

Bye-Law 1:

Democracy and Governance

Owned by: President (Student Voice)

Date passed by Board of Trustees: 17/06/26

Date ratified by Student Senate (SU Council): TBC (*agreed in principle May 2026*)

Review required: June 2029

1. Overview

- 1.1. Winchester Students' Union has a democratic governance structure, supported by the Board of Trustees, aimed at ensuring the Union remains student-focused and student-led as prescribed in the Union's Articles of Association.
- 1.2. This bye-law outlines the Union's governance structure and provides the terms of references for these committees. The make-up and powers of the Board of Trustees and Union General Meetings are governed by the Union's Articles of Association.
- 1.3. Section 12 of this bye-law outlines the official routes of approval for bye-laws, policy, papers and the submission of motions by the appropriate bodies.

2. Democratic Structure

- 2.1. Winchester Students' Union is a student-led charity and the students' responsibility and power is held collectively through the '**Annual Student Members' Meeting**' [3], as well as open democratic officer elections which take place via cross-campus ballot each year.
- 2.2. The work and governance of the Union is then held by two committee strands overseen by the '**Board of Trustees**' (also known as Directors) and '**SU Council**' [7] respectively.
- 2.3. The 'Board of Trustees' has the power to form sub-committees – these may change from time to time but include:
 - 2.3.1. Executive Committee [3]
 - 2.3.2. Appointments Committee [4]
 - 2.3.3. Health & Safety Committee [6]
- 2.4. 'SU Council' can create sub-committees to facilitate wider student voice or project work to be fed into SU Council
- 2.5. No committee shall exercise powers reserved for the Board of Trustees under the Articles of Association.
- 2.6. Please refer to Appendix A for the Union's Democratic Structure, a simplified diagram which aims to draw out the relationship between the Union's Student Members Meeting, Board of Trustees, SU Council and the Union's various committees and subcommittees.

3. Board of Trustees

- 3.1. Winchester Students' Union's Articles of Association sets out the establishment of a Board of Trustees and Directors (Part 3, Articles 19-44).
- 3.2. The Articles of Association establish the appointment and retirement of Trustees, and the the power and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees.
- 3.3. Terms of Reference, beyond the above as outlined in the Articles of Association, for the Board of Trustees can be found as an appendix of this Bye-law: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Board of Trustees](#)

4. Executive Committee

- 4.1. Winchester Students' Union's Articles of Association sets out the establishment of an Executive Committee (Article 31) of elected officers.
- 4.2. Terms of Reference setting out authority, membership, and meeting administration including quoracy for Executive Committee can be found as an appendix of this Bye-law: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Executive Committee](#)
- 4.3. The Committee may not take decisions reserved to the Board under the Scheme of Delegation.

5. Appointments Committee

- 5.1. The Board of Trustees has established a Committee of the Board of Trustees known as the Appointments Committee.
- 5.2. Terms of Reference setting out authority, membership, and meeting administration including quoracy for Appointments Committee can be found as an appendix of this Bye-law: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Appointments Committee](#)
- 5.3. The Committee may not take decisions reserved to the Board under the Scheme of Delegation.

6. Health & Safety Committee

- 6.1. The Board of Trustees has established a Committee of the Board of Trustees known as the Health & Safety Committee.
- 6.2. Terms of Reference setting out authority, membership, and meeting administration including quoracy for Health & Safety Committee can be found as an appendix of this Bye-law: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Health & Safety Committee](#)
- 6.3. The Committee may not take decisions reserved to the Board under the Scheme of Delegation.

