



CHESTER
STUDENTS'
UNION

Byelaws

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Introduction

These Byelaws aim to explain how members can make change and operate within Chester Students' Union, hereby referred to as CSU. These Byelaws are not exhaustive and therefore it may be that the policy making bodies of CSU defined in Byelaw 5 may need to be consulted.

Interpretation of these Byelaws will be the responsibility of the Executive Committee. To make a change to these Byelaws it must be proposed and approved through one of the following routes:

- Executive Meeting,
- Annual Student Members Meeting, or
- Student Council.

Changes must be approved by the Trustee Board and notified to University Council.

1. Members of CSU

- 1.1 Membership of CSU is defined in the Articles of Association. Articles 8-14.
- 1.2 Membership of CSU is divided into the following classes:
 - 1.2.1 Company Law Members, referred to in the Articles of Association.
 - 1.2.2 Student Members.
 - 1.2.3 Associate Members.
- 1.3 Where payment for activities and services are due, CSU may award different rates of entry for Student Members, Company Law Members and Associate Members.
- 1.4 The Board shall consider the rates of entry for membership on an annual basis.
- 1.5 The Trustee Board will be responsible for a Member's Code of Conduct and will review this on an annual basis.
- 1.6 Student Member access:
 - 1.6.1 All Student Members are eligible for access to CSU's full portfolio of activities and services including membership of Union-affiliated Societies as defined in Byelaw 9, in addition to any other service or event that CSU may offer.
 - 1.6.2 When a student's studies have been temporarily suspended, the student will be entitled to all the rights of a Student Member except that they will not be eligible to vote in any elections under Byelaw 8 and will only be eligible to stand for election to any Byelaw 6 role where the term of office will commence after their period of suspension and will not be able to take up any such role until such time as their suspension of studies ends.
- 1.7 Student Members are the only classification of Member eligible to:
 - 1.7.1 Vote at Members' Meetings and in referenda and elections.
 - 1.7.2 Stand for Union Officer positions as defined in Byelaw 6.
 - 1.7.3 Be elected to or sent as representatives of CSU to conferences.
 - 1.7.4 Hold a committee position within affiliated student groups.

1.8 Associate Members:

- 1.8.1. **Partner Student Members:** Students registered on programmes that are offered in partnership with the University.
- 1.8.2. Partner Student memberships will be available at an annual subscription rate determined by the Board of Trustees or its delegated authority
- 1.8.3. **Alumni Members:** Any person who has been a Student Member of CSU may be admitted to Associate Alumni Membership upon payment of a subscription determined by the Board of Trustees or its delegated authority.
- 1.8.4. The period of Alumni membership shall be a minimum of 1 year and no more than 2 years.
- 1.8.5. **Honorary Life Members:** Membership may be awarded by the Board of Trustees for any person (Member or non-Member) in recognition of outstanding service to CSU or its Members
- 1.8.6. Nominations for Honorary Life Members will be invited from the Elected Officer team or CSU staff member on an annual basis, but persons may also be nominated at any other time.
- 1.8.1 All Associate Members are eligible for access to membership of Union-affiliated Societies as defined in Byelaw 9 and any other service or event that CSU may offer except those which are specifically for students only, such as student advice.
- 1.8.2 As described in Byelaw 9, Societies must reject access to membership if the total number of Student Members of the group falls below two-thirds of the total membership of that group.


1.9 Opting out of Membership:

- 1.9.1 Student Members have the right to opt out of membership of CSU in accordance with Section 22 of the Education Act 1994. Any Student Member wishing to do so should write to the Chief Executive Officer in a letter or via the csu@chester.ac.uk email address. Opting out of membership is confined to that academic year.
- 1.9.2 Students who have opted out of Student membership and wish to access CSU facilities, services or other activities may become Associate Members.

1.10 Membership can be removed from any Member following the process set out in Byelaw 10 and any subsequent Complaints and Disciplinary established by the Board of Trustees.

2. Members' Meetings

- 2.1 Membership of CSU is defined in the Articles of Association Articles 8-14.
- 2.2 The Annual Student Members' Meetings are primarily responsible for approving the Articles of Association, approving any affiliations including NUS, receiving CSU accounts and holding the Board of Trustees to account.
- 2.3 The Chair of the Annual Student Members' Meetings will be the Chief Executive Officer, or non-trustee board nominee.
- 2.4 Any Student Member may propose policy, attend, and vote at the Annual Student Members' Meeting or an Extraordinary Student Members' Meetings.
- 2.5 Requests for additional attendees should be made to the Executive Committee.
- 2.6 Attendees who are not Student Members may not vote and may only speak with the permission of the Chair.
- 2.7 The quorum of any Student Members' Meeting is 25 students of the total number of Student Members.
- 2.8 The exact date and time of the Annual Student Members' Meeting should be agreed by the Board of Trustees and communicated to the Membership.
- 2.9 Extraordinary Student Members' Meetings may be called by:
 - 2.9.1 A petition to the President, the petition must include the names, University student numbers and signatures of 250 of the Student Members.
 - 2.9.2 A simple majority of the Student Council.
 - 2.9.3 The reason for the meeting, relevant proposals, motions, or other papers must also be provided.
- 2.10 No further business may be transacted at Extraordinary Student Members' Meetings unless approved by the Executive Committee.
- 2.11 The normal agenda of business for the Annual Student Members' Meeting includes:

