

## **By-law (3): Officer Group**

*This By-law sets out the composition, scope and powers of the Officer Group. Each year, members of the Union elect five full-time and nine part-time officers to lead the Union for terms of twelve months. Elections are run online and any member can get involved, either by standing for office or voting for the best candidate. The officers who are elected together form the Officer Group, with the full-time officers being employed by the Union in paid sabbatical positions, supported by the part-time officers who hold the position alongside their academic work. They work closely together, as well as working with the College Common Room Committees (or equivalent) to improve the University and the student experience.*

### **The Officer Group**

#### ***Membership***

1. The Officer Group shall be comprised of the following members:
  - 1.1. Full-time Officers;
  - 1.2. Part-time Officers;

#### ***Chair***

2. The Officer Group shall be chaired by the Union President.

#### ***Powers and duties***

3. The Officer Group shall be responsible for:
  - 3.1. The direction and day-to-day activity of the Union in accordance with decisions of Union Assemblies, Referenda, the Board of Trustees, the terms of the Constitution, and the law.
  - 3.2. Discussion and coordination of officers' activities, especially as they relate to advancing the strategic aims of the Union.
  - 3.3. Ensuring progress against individual objectives and active Policy.
  - 3.4. Providing guidance and input into the Union's operational and strategic planning.
  - 3.5. Annually agreeing and continuously maintaining a protocol in Appendix (C) of the Bye-Laws, which outlines the minimum level of communication they find fair and

acceptable for publishing notice and records of meetings, and the Policy Process outlined in Bye-Law [CREATING POLICY].

### ***Meetings***

4. The Officer Group shall meet at least twice a term. They shall also hold Open Meetings as outlined in Bye-Law [ACCOUNTABILITY].

### **Full-time Officers**

5. There shall be the following Full-time Officer positions:
  - 5.1. Academic Officer;
  - 5.2. Student Activities Officer;
  - 5.3. Union President;
  - 5.4. Community & Wellbeing Officer;
  - 5.5. York Sport President.
6. Each of these positions may only be held by a single individual.
7. The persons elected to these positions shall be the Officer Trustees of the Union in accordance with Clause 37 of the Constitution.

### **Full-time Officers' Committee**

8. The Full-time Officers may meet as an executive committee in line with Clauses 71-73 of the Constitution;
9. Meetings of the Full-time Officers' Committee shall be held at the request of any of the Full-time Officers;
10. The occurrence of such meetings and business discussed shall be recorded for the benefit of the officers in the conduct of their activities.

## **Term of office**

11. All Full-time Officers shall hold office from the first day of the first month after the close of the academic year, for a period of one calendar year. On taking up their post, each Officer will sign a contract and code of practice governing their behaviour and conduct whilst in office.

## **Remuneration**

12. The remuneration of Full-time Officers is set by, and may only be amended by, the Remuneration Subcommittee of the Trustee Board as outlined in the Constitution.

## **Collective Duties of Full-time Officers**

13. The Full-time Officers shall jointly have the following responsibilities:

- 13.1. To be Officer Trustees of the Union;
- 13.2. To campaign and consult members on their views and speak on their behalf;
- 13.3. To promote and defend the rights of all members;
- 13.4. To implement and uphold the Constitution, Bye-Laws and Policy of the Union;
- 13.5. To be accountable to General Meetings, Referenda and the Officer Group, and to carry out any mandates as these bodies may assign to them;
- 13.6. To ensure the membership are kept informed of the actions of the Officer Group and of opportunities to participate in the Union;
- 13.7. To support, where appropriate other representatives in the fulfilment of their roles;
- 13.8. To liaise with local and national bodies, including but not limited to Heslington Parish Council, the City of York Council, and Parliament, to uphold the reputation and interests of students in the community and across the media;
- 13.9. To attend all Open Meetings of Officer Group as outlined in Bye-Law [ACCOUNTABILITY];
- 13.10. To fulfil the requirements for accountability and communication with

members as agreed annually by Officer Group in Appendix (C) and support the Part-Time Officers to do the same.

### **Duties of individual Full-time Officers**

14. The role of each Full-time Officer shall be defined as follows:

#### ***Academic Officer***

15. The Academic Officer is primarily responsible for all academic matters, ensuring that students' rights as learners are upheld within the University, maintaining a robust system of academic representation and informing members of developments that may impact upon their experience as students at the University of York. To this end, the Academic Officer shall:

- 15.1. Represent the interests of all students on academic issues within the University to ensure they get the highest quality of teaching, assessment and feedback;
- 15.2. Regularly convene meetings of all student academic representatives to discuss Union-wide activity, plan campaigns on issues around teaching and learning and discuss possible Ideas for the Policy Process.
- 15.3. Work with the University and individual departments to develop the systems and processes of student representation within the institution;
- 15.4. Oversee the election and work of Department Representatives and Course Representatives;
- 15.5. Work with Careers , departments and other officers to ensure that there is an employability strategy in place that is relevant and effective;
- 15.6. Be an *ex officio* member of University committees as set out in Appendix (A) and others as may be required, and faithfully represent the views of the membership within those meetings.

