

Leeds University Union Debating Society

CONSTITUTION

Definitions

Activities Executive - the elected students representing Clubs and Societies as outlined in Bye-Law 7:21.

Activities & Opportunities Officer - the elected student who leads the Activities Executive. Their role is outlined in Bye-Law 7:4.

Ex-Officio Membership - membership of clubs & societies given to the Activities & Opportunities Officer and members of the Activities Executive because of the role they have

1 Name, Aims and Objectives

1.1 The name of the Club/Society is Leeds University Union Debating Society, hereafter referred to as the Club/Society, or such other name agreed at an AGM or EGM with the approval of the Activities & Opportunities Officer.

1.2 The purpose of the Club/Society is:

1.2.1 Create a safe and inclusive space where members can express and discuss their own opinions freely.

1.2.2 Foster an environment where members feel supported in building their public speaking skills and confidence.

1.2.3 Promote the practice of debating and public speaking among students at the University of Leeds.

1.2.4 Provide opportunities for members to participate in competitions, workshops, and social events, enhancing both skills and community engagement.

1.3 The Club/Society partners or affiliates with the following groups to support the achievement of its objectives. These partner organisations are: **n/a**

1.4 The Club/Society receives sponsorship and donations from the following groups to support the achievement of its objectives. These organisations are: **n/a**

2 Membership and Participation [this section cannot be edited]

2.1 Membership takes effect upon completion of registration with the Club/Society, including the listing of membership details with the LUU Student Activities Team. Where relevant, this will include the payment of the Club/Society membership fee.

2.2 The table below outlines categories of membership and participation options, along with their corresponding rights. Members and participants have only **the rights outlined in the relevant row.**

	Category	Rights
2.2.1	Full Membership may be granted only to current Members of the Leeds University Union. Members are as defined in the LUU Articles of Association and Bye-Law 6:5.	• To attend all meetings and take part in society activities • To vote on all questions of policy within the club/society • To nominate candidates for election as Core Officers and Committee Members of the club/society • To vote to appoint the Core Officers and the Committee Members of the club/society • To hold office on and stand for election as a Core Officer or Committee Member of the club/society • Membership fees and participation in activities may be subsidised using LUU grants
2.2.2	Ex-Officio membership. This will normally be the Activities & Opportunities Officer and the relevant Activities Executive representative(s).	• To attend all meetings and take part in society activities • To vote on all questions of policy within the club/society • To nominate candidates for election as Core Officers and Committee Members of the club/society • To vote to appoint the Core Officers and the Committee Members of the club/society • To act as an investigator instead of a core committee member in the

		event the core committee cannot nominate a suitable individual • Membership fees and participation in activities may be subsidised using LUU grants
2.2.3	Participant members may be alumni, from another HE institution, or a member of the public.	• Participants are admitted at the discretion of the committee and Activities Executive. • Participants may be charged a fee to take part. • Participants do not hold rights under this constitution.

3 Club/Society Committee Members

3.1 The Committee shall consist of the three Core Officers and Additional Committee Members (section 4).

3.2 The three Core Officers must be Full Members as outlined in section 2.2.1.

3.3 All Committee Members will be appointed by a vote of Full Members at the AGM or an EGM.

3.4 The term of office of all Committee roles will be approximately twelve months.

3.5 All Club & Society Committee Members must adhere to the Committee Member Code of Standards and Code of Conduct. A breach of the Code of Standards and/or the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action using Bye-Law 8.

4 Core Officer Roles and Duties

4.1 The Core Officers have overall responsibility for the smooth running and financial oversight of the Club or Society, which benefits its members and is in line with the stated aims and objectives.

4.2 The primary duties and responsibilities of Core Officers are:

- 4.2.1 Attending all relevant committee training and ensuring an awareness of the requirements placed upon them as Core Officers, including complying with requests from the Activities Executive regarding the group.
- 4.2.2 Being a signatory to the Club/Society LUU cash office account.
- 4.2.3 Ensuring the Club/Society meets the requirements of the annual certification check.
 - 4.2.3.1 Ensuring the society complies with all legal requirements and LUU policy, including the Clubs and Societies [Health and Safety Policy](#), [Media Policy](#), [Freedom of Expression Protocol](#), and [Safeguarding Policy](#).
- 4.2.4 Ensuring the Club/Society LUU webpage, and, if applicable, own website and/or Facebook or similar social media sites, are maintained in line with relevant LUU policy.
- 4.2.5 Running and attending all committee meetings and AGMs per the rules outlined in this constitution.
- 4.2.6 Dealing with any complaints or disciplinary matters in line with the rules outlined in this constitution.
- 4.2.7 Ensuring consultation with Full Members regarding their views on Ideas going to Better Union Forums.
- 4.2.8 Passing on the views of Full Members regarding Ideas to the relevant member of the Activities Executive.

