

Policy Proposal:

Date:
10/09/2025

Proposer/s:
Union Voice Team

Current Policy/Situation

What happens at the moment?

Standing Order 4 currently covers the responsibilities of elected representatives. It can be viewed on the Union website via this link -

<https://www.derbyunion.co.uk/pageassets/change/governance/Standing-Orders-February-2025-v2.pdf>

New Proposal

What is your new proposal? This must include the exact wording that you would like in the Standing Orders?

This proposal is to change Standing Order 4 from Elected Representatives to a Union Democracy Standing Order, this title change reflects the contents showing how the Union delivers democratic processes.

The EDI and Education Councils are being removed as we will no longer have Student Officers and Chairs to attend these, and these are being absorbed into the new Union Meetings which will occur every 2 months.

The Ideas Forum section is being removed due to low engagement in this process and is being replaced by a new online feedback mechanism which should prove more effective in leading to tangible change.

The new section on Union Meetings outlines how this new meeting structure will work, and this should lead to more student engagement and feedback collection. A minimum of one of the Union Meetings each academic year will act as the All Student Meeting, so section 4.5 has been updated to reflect this.

Section 4.6 on the procedure for Executive Officers to be scrutinised has been simplified and updated to reflect it becoming part of the Union Meetings.

Section 4.7 on Votes of No Confidence has been removed as this is included in Standing Order 6.

Section 4.8 has been updated to reflect Trustee Recruitment in line with the new strategy.

The Articles of Association and the Academic Representation Policy will be updated where required to reflect these changes.

All changes can be seen below, everything being removed is shown crossed through in blue, and everything being added is shown in red.

Any sections that have remained unchanged have not been included:

STANDING ORDER 4 – ~~ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES~~ UNION DEMOCRACY

4.1. Executive Committee

4.1.1. ~~There shall be an~~ The Executive Committee ~~which~~ shall be made up of the Executive Officers.

- 4.2.2. The Senior Leadership Team of the Union shall be in attendance in an advisory capacity.
- 4.1.3. The Executive Committee oversees the day-to-day operation of the Union.
- 4.1.4. The Executive Committee must convene a minimum of once a month. Outcomes from the meetings shall be posted via Officer updates, Union social media and Scrutiny Panel reports with minutes available on request.
- 4.1.5. There must be a minimum of two (2) Executive Officers over 50% of the Committee's composition in attendance for a decision to be made.
- ~~4.2.6. Decisions made by the Executive Committee shall take into account both the welfare and interest of the individual and the Union.~~

4.2. Councils

~~4.3.1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Council~~

- ~~4.3.1.1. There shall be an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Council which will inform the work of the Executive Officers.~~
- ~~4.3.1.2. The Council is made up of all EDI Student Officers however any other Student Officer or member of the Union may attend and participate.~~
- ~~4.3.1.3. Notice of meetings will be published on the Union's website 7 days prior to the date of the meeting.~~
- ~~4.3.1.4. EDI Council meetings will be chaired by the respective Equality Officer for each campaign.~~
- ~~4.3.1.5. EDI Council shall meet at least once per term.~~

~~4.3.2. Education Council~~

- ~~4.3.2.1. There shall be an Education Council chaired by the Education Chair~~
- ~~4.3.2.2. Education Council shall meet at least once per term.~~
- ~~4.3.2.3. Please refer to the Academic Representation Policy for full details of Education Council, PGR Council and their responsibilities.~~

4.2.1 Societies Communities Council

- 4.2.1.1. There shall be a Societies Communities Council chaired by the Communities Societies Chair
- 4.2.1.2. Societies Communities Council shall meet at least twice once per month.
- 4.2.1.3. The membership and regulations of this Council are listed within the Communities Activities Representation Policy.

4.2.2. Sports Communities Council

- 4.2.2.1. There shall be a Sports Communities Council chaired by the Sports Communities Chair.
- 4.2.2.2. The Sports Communities Council shall meet at least once per month.
- 4.2.2.3. The membership and regulations of this Council are listed within the Activities Communities Representation Policy.

