



CHESTER
STUDENTS'
UNION

Society Committee Handbook

Contents Page

Chester Students Union.....	4
Your Role On Committee.....	5
Your Year On Committee.....	6
Society Affiliation/Documents.....	7
Society Email Address.....	8
Campus Room Booking.....	9
Memberships.....	11
Rubric.....	12
Finance.....	14
Events.....	18
Elections.....	23
In Year Committee Changes.....	25
Extraordinary General Meetings.....	26
Wellbeing Concerns.....	27
Conflict Resolution.....	28
Social Media.....	29

Chester Student's Union

What is CSU?

CSU is a Student-led charity, independent from the University of Chester, and everything we do is shaped by students like you. From providing support and opportunities, to championing your rights and making your voice heard, CSU is your space to connect, grow, and thrive.

The CSU Opportunities Team

The Opportunities Team are the department that you will work closely with during your time on a Society Committee. They will be your main point of contact through the email address **studentopps@chester.ac.uk**. You will receive society communications from this account, and this should also be the email that you use to enquire about anything society or event related.



**Student
Engagement
Manager
(Opportunities)**



**Student Groups
Coordinator**



**Events and
Opportunities
Coordinator**

The CSU Officer Team

The CSU Officer Team have been elected by the student body to represent the voice and interests of Students at University of Chester. They do this through running campaigns, amplifying voice and providing representation. The team consists of the President, VP Education and VP Student Life. The Opportunities Team works closely with the VP Student Life to champion the voice of Societies, if you have any feedback or ideas, you may wish to contact them on sustudentlife@chester.ac.uk.

Your role on committee

Welcome to your year as a society committee member at CSU. Some of the key things that you and your team should do this year are:

- Create a safe and welcoming community for students with a shared interest
- Have regular sessions/meet ups for your usual society activity
- Plan larger scale events for your society with the help of the CSU staff team
- Promote your society to welcome new members
- Run campaigns to promote change
- Keep up to date with society admin
- Communicate with your members and with CSU regularly
- Work as a team and share responsibility with your other committee members

It is important to remember that even though each committee member has their own assigned role, many of the tasks can be interchangeable between each member (especially when planning events).

Your Year On Committee

1st August

The new membership year starts and the new committee begin their roles

September - Committee Training Week

The CSU Opps Team will deliver numerous training sessions to get ready for your the year ahead

October - December

Time to start Society events and activity. This is the time to try and reach the minimum membership requirement

February

Your members can nominate themselves to be part of next year's committee

May

Time to celebrate the successes and achievements that societies have had this year - a great time to hold end of year events

August

Time for you to complete your affiliation documents before society activity begins

September - Sports and Societies Fair

Societies can book a table at the fair to promote their society to new students

December - January

The SU closes for a small period over the winter break

March

CSU Elections take place. This is when your members will vote to decide who will be on next year's committee

July

Time to get ready for the committee handover ready for the new membership year to start

Society Affiliation/Documents

When you begin your year as a committee members, you will be required to complete two essential documents: Society Constitution and Annual Risk Assessments, these will be sent to you to complete at the start of the academic year. You will not be given access to your Rubric Account, or allowed to plan any society activity until these have been completed and sent back to studentopps@chester.ac.uk.

Society Constitution

The Society Constitution is an agreement between the Society Committee and CSU that you will abide by CSU's policies during your time running the Society. It is important that you read through this properly. It is also an opportunity to outline three goals that you would like to achieve with the society during the year, to help with the development of the society. This will then be sent of for our VP Student Life to approve.

Annual Risk Assessment

You will need to complete an Annual Risk Assessment. This covers your regular society activity and sessions. If you are doing any society activity that you would not consider one of your regular sessions, you will need to complete an additional copy of the risk assessment tailored to this particular event. It is important that your whole committee reads and understands the risk assessment before any society activity is planned.

Additional Risk Assessments

It is important that you identify all the potential risks and understand how you can mitigate them. You should take particular care to any events that include:

- Food
- Physical activity
- External speakers, reputational risk and affiliate organisations
- Specialist equipment
- Trips
- Vulnerable groups

You will need to send this to studentopps@chester.ac.uk for review in addition to your event submission.

Society Email Address

Every Society has their own email address. For existing societies, this will be passed down from the previous committee. For new societies, the email address will be created after your induction.

This email address will be used as your main point of contact for your society, including important updates from CSU. It is important that you check your inbox regularly to avoid missing important updates. You should also use this account to contact studenttopps@chester.ac.uk, unless this is a private matter that you may not want to share with other committee members, for which you should use your student account.

