

Regulation A10-4: Student Groups

Revised: November 2020

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1. Student Group Governance

- 1.1 Robert Gordon University Student Association (the “Union”) shall facilitate and support a number of affiliated student groups which enhance the student experience and further the objects of the Union. These student groups shall include, but shall not be limited to:
- 1.1.1 RGU:Union Student Media;
 - 1.1.2 RGU:Union Nightline;
 - 1.1.3 RGU:Union Peer Support;
 - 1.1.4 RGU:Union Raising and Giving;
 - 1.1.5 Duke of Edinburgh’s Award.
- 1.2 Student groups shall be overseen, governed and be eligible to receive funding from the Union, but shall be separately run and coordinated by Ordinary Members.
- 1.3 Student groups affiliated with the Union are expected to abide by the Union’s Student Activities Regulation, along with all relevant policies of the Union which cover the undertakings of student activities.
- 1.4 The Staff Team at the Union shall have responsibility, as delegated by the Sabbatical Presidents and Trustee Board, to support the running of student groups. This support shall include, but is not limited to, management of the budgets and finances for student groups, assistance with promotion of student groups, training and development of student groups, and overseeing the administration of student groups.
- 1.5 Student groups shall be governed by the Sabbatical Executive Committee and supported by Union Staff. Student groups shall be treated exceptionally from other student activities, such as societies and sports clubs, as Union managed activities and critical to the student experience.
- 1.6 Student groups shall be invited to attend the Societies Forum and be members of the Societies and Activities Team. However, student group representatives in attendance at a Societies Forum shall not be permitted to engage in any voting matters unless otherwise invited to by the Chair of the Societies Forum. Student group committee members from these groups shall be required to engage with Sabbatical Presidents, attend the Union’s Annual General Meeting and other appropriate meetings.
- 1.7 The Societies and Activities Team shall work with both student groups and the Sabbatical Executive Committee to agree and undertake work on key projects for student groups and action any decisions made by the Societies Forum. They shall be responsible for listening to the views of student groups and working with the Union to promote extra-curricular activities.
- 1.8 The Societies Forum shall be the representative body for student groups and shall normally meet twice a semester with the President from each student group in attendance. The Societies Forum shall be the primary mechanism to raise any feedback, ask questions of elected representatives. In the instance a Student Group President is unable to attend a meeting of the Societies Forum, a delegated student group committee member from that affiliated student activity shall be eligible to attend in their stead.

2. Student Group Formation

- 2.1 Student groups shall be proposed to be formed either by the Executive Committee upon identifying a need for a student group or by the successful passing of a motion requesting a student group be established at one of the Union's Annual General Meetings. Any proposed student group, either by the Executive Committee or by the successful passing of an AGM motion, shall require ratification by the Trustee Board to be established.

3. Student Group Documentation

- 3.1 Student groups shall be required to complete constitution paperwork but may not be required to charge membership fees.
- 3.2 Student groups will be required to provide all appropriate paperwork required to abide by regulations and laws, such as around fundraising, food hygiene, personal disclosure, emergency contacts and more.
- 3.3 The Student Group Development Plan is for student groups to outline their name, purpose and proposed activities for the year. The plan will outline how they will improve the student group that year, engage new people, and participate in fundraising activities. Student groups should work with the President (Communication and Democracy) and the Union's Student Development & Volunteering Co-ordinator to ensure plans are complete.

4. Student Group Membership

- 4.1 Student groups are not required to charge a membership fee. In the event a membership fee is established, there shall be no minimum fee.
- 4.2 Student groups shall be able to accept members who are not students of Robert Gordon University, but 50% plus one of the current members must be students of Robert Gordon University.
- 4.3 Membership shall run from August to July each year, and membership can be obtained at any point throughout the year.
- 4.4 Membership may be obtained online or in person by completing a Membership Form.
- 4.5 Student groups may offer incentives or benefits to members such as discount cards, member IDs, and merchandise or otherwise. The student group committee shall be responsible for managing the distribution of such items; however, the Union may assist.
- 4.6 All individuals shall be entitled to be a member of a student group and must not be discriminated against based on gender, race, sexual orientation, disability or other characteristic.

5. Student Group Committees and Leadership

- 5.1 Each student group shall be expected to elect a committee comprised of a team of students who run the student group who shall undertake duties in the vein of a

President, Vice President, Treasurer and Communication & Engagement Lead as a minimum. They shall be responsible for the running of the student group and shall be expected to work with the Union to ensure the proper running of the student group.

