

# **Bye-Law 3: The SUMmit**

*This Bye-Law sets out the composition, scope, and powers of the Union SUMmit. The SUMmit is the political body of the Union and is formed of thirty-one seats which are filled each year by election. Elections are run online, and any Full Member can get involved, either by standing or voting for the best candidates in races they are eligible to. Seven SUMmit seats are held by Officers who are Executive Members elected to lead the Union for terms of twelve months and take up paid Sabbatical full-time positions at the Union. Other seats are filled in by Full Members who hold their positions alongside their academic work. The SUMmit also operates Sub-Committees that hold devolved responsibility for Policy within their stated remits.*

## **Interpretation**

1. The Union Affairs Officer shall be responsible for the interpretation of this Bye-Law.
2. Should the Union Affairs Officer be unable to discharge their duties, or should a conflict of interest arise, the Deputy Chair of the Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the interpretation of this Bye-Law.

## **The SUMmit**

### ***Membership***

3. The SUMmit shall be comprised of the following members:
  - 3.1. The Officers;
  - 3.2. The Members of the Equalities Committee; and
  - 3.3. The Members of the Academic Committee.
4. No Student Member may hold more than one seat on the SUMmit at any one time.

### ***Powers and Duties***

5. The SUMmit shall have the authority to:

- 5.1. Represent the voices of Students;
- 5.2. Set Union Policy subject to the provisions of the Bye-Laws;
- 5.3. Overturn decisions made by the Executive Committee through Policy setting;
- 5.4. Refer Policy Proposals to a Referendum or to a Student Members' meeting subject to Clause 46.1.2 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association;
- 5.5. Make decisions regarding areas of Union business within their remit;
- 5.6. Make, repeal, and amend the Bye-Laws jointly with the Trustees in accordance with Clause 46.1.5 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association; and
- 5.7. Receive regular reports from the Office-holders that make up their Subcommittees.

## *Meetings*

6. The SUMmit shall be chaired by the Union Affairs Officer or, in their absence, a nominated Full-Time Officer of their choice.
7. The SUMmit shall meet at least four times per semester. They shall also hold Open Meetings as outlined in Bye-Law [ACCOUNTABILITY].

## **The Officers**

8. There shall be the following Full-Time Officer positions:
  - 8.1. The Academic Officer;
  - 8.2. The Activities Officer;
  - 8.3. The Union Affairs Officer;
  - 8.4. The Community and Wellbeing Officer;
  - 8.5. The Sports Officer;
  - 8.6. The Union Development Officer; and
  - 8.7. The Equality and Inclusion Officer.
9. Each of the Officer positions may only be held by a single individual.

10. The Members elected to Officer positions shall be the Officer Trustees of the Union in accordance with Clause 20.2 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

## ***Terms of Office***

11. The Sabbatical Officers shall remain in Office for a term of one year. All Officers shall hold Office from the first day of the first month after the close of the academic year, for a period of one calendar year.
12. The term of office may be shorter or longer on a transitional basis to coincide with an alteration of the year's start or end. Subject to a transitional change in the year of Office, a Sabbatical Officer may be re-elected for a maximum further term of one year by the Student Members at an Election to be held in accordance with the Bye-Laws.
13. A Sabbatical Officer's term of Office may be either consecutive or non-consecutive.
14. On taking up Office, each Officer will sign a contract and code of practice governing their behaviour and conduct whilst in Office.

## ***Remuneration***

15. The remuneration of Officers is set by and may only be amended by the Remuneration Subcommittee of the Board of Trustees as outlined in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

## ***Collective Duties of the Officers***

16. The Officers shall jointly have the following responsibilities:
  - 16.1. To be Officer Trustees of the Union;
  - 16.2. To fulfil their manifesto pledges to the best of their ability;
  - 16.3. To consult Members on their views and speak on their behalf, and promote Member-led advocacy where appropriate;
  - 16.4. To promote and defend the rights of all Members, including those traditionally underrepresented;
  - 16.5. To implement and uphold the Memorandum and Articles of Association, Bye-Laws, and Policies of the Union;

- 16.6. To be accountable to Student Member Meetings, Referenda, and the SUMmit, and to carry out mandates as these bodies may assign to them;
- 16.7. To campaign on issues that are affecting Members;
- 16.8. To ensure the membership is kept informed of the actions of the SUMmit and of opportunities to participate in the Union;
- 16.9. To support where appropriate other Representatives in the fulfilment of their roles;
- 16.10. To liaise with local and national bodies, including but not limited to Heslington Parish Council, the City of York Council, and Parliament, to uphold the reputation and interests of students in the community and across the media;
- 16.11. To attend all Meetings of the SUMmit; and
- 16.12. To ensure that the Union and University are committed to inclusive, accessible and sustainable practices in their activities and policies.