4.4. The Ideas Forum

- ~~4.4.1. Any full member of the Union may submit an idea for change through the online 'Ideas' Forum.~~
- ~~4.4.2. The idea must clearly state what the member wants to change and why.~~
- ~~4.4.3. The idea will be published on the Union's website for discussion; if the idea reaches 25 votes it will be presented for discussion at the Executive Committee.~~
- ~~4.4.4. The Executive Committee has the power to accept or reject ideas. This outcome will be posted on the Ideas Forum.~~

- ~~4.4.5. Any policy motion prepared by the Sports Communities Council, Society or Communities Council or Education Council will automatically be presented to the Executive Committee, without requiring a pre-requisite number of votes.~~
- ~~4.4.6. Ideas that fail to reach the threshold for discussion will remain live on the site for six months when they will be archived.~~

4.3. Union Meetings

- 4.3.1. Union Meetings will be held every two (2) months throughout the academic year. There will be a minimum of four (4) meetings held per academic year.
- 4.3.2. Union Meetings will be open to all students, Executive Officers, Student Organisers, and Student Leaders.
- 4.3.3. Union Meetings will discuss key student priorities that have been gathered by via feedback mechanisms and identify actions.
- 4.3.4. Policies or motions affecting these Standing Orders, or the Articles of Association, can only be brought to the Union Meeting acting as an All Student Meeting.
- 4.3.5. Any policy or motion brought to a Union Meeting shall be decided by simple majority of votes.
- 4.3.6. Each Community group will have one (1) vote at each Union Meeting.
- 4.3.6.1. Student Leaders in the primary role, or their proxy, will be the one to cast the vote at Union Meetings.
- 4.3.7. Union Meetings will annually identify key student priorities which will be used to inform the aims for the incoming Executive Officers, who will write a manifesto based on these.
- 4.3.8. Union Meetings will be chaired by a Student Trustee, where no Trustee is available a member of Union staff may step in to chair in their place.

4.5. All Student Meetings

As per Article 18, the Union may hold Student members' meetings and such meetings shall be called and held in accordance with this Standing Order. For the avoidance of doubt, any Student Members' meeting held under this Article 18 shall not be a Company Law Meeting of the Union for the purposes of the Companies Act.

- 4.5.1. One of the Union Meetings per academic year, as a minimum, will act as the All Student Meeting.
- 4.5.2. An All Student Meeting can be called at any time.
- 4.5.3. A meeting shall be called by at least 14 clear days' written notice, this will specify the place, day and time of the meeting and the general nature of the meeting.
- 4.5.4. An All Student Meeting is open to all members to attend and vote. Members may appoint proxies, the rights and responsibilities of the proxy shall be outlined in documentation provided at the point of notification. This shall be agreed annually by the Trustees.
- 4.5.5. An All Student Meeting shall be chaired by one of the ~~Student~~ Trustees.
- 4.5.6. Quorum of an All Student Meeting shall be 50 members.
- 4.5.7. Minutes of an All Student Meeting shall be published on the Union's website.
- 4.5.8. Any policy or motion brought to an All Student Meeting shall be decided by simple majority of votes.
- 4.5.9. Policies or motions brought to an All Student Meeting that relate to responsibilities of the Trustee Board cannot be implemented without being discussed by the Trustees.
- 4.5.10. The Union of Students reserves the right to amend or update any out of date terminology within these Standing Orders without formally proposing these changes at an All Student meeting. Any amendments or updates to terminology made in this way will be collated and ratified at the next available All Student meeting.

4.6. Scrutiny Panels Sessions

4.6.1. ~~Ordinary~~ Scrutiny ~~Panel~~ Session procedures

4.6.1.1. Three (3) of the Union Meetings per academic year, as a minimum, will include a Scrutiny Session to hold the Executive Officers to account.