#### ***Student Activities Officer***

16. The Student Activities Officer is primarily responsible for supporting and developing extracurricular activities for members of the Union, representing the interests of the student body in having a diverse and expanding range of events, groups and projects with which to get involved. To this end, the Student Activities Officer shall:

- 16.1. Chair Societies Committee and work closely with Society Group representatives and individual society committees to support and enhance their work;
- 16.2. Act as the representative of the Union on matters concerning student activities, both to the University and other external bodies;
- 16.3. Encourage student participation in available activities, with particular concern for ensuring that activities are accessible to all parts of the student body;
- 16.4. Ensure that participation in student activities including sport provides opportunities for personal and skills development where appropriate;
- 16.5. Oversee and publicise the process of ratifying or re-ratifying a student group and the allocation of grants to ratified student groups;
- 16.6. Mediate between ratified student groups to resolve disputes and to ensure that they adhere to their own Constitution and the Constitution and Bye-Laws of the Union;
- 16.7. Work with other officers, volunteers and staff members in delivering high-quality events and projects, especially of a collaborative nature.

### ***Union President***

17. The Union President is the primary spokesperson for the Students' Union and shall be ultimately responsible for the reputation, leadership and direction of the Union as a democratic organisation. To this end, the Union President shall:
  - 17.1. Lead and coordinate the Officer Group;
  - 17.2. Oversee internal and external communications, exploring new methods of engaging with the membership;
  - 17.3. Oversee campaigns within the Union, working closely with staff responsible for developing campaigns maximise planning and impact;
  - 17.4. Hold overall responsibility for the Policy Process, ensuring it is run fairly and reflects the views of a broad range of students.
  - 17.5. Be an *ex officio* member of University committees as set out in Appendix (A) and others as may be required, and faithfully represent the views of the

- membership within those meetings;
- 17.6. Be responsible for representations to affiliated bodies, organising and leading delegations as required;
- 17.7. Chair the Board of Trustees;
- 17.8. Act as Line Manager of the Chief Executive (on behalf, and with support of the Trustee Board)

### **Community & Wellbeing Officer**

18. The Welfare & Community Officer is primarily responsible for representing the rights and interests of students regarding their wellbeing on-campus and in the local community, and for ensuring that all students have the support and pastoral care required to enjoy their student experience and for developing and realising the Student Community Partnership Strategy. To the end, the Welfare & Community Officer shall:

- 18.1. Represent student views on matters affecting their wellbeing in the University, locally and nationally;
- 18.2. Liaise with University support services to ensure that provision is consistent, accessible and relevant to the needs of students;
- 18.3. Coordinate and support college wellbeing representatives, providing information, training opportunities and resources to enable them to support the needs of students;
- 18.4. Coordinate and support college off-campus representatives to the same ends;
- 18.5. Work to ensure YUSU provides a professional advice and support service with the capacity to serve all students and to promote this service amongst students;
- 18.6. Ensure students have the information and resources they need to understand and defend their own rights;
- 18.7. Be an ex-officio member of University committees as set out in Appendix(A) and others as may be required;
- 18.8. Support and help to promote the work of Nightline to students;
- 18.9. Support the work of the Part-Time Officers, who chair Campaign Networks, including offering opportunities for them to collaborate on campaigns and awareness-raising activities.

### ***York Sport President***

19. The York Sport President is primarily responsible for all sports within the Union and shall represent the interests of the student body in having opportunities to participate and compete in sports at the University and with external bodies. To this end, the York Sport President shall:
- 19.1. Call and chair the York Sport Committee, assisting the York Sport Treasurer in the dispatch of their duties and in their absence undertake these duties;
  - 19.2. Work with the University to encourage continuous development in the quantity and quality of facilities provided for the physical recreation of students and to make access to these affordable;
  - 19.3. Encourage student participation in sports, with particular concern for ensuring that activities are accessible to all parts of the student body.

