

APPENDIX A: **CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE CITY UNIVERSITY STUDENT** **UNION**

INTRODUCTION

The Code of Practice is established in compliance with the Education Act 1994. Part II of the Act places a number of responsibilities on university governing bodies in respect of the organisation and control of student unions. In the case of The City University the body which has responsibility is the University Council.

The requirements of the Act are intended to ensure that student unions operate in a manner which is fair and democratic and that student unions are properly accountable to university governing bodies for the conduct of their activities and for their financial stewardship. In order to accomplish these aims the Act requires that certain arrangements and procedures are put in place and that these are monitored by student unions themselves and by university governing bodies, these bodies having ultimate responsibility.

One requirement of the Act is that universities devise a Code of Practice setting out the manner in which the relevant provisions of the Act are to be carried into effect. This Code of Practice explains those mechanisms and procedures which are in place and which comprehensively meet the statutory requirements.

OBJECTS OF THE STUDENT UNION

The City University Student Union is the representative body of the University's students and is so recognised within the Charter and Statutes of The City University. The objects of the Student Union are these:

- To act as the official organisation representing all students attending courses of study at the University other than those students who elect not to be a member of the Student Union.
- To develop and foster the cultural, intellectual, social and athletic recreation of students.
- To develop and foster the education and welfare of students.
- To endeavour to provide such services as may from time to time be required by students.
- To develop and foster among its members the formation of Clubs and Societies having the objects described above. Such Clubs and Societies when formed may become affiliated to the Student Union.

In order to meet these objectives, the Student Union provides a number of services and supports a diverse range of Clubs and Societies for the benefit of its members. The policies and procedures which are developed in furtherance of the Student Union objects are determined by Union committees and its Council, subject always to the Constitution, Rules and Standing Orders. These matters are described in the Union Handbook which is distributed to all first year students at their home address and is available to returning students at Registration and from Union reception. Student Union activities are supported by a grant from the University which originates from government funds allocated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and from the fee income of self-funding and overseas students.

STUDENT UNION CONSTITUTION

1. The City University Student Union has a written Constitution which is approved by the University Council as an ordinance of the University.

1.1 Any changes to the Constitution are subject to the approval of University Council. The procedure to be followed by the Student Union in making proposals is set out in the Constitution.

1.2 **University** Council will formally review the Student Union Constitution every five years with the first such review to take place in 2000.

1.3 If in any year the Student Union submits changes to Council the next formal review of the Constitution will take place five years from the date of the most recent approval of changes.

1.4 The Constitution, Rules, Standing Orders and their Appendices shall be made available by the Student Union to its members.

ELECTION TO STUDENT UNION OFFICES

2. As required by the Constitution, election to all Student Union offices is by secret ballot in which all members are eligible to vote.

2.1 Student Union elections are overseen by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee appoints a Returning Officer who is responsible for supervision of the poll.

2.2 Members of the Student Union who have a complaint about the fairness or propriety of Union election rules, or about the conduct of an election, have the right to complain to the Steering Committee. The complaint is to be made in writing and within two days of the declaration of the poll.

MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OF STUDENT UNION FINANCES

3. The Constitution of the Student Union makes provision for financial control and accountability.

3.1 The general arrangements governing management of the Student Union's finances are set out in the Financial Memorandum [*Appendix B to the SU Constitution*] between the University and the Student Union. The Financial Memorandum is made and approved by University Council.

3.2 The Rules include the mechanism by which funds are allocated to student Clubs and Societies.

3.3 The Student Union Annual Budget and the Audited Accounts shall be posted of the Official Notice Boards according to the relevant procedure set out in the Rules.

3.4 The Student Union Annual Accounts together with the Auditors Report shall be submitted to the Union Council and to the Finance and General Purposed Committee of the University. The Student Union's financial year shall commence on 1 August and end on 31 July of the following calendar year.

3.5 The Student Union shall make a formal request to the University Director of Finance for its annual grant and shall do so in the form of a detailed budget submission and including the provision of any other information that the Director of Finance may require. The University Finance and General Purposes Committee and Council will approve the University's grant to the Student Union.

AFFILIATION TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

4. The Student Union may affiliate to external organisations provided that such affiliation is not outside the Student Union's constitutional purposes nor outside the scope permitted by virtue of the Student Union's charitable status. In respect of affiliations undertaken by Clubs and Societies, these are a matter for the members of the Clubs and Societies concerned; the arrangements below relate only to affiliations undertaken by the Student Union.

4.1 The Student Union shall annually publish on the Official Notice Boards and in its Annual Report a list of current affiliations and the cost of each affiliation.

4.2 The list of affiliations shall be approved annually at a Union General Meeting. If the question arises as to the continued affiliation of any particular organisation/s then the matter shall be decided by a secret ballot in which all members are eligible to vote providing that a request to conduct a ballot is received from at least 3% of the current Student Union membership. If fewer than 3% of the membership make such a request then the affiliation/s in question are deemed to continue until such time as a ballot can be requisitioned by 3% of the membership.

4.3 The list of affiliations shall annually be received by University Council.

4.4 Any new affiliations decided during the year by the Student Union membership shall be posted on the Official Notice Boards.

