

Student Groups Code of Conduct

September 2015

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1. Adoption and review of this Policy

1.1. This policy was adopted by the University of Portsmouth Students' Union Board of Trustees in April 2013 and was reviewed in September 2015 by Vice President for Sports, Vice President for Societies and the Chief Executive Officer for minor amendments. Next review date September 2017.

2. Policy Statement

1.1. The University of Portsmouth Students' Union recognises that there is a diverse range of student groups within the Students' Union who wish to undertake a large variety of organised and social activities.

1.2. The University of Portsmouth Students' Union recognises that participating in student-led activities is a great way to develop skills, make friends and adds value to the overall student experience.

1.3. The University of Portsmouth Students' Union is committed to the value of inclusivity and, as such, aims to ensure that all activities within the Students' Union are inclusive to all students who may wish to participate in them and that students are free to participate in activities in a safe, non-threatening and enjoyable environment.

1.4. The University of Portsmouth Students' Union recognises that groups may wish to undertake welcome activities to new members each year and that such activities are an important way of getting existing and new members to mix each year. The Students' Union is committed to ensuring that all such activities, as well as those that happen throughout the year, take place in a considered, safe and inclusive manner without causing undue pressure and distress to student members or a nuisance to the local community.

1.5. The University of Portsmouth Students' Union is committed to ensuring the continued health and safety of all staff and student members and that all activities that take place abide by the Health and Safety Policy.

1.6. The University of Portsmouth Students' Union is committed to a zero tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, including on grounds of age, gender, nationality, race, religion, sexuality and disability as well as all forms of bullying and harassment.

3. Definitions

- 1.1. For the purpose of this policy, the terms 'student activities' or 'groups' includes all groups which are student-led and includes sports, societies, media and volunteering groups.
- 1.2. The term 'members' shall include all members of any group operated by or operating within the Students' Union.

4. Activities

- 1.1. Student groups are able to organise a wide range of activities and events for their members, including those related directly to their group's activity as well as a wide range of social events.
- 1.2. It is the responsibility of the group's committee members to ensure that all activities organised through, or for, group members are inclusive and in line with the University of Portsmouth Students' Union Health and Safety Policy and the Student and Union commitments as set out in the University Student Alcohol and Drugs Policy.
- 1.3. It is the responsibility of the group committee to ensure that all activities that are arranged through or for group members are enjoyable to all those wish to participate and that no 'peer pressure', intended or otherwise, is placed on members to do anything that they would not like to do.
- 1.4. It is the responsibility of the group committee to ensure that they provide activities that are free from discrimination, bullying and harassment. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action against the group and/or individual members within it.
- 1.5. It is the responsibility of the group to ensure that all members are made to feel part of the group and able to participate in teams and/or group activities regardless of their willingness to participate in social activities.
- 1.6. As a group within the Students' Union, all groups agree to abide by the following guidelines:

All groups WILL:
 - 4.1.1. Ensure that all activities, including social activities, are enjoyable to members in a safe and non-threatening environment
 - 4.1.2. Ensure that the welfare of members is paramount at group events and that this is considered during the planning of all group events and activities
 - 4.1.3. Ensure that membership of the group or any teams within it is not dependent on participation within social activities

- 4.1.4. Ensure that all members are free from 'peer pressure', bullying and harassment, whether intended or not, when participating within group activities
- 4.1.5. Ensure that no member of a group is forced into alcohol consumption and that where alcohol is offered as part of a group event, that a suitable non-alcoholic alternative is available
- 4.1.6. Ensure that all communications from the group to its members are suitable and do not promote any activity that is in breach of any Union policy or procedure

All groups WILL NOT:

- 4.1.7. Engage in any activities which are likely to bring the Students' Union and/or the University into disrepute
 - 4.1.8. Promote abuse of alcohol consumption as a method of 'joining in' group activities.
- 1.7. Failure to abide by these guidelines WILL result in disciplinary action being taken against the groups involved, using the Students' Union Disciplinary Procedures, which can be found online. -

5. Initiations

- 1.1. The Students' Union does not condone any behaviour which places members in a position in which they feel pressured into doing something that they would rather not do, whether this is intended or not.
- 1.2. All members should feel free to enjoy all group activities, including social activities, in a free and non-threatening environment.
- 1.3. No member should feel pressured into drinking alcohol at any time during group activities, social or otherwise.
- 1.4. The Students' Union recognises that groups may wish to undertake welcome activities as part of their introduction to new and existing members for the academic year and does not wish to prevent groups from organising such activities. In light of this, the Students' Union has the following regulations in place for all welcome activities, which may include activities which are deemed to be 'initiations':
 - 5.1.1. All activities must be non-compulsory for members to participate in at their choosing and non-participation must be treated respectfully, with no bullying or peer pressure applied
 - 5.1.2. Where alcohol consumption forms part of an activity, a non-alcoholic soft drink alternative must be readily available to all members.

5.1.3. Activities should not include enforced degradation or humiliation or fall outside of publicly acceptable standards of behaviour, e.g. nudity

5.1.4. All activities must take place at a specific venue and not on the streets or any public rights of way. If an activity includes alcohol, then this should take place within licensed premises only.

5.1.5. All members must be made to feel welcome and part of the group and membership of the group or any particular team within it cannot be based on participation in social activities.

5.1.6. All such welcome activities carried out as 'initiations' must have an appropriate risk assessment completed and handed to the relevant Coordinator prior to the event taking place.

1.5. The above guidelines are also applicable to all events and activities carried out throughout the year by student groups.

1.6. Failure to abide by these guidelines WILL result in disciplinary action being taken against the groups involved, using the Students' Union Disciplinary Procedures, which can be found online.

6. Individual Members

1.1. It is important that all members of the groups behave in such a way as to uphold the reputation of the Students' Union and the University at all times when participating in groups' activities.

1.2. As a member of a group, all members agree to abide by the following terms at all times and when representing the Students' Union and the University, including during social activities:

Members WILL:

6.1.1. Conduct themselves in a reasonable and responsible manner at all times

6.1.2. Conduct themselves in a manner of mutual respect and understanding for all members of the University community

6.1.3. Conduct themselves in a manner that shall not offend others and shall not use foul and abusive language, either orally, in writing, or by expression

6.1.4. Treat all Union and University property with respect and shall not interfere with other peoples' enjoyment of Union or University facilities or events

6.1.5. Adhere to all Union policies and procedures as well as the University of Portsmouth Student Charter

Members WILL NOT:

6.1.6. Engage in any activity or behavior that is likely to bring either the Union or the University into disrepute

6.1.7. Engage in any behavior which is deemed an act of discrimination, bullying or harassment

6.1.8. Engage in any behavior which causes either a nuisance or distress to members of the local community

1.3. Failure to abide by these guidelines WILL result in disciplinary action being taken against the groups involved, using the Students' Union Disciplinary Procedures, which can be found online.