### **Part-time Officers**

20. There shall be the following Part-time Officer positions:
- 20.1. Disabled Students' Officer(s)
  - 20.2. Environment and Ethics Officer(s)
  - 20.3. International Officer(s)
  - 20.4. LGBTQ Officer(s)
  - 20.5. Mature Students' Officer(s)
  - 20.6. BME Students' Officer(s)
  - 20.7. RAG Officer(s)
  - 20.8. Volunteering Officer(s)
  - 20.9. Women's Officer(s)
21. These positions shall be elected by cross-campus ballot in accordance with the regulations laid out in Bye-Law [ELECTIONS] and subject to any eligibility criteria that may apply to candidates as set out in the descriptions of officer positions in this Bye-

Law [OFFICER GROUP].

22. Part-time Officer positions may be held jointly by two individuals, in which case they must complete a single nomination form and shall be treated for the purposes of the ballot as a single candidate.

23. Part-Time Officer Terms of Reference can be found in Appendix D

### **Term of office**

24. All Part-time Officers shall hold office for one year from midday on the last day of Spring Term in the year of their election until midday on the last day of the Spring Term in the following academic year.

### **Duties of all Part-time Officers**

25. All Part-time Officers shall have the following responsibilities:

25.1. To carry out all duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Union's Constitution and Policies;

25.2. To always behave in a manner that maintains the good reputation of the Union and the office to which they have been elected.

25.3. To find out the views and needs of the students they represent and promote them within the Union and to external bodies as appropriate.

25.4. To plan and carry out campaigns relating to their role description and to contribute to cross-campus campaigns as required;

25.5. To fulfil any democratic mandates and to adhere to and promote any matters of Union Policy that bear upon their role description;

25.6. To ensure the successful execution of their responsibilities and the proper conduct of the committees and meetings they coordinate;

25.7. To manage any allocated budget responsibly, subject to the decisions of the Trustee Board and the requirement to have the counter-signature of the Full-time Officer who oversees that area of Union activity for any items of expenditure;

25.8. To work to ensure the success of the Union and encourage participation in its democratic, social and pastoral activities;

- 25.9. To attend all Open Meetings of Officer Group as outline in Bye-Law [ACCOUNTABILITY];
- 25.10. To fulfil the requirements for accountability and communication with members as agreed annually by Officer Group in Appendix(C) with the support of the Full-Time Officers.

### **Duties of individual Part-time Officers**

26. The role of each Part-time Officer shall be defined as follows:

#### ***Disabled Students' Officer(s)***

27. The Disabled Students' Officer is responsible for representing disabled students, including promoting awareness of accessibility and welfare issues within the Union and the University. To this end, the Disabled Students' Officer shall:

- 27.1. Convene and chair Disabled Students' Network, through which issues affecting students with disabilities can be discussed and campaigns or actions decided;
- 27.2. Coordinate campaigns run by Disabled Students' Network for the rights and welfare of disabled students;
- 27.3. Ensure the needs of disabled students are reflected in the activities of the Students' Union;
- 27.4. Work with the Officer Group to ensure the Union upholds its commitments to accessibility;
- 27.5. Attend relevant NUS Disabled Students' conferences and events.

28. At least one of the individuals who hold the position of Disabled Students' Officer must self-identify as having a disability. If only one person holds the position, they should self-identify as having a disability.

#### ***Environment and Ethics Officer(s)***

29. The Environment and Ethics Officer is responsible for representing the interests of Union members in the development of the University and Union towards ethical and environmentally sound working practices and mobilizing members to take action to achieve this. To this end, the Environment and Ethics Officer shall:

- 29.1. Convene and chair Environment and Ethics Network, through which issues specific to the ethical and environmental operations of the Union or University can be discussed and campaigns or actions decided;
- 29.2. Coordinate campaigns run by Environment and Ethics Network relevant to these issues, in order to increase awareness and positively influence the actions of students and the University;
- 29.3. Ensure that all ethical and environmental policies are implemented by the Union and taken into account across all decisions made within the Union;
- 29.4. Develop useful connections between individuals and student groups that may help to increase involvement in campaigning and lobbying for improved ethical and environmental practices in the Union and University;
- 29.5. Be the lead officer in all matters related to NUS ethical and environmental Campaigns;

### ***International Officer(s)***

30. The International Officer is responsible for representing the views and interests of international students within the Union and the University, encouraging participation of International Students in the Union, and advancing the welfare of such students. To this end, the International Officer shall:

- 30.1. Convene and chair International Students' Network, through which issues affecting international students can be discussed and campaigns or events decided;
- 30.2. Be responsible for ensuring that all relevant information about the Students' Union and its various facilities and activities is regularly and effectively communicated to all international students;
- 30.3. Act as a representative of international students within the Union and University, as required;
- 30.4. Work with other officers and Union staff to further the internationalisation of the Students' Union, including encouraging international students to participate in its democratic and representative functions;
- 30.5. Raise awareness among the University community of issues affecting

international students;