### *The Academic Officer*

17. The Academic Officer is primarily responsible for all academic matters; ensuring that students' rights as learners are upheld within the University; maintaining a robust system of academic representation; and informing Members of developments that may impact their experience as students at the University of York. To this end, the Academic Officer shall:
  - 17.1. Represent the interests of all students on academic issues within the University to ensure they get the highest quality of teaching, assessment, and feedback;
  - 17.2. Advocate for all underserved learner types, including distance learners, researchers, online learners and postgraduates;
  - 17.3. Convene meetings of the Academic Committee and Academic Leadership Team to discuss Union-wide activity, plan campaigns on issues around teaching and learning, and discuss ideas for the Policy Process as appropriate;
  - 17.4. Be proactive in engaging student Representatives throughout the Institution;

- 17.5. Work with the University and individual departments to develop effective student voice practices – including processes of student representation – across the Institution;
- 17.6. Oversee the recruitment, selection or election of Academic Representatives;
- 17.7. Work with departments and other Officers to ensure that appropriate institutional strategies are in place that are relevant and effective;
- 17.8. Act as the main point of contact for external academic regulatory requirements; and
- 17.9. Be an *ex officio* member of University Committees as required and faithfully represent the views of the membership within those meetings.

### ***The Activities Officer***

18. The Activities Officer is primarily responsible for supporting and developing extracurricular activities for Members of the Union and representing the interests of the student body in having a diverse and expanding range of groups and projects with which to get involved. To this end, the Activities Officer shall:
  - 18.1. Chair the Societies Committee and the Media Committee and work closely with individual Societies and Media Groups to support and enhance their work;
  - 18.2. Act as the representative of the Union on matters concerning student activities, both to the University and to other external bodies;
  - 18.3. Advocate for the needs and interests of Societies and Media Groups within the Union and University structures;
  - 18.4. Proactively encourage student participation in available activities with particular concern for ensuring that activities are inclusive and accessible to all students;
  - 18.5. Ensure that participation in student activities provides opportunities for personal and skills development where appropriate;
  - 18.6. Oversee and publicise the processes of ratifying or re-ratifying student groups and allocating grants to ratified student groups; and

- 18.7. Mediate between ratified student groups to resolve disputes and ensure they adhere to their own Constitution, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Bye-Laws of the Union.

## ***The Union Affairs Officer***

19. The Union Affairs Officer is the primary spokesperson for the Students' Union and shall be ultimately responsible for the reputation, leadership, and direction of the Union as a democratic organisation. To this end, the Union Affairs Officer shall:
  - 19.1. Be the head of the Union and its governance;
  - 19.2. Lead and coordinate the Summit and the democratic process;
  - 19.3. Oversee the Union's democratic and governance structures, ensuring compliance with Union Articles, Bye-Laws and Policy;
  - 19.4. Oversee internal and external communications, exploring new methods of engaging with the membership;
  - 19.5. Oversee the Union's priority campaigns, working closely with staff responsible for developing campaigns to maximise planning and impact;
  - 19.6. Hold overall responsibility for coordinating Union Policy, ensuring the Policy Process is run fairly and reflects the views of a broad range of students in accordance with Bye-Law [DEVELOPING POLICY];
  - 19.7. Be an *ex officio* member of University Committees as may be required, and faithfully represent the views of the membership within those meetings;
  - 19.8. Be responsible for representations to affiliated bodies, including the National Union of Students, and organising and leading delegations as required;
  - 19.9. Chair the Board of Trustees;
  - 19.10. Act as Line Manager of the Chief Executive Officer on behalf and with the Support of the Trustee Board; and
  - 19.11. Act as the Officer contact for the College CRC and SA Chairs and Presidents.