- 5.2 In the event that a student group is unable to engage students in forming a committee, it shall be the responsibility of the Union to oversee the recruitment of new members.
- 5.3 The duties expected of a student group committee and delegated to particular members may include, but are not limited to:
- 5.3.1 Organising regular student group meetings with members;
 - 5.3.2 Liaising with a relevant Sabbatical President no fewer than twice a semester to discuss the operations and development of the student group;
 - 5.3.3 Overseeing and implementing the objectives and functions of the student group;
 - 5.3.4 Submitting all required paperwork to the Union;
 - 5.3.5 Attending the Societies Forum, the Union's Annual General Meeting and any other appropriate meetings;
 - 5.3.6 Management of the budget and finances of the student group and the authorising of expenses;
 - 5.3.7 Attending student group training and liaising with the Union on this matter;
 - 5.3.8 Organising events and activities for the benefit of student group members;
 - 5.3.9 Ensuring the sustainability of the student group by recruiting members, hosting an AGM and carrying out a handover.
- 5.4 A student group may introduce new committee positions or make other key decisions if agreed by the student group committee at a meeting with no less than 50% plus one of the committee members in attendance.
- 5.5 The decisions of a student group committee may be subject to question by a quorum of 75% of the student group's membership, or subject to external ruling through the Union's Complaints Regulation.
- 5.6 In the situation where a decision is tied, the President of the Student Group shall have the casting vote. Where conflict arises in a student group committee, the Union shall act as a mediator to deal with the situation in an appropriate manner.

6. Student Group Elections

- 6.1 Student group committee positions shall be filled through an election from members of the student group at the Annual General Meeting for the student group. All members are eligible to stand for election as long as they shall continue to be a matriculated student of Robert Gordon University the following year.
- 6.2 Elections may be decided either by an open vote or a secret ballot. Votes shall be cast by a show of hands, ballot slips, or by electronic means where appropriate. During the elections any member of the student group may ask for a secret ballot, where the ballot slips shall be counted by an impartial individual.
- 6.3 Student groups may ask a representative from the Union to support and oversee their elections to ensure a fair and democratic process.

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- 6.4 A candidate must achieve a majority of the vote to be elected to a student group committee position.
- 6.5 Student groups are expected to engage and vote for positions in the main Union elections, particularly in promoting the President (Communication and Democracy) and Vice President (Societies) Elected Officer positions.
- 6.6 Society and Activity Team members shall be appointed by the President (Communication and Democracy) after open nominations with the aim of gaining even representation across a range of societies and student groups. The Societies Forum will vote to ratify the appointments at the first meeting. In this instance, student group representatives shall be eligible to vote in any ratification of Society and Activity Team members.

7. Student Group Finances

- 7.1 Student groups shall be allocated funding by the Sabbatical Executive Committee from the Union budget on a needs basis. Student groups may work with the Sabbatical Executive Committee to discuss budgeting and present proposals; however, funding will be allocated separate to the society funding and respective of the Union's overall budget.

8. Student Group Activities

- 8.1 Student groups shall be required to hold an Annual General Meeting ("AGM") once a year to elect their new committee and to review the year's activities.
- 8.1.1 The AGM usually takes place at the end of the academic year, and may be a stand-alone event or part of another social event.
- 8.1.2 All members of the student group must be invited to attend and given at least fourteen days' notice of the meeting. Only fully matriculated members of the student group may vote or speak during the meeting.
- 8.1.3 The agenda for the meeting should be sent in advance to members and should normally include the minutes from the previous AGM, summary of student group activities, annual financial report, election of new committee and approval of the constitution.
- 8.1.4 The minutes of the meeting must be taken as a record of all the items discussed and the votes cast. The minutes of a student group AGM must be circulated to the President (Communication and Democracy) within 10 working days of the AGM.
- 8.1.5 The quorum for a student group AGM shall be 50% plus one of the current members of the members of the student group.
- 8.1.6 The AGM will be chaired by the Student Group President or another committee member, and the student group may invite a representative of the Union to support the AGM.
- 8.2 If a quorum is not present at a student group AGM within half an hour, or is not sustained throughout, then the meeting shall be adjourned and rescheduled within ten working days of the original notice.
- 8.3 If a quorum is not present at a rescheduled meeting, all matters on the agenda shall be delegated to the student group committee and dealt with in consultation with a relevant Sabbatical President.

- 8.3.1 Any decisions of a student group committee may be subject to question by a quorum of 50% plus one of the current members, or subject to external ruling through the Union's Complaints Regulation.
- 8.4 Student groups shall be issued with an e-mail address and print code by the Union, which must be used appropriately. Student groups will be expected to treat all Union and University facilities and equipment respectfully.
- 8.5 Student groups may set up social media accounts for their group. Any social media accounts created for a student group must use their Union issued e-mail address, and any social media usage and activities must be respectful and adhere to the Union and Universities social media policies. Student groups using the 'RGU' and 'RGU:Union' brand must not make any statements or issue communications which are false or could bring the reputation of the Union or University into disrepute.
- 8.6 All student group members must behave in a manner that positively reflects the student group, Union and University. It is unacceptable to engage in any discrimination or anti-social behaviour. Students must be cautious whilst under the influence of alcohol during social activities so that they do not damage the reputation of the Union or University. The use of drugs, or the consumption of alcohol, while using transport, is strictly prohibited.
- 8.7 Student groups shall not be permitted to undertake or condone any initiation activities. All members must be treated equally and allowed the opportunity to join and participate without any discrimination or harassment.
- 8.8 Student groups which breach stated regulations or policies may be investigated by the Sabbatical Executive Committee. If misconduct takes place, the student group may be referred to a Discipline Committee of the Union. Individuals may also make complaints about student groups, which will be investigated under the Union's Complaints Regulation.
- 8.9 In the event of an accident during a student group event or meeting, members should follow the accident procedure, contact the Union and complete the required Accident Report Form.