4.3 Failure to fulfil these duties and those listed in the relevant paragraphs below may result in a motion of no-confidence and removal from office by an EGM, the Activities and Opportunities Officer or the Activities Executive.

4.4 The three Core Officers have additional individual roles and duties alongside those outlined in 4.2:

4.4.1 President/Captain/Chair:

- Organising and overseeing the running of the Club/Society
- Chairing Committee Meetings, AGMs and EGMs
- Ensuring the production of an annual report
- Ensuring there is an up-to-date entry in the Club/Society's LUU webpage
 - The Code of conduct and risk assessments are communicated to all members

4.4.2 Secretary:

- Maintaining membership records containing at least the name and membership category of all the Club/Society's members
- Producing agenda documents for all meetings
- Maintaining a written record of all meetings
- Maintaining an up-to-date copy of the Club/Society constitution
- Ensuring society documentation is archived
- Ensuring only Full and Ex-Officio Members are allowed to vote in society elections

4.4.3 Treasurer:

- Managing the finances of the Club/Society
- Maintaining up-to-date accounts with the LUU Cash Office only
- Submitting grant applications to Activities Executive
- Produce a termly report and yearly budget
- Submitting a detailed statement of accounts for the year to the Club/Society's Annual General Meeting.

5 Additional Committee roles and duties

5.1 The Activities & Opportunities Officer, elected annually to lead LUU as part of the Student Executive team, is also a member of each society because of their elected position and has specific duties to manage all Clubs & Societies. The Activities & Opportunities Officer approves most decisions made at AGMs or EGMs, and leads the Activities Executive, whose role includes making decisions about complaints and disciplinary action.

5.2 The Club/Society may appoint Additional Committee Members to assist the Core Officers in running and managing the Club/Society.

5.3 All Additional Committee Members must attend committee meetings, AGMs and EGMs in line with the rules outlined in this constitution.

5.4 Failure to fulfil these duties and those listed in the relevant paragraphs below may result in a motion of no-confidence and removal from office by an EGM, the Activities and Opportunities Officer or the Activities Executive.

5.5 Where an Equality and Inclusion Officer is not appointed, the specific responsibilities enumerated under the optional role in the Constitution must be borne by the Core Officers

5.6 The Additional Committee roles will be:

5.6.1 Social Media Manager:

- · Run the society's social media
- · Maintain the society's page on the union website

- · Communicate with member, advertise the committee, and answer people's questions and messages.
- · Organizes and runs the social events through the year, both in-person (if allowed) and online
- · Includes Otley runs, Christmas meals
- · Book pub for weekly social after debate meetings
- · Work with social media secretary

5.6.2 Competitions Officer:

- · Trains members in BP style of debating
- · Organize sending teams to competitions and judging
- · Encourages new members to join competitive debating
- · Helps set up the Leeds debating competition as other competitions

5.6.3 Vice President:

- · Work closely with the president and step in when they aren't available
- · Work with all other members in the committee, offering help where needed
- · Help set up and run the Leeds debating sessions

6 Elections to Committee Roles [this section cannot be edited]

6.1 The Activities & Opportunities Officer will be the election's return officer. However, their presence is not required at each election.

6.2 Elections shall occur by a secret ballot of Full members using the approved LUU mechanism.

6.3 Candidates for Club/Society committee positions can only be nominated by Full Members of the Club/Society. For clarity, Full Members may nominate themselves.

6.4 Nominations will open at least 7 working days before the AGM or EGM.

6.4.1 For online elections, the nominations must be open for at least 7 working days, and the voting period must be at least 24 hours.

6.5 Nominations should be made through the official process (i.e., the process approved by the Activities & Opportunities Officer or their nominee) and shared with the Activities & Opportunities Officer or their nominee.

