



LONDON SCHOOL
OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Student Union Constitution

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1. LSST Student Union Constitution

This constitution shall take effect from 1 September 2015 and invalidates all former constitutions of this Union.

This constitution shall be subject to review by the Union Council and the College at least every three years, in accordance with the Education Act 1994.

As a College under the Education Act 1994, LSST has a statutory duty to ensure that the Union operates in a fair and democratic manner and is held to proper account. The Union therefore will operate in a manner that ensures that the affairs of the Union are properly conducted and that the educational and welfare needs of the Union's members are met.

2. What is a constitution?

A constitution is a legal document that sets out the activities and procedures of the Student Union. The constitution is made so that the Union is recognised by other bodies – particularly College governors and the National Student Union (NUS). The constitution makes sure that the rules and procedures used by LSST's Student Union are efficient, transparent and accountable to the members.

2.1 The constitution:

- Provides the framework for the operation of the Union;
- Outlines where and how union members can air their concerns;
- Shows how the executive committee can act on behalf of members;
- Defines what the Union can or cannot do.

2.2 Name

The name of the Student Union is "LSST Student Union".

2.3 The Mission Statement

The mission of the LSST Student Union is:

"We aim to develop and maintain meaningful, imaginative, reciprocal and sustainable relationships with our students in and out of the classroom in an effort to engage students, enable a free and independent student voice, contribute towards their educational journey whilst in the college and foster success during their studies and beyond".

2.3. Constitution Sections:

The constitution is made up of three sections.

3.1 – Aims and Objectives

This section defines the aims and objectives of the Union as well as setting out what can or cannot be done.

The Union is devoted to the educational interests and welfare of its members, and represents the will of the students.

The objectives of the Union will be:

- To enrich and enhance the educational experience of its members as people as well as intellects, and in particular to provide opportunities for members to develop their personal maturity, leadership, communication and any other such skills.
- To be the principal body representing its members' views and interests within their institutions.
- To develop the student community through the provision of entertainment, media, social and other services, and to support a wide variety of student led cultural, recreational and sporting groups.
- To provide help to students encountering problems with student life and to minimise the likelihood of such problems occurring. This work centres on advice services but also extends to the provision of facilities for students with special needs and the induction of students.

The Union aims to do this through an open and democratic structure, effective communication with our members, with emphasis on continual improvement to all our services. Fulfilment of these objectives will thereby enhance the reputation of the institutions with prospective students, potential employers and the local community.

These objectives should be pursued without regard to age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic origin, religion or creed and independent of any political party, organisation or religious body.

3.1.1. Membership Composition

The Student Union shall be comprised of graduate students (BA, BSc), undergraduate students (Level 3-5) and level 7 students.

All members shall be entitled to use union facilities and take part in its educational, social, sporting and cultural activities. Members shall be allowed to speak and vote at union meetings, to nominate, stand and vote in union elections, and to hold office in clubs and societies.

All students who are registered at the College, over the age of 16, shall be members of the Union unless they have decided to give up their membership in accordance with the 'Opting Out' regulations outlined in this constitution.

3.1.2 Union Council

The Union Council will be the supreme decision making body of the Union.

The Union Council will be made up of the following categories:

- Student Union Coordinator (LSST employee);
- President (Student);
- Vice President (Student);
- Secretary (Student);
- Course Representatives from every course on offer by the college (Students). In particular, there will be at least 2 student representatives for every cohort in the diverse courses currently on delivery.

The functions of Student Union Council will be to:

- Set the policy of the Union
- Amend the constitution and schedules as appropriate
- Monitor and discuss events and decisions
- Approve financial reports
- Call an emergency Union Council meeting to discuss a particular issue.
- Insure all Union Council meetings are conducted according to the Meeting Arrangements outlined in this constitution.

3.1.3 Affiliation to External Organisations

Any proposal to affiliate to an external organisation shall be approved by the Union.

The College and members of the Union will be informed of all new affiliations to external organisations including any subscription fee to be paid.

Details of all affiliations to external organizations, including the names of the organisations and each affiliation fee paid, will be included in the Union's annual report which will be made available to all members of the union and to the Corporation.

3.1.4 Complaints Procedure

Complaints about anyone in the Union will be dealt with according to the complaints procedure outlined in the Student Code of Conduct & Disciplinary procedures sections of this constitution.

3.1.5 Union Finance

The Union will receive appropriate funds from the College after approval from the relevant authorities to enable it to effectively pursue its aims and objectives.

This annual allocation of funding will be decided by the College at the last meeting of the financial year, on presentation of the union's estimates for the forthcoming academic year.

