

UCC Societies' Guild

Policies, Procedures & Operational Rules

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Updated by Jerome Wholihane (January 2015)

Updated by Cassie McElligott (November 2015)

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Introduction

UCC Societies' Guild is the governing body of all UCC Societies. As per the Societies' Guild Constitution the Societies' Guild Executive is responsible for the drafting of policy for 'the good running of Societies'. From March 2014 policies that have been drafted by the Guild Executive are required to be approved by the Societies' Senate. For ease of access and in the spirit of transparency all policies, procedures and operational rules shall be added to this document. It's envisioned that this document will be amended and added to over time. To gain a full understanding of the policies and procedures of the Societies' Guild this document should be consulted in tandem with the Constitution, Strategic Plan and training manual.

This document provides information on the following:

- 1) Establishing New Societies
- 2) Finance
- 3) Postering
- 4) Alcohol Promotion & Sponsorship
- 5) Bullying and Harassment Policy
- 6) Events & Room Bookings
- 7) AGMs & EGMs

Appendix
Schedule of Allowances

Establishing New Societies

UCC Societies Executive accepts applications for new Societies all year round. Application forms can be found on societies.ucc.ie. As outlined on the form each application must include a proposed constitution, 200 student signatures and answers to all the questions listed. Applications must be sent to newsocieties@uccsocieties.ie.

Each application is considered by the Societies' Guild Executive.

Applications will be rejected if:

- The remit outlined in the application is covered by an existing Society. A full list of the current Societies can be found on uccsocieties.com.
- The remit of the Society is limited to a single issue campaign (e.g. Yes to Referendum X Society)

Once passed by the Societies' Guild Executive the application will be brought to the Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience for approval.

Finance

The Societies' Guild Executive distributes monies allocated by the University to Societies. Each Society is provided with a bank account and access to an online finance portal.

- Each Society is required to submit a budget at the start of term.

The approved budget is an indication of the funds that will be provided over the year.

To draw down funds each Society is required to submit an application for each event.

- Applications should be submitted two weeks in advance of the events.

The applications are considered weekly during term time by the Finance Committee and then approved by the Societies' Guild Executive as a whole. The Schedule of Allowances (appendix 1) provides a guideline on maximum allowances. Once an application has been approved details will be published on the portal blog.

- Requested cheques must then be signed by both a member of the Accommodation & Societies Office permanent staff and a student member of the committee (Auditor or Finance Officer).
- All receipts must be kept and lodged to the Office.
- All cash must be lodged immediately.
- At the end of term two each Society is required to meet with the Societies Officer to sign off on the accounts.

Note: Monies provided to political Societies is limited as per the guidelines from the Standards in Public Office Commission.

Postering

Postering and advertising are key for promoting a Society. Printing facilities for Societies activities are provided in the Hub. The following are the rules that pertain to postering and ads:

- Abuses of the printing service will result in a €50 fine for the Society.
- Societies shall not poster over another Society's poster.
- If a poster is out of date you may remove it to make space.
- Each poster must clearly show the Society's name and title of the event. A sponsor's name shall not be bigger than that of the Society's.
- Only A3, A4 or A5 posters are allowed.
- All posters must be approved and stamped by the Accommodation and Societies Office before they are put up. Once stamped a poster is valid for two weeks.

- A maximum of 15 posters per event or 25 for a collaborative event are allowed.

Alcohol Promotion & Sponsorship (updated at Senate April 2017)

The following points have been drawn from the UCC Alcohol Policy.

- Societies must not advertise drink deals or use alcohol as an incentive to attend an event.
- Societies must not promote consumption of alcohol whether through:
 - a) direct alcohol promotion/advertisement
 - b) allusion to harmful alcoholic consumption or
 - c) the usage of language/imagery deemed by the Societies' Guild Executive to be encouraging alcohol consumption.
- Societies are not allowed to receive sponsorship from alcohol companies / brands / producers
- Societies advertising of alcohol is limited to the advertising of brand names of beers, stout, spirits or the name of the manufacturers e.g. Jameson Film Fest (if unsure about these points please contact the Societies' Guild Exec).
- No Pub Crawls to be advertised by societies.
- Mystery Tours are banned.