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- 2.11.1 Ratification of minutes of the previous Annual Student Members' meeting.
 - 2.11.2 Receiving the report of the Trustees on CSU's activities since the previous annual Student Members' meeting.
 - 2.11.3 Formally presenting the accounts of CSU to the Student Members.
 - 2.11.4 Approving the list of affiliations of CSU.
 - 2.11.5 Open questions to the Elected Officer Trustees by the Student Members.
 - 2.11.6 Motions for debate submitted prior to the meeting.
 - 2.11.7 Review of lapsed policy, and;
 - 2.11.8 If applicable, a decision on what to do with motions not discussed (i.e. extend the meeting, hold a new meeting, refer to another body).
- 2.12 The Executive Committee will approve any additional agenda items for the Annual Student Members' Meeting and may use their discretion to refer proposals directly to Student Council or other groups if proposals sit within their standing mandates.
- 2.13 The decisions of the Student Members' Meeting if not quorate will be subject to ratification by the next quorate Student Council.

3. Executive Committee

3.1. The Executive Committee is formed by the Sabbatical Officers.

3.1.1. The Executive Committee shall meet at least fortnightly.

3.1.2. The Quorum, shall be 50%, rounded up to the next whole number. The Chair will be the President, or nominee.

3.2. The Executive Committee is supported by the following staff:

3.2.1. Chief Executive Officer.

3.2.2. Other members of the Senior Leadership Team, nominated by the Chief Executive Officer.

3.3. Other persons who, in the view of the committee would bring relevant experience and advice, may be invited to attend by the Chair.

3.4. The Executive Committee is responsible for:

3.4.1. The representation and campaigning work of the Students' Union.

3.4.2. Implementation of CSU Policy.

3.4.3. Administering the democratic functions of the Students' Union, namely:

3.4.3.1. All Student Members' Meetings.

3.4.3.2. Student Council.

3.5. Members shall also:

3.5.1. Hold each other, both collectively and individually, responsible for their work.

3.5.2. Ensure the Student Council and Members Meetings are kept up to date on the work of the Executive Committee.

3.6. Minutes and an action register for each meeting of the Executive shall be held.

4. Student Council

4.1 Student Council undertakes the following roles:

- 4.1.1. Scrutinises the work of the Sabbatical Officers as defined in Byelaw 6.
- 4.1.2. Creates, amends, renews, and disposes of any policy or mandate of CSU, except where such policy has been set by a referendum, as defined in Byelaw 7.
- 4.1.3. Considers informal proposals from Student Members or Members of Student Council, which it can:
 - 4.1.3.1. Enact by directing a Sabbatical and/or Student Council Officer(s) to take certain actions and report back to the following meeting.
 - 4.1.3.2. Refer to the Executive Committee to action, as detailed in Byelaw 3.
 - 4.1.3.3. Turn into a referendum, as detailed in Byelaw 7.
 - 4.1.3.4. Dismiss.
- 4.1.4. Creates working groups as deemed relevant by the Members of Student Council and agrees their terms of reference.
- 4.1.5. The approval of revisions to the Byelaws and Articles of Association.

4.2. The quorum of Student Council is 50% rounded up to the nearest whole number of voting Student Council Members.

4.3. The following attend Student Council as Mandatory Members meaning that they must attend every Student Council or communicate to the Chair beforehand the reason for their absence:

- 4.3.1. The Sabbatical Officers, as defined in Byelaw 6.
- 4.3.2. The Student Council Officers, as defined in Byelaw 6.
 - 4.3.2.1. Student Council Officers may be deemed to have resigned their position if they fail to attend more than one meeting without prior notice.
- 4.3.3. Non-voting Student Members who have submitted proposals or motions are entitled to attend the meeting and speak to their proposal or motion.
- 4.3.4. Any Student Member may attend the meeting to observe and speak with the Chair's approval.
- 4.3.5. Student Council may, on an ad hoc basis, invite anyone to attend whom the voting Student Council Officers feel appropriate.

4.4. Timetable:

- 4.4.1. There shall be a minimum of 4 Student Council meetings in the academic year.
- 4.4.2. Student Council meetings should be held in-person, ad hoc requests to attend online must have prior approval from the Chair.
- 4.4.3. Additional meetings may be called by the Executive Committee.