CHARITABLE STATUS

5. The Student Union, which derives its charitable status from The City University, is governed by laws relating to educational charities. In particular:

5.1 The Student Union shall not expend funds for activities outside its constitutional purposes. As a charitable organisation the Student Union cannot legally make donations to external organisations.

5.2 The Student Union shall not make donations to any external organisation except in circumstances where: a specific collection has been made for that purpose; a separate account has been established for that purpose; all those making a donation are aware of the destination of their donation; and all reasonable costs associated with collecting donations are charged against the account established. (An example would be RAG money collected under the auspices of the Student Union; this money is never the property of the Student Union but is merely held on behalf of those charities for whose benefit it has been collected.) The details of any such collections shall be published in the Student Union Annual Report.

ANNUAL REPORT

6. The Student Union shall publish an Annual Report for submission to its members at a General Meeting and for submission to the University Council.

6.1 The Annual Report shall contain a statement that the Union operates in a fair and democratic manner, and that it has properly accounted for its finances.

6.2 It shall contain a report on the Student Union's finances, a report of any collections (as stated in 5), and a report concerning current affiliations.

6.3 The Annual Report shall be made available to the members.

MEMBERSHIP AND THE RIGHT NOT TO BE A MEMBER OF THE STUDENT UNION

7. All registered City University students are automatically members of the City University Student Union. Any City University student has the right not to be a member of the Student Union. The procedure for exercising that right is as follows:

7.1 Any student wishing to declare his or her non-membership may do so only by giving notification in writing to the Student Union President. This declaration remains in effect until the end of the academic year in which it is made.

7.2 Any student who has elected not to be a member and who subsequently wishes to become a member may do so at the commencement of the next academic year by giving notification in writing to the Student Union President.

7.3 A list of non-members will be maintained by the Student Union President. A copy of this list shall be provided to the University Secretary.

STUDENTS REGISTERED ON COURSES VALIDATED BY THE UNIVERSITY

8. This section is concerned with students registered on courses validated by the University.

8.1 Students attending a course validated by the University and who are registered with the University have the status of Associate Member of the Student Union.

8.2 Associate membership confers the right of access to Student Union facilities, services and activities as set out below at items 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 below.

8.3 Associate membership does not confer the benefit of participation in the democratic processes of the Student Union; the particular restrictions involved are set out below at section 10 where they are given in connection with non-membership.

RIGHTS OF ACCESS BY NON-MEMBERS TO STUDENT UNION FACILITIES, SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

9. Registered students of the University who have elected not to be members of the Student Union have the following rights of access to Student Union facilities, services and activities:

9.1 Access to all facilities managed by the Student Union: bars (but always subject to the terms of the liquor licence in force at the time), catering services, shop, and games areas.

9.2 Entitlement to advice provision made through the Student Union Welfare Worker and/or other forms of provision made by the Student Union.

9.3 Entitlement to become a member of any Student Union affiliated Society or Club provided that the appropriate membership fee, if any, has been paid, which fee shall not be higher than that charged to members of the Student Union; however restrictions as to elected positions apply (see section 10).

PARTICIPATION IN STUDENT UNION GOVERNANCE

10. Non-members may not participate in the democratic processes of the Student Union as outlined below, nor may they be involved in any capacity which would give them a decision making role involving the Student Union's activities, funds, policies, procedures, or services.

10.1 Non-members may not hold elected or appointed office in the Student Union; they may not become sabbatical or non-sabbatical officers, and they may not serve as members of Student Union committees.

10.2 Non-members are not eligible to vote in Student Union elections or at Student Union meetings.

10.3 The Student Union recognises representatives of Boards of Studies. These representatives are normally ex-officio members of the Student Union Education committee. Where a Board of Studies representative is not a Student Union member, the representative concerned may only attend meetings of the Education committee in the capacity of an observer and without voting rights.

10.4 Non-members may not serve as an officer of any Student Union affiliated Society or Club nor serve as a member of any Society or Club committee.

10.5 Non-members may not vote in any election or meeting of any Student Union affiliated Society or Club.

10.6 Non-members may not serve as Student Union representatives on committees or working groups which form part of the governance structure of The City University, its Schools, Department or other constituent parts.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

11. Students have the right to complain if they are dissatisfied in their dealings with the Student Union or if they believe that they have been unfairly disadvantaged by reason of having exercised their right not to be a member of the Student Union. Complaints shall be dealt with in the following manner:

11.1 The complainant shall follow the Student Union internal complaints procedure for the time being in force and, in the first instance, shall give notification in writing to the Student Union President.

11.2 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Student Union's response, then he/she may appeal to the person appointed by the Vice-Chancellor for the purpose of considering such instances of dissatisfaction.

11.3 If the complainant remains dissatisfied then the matter may be referred to an independent person appointed by University Council to investigate and make a report.

CODE OF PRACTICE ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH

- 12.** The City University Student Union is required to observe the University's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech in connection with meetings and other events held on University premises including those premises used by the Student Union. The Education (No 2) Act of 1986, section 43, places a duty of the University Council to ensure as far as is reasonably practical that Freedom of Speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the University and for visiting speakers. [*The Code of Practice forms Appendix D.*]

RJS

23.2.95

Amended 10.5.95 with the inclusion of section 8