

Code of Conduct

1 Introduction

- 1.1 It is important for UPSU to be governed and managed soundly and harmoniously in order to allow it to properly achieve its charitable object of promoting and representing the general interests of its members as students.
- 1.2 It is the responsibility of trustees, staff and student officers to ensure good working relations at all times.
- 1.3 If any circumstances arise which are not covered in detail by this document, then the spirit of the document shall prevail. It will be the responsibility of the trustees of UPSU to ensure that this provision is met.
- 1.4 'Elected officers' means elected persons who are elected in accordance with the UPSU Constitution.
- 1.5 'Staff' means any individual paid to do work for UPSU whether full or part time, contracted on a permanent or fixed term basis that has been appointed, rather than elected to their post. It includes staff drawn from the student body of UPSU and employed on an 'as-and-when' basis.
- 1.6 'Student Officer' means any post filled by a student who is elected.
- 1.7 The Students' Union supports trade union representation and will liaise with recognised trades unions.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This document replaces all and any previous documents which relate to the same subject and is effective from the date of ratification.
- 2.2 This document seeks to define the responsibilities of the trustees, staff and student officers to assist them to conduct the business of UPSU within the constraints of the law and good practice.
- 2.3 This document will place a responsibility on trustees, staff and student officers to work within the agreed protocol at all times and to ensure that Grievance and Disciplinary procedures are adhered to as a means of ensuring fair working practices.

- 2.4 The contents of this protocol will be recognised within the Constitution of UPSU and may not be varied unless such a variation is agreed strictly in accordance with Section 10 of this protocol.
- 2.5 UPSU will at all times strive to be a good employer by actively promoting sound working relationships throughout its structure. This protocol will take into account the provisions of the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- 2.6 Students employed as UPSU staff in any capacity are entitled to enjoy full rights and benefits of membership. In addition they are entitled to the same quality of management, supervision and consideration as any other member of staff.
- 2.7 Any students employed as UPSU staff must raise matters relation to their employment within the line management structure of UPSU.
- 2.8 Students employed by UPSU will be treated the same as any other employee regarding Grievance and Disciplinary matters. The staff procedures will apply.

3 Trustees and Student Officers

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of elected officers to ensure that the management recognise and address, individual training and personal development needs of the management and staff in order to meet the Charitable Objectives of the organisation.
- 3.2 The trustees of UPSU bear responsibility for the employment of staff and delegate day to day staffing issues to the Finance and Staffing Committee of the Board of Trustees, which is chaired by the President.
- 3.3 The Finance and Staffing Committee will at all times act in the best interests of UPSU and its Trustees, and staff will ensure that all Trustees (sabbatical officers and other trustees) are kept informed of issues which involve collective responsibility.
- 3.4 Elected officers may elect to join a trade union.
- 3.5 Elected officers should at all times take into account relevant input from trades unions when considering staffing issues.
- 3.6 Elected officers shall at all times treat staff with appropriate respect, professionalism, tact and understanding so that they may undertake their duties in an atmosphere of goodwill and co-operation.
- 3.7 The daily management of the staff and their duties will be delegated by Finance and Staffing Committee to the Chief Executive and then through the line management structure of UPSU. The Chief Executive will be responsible to the nominated trustee for

the effective management of the senior management team and, through them, the staff of UPSU.

3.8 The Trustees must administer UPSU in accordance with the Constitution and with the requirements of Charity Law, the Education Act and current employment and health & safety legislation.

3.9 Trustees and elected officers must declare any conflict of interest to the President as soon as this arises

4 Staff

4.1 It is the responsibility of all staff to promote the charitable objectives of UPSU and to ensure (through the staff management structure) that all staff recognise, support and co-operate with elected officers and members.

4.2 It is the responsibility of managers to actively assist in the creation and support of an environment which seeks to address the individual training and personal development needs of all elected officers and staff, in order to meet the needs of the organisation.

4.3 Non-student staff shall not interfere in the democratic government of UPSU and may not hold an elected position of office on any UPSU Committee. Student staff whilst taking part in the democratic processes of UPSU must declare any conflict of interest which arises, because of their staff post. Student staff are not entitled to take a position as a paid sabbatical officer.

4.4 Staff may be required to advise elected officers on any matter that is within their area of work, but may not seek to influence the policy making process in any other way.

4.5 Unless specifically instructed otherwise by their line manager on the authority of the Union Executive Committee, staff may not work contrary to Union Policy nor take part in any public or media (including student media) discussion, nor express publicly any views which are contrary to the policies of UPSU.

4.6 Staff may elect to join a trade union.

4.7 Staff shall at all times show appropriate respect, professionalism, tact and understanding so that all those who contribute to the running of UPSU may undertake their duties in an atmosphere of goodwill and co-operation.

4.8 UPSU staff will use their best endeavours to ensure the smooth and efficient administration of UPSU.

4.9 UPSU non student staff shall ensure that they are non-partisan in all matters of elections and UPSU politics whilst on duty.