4.5. Agenda:

- 4.5.1. The Student Council Chair will set the agenda of Student Council and may choose to refer items directly to other bodies.
- 4.5.2. The agenda for Student Council may include:
 - 4.5.2.1. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising from those minutes.
 - 4.5.2.2. Reports from and questions to the Sabbatical Officers
 - 4.5.2.3. Consideration of motions and proposals submitted prior to the meeting.
 - 4.5.2.4. Discussion of proposal and topics raised by Members of Student Council during the meeting.
 - 4.5.2.5. Reports from other student groups, previously agreed by the Executive Committee.
 - 4.5.2.6. Any other business deemed relevant by the Chair.

4.6. Student Council may elect or convene committees to address particular issues, oversee particular projects or serve other specific purposes, as it deems necessary.

4.7. A summary of Student Council discussions will be presented as part of the CSU update report to the Board of Trustees.

4.8. All reports and minutes of Student Council must be published and accessible to all Student Members within seven working days of each meeting.

4.9. Student Council will be referred to as Union Assembly by Student Council Officers and in promotional material and communications after an Officer vote to rename them as such.

4.10. Student Council Officers will therefore be referred to as Union Assembly Officers or part-time Officers in promotional material and communications, as well as internally.

5. Policy

- 5.1. The definition of 'policy' for the purposes of byelaws and articles relates specifically to representative and campaigning policy.
- 5.2. Policy is created by the following channels:
 - 5.2.1. Referenda.
 - 5.2.2. Student Council.
 - 5.2.3. Annual Members' Meeting.
 - 5.2.4. Extraordinary Members' Meeting.
 - 5.2.5. Executive Committee.
- 5.3. The Trustees have the power to override any decision made by Referenda, by the Student Council, at an Annual Members' Meeting or an Extraordinary Members' Meeting if in their absolute discretion they consider that any such decision has or may have any financial implications for CSU, or is or may be in breach of, contrary to or otherwise inconsistent with charity or education law or any other legal requirement (including ultra vires), or is not or may not be in the best interests of CSU (including its reputation) or all or any of its charitable objects or will or may otherwise affect the discharge of any or all of the responsibilities conferred by CSU's Articles of Association on the Trustees.
- 5.4. Policy normally requires a simple majority of those entitled and choosing to participate in a vote to become valid. Abstentions will not count as part of the active vote.
- 5.5. Voting on whether to enact a new policy will take place either during the Annual Student Members Meeting or by referenda.
- 5.6. Policy calling for a vote of no confidence in an Elected Officer is subject to the provisions of the Articles of Association.
- 5.7. Policy remains active for three Academic Years; thereafter it lapses unless renewed by the Annual Members' Meeting.
- 5.8. Policy is assigned to the portfolio of the appropriate Sabbatical Officer, defined in Byelaw 6, which may not be the Officer specified in the original motion and may be carried out in conjunction with another body as approved by the Executive Committee.

6. Officers

- 6.1. There are the following categories of Union Officers:
 - 6.1.1. Sabbatical Officers.
 - 6.1.2. Student Council Officers.
- 6.2. All Elected Officers will be elected by cross-campus ballot.
- 6.3. The remits of the Sabbatical Officers should be reviewed annually by CSU staff, including a review of the titles and role descriptions of the Sabbatical Officer positions and the working relationships between Sabbatical Officers and their constituent bodies.
- 6.4. Sabbatical Officers are not able to run for any CSU run elected part-time officer role or CSU student or career staff positions for at least two years following their term(s) in office. This includes, but is not limited to, Student Council, Student Trustee, Student Voice Partners and Front of House staff.
- 6.5. In the situation that a Sabbatical Officer were to vacate their role, voluntarily or involuntarily, their roles and responsibilities are not to be left vacant once the procedure to terminate their contract is completed.
- 6.6. Once the procedure stated in the Articles of Association is followed the Board of Trustees shall consider the process to fulfil the duties:
 - 6.6.1. In the event of a by-election, process in Byelaw 8 is to be followed.
 - 6.6.2. In the event of no by-election, the Board shall approve the method of replacement.
 - 6.6.3. For the purposes of the Education Act 1994, Sabbatical Officers are the only officers to be considered as major union office-holders.
- 6.7. In the situation that a Student Council Officer were to vacate their role, voluntarily or involuntarily. The Executive Committee shall seek to establish the basis for replacement and either:
 - 6.7.1. Ensure a by-election is held at a suitable time to ensure effective replacement of the role.
 - 6.7.2. If less than 5 months of the academic year remaining, seek a co-option to the role, to be approved by Student Council.

6.8. Code of Conduct:

6.8.1. Elected Officers are expected to act in accordance with CSU's Vision, Mission and Values and to promote the Objects of CSU and their office.