6.6 Newly elected Club/Society Committee members must assume their duties after their handover and before the end of the academic year. The anticipated date for assuming these duties should be published with the opening of nominations.

7 Club and Society Formal Meetings

7.1 The Activities Executive or Activities & Opportunities Officer may, at their discretion, send an observer to any Club/Society formal meeting.

7.1.2 If any Full Member moves a no confidence motion in the Chair, a vote shall be taken immediately.

7.1.3 If a motion of no confidence in the Chair is passed, the full members will elect a new temporary Chair at the meeting.

7.1.4 Decision-making should ideally be by consensus. However, if a vote is required, voting shall be by show of hands unless a secret ballot has been previously requested. Decisions will be made by a simple majority of the members who have the right to vote, as outlined in Section 2 of this Constitution. No member has more than one vote.

7.2 Committee Meetings

7.2.1 Any Committee Member may call a Committee Meeting.

7.2.2 The time, date, and location of Committee Meetings must be posted on the Club/Society LUU webpage or a member-accessible web source at least two working days in advance.

7.2.3 Committee Meetings shall be open to all members of the Club/Society.

7.2.4 The agenda for Committee Meetings should be made available at the start of the meeting.

7.2.5 The quorum for all Committee Meetings shall be two-thirds of all Officers who have a vote, or three Officers who have a vote, whichever is greater.

7.2.6 Once ratified as a true and accurate record of the meeting, the minutes of any decisions made at the meetings must be accessible via the Club/Society LUU webpage.

7.3 Annual General Meeting

7.3.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held during the designated election period, as defined by the LUU Activities Team.

7.3.2 In exceptional circumstances, with the agreement of the Activities and Opportunities Officer, the AGM will instead be held within 395 days of the previous AGM.

7.3.3 Notice of the AGM must be posted on the Club/Society LUU webpage or a member-accessible web source at least seven working days before the meeting.

7.3.4 The agenda for the AGM must be posted on the Club/Society LUU webpage or a member-accessible web source at least seven days before the meeting.

7.3.5 The order of business shall be:

- the President's/Captain's/Chair's report
- the Financial report
- Constitutional Amendments
- Elections
- Any other business

7.3.6 The quorum for the AGM shall be either one-third of all the Full Members or 20 Full Members, whichever is the lesser.

7.3.7 If an AGM is declared inquorate, it must adjourn to be reconvened within ten working days.

7.3.8 If a reconvened AGM is declared inquorate, the Club/Society shall report this to the Activities & Opportunities Officer, who may authorise an inquorate AGM.

7.3.9 The Club/Society must submit the full agenda and minutes of their AGM to the Activities Executive if requested by the Executive.

7.4 Extraordinary General Meetings

7.4.1 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called by either one-third of all the Full Members or 20 full members, whichever is the lesser, and/or by the Committee.

7.4.2 Notice of the EGM, together with its agenda, shall be posted on the Club/Society LUU webpage or a member-accessible web source within two working days of the meeting being called.

7.4.3 The agenda for the EGM shall be restricted to the motion or business for which the meeting was called.

7.4.4 The quorum for the EGM shall be either one-third of all the full members or 20 full members, whichever is the lesser.

7.4.5 If an EGM is declared inquorate, it may not proceed. The Club/Society shall report this to the Activities & Opportunities Officer, who may authorise an inquorate EGM.

7.4.6 The Club/Society must submit their EGM's full agenda and minutes to the Activities Executive if requested by the Activities & Opportunities Officer.

8. Motion of No Confidence

8.1 This section outlines the process for a Motion of No Confidence, a democratic method for removing a Committee Member from their role by a Club or Society.

8.2 For a Vote of No Confidence to proceed, there are a number of conditions to be met:

8.2.1 There must be grounds for the vote. These may include a breach of conduct; failure to perform duties; misuse of funds or resources; loss of trust or support. Concerns must be raised with the Activities Manager, or their nominee.

8.2.2 A Petition or Motion to initiate the vote must be raised. A petition of 15% of the Club/Society's membership, a simple majority of the Committee, a simple majority vote of the Activities Exec, or a ruling by the Activities & Opportunities Officer will be considered sufficient basis to initiate a vote.