The Societies Office check and stamp each poster to ensure they adhere to the above rules. If a society is in breach of these rules, they must remove the offense before bringing it back to the Societies Office to be stamped.

If a Society is found to be in breach of these rules the following penalties apply:

- *Fliers*
Fine will be decided on a case by case basis, depending on the severity of the offense.
- *Email / Official Society Social Media Account*

The severity of the offence shall be established by a vote at Societies Guild Executive.

First Offence:

Minor Offence: €175 fine
Serious Offence: €350 fine

Second Offence:

Minor Offence: €375 fine
Serious Offence: €750 fine

Third Offence:

The Society will be put on a probationary period until the end of the semester, and will not be allowed to hold events.

Note : An A4 letter appealing the fine may be sent to president@uccsocieties.ie within 48 hours of the initial notification of the fine for review by the Societies executive.

Note: All fines will be donated to an alcohol rehabilitation charity.

Bullying and Harassment Policy (Passed at Societies Senate 18th November 2014)

Overview

This policy outlines the definitions of behavior that the Societies Guild views as discriminatory and unacceptable. This policy also outlines how to create a safe and friendly environment in the hub, at society events and on society trips outside of Cork. Finally the Societies Guild complaints mechanism and the process for disciplinary action are outlined.

The Societies Guild Notes:

- 1) All students have the right to enjoy societies without fear of bullying or harassment of any sort.
- 2) That the Societies Guild has a duty to all societies' members to create a safe, caring and inclusive environment where all students are treated equally.
- 3) All University policies in relation to bullying and harassment such as the Student Charter, Duty of Respect and Right to Dignity Policy and the Student Rules.
- 4) All definitions and rules herein apply to all Societies and the UCC Societies Guild.

Definitions:

- 1) Harassment is defined as any form of unwanted conduct related to any discriminatory grounds, if the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. The discrimination can be marital status, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, race, family status, membership of the Traveller community and family status (this list is not exhaustive).
- 2) Common harassment behavior can be the following but is not limited to; unwelcome physical contact, inappropriate looks, comments or suggestions, interfering with or damage to property, threats or extortion, comments, gestures, jokes or displaying or circulating offensive material, hostile attitudes, practices or structures which discriminate against an individual or group of persons.

- 3) Sexual harassment is defined as any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, if the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.
- 4) Common sexual harassment behavior includes, but is not limited to; verbal or physical advances, requesting sexual favors, asking about someone's sexual preferences, fantasies or activities, asking someone about their sexual orientation in an aggressive manner, asking someone their gender identity in an aggressive manner, repeatedly asking for a date after someone has expressed lack of interest, unwelcome patting, hugging or touching someone's body, hair or clothing, making comments, jokes, sexual innuendo, or displaying or circulating offensive and/or pornographic material, making disparaging remarks to someone about their gender or body.
- 5) Bullying is defined as repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, which can be reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity. An isolated incident of the behavior described in this definition may be an affront to a person dignity but as a once off incident is not considered bullying.
- 6) Common bullying behavior includes but is not limited to; unreasonably blocking someone's progress or advancement, persistent picking on someone, manipulation of someone's reputation, manipulating the nature of someone's work or ability of someone to do their work, social exclusion or isolation, unwarranted or constant criticism, preventing someone from speaking, shouting, public reprimands, rages or insults, unwanted physical contact, physical abuse or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property, undermining an individual's work or self-esteem, verbal abuse/insults, intimidation, aggression, humiliation and blame for things beyond the persons control.

The Hub

The Hub is meant to be a friendly and safe environment that enables people to carry out their societies work. It is everyone's responsibility to make sure that there is a positive atmosphere in the hub. This is particularly important during times when people are stressed such as around the budget deadline and awards application deadlines. Examples of inappropriate behavior would be:

- Any of the previously mentioned behavior covered under definitions.
- The criticism of people's posters or Photoshop abilities (constructive criticism is fine as long as it is **constructive**) also constructive criticism may not be wanted and a person has a right to not accept constructive criticism.

- Discussion of inter committee or inter society problems these are issues that should be discussed in private and not in the Hub. The exception to this would be discussing it with the President or Guild Reps in the office.
- The criticism of election manifestos.
- The use of discriminatory language including but not limited to: sexist language, racist language, homophobic language, language that mocks ones religion and transphobic language.
- Criticism and/or the undermining of other societies events.