6.8.2. Elected Officers must also adhere to all legal obligations including the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Byelaws, Rules, and Policy, including but not limited to:

6.8.2.1. Read and adhere to the following policies.

- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.
- Financial Policy and Procedures.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- The Staff and Officer Protocol (for Sabbatical Officers).

6.8.2.2. Use Union resources responsibly and honestly.

6.8.2.3. Fully participate in all induction, training and development opportunities pertaining to the team within which they are a part or to the advancement of their portfolio.

6.8.2.4. Not act dishonestly or with intent to commit fraud.

6.8.2.5. Adhere to and respect any confidentiality practices that may be in place to protect the reputation, services, activities and people of CSU.

6.8.2.6. Not knowingly misrepresent the views of CSU.

6.8.2.7. Carry out the duties and responsibilities of their elected role in good faith.

6.8.2.8. Make every reasonable effort to be punctual and reliable.

6.8.2.9. Comply with any relevant conflict of interest policies.

6.8.2.10. Not behave recklessly in the discharge of their duties.

6.9. All Sabbatical Officers are accountable to the following channels:

6.9.1. Annual and Extraordinary Members' Meetings, as members of the Board of Trustees.

6.9.2. Student Council.

6.9.3. Disciplinary procedures, stated in Byelaw 11

6.10. All Sabbatical Officers will be expected to submit written reports to Student Council. Additional reports will be expected from time to time as directed either by Policy or by relevant CSU and University bodies.

6.11. Responsibilities of the Sabbatical Officers include:

- 6.11.1. Serving as Sabbatical Trustees, as defined in the Articles of Association, where specified below.
- 6.11.2. Leading on a portfolio of policy as detailed in these Byelaws.
- 6.11.3. Campaigning for students as directed by Student Members through manifesto priorities, referenda, Members' Meetings and Student Council.
- 6.11.4. Leading CSU's campaigning activity on issues relevant to their role.
- 6.11.5. Representing Student Members to the University, local and national bodies.
- 6.11.6. Representing Student Members on relevant University committees and working through them to implement Union policy as appropriate.
- 6.11.7. Ensuring consultation on relevant University policymaking.
- 6.11.8. Supporting and developing relevant Networks, Societies and representatives.
- 6.11.9. Acquiring and disseminating knowledge of relevant national Higher Education (HE) issues and policy development.
- 6.11.10. Working with relevant NUS campaigns and ensuring wide circulation of information.
- 6.11.11. Actively encourage participation in the democratic structure and processes of CSU championing and fully participating in the democratic processes of CSU.
- 6.11.12. Champion the work of the strategic priorities of both the sabbatical officers,' and CSU.
- 6.11.13. Attend student disciplinary and Professional Suitability Panels.
- 6.11.14. Sabbatical Officers may be referred to as full-time Elected Officers in promotional material and informal communications.

6.12. Sabbatical Officer Role Descriptions:

- 6.12.1. The role descriptions are not designed to be a full role description, and further duties will be expected through agreement with the postholder, Trustee Board, Student Council or Executive Committee in addition to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 6.12.2. At the commencement of each academic year the Executive Committee will be responsible for appointing Elected Officers to relevant committees within the Students' Union and University.

6.13. President:

- 6.13.1. Be the spokesperson of CSU both in discussions with the senior University staff and external organisations, including the media.
- 6.13.2. Represent CSU within the National Union of Students.
- 6.13.3. Chair the Board of Trustees.
- 6.13.4. Alongside the Deputy Chair of the Board, line manage the Chief Executive Officer.
- 6.13.5. Articulate the voices of students to the University.
- 6.13.6. Attend and actively engage in university committees, including the Board of Governors.
- 6.13.7. Maintain accountability to the Student Voice and Experience Committee sharing termly reports with the committee and obtaining feedback on work undertaken.
- 6.13.8. Champion the work of the elected officers and CSU strategic priorities, working closely with the officer team to ensure the three post holders are acting as a cohesive team.
- 6.13.9. Regularly engage with students and seek their feedback from across the sites.
- 6.13.10. Create opportunities for students to get involved and deliver on students' priorities.

6.14. Vice President Education:

- 6.14.1. Represent and champion the needs of University of Chester students across the different sites on all academic matters.
- 6.14.2. Primary point of contact for academic faculties, schools and divisions and work collaboratively to enhance the educational experience for students.
- 6.14.3. Champion the Student Voice Representation and Partnership system, working closely with representatives and Union staff to ensure the student voice around the academic experience is being heard and acted upon at a course and department level.
- 6.14.4. Work closely with Union colleagues on evidence-based campaigns and research that improves students' academic experience.
- 6.14.5. Attend and actively engage in University committees relating to students' academic experience.
- 6.14.6. Maintain close links with university professional services departments that directly support the academic experience.
- 6.14.7. Create opportunities for students to get involved and deliver on students' priorities