## *The Community and Wellbeing Officer*

20. The Community and Wellbeing Officer is primarily responsible for representing the rights and interests of students regarding their well-being on campus and in the local community, and for ensuring that all students have the support and pastoral care required to enjoy their student experience. To this end, the Community and Wellbeing Officer shall:
  - 20.1. Represent students on matters affecting their well-being at the University, locally and nationally, and their relationship with the local community;
  - 20.2. Liaise with the University support services to ensure that provisions are consistent, accessible, and relevant to the needs of students;
  - 20.3. Coordinate and support College Wellbeing Representatives, providing information, training opportunities, and resources to enable them to support the needs of students;
  - 20.4. Work to ensure the SU provides professional Advice and Support services with the capacity to serve all students and to promote this service amongst students;
  - 20.5. Strengthen and develop initiatives which look to integrate students as active members of the City and local community;
  - 20.6. Ensure students have the information and resources they need to understand and defend their own rights; and
  - 20.7. Be an *ex officio* member of University Committees as may be required and faithfully represent the views of the membership within those meetings.

## *The Sports Officer*

21. The Sports Officer is primarily responsible for all sports within the Union and shall represent the interests of the student body in having opportunities to participate and compete in sports at the University and with external bodies. To this end, the Sports Officer shall:
  - 21.1. Act as the representative of the Union on matters concerning student sport, both to the University and external bodies;

- 21.2. Advocate for the interests and needs of student-athletes within the University and wider sports community;
- 21.3. Convene the York Sport Union Committee, assisting the York Sport Union Treasurer and deputising as Treasurer in their absence;
- 21.4. Convene the College Sport Committee, working with College Heads of Sport and their equivalents, College Sport Officers, and the College Sport Communication Officers to encourage continuous development in College Sport, and consider matters relating to York Sport Union's role within College Sport;
- 21.5. Lead on inter-university sporting events such as the Roses Tournament and College Varsity;
- 21.6. Work with the University to encourage continuous development in the quantity and quality of facilities provided for the physical recreation of students and to make access to these affordable; and
- 21.7. Proactively encourage student participation in sports, with particular concern for ensuring that activities are inclusive and accessible to all students.

### *The Union Development Officer*

22. The Union Development Officer is primarily responsible for the development of student-centred flagship events, volunteering and fundraising, ensuring these are aligned with sustainable and socially conscious standards. To this end, the Union Development Officer shall:
  - 22.1. Act as the representative of the Union on matters concerning events, volunteering and fundraising;
  - 22.2. Advocate for the needs and interests of Volunteering Projects within and outside the Union;
  - 22.3. Advocate for the diverse entertainment interests and cultural event needs of the student body;
  - 22.4. Convene and chair the Union's Sustainability Committee and champion sustainability initiatives within the Union;

- 22.5. Ensure that events and initiatives align with environmental and ethical standards and with the values and expectations of the student community, promoting a culture of social and environmental responsibility;
- 22.6. Organise recognition and awareness events that celebrate diversity, raise awareness of social issues and foster dialogue within the University community;
- 22.7. Raise awareness of social issues within and outside the University community through campaigns, workshops, and educational events; and
- 22.8. Proactively encourage student participation in events, volunteering, fundraising and wider civic engagement with particular concern for ensuring that activities are inclusive and accessible to all students.

### *The Equality and Inclusion Officer*

23. The Equality and Inclusion Officer is primarily responsible for ensuring the representation and advocacy for students from traditionally marginalised backgrounds, working to remove systematic barriers for all students and provide an equitable experience within and outside the Union and University. To this end, the Equality and Inclusion Officer shall:
  - 23.1. Act as the representative of the Union on matters concerning Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI);
  - 23.2. Lead advocacy efforts to promote EDI within the Union, University and City, challenging discriminatory practices, policies and behaviours;
  - 23.3. Lead on integrating intersectionality into policies, ensuring that diverse perspectives are considered in all aspects of decision-making;
  - 23.4. Facilitate work and initiatives to help students find and connect with communities that align with their identities;
  - 23.5. Collaborate with Equalities Sub-Committee members to amplify their voices and work toward shared EDI goals;
  - 23.6. Listen to and raise awareness of the diverse range of experiences and views of students and make representations based on those views;

- 23.7. Support other Union Officers and Representatives to foster communities from marginalised backgrounds amongst student members.