7. SU Council (Student Senate)

- 7.1. As laid out in article 45 of the Union's Articles of Association, Student Senate will be known as SU Council.
- 7.2. SU Council seeks to represent the voice of students and may set policy for the Union and seek wider student consultation and feedback from forums and meeting groups which it may form from time to time.
- 7.3. Terms of Reference setting out authority, membership, and meeting administration including quoracy for SU Council can be found as an appendix of this Bye-law: [Paper – Terms of Reference – SU Council \(Student Senate\)](#)
- 7.4. The Committee may not take decisions reserved to the Board under the Scheme of Delegation.
- 7.5. **SU Council subcommittees**
 - 7.5.1. SU Council may establish formal subcommittees as outlined in its Terms of Reference. The current existing formal subcommittees of SU Council are as follows:

- 7.5.1.1. Officer Review Panel (see **Appendix I: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Officer Review Panel \(SU Council subcommittee\)](#)**)
- 7.5.1.2. Widening Participation Student Committee (see **Appendix J: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Widening Participation Student Committee \(SU Council subcommittee\)](#)**)
- 7.5.2. Additionally, SU Council may create Working Groups (such as Campaign Groups) to facilitate project work and deliver campaign work as directed by the Council.

8. Bye-Laws, Policies, Papers and Motions

8.1. Definitions

- 8.1.1. Bye-laws, Policies and Papers are created under the auspice of the governing articles for the purpose of efficiently achieving the objects of the Union.
- 8.1.2. Bye-laws are defined in the Articles of Association of the Union as to the management of the Union and its working practices, and are set in line with the Articles of Association of the Union.
- 8.1.3. Policies are defined in the Articles of Association of the Union and this bye-law as statements of practice that delineate the Union, view, position or response to a representation or campaign matter. Policies act as a statement of intent for how the Union should operate and handle specific situations to achieve desired outcomes.
- 8.1.4. Papers are defined in this bye-law as statements of recommended practice that may be adopted by the staff and officers of the Union but fall outside of the two definitions above.
- 8.1.5. Terms of Reference for meeting groups are defined as Papers.
- 8.1.6. Motions are defined in this bye-law as the formal expression of a members request for the Union (as represented by its officers) to behave or act in a certain way on a specific issue, matter, or campaign.

8.2. Bye-laws

- 8.2.1. Bye-laws may be set via the democratic process of the Union, jointly though SU Council and the Board of Trustees.
- 8.2.2. SU Council and the Board of Trustees have the power to overturn or amend bye-Laws.
- 8.2.3. The Board of Trustees has the right to overturn any bye-law or bye-law decision, even if approved by SU Council if the bye-law;
 - 8.2.3.1. Has serious financial implication for the Union
 - 8.2.3.2. Fails to comply with law or the charitable aims of the Union
 - 8.2.3.3. Is likely to damage the reputation of the Union
 - 8.2.3.4. The decision of the Board of Trustees in these matters shall be final.
- 8.2.4. Bye-laws will not normally lapse but a review of a bye-law will be triggered in the third year since such bye-law was created, or at the quinquennial review of the Articles of Association of the Union, whichever is sooner. Such reviews will be conducted by SU Council and/or the Board of Trustees.

8.3. Policies

8.3.1. Union policy may be set by members via the democratic process of at the Union at either;

8.3.1.1. SU Council

8.3.1.2. Board of Trustees

8.3.1.3. Student Members' Meetings

8.3.1.4. Referendum

8.3.1.5. Executive Committee

8.3.2. The Board of Trustees has the right to overturn any policy decision set via the democratic process if the policy;

8.3.2.1. Has serious financial implication for the Union

8.3.2.2. Fails to comply with law or the charitable aims of the Union

8.3.2.3. Is likely to damage the reputation of the Union.

8.3.2.4. The decision of the Board of Trustees in these matters shall be final.

8.3.3. Policies may be amended by a resolution of the Executive Committee & ratified by SU Council, provided it is not within the same academic year that the policy was adopted.