6.15. Vice President Student Life:

- 6.15.1. Represent and champion the needs of University of Chester students across the different sites on all matters relating to their wellbeing, welfare, sustainability and social opportunities.
- 6.15.2. Primary point of contact for university student support services and extra-curricular services, including university AU Sports and commercial services to collaboratively enhance the student experience for students.
- 6.15.3. Champion Societies and their leaders working closely with committee members and Union staff to create thriving societies and activities that add value to the student experience.
- 6.15.4. Work closely with Union colleagues on evidence-based campaigns and research that improves students' wellbeing and extra-curricular student experience.
- 6.15.5. Attend and actively engage in university committees relating to students' wellbeing and extra-curricular experience. Support students' collectivism and innovation, making positive change in their communities through charity events, Societies and campaigns.
- 6.15.6. Through the year ensure CSU and University are offering opportunities for students to form social connections and make the most of personal development opportunities.
- 6.15.7. Create opportunities for students to get involved and deliver on students' priorities.

6.16. Student Council Officers:


- 6.16.1. Being a voting member of the Student Council.
- 6.16.2. Providing a report and plan for the area of work they are responsible for.
- 6.16.3. Gaining and disseminating knowledge about relevant policy development locally and nationally with the support of the relevant Sabbatical Officers and reporting on this to Student Council.
- 6.16.4. Gaining student opinion and feedback on issues relating to their role and reporting relevant topics to Student Council.
- 6.16.5. Undertaking activities to gather student views for their area or demographic and reporting relevant topics to Student Council.
- 6.16.6. Scrutinising the work of Sabbatical Officers.
- 6.16.7. Mandating actions for Sabbatical Officers to take on relevant issues.

6.17. The exact number and titles of Student Council Officers shall be decided on an annual basis by the Executive Committee.

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- 6.18. In consideration of the exact number and titles of Student Council Officers the Executive Committee shall, so far as reasonably practicable, ensure effective representation of University Sites and Centres, under-represented groups within the student community and those who are considered to be at a disadvantage as a student.
- 6.19. Student Council will be Chaired by an independent, neutral student, paid via bursary. The Chair will be recruited by members of CSU staff.
- 6.20. Additional Representatives:
- 6.20.1. From time to time there will be a requirement for additional representatives of the student members to provide student views. These needs and requests will be considered by the Executive Committee on an ad-hoc basis. The Executive Committee shall track where this may need to become more official and feed into the annual review of Student Council Officers.
 - 6.20.2. These additional representatives will not be considered Officers of CSU.
- 6.21. Course and School Level Representation:
- 6.21.1. There will be a Student Voice Representative system, or equivalent student voice mechanism, operating across the University at division level. This will be operated by the University with support from CSU.
 - 6.21.2. CSU will recruit Student Voice Partners at the School level to ensure feedback is being received from students at division level as well as participating in relevant meetings and committees. This is a paid role in the form of a bursary.
 - 6.21.3. The Vice-President Education is the lead Sabbatical Officer for the programme.
 - 6.21.4. An annual review of the programme in collaboration with the nominated person from the University's Strategic Executive Committee shall meet the Vice-President Education and Chief Executive Officer or nominee to agree the parameters of the programme.

7. Referenda

- 7.1. A referendum is a general vote by the Student Members on a single question that has been referred to them for a direct decision.
- 7.2. Referenda may be called where there is a clear choice on a specific policy, mandate, or position in the following ways:
 - 7.2.1. By a motion passed at an Annual or Extraordinary Members' Meeting.
 - 7.2.2. By a decision passed by Student Council or a Student Council committee.
 - 7.2.3. By a written or online petition signed by at least 200 of the Student Members submitted to the President.
 - 7.2.4. By a resolution of CSU Board of Trustees.
- 7.3. The Returning Officer or their nominee, as described in Byelaw 8, is responsible for the conduct of all matters regarding referenda procedures and certification of results.
- 7.4. Validity:
 - 7.4.1. Ballots from at least 500 of the Student Members must be returned in a referendum to make its decision valid.
 - 7.4.2. The Board of Trustees may override any decision made by the Members in a referendum in accordance with Article 29.3 of the Articles of Association.
- 7.5. Regulations and Timetable:
 - 7.5.1. The Returning Officer is responsible for the final wording of the question, which should be agreed with the proposer and the Executive Committee.
 - 7.5.2. The question must offer clear choices for the outcome of the vote.
 - 7.5.3. The Returning Officer or their nominee is responsible for producing referenda regulations prior to the commencement of the referenda process.
 - 7.5.4. The regulations should create an environment of fairness to voters and between campaigns and encourage positive, creative campaigning.
 - 7.5.5. The regulations should clearly state the ways in which campaigns can promote themselves, use any resources and appeal decisions.
 - 7.5.6. A meeting must be held to enable Student Members to choose leaders of groups campaigning on the vote. The leaders must be Student Members.