Society Events

All students should be able to attend a society's event without fear of bullying or harassment. There are wide variety of events on campus such as speakers, quiz's and debates. Although most speakers will not be using language that may cause offence or discriminate it is important to make sure that speakers are aware of the Societies Guild Bullying and Discrimination Policy. With regard to quiz's make sure that an MC's joke doesn't stray over the line to being discriminatory. Debates are naturally quite heated and this is the way that they should be it makes the event more enjoyable for everyone. Having said this though it is important that no speaker or member of the audience use the setting of a debate to get abusive, personal or aggressive.

Society Trips Outside of Cork/Abroad

Society trips to conferences, debates, competitions, parades etc. can be the most exciting and fun part of many societies. Society trips away are meant to be fun and a chance for society members to experience new things. This does not mean though that the rules laid out in this policy are not to be followed or don't apply. When on a trip away it is important to remember that you are representing both UCC and your society.

Complaints Procedure:

In the event a society member would like to make a complaint against another society member, a member of the societies executive or a society within UCC, the following procedure will apply :

At the first instance, the complainant should contact their Society Executive Representative, Societies President or Societies Officer to discuss the alleged complaint with them briefly and informally.

Resolution

If required the complainant may be asked to fill out the UCC Societies Complaint form. Once signed by the complainant will then discuss matters in full with the Societies President and Societies Officer.

It should be noted that the societies office can only deal with complaints of breach of societies rules, policies and procedures.

Any documentation gathered by the Societies office during the consideration of the complaint, including the original complaint form may be forwarded to campus watch if appropriate. This may not preclude an informal resolution to the complaint but may invoke a formal resolution process.

Note : The discretion to forward the complaint to Campus watch may be exercised by the Societies President or Societies Officer where it may be alleged that a student has breached the UCC student rules.

Confidentiality:

Statements, letters and other communications shall be confidential to those involved in the procedure to the greatest extent possible, compliant with entitlement of the Complainant and Respondent to the full disclosure to them of all relevant documents. Complaints that are received into an email account shall only be forwarded to relevant parties such as the Societies Officer and the Societies Guild Executive. Once the topic outlined in the complaint has been resolved the relevant email will be printed out and stored in a file which is kept in the Societies Guild Executive

Events & Room Bookings

Running events is a core activity of Societies and up to one hundred are held each week. The following are the rules that pertain to event organization:

- Room bookings must be submitted at least 48 hours in advance of an event.
- Room should be left the way they were found.
- To add an event to the all student email it must be submitted via the online portal by midnight each Thursday during term.
- Mystery tours are not allowed.
- For Balls and functions one Student Community Support member is required per 100 guests. 2 Student Community Support members are required per 100 guests after a ball will surpass 600 guests. SCS must be booked through the portal at least two weeks in advance of the event.
- Maximum two free drinks per person for any on-campus function.
- Maximum one free drink per person for any off campus events.
- Organisers of Society events such as Balls should ensure that the sale, distribution and consumption of alcohol at these events is conducive to the low risk consumption of alcohol by participants.

AGMs & EGMs

Each Society is required to hold an AGM in the second term for the purpose of electing officials and reporting on activities. The following are the rules that pertain to AGMs and EGMs:

- A Guild Rep must be present at the AGM for it to be valid. Please contact the Rep at least two weeks in advance of the AGM.
- Each Society must have completed a finance meeting with The Societies Officer prior to the AGM.
- Each Society must then present a Finance Report to your AGM so that all members know the current financial position of the Society.
- Each Society must submit its Constitution to the Guild Rep in advance of the AGM or EGM.
- All available positions on the committee must be advertised by poster and email for two weeks in advance of the AGM /EGM.
- Each Guild Rep must fill in a report of each AGM. The Society Auditor is required to sign this report at the end of the AGM.
- After the AGM each Society must add the new committee members to the portal and to the UCC Society Committee Members Noticeboard ~~2014/15~~.

For more general advice on running a Society see the annual training manual available from the Societies' Hub or the Accommodation and Societies Office.