This will also be the email address that is shown on your Rubric page, so you should expect emails from prospective members to go to this account.

This email address will not have a password to login, instead you will be granted access when you start your year on committee, and will add this inbox as an extra account on Outlook.

You will receive information on how to access this account once your society has been affiliated.

Campus Room Booking

Every Society has their own login for the Web Room Booking System. This means that you will be able to book rooms on Campus for your Society Activity.

The link to the booking system will be sent to your Society email address at the start of the membership year. If you are a new society, this will be sent to you once it has been created, along with your login details.

You should bookmark the link or save the email so you can have easy access to the system.

It is worth noting that the room booking system can only be used on University of Chester WiFi.

There are several bookable rooms on campus that you will be unable to book through the system. Some examples of these are:

- Any sports facilities
- The Cinema Room or Auditorium in the Exton Park School of Education Building
- The CSU Studio

To book any of these, you should email studentopps@chester.ac.uk. Please make sure that you give enough notice for your activity, as sometimes we have to contact other departments for these booking.

The CSU Studio is a great space for society activity, it includes the use of the CSU letter lights, and a television which can be used for presentations.

If you are using campus space outside of the 9am-5pm Monday-Friday timeframe, you will need to email the campus' security in advance to let them know which space you will be using and what time.

Campus Room Booking

If you need to contact the Security Team for a security, safety or first-aid incident:

- Exton Park- 01244 511541
- University Centre Warrington- 07584182856 (Time Square)
07584182738 (Remond House)
- Creative Campus Kingsway- 01244 575 876
- Queen's Park- 01244 511 910
- Wheeler- 01244 512 600
- University Centre Birkenhead (Marriss House): 01244 513 880

Memberships

Any University of Chester student is eligible to buy or sign up for a membership for all societies. Only students who have done this officially via Rubric will be considered official members of your society.

It is important to encourage people to have an official membership because:

- Only members will receive the communications that you send out via Rubric
- There is a minimum membership requirement to apply for grants
- You will need to have a minimum amount of members by a certain date for the society to be able to continue (the specifics of this may change year-on-year)
- Only members will be eligible to nominate themselves for next year's committee roles during elections
- Only members will be able to vote in any society elections

All committee members must have memberships for the society, and the amount of standard members must outweigh the amount of committee members.

When creating events on Rubric, you can choose to make a cheaper ticket option for people who have memberships.

The committee can choose at the start of the year what they would like to set the membership cost as. This must either be £0 or £2 and above. Any money made from membership sales goes to your Society Pot. Remember to account for VAT and Rubric Fees (more information in the finance section).

Rubric

During your time on committee, you will have access to 'Rubric', which is essentially your 'Society Portal'. This will be where people can get society memberships, where you will upload your events and sell tickets, and where you will find all your essential forms and training.

You will be added as a committee member of your society by CSU, and you will then have access to your account, which you will login to with your student email and password. You can login through the CSU website.

It is important to note that there are some sections on Rubric which you will not need to use.

On your Rubric Dashboard you will find:

Operations

This section includes:

Memberships

- How many members you have
- Your membership date and cost (it is important that you DO NOT edit this, please ask CSU to do this for you)
- Your members and their contact details

Events

- See a timetable of your upcoming events
- Add an event (to be sent off and approved by CSU)
- Create a recurring or collaborative event

Merchandise

- Sell Society Merchandise (great way to make money for your society!)
- Always speak to CSU before doing this
- DO NOT order your merchandise directly from Rubric

Rubric

Communications

This section includes:

Outreach

- Email Builder- where you can send a whole society email to communicate events and announcements

Social

- Link in Bio- where you can edit how your page looks for members, this presents your events and you can also link your social media (anyone can view this by clicking on your society on the CSU Website).

Finance

Please ignore the finance section of Rubric (CSU will let you know if this has changed)

If you would like to know your social pot balance- email studentopps@chester.ac.uk.

Administration

This section includes:

Forms

- All Forms- On here you will find:
 - Society Re-affiliation Submission
 - Society Guest Speaker Request
 - Society Expense Claim
 - Society Off-Campus Trip Register
 - Any other forms that may be added
- Submissions- See any forms that you have submitted

Leadership

- Elections Module- This is where your elections will be built (it is important you do not edit this, CSU will produce the election for you)
- Training- Here you will find

Finance

Society Social Pot

Your Society Social Pot is where the money that your society earns is kept.