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- 7.5.7. Campaign leaders are responsible for the conduct of the respective campaigns and are answerable to the Returning Officer.
 - 7.5.8. At least seven days' notice must be given for the vote.
 - 7.5.9. The Students' Union will host a public debate on the referenda question using a format agreed by the Returning Officer.
- 7.6. Voting:
- 7.6.1. Voting must be by secret, secure ballot either through paper or electronic means.
 - 7.6.2. Voters must be current registered students at the University of Chester at the time of voting.
 - 7.6.3. A motion put forward in a Referendum shall be deemed to have passed only if it receives 50% of the total valid votes cast, plus at least one vote.
 - 7.6.4. Passed motions will be enacted as soon as realistically possible, if and when agreed upon by the Board of Trustees.

8. Elections

8.1. The following elections are governed by the Byelaws:

- 8.1.1. Sabbatical Officers: defined in the Articles and Byelaw 6, elected annually by cross campus ballot of the Student Members in the second term of the Academic Year.
- 8.1.2. Student Council Officers: defined in Byelaw 6, elected annually by a ballot of the Student Members in either the first or second term of the Academic Year.

8.2. Additional elections may be run or supported by CSU as required.

8.3. The Returning Officer:

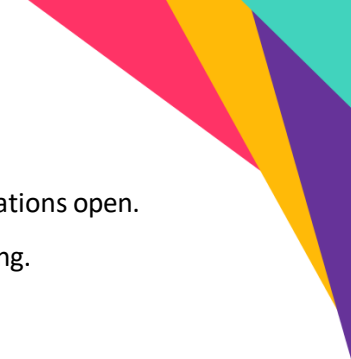
- 8.3.1. The Returning Officer is appointed or approved by the Trustee Board or designated sub-committee for the purpose of administering elections.
- 8.3.2. The Returning Officer is the sole competent official to adjudicate on elections decisions and appeals.
- 8.3.3. The Returning Officer must be independent and should not be a member of CSU staff.


8.4. The Deputy Returning Officer is the nominated, impartial individual who ensures a fair and regulated election period. The Deputy Returning Officer will:

- 8.4.1. Provide operational support where necessary for the elections as the Returning Officer's nominee.
- 8.4.2. Enforce Election rules by making initial rulings in response to complaints and referring decisions to the Returning Officer where appropriate.
- 8.4.3. Submit appeals on complaints rulings to the Returning Officer at the request of affected candidates.

8.5. Regulations and Timetable:


- 8.5.1. The Returning Officer or their nominee is responsible for the conduct of all matters regarding the elections and the certification of results.
- 8.5.2. The Returning Officer or their nominee is responsible for producing the election regulations.
- 8.5.3. The election regulations will be published prior to the elections to which they relate.
- 8.5.4. The election regulations should create an environment of fairness to voters and between candidates and encourage positive, creative campaigning by candidates.
- 8.5.5. The election regulations should clearly state the ways in which candidates can promote themselves, use any resources and appeal decisions.

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- 8.5.6. Notice of elections must be given a minimum of seven days before nominations open.
 - 8.5.7. Nominations must open at least fourteen days before the opening of polling.
 - 8.5.8. Polling must be at least for one day and no more than ten days.
- 8.6. Nominations:
- 8.6.1. Only Student Members may be nominated for election.
 - 8.6.2. Validation of each nominee's Membership status is required before the nomination is confirmed.
 - 8.6.3. Candidates for Sabbatical Officer or Student Council Officer positions may not stand in both elections or any other non-union related elections
 - 8.6.4. If there are no candidates for a position the Returning Officer or their nominee may re-open the nominations for that position or declare a new election be held for that position.
 - 8.6.5. If a new election is held, it must be held at a time to maximise participation by Student Members.
- 8.7. Voting:
- 8.7.1. Voting must be by secret, secure ballot either through paper or electronic means.
 - 8.7.2. The Single Transferable Vote (STV) voting method as defined by the Electoral Reform Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland must be used.
 - 8.7.3. Validation of the voter's Membership status is required in order to vote.
 - 8.7.4. All ballots must include the option to re-open nominations. Should Re-Open Nominations be elected, the post will remain vacant until a by-election is held or the position is co-opted (see Byelaw 6).
 - 8.7.5. If Re-Open Nominations is elected in a multi-seat election, the seat shall remain vacant and can be filled as per Byelaw 6. RON cannot hold multiple seats in a multi-seat election and votes for RON will not be transferred.
- 8.8. Disciplinary Powers and Procedures:
- 8.8.1. The Returning Officer or Deputy Returning Officer are the sole competent authorities to issue sanction to candidates and their campaign teams. Any breach of the rules may be punished. Sanctions are to include but not limited to:
 - 8.8.1.1. An informal warning
 - 8.8.1.2. A formal warning
 - 8.8.1.3. Total disqualification from running in the Election.