~~4.5.1.1. The Scrutiny Panel is a collection of representatives with senior student roles within the Union that regularly hold the Executive Officers to account. Scrutiny Panels shall take place four times during an Officer's term.~~

4.6.1.2. The Scrutiny ~~Panel~~ Session also has the power to co-opt a Student ~~Officer~~ Leader into post.

~~4.5.1.3 A request for Executive Officers, in their capacity of representatives, or Student Officers to provide a report on their progress can be made by:~~

~~4.5.1.3.1. Any member to the Chair via the Democracy and Governance Coordinator.~~

~~4.5.1.3.2. Any member of Union Staff via the Executive Officers.~~

~~4.5.1.4. If the Panel is not satisfied with the progress provided by the Executive Officer or Student Officer the Chair can call the appropriate individual(s) to the next Scrutiny Panel to deliver an in-person report and to be questioned by the Panel.~~

4.6.1.3. The Scrutiny ~~Panel~~ Session shall be chaired by one of the Student Trustees. In the event that a Student Trustee is unavailable, ~~another chair Student Officer, Sports or Societies Committee Member~~ may be appointed ~~at from~~ the Union Meeting group to chair the meeting, this would be supported by Union staff.

~~4.5.1.6. Scrutiny Panel Panellists must consist of the Chair and between 3–6 members. Representatives from each of the following areas must be invited to the panel:~~

~~4.5.1.6.1. Student Organisers Officers;~~

~~4.5.1.6.2. Student Leaders;~~

~~4.5.1.6.2. Members of the Sports Council;~~

~~4.5.1.6.3. Members of the Societies Council;~~

~~4.5.1.6.4. Members of Sports Club Committees;~~

~~4.5.1.6.5. Student Representatives;~~

~~4.5.1.6.6. Members of Society Committees; and~~

~~4.5.1.6.7. PAL Leaders.~~

~~4.5.1.7. The Union President and/or Vice President Education shall extend an invitation to senior members of the university to attend the panels as observers of the proceedings:~~

~~4.5.1.7.1. Only one University observer may be privy to one closed-session deliberation process per academic year.~~

~~4.5.1.7.2. The University observer may indicate which panel they wish to attend for the closed-session deliberation process, subject to the approval of the Union Democracy and Governance Coordinator, Voice Manager and Head of Membership.~~

~~4.5.1.7.3. The Union Executive Officers, and any individual who is being scrutinised, must be informed if a University observer will be present, and the identity of the individual, at least 24 hours in advance.~~

~~4.5.1.7.4. The University observers shall have no voting rights, and cannot advise panellists in any fashion, so as to not influence the panel's outcomes.~~

4.7.1.4. Executive Officers will give a statement or presentation on their progress towards achieving their manifesto aims. reports, and role descriptions will be submitted to the Panellists and published on the website prior to meeting.

~~4.5.1.9. Panellists of the Scrutiny Panel are expected to read these prior to meeting. Panellists are also expected to communicate with the students within their area of responsibility as to when these meetings are. Those students who cannot attend Scrutiny Panel may~~

submit questions for the Officers via these Panellists or by contacting the Voice Team directly, or through the question submission platform.

~~4.5.1.10. Students and Panellists will be made aware of the dates of the meetings at the beginning of the academic year, agendas will be submitted to the Panellists 5 working days prior to the meeting.~~

4.7.1.5. If an Executive Officer fails to **provide their statement or presentation**, ~~submit a report to~~ or attend a Scrutiny **Panel Session** when requested without mitigating reason, a meeting with their Link Mentor will be called.

~~4.7.1.6. If a Student Officer fails to submit a report or attend a Scrutiny Panel Session when requested without mitigating reason, the Scrutiny Panel reserve the right to remove them from their elected position. Evidence should be provided by the Student Officer as to these reasons.~~

4.7.1.6. The end of the Scrutiny Session will form the closed session of the procedures, where members discuss the Executive Officers progress. Those under scrutiny will not be present during this part of the session.