The financial year of the Union will run from 1 September to 31 August of every academic year.

The organisation of the Union's finances and systems of control are outlined in the Finance Management section of this constitution.

3.1.6 Minutes

Minutes will be taken in all union meetings and circulated to every member present in the meeting. After the corrections are carried out the confirmed minutes will be filed and made available to the College.

The following will be made available to the College:

- A copy of the constitution, including any amendments
- A copy of the annual report and any plans for the Union's activities including the budget

The regulations for the organisation of union meetings are outlined in the Meeting Arrangements section of this constitution.

3.1.7 Amendments to Constitution

Only the Union will be permitted to amend the constitution and schedules. All amendments will be subject to the approval of the council before they can be implemented.

All amendments to the constitution or schedules will require the support of a minimum of two-thirds of the members present and will be entitled to a vote at a Union Council meeting.

The constitution will be reviewed by the Union annually from the date of the current document's implementation and any review shall be approved by the Corporation.

3.1.8 Code of Conduct

The code of conduct may include restrictions including unlimited suspension of any member including any union membership rights or privileges.

The official and only language of the Union is English and all members are expected to respect that.

Council meetings and discussions shall remain confidential until publication is approved by the Council.

Respect of other Council members is expected during discussions and any cross talk is not permitted.

The code of conduct may include restrictions up to and including the unlimited suspension of any or all of the rights of union membership.

3.1.9 Beneficiary Addendum

Should this organisation cease to exist, our funds will be donated to the **LSST**.

4. Section 2 – Operational Information

4.1 Student Union Election Regulations

This section gives further operational details of the Union's procedures.

4.1.1 Student Union Coordinator

The Student Union Coordinator will be responsible for the good conduct and administration of all union elections and shall have the sole interpretation of the election regulations. The Student Union Coordinator may appoint assistants to support them in their duties.

4.1.2 Election Dates

The Union Council will decide when election will take place and dates will be announced according to the existing members leaving dates.

4.1.3 Members for Election

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary

4.1.4 Election Publicity

The Student Union Coordinator will produce a list of candidates which will be displayed on the Union notice-boards within 48 hours of the closing date for nominations.

Candidates may produce a manifesto and a poster to a specification to be determined by the Student Union Coordinator, which must be handed in with the completed nomination form.

4.4.5 Campaigning

Candidates may commence campaigning at the close of nominations

The length of speeches and responses by candidates to questions at any debate or similar event shall be determined by the Student Union Coordinator who will also appoint a chair.

4.1.6 Voting procedures

All members of the Union and students will be able to vote regardless of their place or time of study.

All members of the Student Union can only vote when accompanied by a valid LSST student ID Card.

Voting will be done by secret ballots.

4.1.7 Declaration of Votes

The Student Union Coordinator will inform the candidates of the time and venue of the count. The candidates or their appointed representatives may, if they so wish, attend the counting of the votes as observers only.

Once the votes have been counted they will be kept for a period of six months in case of any appeals against the result.

Results of the elections will be declared by the Student Union Coordinator when the count for each post has been completed and any complaint has been resolved to the satisfaction of the officer.

4.1.8 Meeting Arrangements

The President shall be responsible for the agenda and publicising the meeting.

Meetings will be held monthly and are open to all Student Union members. Quorum is set at 50% attendance of the Student Union members

An emergency Union meeting may be called to discuss a particular issue.

A brief description of the meeting will be sent with the agenda of the meeting.

4.1.9 Meeting Agenda

The agenda of the meeting will take place in the following order:

- Checking the minutes of the previous meeting for accuracy
- Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting
- Events
- Course/Class Representatives Reports
- Other matters
- Discussion

4.1.10 Minutes

At all union meetings, minutes will be taken which will be circulated at the next appropriate meeting. Confirmed minutes will be filed and made available to students whenever relevant.

4.2. Job Descriptions

4.2.1 President

The **President's** duties will be as follows:

- Preside over all executive and membership meetings
- Externally represent LSST and its members at all times
- Be a member of the Union and ensure that the decisions made are implemented
- Ensure that all officers of the Union compile a written report after served tenure
- Oversee the actions and duties of all other officers
- Act reasonably in all matters, and in the best interests of the Union

- Maintain all legal documentation relating to the Union, including the constitution, the union code of practice and all legal advice
- Be responsible for publicising all Union Council meetings and changes for discussion and circulating agendas and minutes to members of the meeting

4.2.2 Vice President

The **VP**'s duties will be as follows:

- Deputise for the President in their absence
- Take the lead in understanding and representing the student experience of the Student Union's members.
- Set the direction for the Student Union strategic plan and be responsible for the delivery of improvements.
- Act reasonably and prudently in all matters, and in the best interests of the Union.
- Brief the Course Representatives
- Deal with all matters related to student life

4.2.3 Secretary

The **Secretary**'s duties will be as follows:

- Keep accurate history and records of the Union's activities and meetings
- Write and distribute meeting minutes for each meeting
- Keep records of all communication and correspondence

4.2.4 Course Representative

Elected during the first few weeks of Semester 1 and Semester 2, Course/Class Representatives are the key link between students and staff in their course. Every class or group of students in the College should have at least one Representative per class and two Representatives per course.

The course Representative duties will be as follows:

- Attend the Union meetings
- Gather the views and concerns of other students in their class and feed them back to the lecturer directly, to the department at Course Committee meetings and to the Students Union.
- Liaise between Faculty and student body
- Keep in contact with the Student Union

5. Section3: Regulations to follow

The constitution will be reviewed by the Union annually from the date of the current document's implementation and any review shall be approved by the Corporation.

This section includes regulations which the Union has to follow.

5.1 Membership

All LSST registered students will be a part of the Student Union

The consequences of opting out of membership shall be:

- A student may not participate in any of the democratic processes of the Union
- A student will not be represented by the Union

5.2 Opting Out

A student who opts out of the Union will not be able to participate in the democratic and decision-making function of the Union. This includes not being able to stand for any Officer or Representative position.

A student who opts out of the Union will continue to have the right to attend Union run events and participate in the activities.

A student wishing to opt out must indicate this within six weeks of the start of their course in writing to the Student Union Coordinator.

5.3 Disciplinary Procedures

The Union's disciplinary policy has authority over any premises managed by the Union, any union activities, including any activities or any misconduct which takes place outside union premises but is connected to the Union and is likely to affect the reputation of the Union.

If a member is deemed to have breached the rules of the Union, their conduct will be examined by the Union Council.

In cases involving the misuse of union facilities or resources; or behaviour likely to cause potential danger or offence to students, staff or other persons, the student may be suspended from the use of particular union facilities or resources until the disciplinary committee has reached a decision.

Any member of the Union Council or any other committee who has been absent from at least three successive ordinary meetings, without submitting a reason to the council will automatically be deemed as no longer holding office.

Any resignation must be in writing to the Student Union Coordinator. Resignations will take effect immediately after an emergency election has been held and the position is filled.

5.4 Code of Practice

This code of practice is approved by the LSST Executive Committee in accordance with its Student Union Code of Practice, pursuant to the requirements of clause 22(3) of the Education Act 1994 which requires that the governing body of LSST shall take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that the Union operates in a fair and democratic manner and is accountable for its finances. The code of practice should be read in conjunction with the constitution, schedules and appendices.

5.5 Constitution

The Union will have a written constitution, approved by the Corporation and reviewed by the Corporation at intervals of no more than three years. Any amendments to the constitution will be approved by the Corporation.

5.6 Election

The Student Union Coordinator will conduct independent elections once every new term in order to facilitate changes of exiting students (completions) and entering students (new start ups) by ensuring that elections are fair and properly conducted.

5.7 Finances

The financial affairs of the Union will be properly conducted by the Council and this also includes appropriate arrangements for the approval of the Union's budget and the monitoring of expenditure by the College.

The Union's annual accounts will be made available to the College and to all students.

5.8 Affiliation to external organisations

Any decision to affiliate to an external organisation will be published, stating the name of the organisation and details of any subscription or similar fee paid or proposed to be paid.

All affiliations will be approved by the Union Council annually.

5.9 Freedom of Speech

The Union and its members are bound to observe the College's code of practice in relation to freedom of speech as required by section 43 of the Education (No. 2) Act of 1986.

5.10 Complaints

The following complaints procedure will be made available to all students or groups of students who are dissatisfied in their dealings with the Union or claim to be unfairly disadvantaged by reason of their having exercised their right to opt out of union membership. The procedure is as follows:

- Any complaint about the Union will be addressed to the President. In any circumstances where the complaint relates to the president, it will be addressed to the Student Union Coordinator.
- The President will make a written reply within ten working days.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response they may appeal to the Student Union Coordinator. The Student Union Coordinator shall respond to the complainant within ten working days.
- If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the response provided by the Student Union Coordinator, the College shall appoint an independent person to consider and resolve the complaint.

Members who complain will also be referred to the procedures outlined in this constitution to remove officers and change the policy of the Union