8.3.4. Policy shall automatically lapse;

8.3.4.1. Not less than three calendar years after creation

8.3.4.2. In the event it contravenes or contradicts any law, policy or bye-law of the Union.

8.4. Papers

8.4.1. Union papers may be set by members or staff via the processes of the Union at either;

8.4.1.1. SU Council

8.4.1.2. Board of Trustees

8.4.1.3. Student Members' Meetings

8.4.1.4. Referendum

8.4.1.5. Executive Committee

8.4.1.6. Meetings of the Senior Leadership Team of the Union

8.4.1.7. Meetings of the Senior Management Team of the Union

8.4.2. The Board of Trustees has the right to overturn any paper decision set via the Union's process if the paper;

8.4.2.1. Has serious financial implication for the Union

8.4.2.2. Fails to comply with law or the charitable aims of the Union

8.4.2.3. Is likely to damage the reputation of the Union

8.4.2.4. The decision of the Board of Trustees in these matters shall be final.

8.4.3. Papers may be amended by a resolution of the body of which originally passed the paper.

8.4.4. Papers shall atomically lapse;

8.4.4.1. Three calendar years after creation, with annual review as required.

8.4.4.2. In the event it contravenes or contradicts any law, policy or bye-law of the Union.

8.4.5. Terms of Reference for meeting groups defined in this bye-law shall be Papers. Terms of Reference shall require review three calendar years after creation.

8.5. Motions

- 8.5.1. Motions may be submitted by any student member to the Union via the prevailing mechanism.
- 8.5.2. Motions shall be aimed at providing the officers of the Union with direction for which the work, including but not limited to campaigns, shall take.
- 8.5.3. A vote of SU Council in favour of the motion by 50%+1 will require the Union to act upon the requests within the motion, and at minimum provide the members of SU Council with an update on the progress of the motion at the next meeting.
- 8.5.4. The Board of Trustees has the right to overturn any motion request or decision as set by SU Council if the motion;
 - 8.5.4.1. Has serious financial implication for the Union
 - 8.5.4.2. Fails to comply with law or the charitable aims of the Union
 - 8.5.4.3. Is likely to damage the reputation of the Union
 - 8.5.4.4. The decision of the Board of Trustees in these matters shall be final.
- 8.5.5. As motions only provide direction for the Union and are not held as formal documents of the Union, there is no appropriate route to amend a motion other than through further discussion at SU Council.
- 8.5.6. Unless otherwise agreed by SU Council, motions lapse automatically at the end of the academic year in which they are passed.
- 8.5.7. Further information about Motions can be found as an appendix of this Bye-law: [Paper – Motions](#), including a motion template for members to use.

8.6. General

- 8.6.1. A register of all bye-laws, policies, papers and motions will be maintained by the CEO, or their delegate, and will be made available to any member or stakeholder upon request.
- 8.6.2. The CEO, or their delegate, will bring to the attention of the Board of Trustees and SU Council when applicable, when bye-laws require review or policies are due to lapse. This shall be done at least one month prior to any such lapse.
- 8.6.3. All bye-laws, policies and papers shall be presented in an identifiable format that is consistent with Union documentation. They shall always include the following information;
 - 8.6.3.1. Whether it is a bye-law, policy or paper,
 - 8.6.3.2. Who proposed or owns the document
 - 8.6.3.3. Which body or authority of the Union passed it
 - 8.6.3.4. The date at which it was passed
 - 8.6.3.5. The date at which it will lapse or require review.

APPENDICES: BYE-LAW 1: DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

See www.winchesterstudents.co.uk/governance for the most up-to-date links to all appendices.

Appendix A: [Paper – Democratic Structure](#)

Appendix B: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Board of Trustees](#)

Appendix C: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Executive Committee](#)

Appendix D: [Paper – Executive Committee Officers: Roles, Responsibilities and Presidents' Job Descriptions](#)

Appendix E: [Paper – Executive Committee Officers: Code of Conduct](#)

Appendix F: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Appointments Committee](#)

Appendix G: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Health & Safety Committee](#)

Appendix H: [Paper – Terms of Reference – SU Council \(Student Senate\)](#)

Appendix I: [Paper – SU Council Representatives: Roles and Responsibilities](#)

Appendix J: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Officer Review Panel \(SU Council subcommittee\)](#)

Appendix K: [Paper – Terms of Reference – Widening Participation Student Committee \(SU Council subcommittee\)](#)

Appendix L: [Paper – Motions](#)