5 Confidentiality

- 5.1 Elected officers and staff share a responsibility to ensure that appropriate levels of confidentiality are maintained with regard to personal, staffing and operational information.
- 5.2 Confidentiality must prevail regarding discussions or reports on matters relating to the responsibilities, conditions of employment, performance or conduct of any individual. If in doubt such discussion, or reporting, should always be referred to Finance and Staffing Committee. Appropriate exceptions would include appraisals between a line manager and the individual, senior management team or line management meetings considering staff duties or responsibilities. Appropriate forums would include Union Executive Committee or Finance and Staffing Committee Meetings.
- 5.3 No reference may be made to any member of UPSU staff in any articles or publications by the Students' Union, except where objective or non-critical information is being communicated to the membership.
- 5.4 Individual or personal matters relating to staff may not be discussed at any general or open meeting.
- 5.5 Breaches of confidentiality by staff, trustees and elected officers may attract disciplinary action at the discretion of the Finance and Staffing Committee and in accordance with the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures.
- 5.6 All staff and elected officers are expected to comply with the current Data Protection legislation.
- 5.7 No information regarding the conduct of staff, elected officers, student officers or trustees, whether individual or otherwise, may be communicated to outside bodies without the express permission of Staffing Committee.

6 General Provisions

- 6.1 Elected officers and staff must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times. Obscene, offensive or disorderly conduct (including foul language) or any behaviour which is perceived as harassment is unacceptable anywhere within the Union or at any Union function, or if representing UPSU in any capacity. The Chief Executive or nominated trustee may instigate action in accordance with Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures to deal with inappropriate behaviour. For trustees, instigation would be by another trustee.
- 6.2 Elected officers and staff must at all times strive to achieve the provisions of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

7 Complaints by Staff against Elected officers, Student Officers or Trustees.

- 7.1 If any member of staff has reason to complain about the behaviour of any executive officer or trustee they should inform the line manager and if the matter is not resolved, the Chief Executive, who will consider the appropriate action. If considered appropriate he/she will inform the President (or if the subject of the complaint is the President, then an alternative Executive Officer may be informed) in writing. On receipt of a written complaint, the recipient will carry out a preliminary investigation of the matter in confidence and report to the Finance and Staffing Committee.
- 7.2 If the subject of the complaint is a member of the Staffing Committee then they will be replaced for the duration of the discussion(s) by a non sabbatical officer who will be committed to fill that role until the matter is resolved. A recognised trade union or other representative may be asked to attend where appropriate.
- 7.3 Staffing Committee will consider the case and the appropriate course of action making reference to the UPSU Grievance and Disciplinary procedures. Opinion may be sought by the Finance and Staffing Committee from external bodies such as NUS, trades unions or the Union's solicitors.
- 7.4 The subject of the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the deliberations as soon as is practicable both verbally and in writing. The matter will then be dealt with according to the UPSU Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures.
- 7.5 Any recommendation of the Finance and Staffing Committee will be based on the same criteria and to the same degree as would apply to a member of staff for a similar complaint.
- 7.6 All elected officers or trustees will be provided with a copy of the UPSU Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures.
- 7.7 If a complaint against an executive officer or trustee results in that person being dismissed from their post, the Executive Committee will have the authority to delegate the duties of that person to the Executive Committee members in order that the role continues, or to seek the appointment of a replacement through election or co-option to fill the vacancy.

8 Complaints by Elected officers, Student Officers or Trustees against staff.

- 8.1 If an executive officer or trustee has reason to formally complain about the behaviour of a member of staff they should inform the nominated trustee in writing, who will inform the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will request the line manager to carry out a preliminary investigation of the matter in confidence so that the appropriate action can be considered. If the matter is not resolved the Chief Executive will forward a report to the Finance and Staffing Committee.

- 8.2 If a complaint is about the Chief Executive, the nominated trustee will conduct the investigation or will delegate a suitable alternative person.
- 8.3 Finance and Staffing Committee will consider the case and the appropriate course of action, making reference to the UPSU Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures. Opinion may be sought by the Finance and Staffing Committee from external bodies such as NUS, trades unions or the Union's solicitors.
- 8.4 The subject of the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the deliberations as soon as is practicable both verbally and in writing. The matter will then be dealt with according to the UPSU Grievance and Disciplinary procedures.
- 8.5 All staff will be provided with a copy of the UPSU Grievance and Disciplinary procedures.
- 8.6 If a complaint against a member of staff results in that person being dismissed from their post, the Chief Executive will advise the Finance and Staffing Committee on options for ensuring that the duties of that person are continued either by the appointment of a replacement through normal selection processes and/or by re-distribution of tasks within the workforce.
- 8.7 If the complaint results in the Chief Executive being dismissed from their post, the trustees will advise the Finance and Staffing Committee on options for ensuring that the duties of the Chief Executive are continued.

9 Complaints by Staff against Staff

- 9.1 Staff who have a complaint against another member of staff, should use the UPSU Grievance Procedure.

10 Variation to this Agreement

- 10.1 This protocol has been ratified by the trustees of the UPSU following consultation with the Union staff, Unite and UNISON.
- 10.2 It shall not be modified by the trustees without consultation with the above parties.
- 10.3 The procedures will be reviewed and re-adopted every two years unless a change in legislation dictates that an interim amendment should be made, always provided that the amendment is lawful.
- 10.4 At least 14 days notice must be given to all parties of any proposed meeting to be convened to discuss variations.

10.5 Requests to re-negotiate or modify this agreement shall be made in writing by either the President, the Chief Executive or representatives of the recognised trade union(s). The party instigating a change must forward proposals to the other two parties.

10.6 All staff and officers will be issued with a Staff Handbook which will contain the current Code of Conduct.