

University of Limerick Students' Union

Bye Law 2: Student Council

1. Purpose

The purpose of Student Council is to:

- a. Represent the voice of University of Limerick students
- b. Identify issues that are of concern to students and ensure they are raised with the Student Life senior management team or governing body of the University
- c. Oversee the work of Executive

Student Council must act in accordance with the Constitution, the Bye Laws, and the University of Limerick Code of Conduct.

2. Function

The function of Student Council is to:

- a. Decide the policy of the student union in relation to political, social, welfare and academic issues, subject to any relevant referenda and Article 11.5 of the Constitution.
- b. Inform and advise on the development of internal organisational Union policy.
- c. Instruct and hold the Executive to account.
- d. Monitor and discuss the events and decisions of the University's decision-making bodies and raise the concerns of students with the Executive members on Student Council and Student Life senior management team.
- e. Attend Student Forum meetings and gather feedback on views of students.
- f. Contribute to the development of the strategic plan of the Union and propose any amendments to the plan to the Board of Directors.
- g. Review the draft Union budget received from the Board of Directors for discussion and feedback.
- h. Make recommendations to the Board of Directors in relation to Student Officer pay.
- i. Receive reports from the Board of Directors.
- j. Receive reports from the Executive.
- k. Make, repeal, or amend Bye Laws jointly with the Board of Directors, in line with Article 25 of the Constitution.
- l. Establish committees of Student Council as necessary, with the Executive Oversight Committee as a standing committee.

3. Membership, voting and attendance

- a. The membership of Student Council is made up of:
 - i. Department Representatives
 - ii. Interest Group Councillors
 - iii. Student Council Chair
 - iv. All Executive members
- b. The Student Council members shall be elected from among the students in their constituencies for the following academic year, in accordance with Bye Law 8: Elections.
- c. The President, the Deputy President Welfare, the Vice President Academic, and the Vice President Diversity & Inclusion are non-voting members on Student Council.
- d. Members of Executive may vote at Student Council meetings on all matters except any motions that they are bringing for discussion and decision-making.
- e. All students shall have Participant status at meetings of Student Council but can be asked to leave at the request of the Chair. Student Council may grant Participant or Observer status on any other person as deemed appropriate.
- f. Student Council has the power to create non-executive Council member positions.
- g. Each Student Council member must attend all Council meetings and represent their constituency at all forums.
- h. A Student Council member may resign by notifying the Student Council Chair in writing and their resignation takes effect upon receipt of this notification.
- i. Student Council members shall be deemed to have resigned from Student Council if they miss two consecutive Council meetings or one Students Forum without giving apologies to the Student Council Chair and do not provide satisfactory reasons acceptable to Student Council.
- j. Student Council members who are on an external placement or a study abroad programme as part of their studies may resign from their posts should this placement interfere with their attendance at Council meetings.
- k. Where possible, Student Council members will be allowed to attend remotely via videoconferencing software (Teams, Zoom, Jitsi, etc.) in a hybrid capacity. However, where this is not possible and the member cannot attend in any capacity for two consecutive Council meetings and has not sent apologies or

otherwise given good reason for their non-attendance to the chairperson as deemed by Council, they will be deemed to have resigned.

4. Roles

- a. The Student Council Chair will chair the meetings according to the Standing Orders in Appendix One of this Bye Law. If the Chair is not present or has not been elected and the Deputy Chair has not been elected, the meeting can be chaired by the President, or the chairing of the meeting may be opened to the floor.
- b. The Deputy Chair of Student Council is appointed once Student Council convenes and is elected from within the council membership. The Deputy Chair is called upon when the Student Council Chair is unavailable to chair Council or other meetings linked to their role.
- c. In the event that the Student Council Chair resigns from their role, the Deputy Chair will chair all council meetings until a new Chair is elected. In the event that a new Chair is not elected within a four-week period, Student Council will be asked to vote on appointing the Deputy Chair into the Chair's role for the remainder of the academic year.
- d. Faculty Representatives (Reps) are elected by Student Council to represent each of the faculties of the University. The Reps for each faculty are elected from the department reps from that faculty.
- e. Faculty Reps sit on the Faculty Boards and other relevant committee or working groups which are dedicated to the improvement or augmentation of their faculty.
- f. The Faculty Reps form the education working group and provide regular updates to the Faculties Officer and the Vice President Academic.
- g. All Council members must fulfil any mandate pertaining to their role or directed by Student Council.
- h. Outgoing Council members will be required to write a summary of their experience on Student Council, called the Handover Document. Failure to complete the document may impinge on successfully attaining PVA hours. The Leadership and Representation Office (LRO) shall ensure there is adequate training provided for the incoming officers.