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- 8.9. Members and non-Members should bring allegations regarding breaches of elections regulations to the notice of the Deputy Returning Officer.
 - 8.10. Complaints relating to the elections will usually be investigated by the Deputy Returning Officer. If the complaint relates to the actions of the Deputy Returning Officer, the Board of Trustees will designate an alternative appropriate person to investigate the complaint.
 - 8.11. Complaints and appeals regarding breaches of elections regulations should be submitted within one hour of the close of voting in the relevant election. Complaints and appeals submitted after this deadline may be investigated but will not affect the outcome of the relevant election.
 - 8.12. The affected candidate may appeal any of the Deputy Returning Officer's decisions on complaints to the Returning Officer.
 - 8.13. A Returning Officer's decision during elections is final.
 - 8.14. All matters of complaint are to be included in the Annual Report of Elections considered by the Trustees and notified to the University Governing Body.

9. Societies

- 9.1. CSU is entitled to affiliate and support Societies.
- 9.2. Full members of CSU may apply to affiliate a Society, in accordance with these Byelaws.
- 9.3. Full members of CSU will be entitled to become a member of any affiliated Society, subject to any membership requirements set out by the group in their approved constitution and provided there are no CSU sanctions against them doing so.
- 9.4. The interests of affiliated Societies and their members will be represented by the Vice-President Student Life.
- 9.5. CSU is entitled to award grants, allocate facilities, and provide resources to affiliated Societies.
- 9.6. CSU must ensure that the procedure for allocating resources to affiliated Societies Fair and is set down in writing, being freely accessible to all Members, as required by the 1994 Education Act.
- 9.7. CSU is entitled to suspend or revoke affiliation of a Society or restrict or deny access to resources, support and facilities in circumstances including:
 - 9.7.1. Minimum standards have not been met (eg. as determined by the reaffiliation process)
 - 9.7.2. CSU, University or Legal Policy, Regulation or Law has been breached (eg. as determined by a Code of Conduct investigation).
 - 9.7.3. In the interest of student safety or wellbeing.
- 9.8. Societies must satisfy all of the following, in addition to any criteria set out in the Societies Handbook, in order to be eligible to affiliate or reaffiliate to CSU:
 - 9.8.1. Be expressly set up with the intention of advancing education for the public benefit, as defined CSU's Articles of Association.
 - 9.8.2. Have a constitution, approved by CSU, that does not replicate the aims, objectives, or primary purpose of another affiliated Student Group. By affiliating a group agrees their constitution will be interpreted in accordance with SU definitions of words or phrases.
 - 9.8.3. To not delete, or add further criteria to, any part of the constitution without prior approval of the Vice-President Student Life and Student Groups Coordinator.

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- 9.8.4. Reach the minimum membership number, as set out in the Societies Handbook, by the start of the annual reaffiliation period as defined by CSU. Newly affiliated Societies will not need to meet this requirement for the academic year in which they are affiliated:
- 9.8.4.1. Include a number of mandatory Committee positions in their constitution, as set out in the Societies Handbook, and comply with that policy in relation to filling those positions.
 - 9.8.4.2. Comply with the Code of Conduct, and other relevant policies.
 - 9.8.4.3. No affiliated Society can unlawfully discriminate, including against any Member or in the conduct of their activities. Where an affiliated Society wishes to rely on lawful exemptions, including restriction of membership and/or access to its activities, this must be set out in its approved constitution. Constitutions will only be approved if CSU is satisfied that they are lawful.
 - 9.8.4.4. Mandatory committee positions can only be held by full members of CSU. A single mandatory position can be occupied by one person only. A person cannot hold more than one mandatory position within a single affiliated Society.
 - 9.8.4.5. All Committee positions must be elected on an annual basis. Only full members of CSU may vote in elections for Committee positions.
- 9.9. Affiliated Society Committees are responsible for ensuring that they are fully aware of and agree to abide by CSU's policies and procedures in relation to the operation of the Societies, including:
- 9.9.1. Student Code of Conduct.
 - 9.9.2. Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.
 - 9.9.3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
 - 9.9.4. Both CSU's and University's Freedom of Speech Policy and Code of Practice.
 - 9.9.5. Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
 - 9.9.6. Privacy Statement.
 - 9.9.7. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- 9.10. Renewal of Affiliation:
- 9.10.1. All affiliated Societies must apply to renew their affiliation to CSU annually as set out in the Societies Handbook.
 - 9.10.2. CSU sets the timeframe for reaffiliation in conjunction with relevant officers.
 - 9.10.3. Should a Society fail to successfully complete reaffiliation within the timeframe set out by CSU, their affiliation will lapse and will not renew for the next academic year.