~~4.5.1.13. At the discretion of the Chair, non-Panellists may attend the closed Scrutiny panel as an observer but would not have speaking or voting rights.~~

~~4.5.1.14. There shall be a minimum of 4 Scrutiny Panels per academic year.~~

4.7.1.7. All voting within the Scrutiny **Panel Session** will be conducted using a simple majority vote ~~of panellists~~.

4.7.1.8. Outcomes of the Scrutiny **Panel Session** shall be published on the Union's website and **the Executive Officers statements made available to** ~~reports tabled as a standing item at~~ the Trustee Board.

~~4.5.2. Extraordinary Scrutiny Panel~~

~~4.5.2.1. In the event that an additional Scrutiny Panel is required (for reasons including but not limited to, calling an individual Officer to attend or co-opting a Student Officer), an Extraordinary Scrutiny Panel may be called.~~

~~4.5.2.2. Any member of the Union or Union Staff may call an Extraordinary Scrutiny Panel, if the following conditions are met:~~

~~4.5.2.2.1. Permission has been sought by the Democracy and Governance Coordinator and given by the Union's Executive; and~~

~~4.5.2.2.2. At least 4 weeks' notice has been given.~~

~~4.5.2.3. Aside from the clauses 4.5.3.1.1—4.5.3.1.2, Extraordinary Scrutiny Panels will have the same function, requirements and powers as an ordinary Scrutiny Panel.~~

~~4.5.3. Powers of the Scrutiny Session Panel~~

~~4.5.3.1. The Scrutiny Session Panel:~~

~~4.5.3.1.1. Shall have the authority to ratify Union policy;~~

~~4.5.3.1.2. Can confer Honorary Life Memberships as outlined in Standing Order; and~~

~~4.5.3.1.3. Can co-opt Student Leaders Officers into vacant positions.~~

~~4.5.3.2. The process of co-option shall be as follows:~~

~~4.5.3.2.1. The student wishing to be co-opted must attend the Scrutiny Panel and state their reasons for standing.~~

~~4.5.3.2.2. That any co-option must be agreed by simple majority of the Scrutiny Panel.~~

~~4.5.3.2.3. Student Leaders Officers elected via co-option shall hold office from the date of their election until the end of their term of office.~~

4.7.2. Executive Officer and Student Officer Outcomes and Procedures

- 4.7.2.1. Following the conclusion of an open Scrutiny ~~Session Panel~~, a closed Scrutiny ~~Session Panel~~ will take one of the following actions in response to the Executive Officers' ~~and any called Student Officers' statements reports~~:
- 4.7.2.1.1. Approve the ~~statement reports~~;
 - 4.7.2.1.2. ~~Issue informal warning with recommendations for further actions. Reject the statement with a requirement for improvement by the following Scrutiny Session.~~
 - 4.7.2.1.2.1. ~~The recommendation should not put the Union at risk financially or reputationally;~~
 - 4.7.2.1.2.2. ~~The recommendation should be within the Executive Officers' or Student Officers' role description;~~
 - 4.7.2.1.2.3. ~~The recommendation should link to the objectives outlined in the Officer's manifesto;~~
 - 4.7.2.1.2.4. ~~The recommendation should benefit the membership and not be representative of a personal issue or opinion.~~
- ~~4.5.4.2. If the Scrutiny Panel are satisfied the Executive Officer or Student Officer is making sufficient progress on their manifesto and meeting their role description, they will approve the report and the Executive Officer or Student Officer will continue with no further action.~~
- ~~4.5.4.3. If the Scrutiny Panel are not satisfied that the Executive Officer or Student Officer is making sufficient progress on their manifesto and/or meeting their role description, the Scrutiny Panel may issue an informal warning with recommendations:~~
- 4.7.2.2. The recommendations are not exclusive to the above list; any other recommendations will be at the discretion of the Chair of the Scrutiny Panel.
- 4.7.2.3. These recommendations should be explored and where possible, implemented and evidenced at the next Scrutiny Panel;
- 4.7.2.2. At the following Scrutiny Session any Executive Officer whose statement was approved at the previous session will present a new statement as usual.
- 4.7.2.3. At the following Scrutiny Session any Executive Officer whose statement was rejected must address this in their new statement and evidence any improvement that has been made.
- 4.7.2.3.1. If the Scrutiny ~~Panel Session~~ is satisfied with the Executive Officer's ~~or Student Officer's~~ evidence, they ~~will approve the report. The Officer~~ will continue with no further action;
 - 4.7.2.3.2. If the Scrutiny ~~Panel Session~~ is not satisfied with the Executive Officer's ~~or Student Officer's~~ evidence ~~the matter will: they will issue a formal warning.~~
 - 4.7.2.3.2.1. Be sent to the Trustee Board; and/or
 - 4.7.2.3.2.2. Trigger a vote of no confidence in the Executive Officer.
- 4.7.2.4. ~~Following a formal warning the Executive Officer or Student Officer will be invited to a review meeting 4 weeks from the date of the Panel at which the warning was issued.~~
- 4.7.2.5. ~~The review Panel membership will be comprised of the same members of the Scrutiny Panel who issued the formal warning where possible. The outcomes of the review are as follows:~~
- 4.7.2.5.1. ~~If the Executive Officer or Student Officer evidences improvement in the 4 week time frame, the formal warning will remain in place for 3 months subject to their continual improvement.~~
 - 4.7.2.5.2. ~~Within this 3 month review period, if the Executive Officer or Student Officer is again found to not be completing their manifesto or job role sufficiently, the Scrutiny Panel can suggest the Officer:~~
 - 4.7.2.5.2.1. ~~Provides an apology to the membership;~~