5. Notice of meetings, agenda, and motions

- a. Student Council will meet at least three to four times during each Semester and meetings are scheduled for a maximum of 90 minutes. The LRO bring suggested meeting dates to the first Student Council meeting for agreement and the dates are then posted on the website. Meetings may take place, Online, Fully in person, or in person with a hybrid option for those who's attendance is impacted by an extenuating circumstance.
- b. LRO is responsible for the coordination of agenda preparation, meeting arrangements and paperwork. Student Council members and Student Officers must send any agenda items to the LRO at least five university days before the meeting. The final agenda and associated papers will be posted at least two university days before the meeting to allow Council members to be fully briefed.
- c. The agenda for Council meetings will always include the following items:
 - Apologies
 - Minutes of the last meeting to be agreed for accuracy
 - Matters arising from the minutes not included in this agenda
 - Motions
 - Officers' Reports and Questions to Officers
 - Executive Oversight Sub Committee report (twice a semester)
 - Items for discussion
 - Any other business (AOB)
- d. Any motions must be submitted in writing to the Student Council Chair at least five university days before the Council meeting. Any motions proposing changes to a Bye Law must include a reference to the relevant part of the Bye Law.
- e. New policies or amendments to existing policies can be brought to Council as a motion. Advice from the LRO can be sought in relation to the wording of a policy or an amendment.
- f. Motions must not be in breach of the Constitution, the Bye Laws, and the University of Limerick Code of Conduct.
- g. An emergency Council meeting may be called by the President; a majority of Executive members; or one third of Student Council. This is done by way of a written request to the Student Council Chair who consults with LRO. An emergency meeting should usually deal with only one topic. Related motions may be put to the emergency meeting in line with this Bye Law, but only after a full discussion of the topic.

6. Proceedings at meetings

- a. The quorum for all Student Council meetings shall be a simple majority of Council members. If the meeting is inquorate, it may carry on for information and discussion, but no voting can take place.
- b. Voting at Student Council meetings shall be by a simple majority of members present and voting. Voting at online meetings will be done through an online poll and voting at offline meetings will be done through a show of hands.
- c. Motions must be submitted in writing to the Student Council Chair at least five university days before the Council meeting. Any motions proposing changes to a Bye Law must include a reference to the relevant part of the Bye Law. Each motion submitted must be proposed and seconded by two Council members.
- d. All discussion and voting at Student Council takes place according to the Standing Orders in Appendix One of this Bye Law.
- e. Minutes of Student Council meetings will be taken by a member of the LRO and circulated to all members. At the next Student Council meeting corrections will be made if necessary and the minutes agreed as an accurate record. The agreed minutes will be posted on the Union website.

7. Holding Executive to account

- a. Each year an Executive Oversight Committee is elected from within the Student Council membership. The committee is made up of five council members whose role is to liaise with the LRO in reviewing Executive Officers' performance and reports. Once all 5 members are elected, the committee will meet with the Student Representation Coordinator who will explain the nature and intention of the committee.
- b. The committee will meet twice per semester to review the work of Executive performance and reports. These meetings will be co-ordinated by the LRO.
- c. If an issue is identified as a result of the review, the committee will be required to produce a written report and will work with the LRO on this report. Where necessary the General Manager will be made aware of any concerns arising before they are formally addressed. No personal information shall be included, and the reports must be objective and factual. Based on their report Council may decide to initiate a petition for a referendum to remove an officer as outlined below.
- d. Every Executive Officer or Council member who has been elected where there were at least two candidates (which may include a reopen nominations candidate) in the election shall be liable to be removed from office on a

proposal to that effect approved by a Referendum held in accordance with Bye Law 8: Elections. Where such a proposal is approved, it shall take effect upon the declaration of the Returning Officer. A quorum for the removal of any such Executive Officer or Council member shall be 50% of the total number of valid votes cast in the election for the position. Where such a proposal is approved, s/he will be deemed to have resigned and may not stand for re-election in any subsequent election.

- e. Every Executive Officer or Council member who has been elected where there was not at least two candidates (which may include a reopen nominations candidate) in the election shall be liable to be removed from office on a proposal to that effect to the Council passed by a Qualified Majority of Council members present and voting. Where such a proposal is passed, s/he will be deemed to have resigned and may not stand for re-election in any subsequent election.
- f. The Clubs Officer and the Societies Officer on the Executive shall only be liable (subject to point 7.h. below) to be removed from office by a proposal to that effect passed by the Clubs and Societies Council in accordance with the Clubs and Societies Rulebook.
- g. The Postgraduate Students' Union (PGSU) Executive Nominee shall not be liable to be removed by the Union from any PGSU Office that they hold (subject to point 6.h. below). They may be removed by the PGSU in accordance with their own procedures. They can be excluded from representing postgraduates on Student Council, Executive or any other body formed by the Union. Executive may then seek the PSU Executive to nominate a replacement representative.
- h. Any Executive member or Student Council member who has been expelled from the University as a result of a breach of the University's Code of Conduct shall be deemed automatically resigned from office upon such expulsion coming into effect.

8. Review of Bye Laws and Student Union Policy

- a. Every five years the Board of Directors and Student Council jointly appoint a review group, which includes representatives of Clubs and Societies and Postgraduate Student Union, to carry out a review of the Bye Laws.
- b. All amendments to the Bye Laws, whether arising from the review or deemed necessary from time to time, must be passed by a simple majority vote at meetings of both the Board of Directors and Student Council.
- c. Any amendments which are relevant to Clubs and Societies will be subject to approval of Clubs and Societies Council. Any amendments which are relevant

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to the Postgraduate Student Union will be subject to the approval of the Postgraduate Student Union Council (or equivalent).