8.3 An EGM will be called to facilitate the vote, with a Vote of No Confidence as the sole agenda item. The grounds for removal of the Committee Member in question will be summarised, and the subject of the vote will be allowed to defend themselves before the vote, either through a written statement or speaking at the meeting. The Vote of No Confidence will be carried out by secret ballot, and a simple majority will decide the outcome.

8.4 If a Committee member is removed from their role through a Vote of No Confidence, the Club/Society may schedule a further Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) to elect a new Committee member through a By-Election. The member removed from their office via a No Confidence vote is not eligible to stand in By-Elections during the academic year they were removed from office.

9 General Administration and Finance [this section cannot be edited]

9.1 Constitution

9.1.1 In case of dispute over a particular interpretation of this constitution, the Activities & Opportunities Officer will be the final arbiter.

9.1.1.1 If a Group's constitution is deemed invalid, the [Club & Society Model Constitution 2024/25](#) will instead be used as that Group's constitution.

9.1.2 The assets or liabilities of the Club/Society shall remain with the Club/Society regardless of any changes to the committee, group structure or constitution.

9.1.3 The Club/Society shall be a constituent part of LUU and thus subject to the rulings of the Better Union Forum, the Activities Executive, and the Board of Trustees

9.1.4 In the event of dissolution or abolition of the Club/Society its assets will revert to LUU.

9.2 Constitutional Amendments

9.2.1 Constitutional amendments may be recommended by an Annual General Meeting, Extraordinary General Meeting, or by Referendum of the Club/Society.

9.2.2 Constitutional amendments may not come into force until they have been approved by the Activities & Opportunities Officer acting on behalf of the Activities Executive. For clarity, approval will be in the form of an email confirmation sent to the society's Core Officers with the amended constitution attached.

9.2.3 Proposed constitutional amendments must be published in the agenda for the appropriate General Meeting and cannot be moved under 'Any Other Business'.

9.2.4 Constitutional amendments shall come into effect immediately after Activities & Opportunities Officer approval unless otherwise stated in the amendment.

9.3 Administration and Finance

9.3.1 If the Activities Executive requests a detailed statement of accounts, the Club/Society must produce one within 24 hours.

9.3.2 The Core Officers shall accept full administrative and financial responsibility for the Club/Society.

9.3.3 Committee members may not receive financial payment or profit due to their position on the committee.

9.3.4 Members may be reimbursed for any reasonable expenditure on behalf of the Club/Society only after submitting a receipt to the Treasurer.

9.3.5 Reimbursements must be requested within 3 months of costs being incurred. Requests after this period shall not be authorised.

9.4 Cash Office

9.4.1 The Club/Society will have a bank account (or accounts) with the LUU Cash Office only.

9.4.2 At least two Core Officers' signatures will be required to make payments from the Club/Society account.

9.4.3 The Club/Society will keep full, up-to-date accounts of its finances through the LUU Cash Office.

9.4.4 LUU Subsidies allocated to the Club/Society may not be spent on tobacco, gambling or illegal items.

9.4.5 The Club/Society Subsidy and/or Grant account will be zeroed at the end of each academic year, and the funds will be returned to LUU.

10 Marketing, Media, and Communications

10.1 The Club/Society will always adhere to the [LUU Data Privacy policies](#).

10.2 Gryphon Clubs will always adhere to the [Branding Guidelines](#) agreed by the Leeds Sports Partnership and order kit through Leeds Sports' nominated supplier which is currently Player Layer.

10.3 The Club/Society may require members to adhere to kit guidelines, which may include appropriate match-day and training kits, appropriate activity wear, and club colours.

10.4 The Club/Society will always adhere to the [Media Policy](#).

11 Complaints [this section cannot be edited]

11.1 Any member has the right to raise a complaint to the Committee, relating to (but not limited to) the following;

11.1.1 The conduct of another member or members of the club or society (while participating in club/society activity)

11.1.2 The delivery of any club/society activity

11.1.3 Any decision taken which impacts on the overall activity of the club/society

11.2 Any member may also raise a complaint to the LUU Student Activities Team regarding the individual or group conduct of a club/society or their members. Complaints raised in this way will be referred to the Committee to handle.