30.6. Be responsible for liaising with and supporting international and cultural societies who wish to campaign on issues relevant to the aims and objectives of the society;

30.7. Attend relevant NUS conferences and events;

### ***LGBTQ Officer(s)***

31. The LGBTQ Officer is responsible for representing students who do not self-define as simultaneously and exclusively as heterosexual, heteroromantic and cisgender, ensuring that the views and needs of these students are taken into account by the Students' Union and the University and that awareness of LGBTQ issues is increased. To this end, the LGBTQ Officer shall:

31.1. Convene and chair LGBTQ Network, through which issues affecting LGBTQ students can be discussed and campaigns or actions decided;

31.2. Coordinate campaigns run by LGBTQ Network for the rights and welfare of LGBTQ students;

31.3. Ensure the needs of LGBTQ students are reflected in the activities of the Students' Union and that the rights of LGBTQ students are respected;

31.4. Work with other Officers and Union staff to ensure the Union is inclusive of LGBTQ and that positive awareness is promoted.

31.5. Attend relevant NUS conferences and events.

32. The individual(s) holding the position of LGBTQ Officer shall not self-define as simultaneously and exclusively as heterosexual, heteroromantic and cisgender.

### ***Mature Students' Officer(s)***

33. The Mature Students' Officer is responsible for representing the views and interests of mature students within the Union and the University, encouraging participation of mature students in the Union and advancing the welfare of such students. To this end, the Mature Students' Officer shall:

33.1. Convene and chair Mature Students' Network, through which issues affecting mature students can be discussed and campaigns or events decided;

- 33.2. Be responsible for ensuring that all relevant information about the Students' Union and its various facilities and activities is regularly and effectively communicated to all mature students;
  - 33.3. Act as a representative of mature students within the Union and University, as required;
  - 33.4. Ensure that the Union effectively addresses issues affecting mature students, and is responsive to any additional requirements or responsibilities they may have;
  - 33.5. Encourage the participation of mature students in the Students' Union, including its democratic and representative functions;
  - 33.6. Attend relevant NUS conferences and events;
34. The individual(s) holding the position of Mature Students' Officer shall be over the age of 21.

***BME Students' Officer(s)***

35. The BME Students' Officer is responsible for the representation of black and minority ethnic students within the Union and the University, promoting equality between students of different races and ethnicities. To this end, the BME Students' Officer shall:
- 35.1. Convene and chair BME Students' Network, through which issues affecting black and minority ethnic students can be discussed and campaigns or events decided;
  - 35.2. Coordinate campaigns run by BME Students' Network around ethnic minority issues, promoting black liberation and anti-racism;
  - 35.3. Encourage the combating of racism at all levels;
  - 35.4. Raise awareness of rights of enfranchisement among people of different cultures;
  - 35.5. Liaise and work closely with the International Students' Network and other groups in the pursuit of furthering racial equality within the Union and the University.
  - 35.6. Attend relevant NUS conferences and events;
36. The individual(s) holding the position of BME Students' Officer may not self-define as

White British.

***RAG Officer(s)***

37. The RAG Officer is responsible for the development of fundraising opportunities in which members can participate. To this end, the RAG Officer shall:

- 37.1. Call and chair meetings of the RAG Committee;
- 37.2. Coordinate RAG events and activities;
- 37.3. Promote the charitable work of the Union;
- 37.4. Work with officers, colleges and ratified student groups, where necessary to coordinate charitable work;
- 37.5. Attend training about the ultra vires requirements of charitable fundraising and be responsible for making others engaged in such work aware of these requirements;

***Volunteering Officer(s)***

38. The Volunteering Officer is responsible for the development of volunteering opportunities for the membership. To this end, the Volunteering Officer shall:

- 38.1. Call and chair meetings of the Volunteering Committee;
- 38.2. Promote the opportunities that exist for members to participate in volunteering projects or events;
- 38.3. Coordinate the development of new volunteering opportunities, in association with staff, ratified student groups and external parties, where appropriate;
- 38.4. Support and oversee YUSU Volunteering projects and College volunteering activities, in conjunction with Union staff;

***Women's Officer(s)***

39. The Women's Officer is responsible for the representation of women and the promotion of women's liberation within the Union and the University. To this end, the Women's Officer shall:

- 39.1. Convene and chair Women's Network, through which issues affecting women students can be discussed and campaigns or events decided.
  - 39.2. Coordinate campaigns run by Women's Network relevant to these issues, in order to increase awareness and positively influence the actions of students and the University.
  - 39.3. Encourage the combating of sexism at all levels.
  - 39.4. Produce the annual Women's Handbook.
  - 39.5. Attend relevant NUS conferences and events;
40. The individual(s) holding the position of Women's Officer shall self-define as women.