disaffiliated as per the *Societies* byelaw if:

- i. It has been lapsed or suspended for three consecutive years.
- ii. Its Aims or Objectives become legally in compliant.
- iii. It becomes unable to achieve its Aims and Objectives.

The Union may, at any point it deems necessary, audit its roster of Societies to ensure compliance with present Union Governance. Any Society not compliant may be disaffiliated by the Union.

A Society's disaffiliation requires sign-off from a Full-Time Officer or Senior Staff Member of the Union to take effect.

Changes to Name, Aims, or Objectives

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A Society must first pass a motion detailing the proposed changes with a two-thirds majority at a quorate General Meeting.

If the proposed change preserves the meaning of the present Name, Aims, and Objectives, as decided by the Union, then this may take effect upon the Union's acknowledgement of this.

If the proposed change does not preserve the meaning of the present Name, Aims, and Objectives, then the Society must submit their Constitution to the Union. The Union shall then go through stages 1 & 2 & 3 of the above Society Affiliation Process, including reallocation of the Society's group-type. The proposed changes shall either take effect or be nullified following the ratification of the Union's verdict by Societies Executive Committee.

External Relations of Societies

Any Society or prospective-Society wishing to affiliate or engage in a formal contract with an external organisation must express this to the Union.

Affiliations to external organisations should primarily further the Aims and Objectives of the Society or prospective-Society, in line with Charitable Objects of the Union, as opposed to the external organisation.

The Union reserves the right to reject affiliation to, or formal contracts with, external organisations based upon any contractual agreements it has entered, any breaches of any codes of ethics it holds, or any other reason it may see fit.

Affiliation to external organisations must be ratified by Societies Executive Committee before they can take effect.

Appeals regarding societies

Any formal appeals regarding the processes in this document must be lodged within 5 Union Days of the receipt of the decision.

Any formal appeals regarding the processes in this document shall be directed to Democratic Procedures Committee who shall explore whether the democratic procedures have been appropriately followed.

Any appeals further to the decision of Democratic Procedures Committee ought to be taken through the appropriate appeals processes detailed in the Byelaws.

This Guidance Document

All processes outlined in this document must be clearly minuted. These minutes must be stored and be available upon request to any Full-Member of the Union.

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Any decision making meetings of the Union referenced in this document must occur with Terms of Reference approved at least annually by Societies Executive Committee; these Terms of reference must be available upon request to any Full-Member of the Union.

This Guidance Document shall be reviewed annually by Societies Executive Committee, with recommendations for changes made to Democratic Procedures Committee where appropriate.

This Guidance Document is made pursuant, and is thus subordinate, to the byelaws of the Union.

Approved by Democratic Procedures Committee): 14th May 2020

Edited by Societies Executive Committee: January 2020