9.11. Memberships, Data & Fees:


- 9.11.1. All affiliated Society committee members are required to pay the applicable membership fees (if any) set by their group.
- 9.11.2. Any membership fees must be collected by a method approved by CSU.
- 9.11.3. Membership data must be processed by a method approved by CSU and in compliance with the law.
- 9.11.4. Affiliated Societies may not offer memberships that cover more than one academic year.

9.12. Financial Regulation:

- 9.12.1. Affiliated Societies who get into a position of overall debt or make financial commitments that they cannot meet, may have their affiliation revoked.
- 9.12.2. Affiliated Societies are not permitted to hold external bank accounts except where it is approved by the Board of Trustees and has received express permission from CSU in writing, in advance.
- 9.12.3. Whilst affiliated to CSU, funds raised and collected by affiliated Societies are under the control and responsibility of the group. So long as the Society is affiliated, the group is entitled to use its resources as it determines, as long as it does so in compliance with the aims and purposes of the group, charity law and Union policy.
- 9.12.4. CSU has the right to take total control of any affiliated Society account if:
 - 9.12.4.1. The affiliated Society ceases to be affiliated.
 - 9.12.4.2. There are concerns that the funds are being managed in breach of the provision set out in the Byelaws.
 - 9.12.4.3. The group ceases to exist or there are breaches of any minimum standards set out in Union Policy.


9.13. Where CSU has taken control of the funds or assets of an affiliated Society, CSU will hold them for a minimum of 12 months. Funds and assets not needed to settle debts will then be used by CSU to support other affiliated Societies.

9.14. All affiliated Societies must have a declaration of financial responsibility agreed to by the President and Treasurer each year. CSU accepts no responsibility for the funds of any Society and has no liability if funds are mismanaged.

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- 9.15. Mismanagement of affiliated Society funds may result in disciplinary proceedings against individual committee members.
- 9.16. Outgoing committee members are responsible and liable for an affiliated Society's accounts until the reaffiliation process is completed and responsibility is transferred to the incoming committee. It is their responsibility to make sure all outstanding debts relating to the period they are in role are paid.
- 9.17. An affiliated Society must inform CSU if at any time the Group is facing financial difficulties, legal issues, health and safety issues, or if they intend to remove or appoint a committee member.
- 9.18. Student Members and Societies:
- 9.18.1. Complaints about student members and Societies will be detailed within the Students' Union Complaints Policy.
 - 9.18.2. The Complaints Policy will be published on the website.
 - 9.18.3. Student Members and its Societies may also be subject to CSU's internal disciplinary action for any breach of the Byelaws or Policy.
 - 9.18.4. Student Members and non-Student Members should bring allegations regarding breaches of the Byelaws or Policy in accordance with CSU's Complaints Policy and Procedure. Should CSU become aware of conduct (whether by act or omission) that may constitute a breach of the Byelaws or Policy, it may investigate that conduct as though it were reported through CSU's Complaints Policy.
- 9.19. Complaints relating to the conduct of Members and/or Societies will be investigated in accordance with CSU's Complaints Policy and Procedure. The investigation will include the opportunity for the Member and/or Society to put forward any evidence.

10. Complaints and Appeals

- 10.1. CSU's Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring that there is a complaints policy and procedure that covers complaints regarding the activities and services of the organisation.
- 10.2. They shall also be responsible for the annual review of a complaints register.
- 10.3. CSU complaints procedure should ensure that the competent authority deals with relevant complaints and avoid situations whereby a member may be subject to multiple processes by different bodies for the same complaint.
- 10.4. Legal Proceedings:
 - 10.4.1. Where a complaint identifies that police action and investigation may be required, this should take precedence and liaison with the University of Chester nominated department and personnel must be sought to effectively ensure complaints are resolved as effectively and efficiently as possible.
 - 10.4.2. During such proceedings it may be necessary to suspend a member's status, with consideration given by the Chief Executive Officer, or nominee to access to services such as student advice.
- 10.5. Serious breaches of University of Chester rules, disciplinary procedures or conduct constituting misconduct will be referred to the Vice-Chancellor of the University or to a person or persons nominated to act on their behalf as stated in the University's Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.
- 10.6. Removal of Membership:
 - 10.6.1. The Complaints Policy and Procedure shall have a range of sanctions including the temporary suspension or permanent removal of membership.
 - 10.6.2. Such actions should be reported in the annual review of complaints.
- 10.7. Complaints during election periods are detailed in Byelaw 8.
- 10.8. Complaints regarding Student Societies are detailed in Byelaw 9. If a member or Society is found to have breached any of the Byelaws or Policy, disciplinary sanctions will be considered in accordance with the Code of Conduct and Complaints Policy.



10.9. The Member or Society committee about which the complaint has been made, or any person who brought the initial complaint under CSU's Complaints Policy and Procedure, may appeal any decision taken in accordance with CSU's Complaints Policy and Procedure.