You can view this as your society's 'bank account' even though it is actually part of the wider CSU bank account, and this money is just allocated to your society.

You can build up your social pot through:

- Ticket sales on Rubric
- Membership sales on Rubric
- Using the CSU card machines at events
- Society fundraising
- Selling Society Merchandise
- External partnerships

It is the responsibility of your Society's Treasurer to keep track of how much money is in the social pot. There is also a budget tracker for societies which will be helpful to use when planning events.

If you are not sure how much is in your social pot, you can email studentopps@chester.ac.uk and we can let you know.

Spending your money

There are several ways that you can spend the money that's in your social pot.

The main way of doing this is through the expense claim process. This means that you spend the money on the items that you need (from your personal bank account). You would then complete the 'Society Expense Claim' form and attach your receipt (with VAT), and the money will be sent back to you from CSU.

Always check how much is in your social pot before you spend this money, as we will not be able to reimburse you if you do not have this money in your pot.

Alternatively (especially for bigger and online purchases), you can ask CSU to purchase the items for you and the money will be taken directly out of your social pot.

Finance

Understanding VAT and Rubric Fees

When selling memberships, event tickets, or merchandise through Rubric, there are two costs to be aware of: **VAT** and **Rubric transaction fees**.

VAT (20%)

- VAT is deducted from any income your society receives through sales. This is a legal requirement.
- When budgeting for purchases, remember that if an item includes VAT, the Students' Union may be able to reclaim this on your behalf. Because of this, your expenditure budgets should be based on the **pre-VAT** cost where possible.
- Always keep and submit **VAT receipts** for purchases, as these are required to reclaim VAT.

Rubric Transaction Fees

- All sales made through Rubric are subject to a **3.5% + 70p transaction fee**.
- For **society memberships**, the society automatically absorbs this fee.
- For **event tickets and merchandise**, societies can choose whether to:
 - **Absorb the fee** themselves, reducing the amount received from each sale, or
 - **Pass the fee on** to the purchaser by adding it to the sale price.

When you set up an event or new item of merchandise, there is a button for you to toggle either option.

When setting prices, make sure you consider both VAT and transaction fees so that your society receives the amount of income you expect



Finance

Charity Fundraisers

When raising money for Charity as a Society, you cannot donate funds directly from your social pot (this includes money you have raised from Rubric or the CSU card readers).

Instead, if your society is doing a charity fundraiser, you should use a donations platform such as JustGiving or Go Fund Me.

We also ask that you send proof of the charity donation to studentopps@chester.ac.uk.

More information on charity donations can be found on the Committee Hub.

External Partnerships and Sponsors

An option for societies to raise money is to be sponsored by an external organisation for example, a local business in Chester, especially if it is somewhere that your society visit. They may offer you support in the form of funding or discount. It is important that you speak the Opportunities Team before you agree to any partnerships. If we are happy with this, we will send you a form to complete.

Finance

Grants and Funding

There are two different grants that societies can apply for to help fund events and resources- these are the Development Grant and the Proud to Be Fund.

To be granted these, you must go through an application process. The forms for this can be found on Rubric.

Development Grant

You can apply for the Society Development Grant to help fund things that will have a long term or developmental benefit for your society such as:

- Events that will engage majority of society members or be available to the wider student body
- Resources, training and supplies that your society will be able to use in your regularly activity

A good quality application:

- Highlights why the resource or event will be beneficial for students
- Gives a price breakdown
- Shows that you have considered cost effectiveness

It is worth noting that applications can be accepted at the full or partial amount, and you must spend what this money on the items that have been approved. This money does not get moved to your social pot, it is a seperate allocated amount of money.

If your application gets accepted, you will have three months to claim this via the expense claim form, or by asking CSU to purchase the items for you.

Proud to Be Fund

The Proud to Be fund can be applied for to use for events or campaigns that promote liberation, diversity, equality and inclusion.

You can find more information about how you can apply for this and what you may use it for on the CSU website under 'Student Voice'.

Events

CSU Events Process

Getting Started

- Define event
- Inform CSU
- Book venue
- Budget
- Event submission form

Logistics

- Complete risk assesment
- Catering
- External speakers
- Agenda

Promotion

- List the event on Rubric
- Promote on social media
- Make posters

On the day

- Set up the room
- Brief your society
- Track attendee numbers
- Clean up after

Key Deadlines

Small/Simple events

- Outside of your normal activities
- No external elements, e.g. catering, speakers, DJ
- Under 30 attendees

10 Working Days Notice

Complex Events

- Outside of your normal activities
- Do have external elements, e.g. catering, speakers, DJ
- Over 30 attendees
- Multiple elements

3 Months Notice

Events

Event VS Regular Society meet up

An 'Event' is something that falls outside of your normal society activity. They are usually larger scale and can include external elements such as catering, live music or external speakers.