- d. All policy agreed by Student Council, and excluding policy decided by Referendum, will have an initial lifespan of three years which can be extended at the direction of Student Council. It is the responsibility of the LRO to ensure that policies due for review are brought to Council and the Students Forum is informed.

Appendix One

Student Council Standing Orders

1. These standing orders may not be suspended.
2. A copy of the Standing Orders shall be available at each meeting.
3. Each speaker shall address himself/herself solely to the Chairperson.
4. The Chairperson shall ensure, wherever practicable, that speakers for and against the question under discussion address the meeting alternately.
5. Whenever the Chairperson speaks, he/she shall be heard in silence and any other member shall, at once, cease speaking.
6. The Chairperson may leave the Chair at any time to contribute to the debate but must formally pass the Chair to the Deputy Chair for the rest of that item.
7. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote.
8. If the Chairperson is unwilling to exercise a casting vote, the motion may be put again or declared, 'Not carried'.
9. The Chairperson shall have general responsibility for ensuring that discussion is conducted in an orderly fashion and that speakers are not interrupted except as provided for in these standing orders.
10. The Chairperson shall ensure that speakers adhere to the motion when speaking.
11. Every motion or amendment which shall be proposed, or any report given, shall thereafter be open for discussion.
12. The proposer shall have the right to reply immediately before a vote is taken but may not then introduce fresh subject matter.
13. Only one motion, report, or amendment to a motion may be before the floor at any one time.
14. Amendments to a motion shall be relevant to it and form an intelligible unit with it. They may not seek to negate it directly.
15. If an amendment is carried or accepted, the original motion incorporating the amendment shall become the main motion to which further amendments may be moved.

16. If, at any time, there is no discussion, the Chairperson may inquire whether there is any opposition and, if not, shall declare the motion carried.
17. Procedural motions are used to move the debate along and empower students to take control of the debate and make sure it is moving in an appropriate direction. The following procedural motions may be put:
 - 17.1 A motion that a vote be taken
 - 17.2. A motion that a vote is not taken
 - 17.3. A motion to postpone or adjourn the matter to a later specified time or meeting
 - 17.4. A motion to refer the matter to the Executive or to any other specified body for examination or report
 - 17.5 A motion of no confidence in the Chairperson
 - 17.6. A challenge to the Chairperson's ruling
 - 17.7 A motion that an item be voted on in parts
 - 17.8 A Live amendment to be made to the motion
18. Procedural motions shall require a seconder.
19. Procedural motions may not be proposed while any member is speaking on a point of order or during the act of voting.
20. The Chairperson may refuse to put any procedural motion if one of similar effect and related to the same subject matter has been defeated within the previous fifteen minutes.
21. The proposer of a procedural motion should speak in favour of the motion, followed by one speaker against the procedural motion. It shall then be put to a vote.
22. The proposer of the main motion under discussion shall have priority in speaking against the procedural motion except in the case of procedural motions Standing Orders (SO)17.5 and SO17.6 where the Chairperson shall have priority.
23. When Standing Orders (SO) 17.5 and SO 17.6 are proposed, the Chairperson shall leave the Chair until it is determined, passing the Chair to the Deputy Chair until the issue is determined. If SO 17.6 is carried, the Chairperson shall resume the Chair but shall not give a ruling in accordance with the procedural motion. If SO

- 17.6 is carried, the Chairperson to whom it relates shall not take the Chair for the remainder of that meeting and the Deputy Chair remains in the Chair.
24. When SO 17.1 is carried the Chairperson shall immediately allow the proposer of the main motion to sum up and reply and then put the main motion to a vote.
 25. Amendments may not be proposed to procedural motions except in respect of the element of time in SO 17.3 or in respect of the body to which the matter is referred to in SO 17.3. No procedural motion may be moved in respect of another procedural motion.
 26. A point of order shall have precedence over all other business except the act of voting (unless it refers to the conduct of the vote).
 27. A point of order may be raised by any member it provided that he/she raises the point immediately and states that he/she is raising 'on a point of order'.
 28. A point of order shall relate only to the procedure adopted or to the conduct of the meeting.
 29. A point of information may be raised at any time except during a point of order or the act of voting, provided that the speaker states that he/she is rising on a 'point of information'.
 30. The speaker on the floor may accept or refuse a point of information and if the speaker refuses, the person offering the point of information shall immediately stop speaking.
 31. A point of information shall consist of brief and relevant information offered to or asked from the speaker.
 32. Voting shall be by a show of hands unless otherwise called for. At an online meeting voting shall be by an online poll.
 33. The Chairperson shall then declare the result.
 34. Decision shall normally be by simple majority.
 35. The Chairperson, if requested by any member of the meeting, may appoint tellers if necessary.