## **SUmmit Representatives**

24. SUmmit Non-Officer positions shall be elected by Member ballot in accordance with the regulations laid out in Bye-Law [ELECTIONS] and subject to any eligibility criteria that may apply to candidates as set out in the descriptions of Officer positions in this Bye-Law.
25. Only Members who self-identify with the caucus represented by each Non-Officer seat as specified in this Bye-Law shall be eligible to vote in Non-Officer SUmmit Elections.
26. Non-Officer SUmmit Representatives shall be continuous students of the University and not take a Sabbatical to fulfil their role. They are expected to balance the demands of their role with their other commitments and shall have the support of the Union in pursuit of this.
27. In line with the Memorandum and Articles of Association, Non-Officer SUmmit Representatives are generally expected to be continuing their studies whilst holding Office. It is recognised however that they may need to take a period of Leave of Absence. Should a Representative feel able to continue in their role during any periods of Leave of Absence, this should be possible provided this does not undermine any agreement that the Representative has in place with the University concerning the terms of their Leave of Absence, or duty of care considerations related to this.
- 27.1. These matters shall be considered collaboratively by a Senior Member of staff or Human Resources Manager in conjunction with the Representative on a case-by-case basis with any reasonable adjustments to the Representative role explored as required.
- 27.2. Decisions on the ability of a Representative to pursue their term in relation to a Leave of Absence are to be reported to the Union Affairs Officer.

### ***Terms***

28. All Non-Officer Representatives shall hold Office for one year from midday on Monday of the fourth week of the first semester.

29. Representatives elected through by-election or appointed through co-option shall start their term from midday on the Monday following their election or appointment and vacate their seat following the end of the next Representative Elections.

### ***Duties of All Non-Officer Representatives***

30. All Non-Officer SUMmit Representatives shall have the following responsibilities:
  - 30.1. To carry out all duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Union's Memorandum and Articles of Association and Policies;
  - 30.2. To always behave in a manner that is respectful and maintains the good reputation of the Union and the Office to which they have been elected, in addition to the Union's duty of care to all Members;
  - 30.3. To find out the views and needs of the Members they represent and promote them within the Union, the University and to external bodies as appropriate;
  - 30.4. To fulfil any democratic mandate and to adhere to and promote any matters of Union Policy that bear upon their role description;
  - 30.5. To ensure the successful execution of their responsibilities and the proper conduct of the committees and meetings they coordinate;
  - 30.6. To manage any allocated budget responsibly subject to the decisions of the Board of Trustees and the requirement to have the countersignature of the department of the Union that oversees that area of Union activity for any items of expenditure;
  - 30.7. To work to ensure the success of the Union and encourage participation in its democratic, social and campaigning activities;
  - 30.8. To attend all Meetings of the SUMmit and its Sub-Committees as relevant; and
  - 30.9. To fulfil the requirements for accountability and communication with Members as agreed by the SUMmit.

### **Sub-Committees**

31. The quorum for all sub-committees of the Summit shall be an absolute majority of all Committee members.

### ***The Executive Committee***

32. The Officers may meet as an Executive Committee in line with Clause 32 of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.
33. Meetings of the Officers' Committee shall be held at the request of any of the Officers.
34. The Union Affairs Officer shall be Chair of the Executive Committee.
35. The Executive Committee shall have the power to set direction on Union business that is time-sensitive or of organisational importance.
36. The Executive Committee shall be a sub-committee of and accountable to the Union Summit. Officers shall be responsible for reporting Executive decisions to Union Summit.
37. The Union Summit shall have the power to overturn Executive Committee decisions by setting Union Policy in line with Bye-Law [DEVELOPING POLICY].

### ***The Equalities Committee***

38. The Equalities Committee shall be a sub-committee of the Union Summit.
39. The Equalities Committee shall be composed of:
  - 39.1. The Equality and Inclusion Officer;
  - 39.2. The Community and Wellbeing Officer;
  - 39.3. The Working-Class and Social Mobility Student Representative who shall self-identify as working class, which may include but is not limited to first-generation students or York Bursary recipients;
  - 39.4. The Local and Commuting Student Representative who shall either live outside of the City of York or have their permanent and ordinary resident in York;
  - 39.5. The Disabled Student Representative who shall self-identify as being disabled, having a disability or being neurodivergent;