For these events, you will have to create a separate risk assessment to the one that covers your regular society activity.

It is important that you upload events onto your Rubric page, which will be reviewed by CSU. This is the only accepted way of selling/providing event tickets - and it also keeps your members in the loop!

External Guests/ Speakers

- Always let CSU and University Security know of any external guests, suppliers or speakers coming onto campus for an event
- If you plan on having a guest speaker at your event, you will need to complete the Guest Speaker Proposal Form found on Rubric, if this gets approved by CSU, you will then need to complete a second form which will be sent to the University Secretary
- You will need to submit Guest Speaker Forms with at least 21 days notice (a month if possible)
- There may be sanctions if a society is found to have invited a guest speaker without approval



Off-Campus Trip Register

If you are planning an event that takes your society **outside of Chester**, you will need to complete the 'Off Campus Trip Register' found on the forms section of your Rubric Dashboard and follow all other event process.

Events

Food/Catering at Events

- We cannot allow you to cook food in your own houses for events
- All food must include a list of ingredients and allergens in compliance with **Natasha's Law**
- You can use external catering providers, you will need to send us a copy of the caterer's risk assessment, food hygiene certificate and insurance provider
- We recommend using pre-packed, store-bought items
- Another option is to collaborate with the UoC Catering team (catering@chester.ac.uk)
- Be mindful of people's allergens and dietary requirements
- Always clean up and recycle appropriately when working with food

Event Safety

For events outside of your regular meetups/sessions, you will need to complete an additional CSU Risk Assessment and send it to studentopps@chester.ac.uk to be checked.

If an incident occurs at one of your events such as a serious injury or altercation, you will need to report this to the **'Adverse Event Report Form'** in the Club Files → Society Forms (External) Section of your Rubric Dashboard, and let studentopps@chester.ac.uk know as soon as possible.

When thinking about event safety, some important things to consider are:

- Room Capacity (you don't want overcrowding)
- Accessibility of the location
- Food and Catering safety (see above)
- Who is at your event? You can monitor attendees by scanning membership passes or tickets
- Where is your nearest first aider? Is this someone in your society or is it on-campus security?

Events

Funding Your Event

There are several ways that Societies can finance events

Social Pot

Money that the society has built up through ticket, membership, merchandise sales or society fundraisers can be used to fund events

Development Grant

Societies can apply for the development grant to fund events. This can not be used to fund event catering (unless it is a cultural event)

Ticketing

Your Society can sell tickets through Rubric and on the door (with CSU's card readers) for the event to cover its cost. There is a function on Rubric where you can use your phone to scan attendees tickets. Make sure to take into account Rubric fees and VAT (more information in finance section).



Events

Extra Considerations and Top Tips

Some extra things you may want to consider when the event:

- Book a meeting with CSU's Events Coordinator when planning big events (by emailing studentopps@chester.ac.uk)
- Consider how many people will be attending your event before ordering/buying the catering options
- Prioritise booking a room or venue for the event, the earlier you have this and the timings confirmed, the sooner you can advertise your event
- The earlier you tell us about the event, the more help we can give you
- Create a budget plan before starting the event planning, if you need help with this or would like a template, contact studentopps@chester.ac.uk
- Consider sustainability when buying your resources- CSU may be able to lend you items. If you are buying something new, it is always better if your society can reuse it
- Do not spend more than what is in your social pot/how much has been granted to you (you won't be able to be reimbursed for money you don't have)
- Consider accessibility and inclusion in your event. This includes timings and locations
- Do you need to borrow the speaker or card readers off CSU? Have you let them know in advance?
- Are there going to be visitors at the event? Have they checked in at Reception?
- Do facilities need to know of any room arrangements in advance (seats in the auditorium, etc)
- Will any approved visitors/guest speakers need campus parking?

Elections

During the spring time, every society (apart from ones who are new that year) will take part in Society Elections. This decides who your committee will be in the new membership year.

Key information:

- To take part in elections, or even to vote, you must be an official member signed up on Rubric.
- Any society member can nominate themselves as a candidate, as long as they will still be a student in the new membership year.
- Committee members cannot hold the same role for more than two
- Societies must receive at least one nomination for each of the mandatory roles, otherwise the society will not be able to reaffiliate
- You will need a 20%+1 voter turnout for the new committee to be elected
- Elections take place in the spring- however the exact dates will change yearly



Elections

Timeline of Elections

Step 1- Roles

This is when you will first receive communications about elections. The first step will be confirming the roles that your society will have next year (alongside President, Treasurer and Wellbeing Officer).