11.3 The Committee must inform the LUU Student Activities Team of any complaints.

11.4 The Committee should work with the member who has raised the complaint to come to an informal resolution, following the [LUU Good Practice Guidelines](#). Resolution of complaints by the Committee should always be the first stage in any issue relating to the society.

11.5 If the Committee and the member who has raised the complaint are unable to reach an informal resolution, or if informal actions are deemed inappropriate, they must conduct a fair and impartial investigation. They must consult with the Student Activities Team Manager or their nominee before undertaking the investigation. An investigator will be identified from the Core Committee members, or their nominee which may be an ex-officio member. Nominations made in this way will be made with the agreement of the Activities Team Manager or their nominee.

11.5.1 The investigation process must follow the [Good Practice Guidelines](#). An investigation will ideally conclude within 14 days of its initiation. The complainant will be informed when the investigation begins and will be notified if the investigation timeline is expected to extend beyond 14 days from its initiation. The reason for delay and the new expected deadline will be communicated each time a delay occurs.

11.5.2 If it is deemed appropriate due to the severity and impact of allegations, the member under investigation may be suspended from their membership to the Club/Society, including any Committee roles, if the Committee or the investigator recommends this. As with all suspensions, this action must be taken with the agreement of the Activities Manager, or their nominee.

11.5.3 Following the conclusion of an investigation, the Committee will review the investigator's report and decide on the outcomes for the member under investigation. If the Committee decides to take disciplinary action following an investigation into a complaint, it must consult the Student Activities Team

Manager or their nominee as soon as possible; otherwise, any subsequent decision will be void.

11.5.4 Disciplinary action against a member may include (but is not limited to):

11.5.4.1 Temporary suspension from some or all activity

11.5.4.2 Requirement that the disciplined member issues an apology

11.5.4.3 Requirement that the disciplined member completes mandatory training to prevent an issue from reoccurring

11.5.5 In more serious cases, the Committee may permanently suspend a member from some or all activity, or permanently exclude that member from the society. This is covered in section 12 of this constitution.

11.6 Any member impacted by the outcome of a complaint managed by the Committee has the right to appeal the decision. The appeal should be made in writing to the Activities Executive via the Activities & Opportunities Officer and submitted within 14 days of the original decision. A member appealing should do this on the basis of either procedural deficiency or unfairness of the decision-making process. As such, appeal cases should be made on grounds of:

- unfairness of judgement
- the severity of the penalty having regard to extenuating circumstances
- new evidence coming to light that was not available at the time of the original meeting/investigation
- material procedural irregularities
- bias of panel members
- unfairness of the interview.

11.7 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Committee's resolution of their complaint, they may formally escalate the issue to the Activities Executive, using the same grounds for appeal as set out in clause 11.6.

12 Suspension and Expulsion [this section cannot be edited]

12.1 Any member, other than Ex-Officio Members, may be suspended or expelled from any or all rights, including membership, for any period by a decision of the Core Officers of the club/society, so long as the decision was made using the procedure outlined in this section.

12.2 The Club/Society Core Officers can suspend or expel any group member so long as they have taken explicit advice from the Student Activities Team Manager, or their

nominee, *and* informed the individual affected of the reason/s for the decision in writing.

12.2.1 The cause for suspension and expulsion would be if formal disciplinary action were taken using section 11 of the constitution, or there was a medical need.

12.3 The Club/Society Core Officers must immediately notify the Activities & Opportunities Officer, in writing, of any suspensions or expulsions with a summary of the reason/s for the decision.

12.4 Suspended or expelled members may appeal a disciplinary decision so long as the request is submitted in writing to the Activities & Opportunities Officer within 10 working days of being notified of this decision.

12.5 On receipt of a request for a review, the Activities & Opportunities Officer will:

- acknowledge receipt of the request as soon as reasonably possible;
- notify the Club/Society Core Officers and the Head of Student Activities that a review is taking place;
- if necessary, consult with relevant parties regarding the original decision and may take into account new information;
- will, in discussion with the Activities Executive, decide whether to uphold, modify or over-turn the original decision and
- will inform both parties of the outcome of their decision within 14 days

12.6 If the Activities Executive upholds the decision to suspend or expel the member, the matter will be deemed to have been through an LUU disciplinary and appeal process, and the member will have no further rights to appeal under the Bye-Laws.