- 39.6. The International Student Representative who shall self-identify as having an international background, whether that means having come to the UK to study (not limited by fee status) or having lived in or meaningfully interacted with two or more cultural environments;
- 39.7. The Mature Student Representative who shall have begun an undergraduate course at the University after the age of 21 or a postgraduate course after the age of 24;
- 39.8. The Parent, Guardian and Carer Student Representative who shall self-identify as having legal or caring responsibility for a dependent or partly dependent person;
- 39.9. The Estranged and Care-Experienced Student Representative who has no communication with both of their biological or adoptive parents, and the situation is likely to remain permanent or have care experience;
- 39.10. The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Representative who shall not self-identify as exclusively White;
- 39.11. The LGBTQ+ Student Representative who shall not self-identify as both cisgender and heterosexual;
- 39.12. The Gender Equality Representative who shall not self-identify as cisgender male; and
- 39.13. The Environmental and Social Responsibility Student Representative who shall have an interest in environmental and social responsibility issues.
40. The Equalities Committee shall select a Sabbatical Officer Chair from amongst their number.
41. Should they deem it necessary, the Chair shall appoint a member of Union staff to be Secretary to the Equalities Committee.
42. The Equalities Committee shall be convened by the Chair or the Committee Secretary three times per semester.
43. The Equalities Committee shall have primary responsibility for setting Union direction on issues of importance relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and intersectionality within and outside the Union.
44. The Equality and Inclusion Officer and Community and Wellbeing Officer shall have responsibility for reporting decisions made on issues of importance

pertaining to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and intersectionality outside of meetings to the Equalities Committee.

## *The Academic Committee*

45. The Academic Committee shall be a sub-committee of the Union Summit.
46. The Academic Committee shall be composed of:
  - 46.1. The Academic Officer;
  - 46.2. The Undergraduate Department Representative who shall be a recognised member of the Academic Leadership Team on an undergraduate course;
  - 46.3. The Postgraduate Taught Department Representative who shall be a recognised member of the Academic Leadership Team on a postgraduate taught course;
  - 46.4. The Doctoral Researcher Representative who shall be a student on a Doctorate course;
  - 46.5. The Masters by Research Representative who shall be a student on a postgraduate researcher on a Masters course;
  - 46.6. The Apprentice Representative who shall be a student apprentice;
  - 46.7. The Foundation or Pre-sessional Representative who shall be a student on a foundation year or pre-sessional course;
  - 46.8. The Online Student Representative who shall be a student on a York Online Programme;
  - 46.9. The Distance Learner Representative who shall be a student learning from a distance;
  - 46.10. The Part-Time Student Representative who shall be a Part-Time student; and
  - 46.11. A CITY College Representative who shall either be the elected President or Education Officer at CITY College Students' Union.
47. The Academic Officer shall chair the Academic Committee.

48. Should they deem it necessary, the Academic Officer shall appoint a member of Union staff to be Secretary to the Academic Committee.
49. The Academic Committee shall be convened by the Academic Officer or the Committee Secretary three times per semester.
50. The Academic Committee shall have primary responsibility for setting Union direction on all academic matters.
51. The Academic Officer shall have responsibility for reporting decisions made on issues of importance pertaining to academic matters outside of meetings to the Academic Committee.

### *The Chairs and Presidents' Committee*

52. The Chairs and Presidents' Committee shall be a sub-committee of the Union's SUMmit.
53. The Chairs and President Committee shall be composed of:
  - 53.1. The Union Affairs Officer;
  - 53.2. The Community and Wellbeing Officer; and
  - 53.3. The Chair(s) or President(s) of each University College Common Room Committee or Students' Association.
54. The Chairs and Presidents' Committee shall be chaired by the Union Affairs Officer.
55. Should they deem it necessary, the Union Affairs Officer shall appoint a member of Union staff to be Secretary to the Chairs and Presidents' Committee.
56. The Chairs and Presidents' Committee shall be convened by the Union Affairs Officer or the Committee Secretary on a weekly basis in term-time.
57. The Chairs and Presidents' Committee shall have primary responsibility for setting Union direction on issues of importance relating to the University's Colleges and collegiate system.
58. The Chairs and Presidents' Committee shall be permitted to select representatives to appoint the Accountability and Scrutiny Chair.

59. The Union Affairs Officer shall have responsibility for reporting decisions made on issues of importance pertaining to Colleges outside of meetings to the Chairs and Presidents Committee.

### *The Academic Leadership Team*

60. The Academic Leadership Team shall be a sub-committee of the Academic Committee.
61. The Academic Leadership Team shall be composed of:
  - 61.1. The Academic Officer; and
  - 61.2. The Department Representatives.
62. The Academic Leadership Team shall be chaired by the Academic Officer.
63. Should they deem it necessary, the Academic Officer shall appoint a member of Union staff to be Secretary to the Academic Leadership Team.
64. The Academic Leadership Team shall have responsibility for feeding back and coordinating taught academic representation and activity.
65. The Academic Leadership Team shall be convened by the Academic Officer or the Committee Secretary at least four times per semester.

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