Step 2- Nominations

This is when Nominations will open. Your Society members can complete a form to nominate themselves for a role. It is your job as committee to make sure that they are well informed about the roles and the elections period.

Step 3- Campaigning

If there are multiple candidates for each role, they should use this time to campaign and share with the society why they should vote for them.

Step 4- Voting

Voting will be open for 24 hours- all your members will receive an email to vote, however, you should also remind them and encourage them, as your society needs to meet the minimum voter turnout.

In-year Committee Changes

All Societies take part in our Spring Elections, where their committee for the next membership year will be decided.

However, sometimes a change to the committee may happen in the middle of the year outside of the election period. This may be for one of the following reasons.

- Your society membership has increased and you think the amount of committee members should reflect this
- A committee member would like to resign from their role and the role needs replacing
- You believe that a particular role would be beneficial to add to the Society's committee

Once your society is affiliated, and has the minimum number of members required (email studentopps@chester.ac.uk if you are not sure what this is), you can host an in-year election to add to the committee. Our Student Groups Coordinator will create this on Rubric for you, do not try and create an election yourselves.

Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs)

CSU has the right to call an EGM if deemed that the society has breached the terms of their society's constitution and/or CSU's policies & procedures.

Society members that do not sit on committee can also call an EGM; to do so they would need a petition of 51% of the society's membership.

The Chair shall be the Society President, unless deemed inappropriate by CSU. In that case the chair will be taken by a CSU representative.

The minimum quorum for the meeting is 50% +1 member of the current student membership (Example, if your society has 20 members, the quorum would be 11). The society membership will be frozen when the EGM notice is communicated.

The EGM may consist of a vote (e.g. electing new committee members).



Wellbeing Concerns

During your time on committee, you may encounter some wellbeing concerns for your members. The role of Wellbeing Officer is an important part of the committee, and training will be offered during Society Training Week as well as several sessions throughout the year to best equip the committee to deal with wellbeing concerns. It is mandatory that your Wellbeing Officer attends this training (or another core committee member if you do not currently have a Wellbeing Officer).

It is important to be aware that you can direct society members to the wellbeing team in student services (studentservices@chester.ac.uk or visit the Binks Building) if you are particularly concerned, the CSU staff are also here to advise you what to do if you are unsure on how to deal with a particular situation.

Conflict Resolution

1

Identify the conflict

Who or what are you upset or frustrated with?

2

All parties involved discuss solutions

Discuss appropriate, effective solutions to the conflict. Be sure to talk in a private, neutral location.

3

Identify the reasons behind the conflict

How did it get to this point? Be sure to look at all possibilities, even if it is partially your fault.

4

Agree on a solution

All parties agree to a solution that benefits all parties. Make it a win-win!

Please keep in mind that you will receive more information about this during your committee training, and that CSU are happy to advise on any conflict resolution scenario that may come up, and are happy to mediate society meetings if needed.



Social Media

Societies are encouraged to have social media accounts to help with promotion and communication with members. Here is some guidance on how to make the best use of your social media and make sure you are staying within CSU's Social Media Policy

Account Ownership and Access

- Society Social Media accounts belong to the Society, not the committee that have access to them
- At least two committee members should have access to every account
- Account login details must be securely passed on to the next committee during the handover period

Appropriate Content

Society Accounts should be used to promote:

- Events
- Activities
- Achievements
- Opportunities
- Society News
- Student Engagement

Inappropriate Content

Posts must not include:

- Discriminatory Language
- Bullying or Harassment
- Hate Speech
- Illegal Activity
- Explicit Content
- Confidential Information
- Copyright-infringing material
- Content that could damage the Reputation of the Society, Student's Union, or University

Social Media

Branding and Support

Societies are encouraged to create their own logo and branding to use on their social media. The Students' Union logo must not be altered in any way or used to suggest official endorsements without permission. If you need any support with Social Media branding or have any questions about social media, please contact csumarketing@chester.ac.uk.

WhatsApp groups are a great way to keep members involved and share information about society activity. However, it is best to make sure members have to be accepted into this group by admin (committee members). If you are concerned by any content shared by members on chats or social media, please contact studentopps@chester.ac.uk for support.





CHESTER
STUDENTS'
UNION