- 4.7.2.5.2.2. Pay compensation for damage and/or cost;
- 4.7.2.5.2.3. Be excluded from any Union Venues, Services, Facilities and or Affiliated Nights;
- 4.7.2.5.2.4. Face permanent Expulsion or Temporary Suspension of Union Membership;
- 4.7.2.5.2.5. Be removed from post.
- 4.7.2.5.3. Outcomes are not exclusive to the list above; any other sanction taken is at the discretion of the Chair.
- 4.7.2.5.4. The Executive Officer or Student Officer has the right to appeal the outcome of the Scrutiny Panel in accordance with the appeals process.

4.8. ~~Vote of No Confidence~~

- 4.8.1. ~~Members can raise a vote of no confidence in the Executive Officers or the Student Officers.~~
 - 4.8.1.1. ~~To raise a vote of no confidence in an Executive Officer please refer to clause 34 of the Union's Articles.~~
 - 4.8.1.2. ~~To raise a vote of no confidence in a Student Officer, a secure petition of 50 signatures is to be submitted to the President.~~
- 4.8.2. ~~Upon receiving the petition the Union shall call an all Student meeting (Please refer to Standing Order 4, Section 7).~~
- 4.8.3. ~~The Executive Committee shall decide the necessity of an interim suspension on receipt of a secure petition.~~
- 4.8.4. ~~If a vote of no confidence is upheld at an all Student meeting, the Student Officer, will be removed with immediate effect.~~

4.8. ~~The Appointments Committee~~ **Trustee Recruitment**

- 4.8.1. The Union shall have both External and Student Trustees to sit on the Trustee Board and have oversight on how the Union operates.
- 4.8.2. External Trustees are recruited through the Finance and HR Committee which shall consist of at least 3 Trustees appointed by the Trustee Board, one of whom will be an Executive Officer and one of whom will be an External Trustee.
 - 4.8.2.1. Trustee members may be members of the Committee as long as they are members of the Board of Trustees and not members of the Audit and Risk Sub-Committee.
 - 4.8.2.2. The Chief Executive will be in attendance and other staff as required.
- 4.8.1. ~~The Appointments Committee shall include the following members and shall be convened by the President and the Chief Executive;~~
 - 4.8.1.1. ~~Chair of the Trustee Board~~
 - 4.8.1.2. ~~President~~
 - 4.8.1.3. ~~1 member of the Scrutiny Panel~~
 - 4.8.1.4. ~~Two other Trustees~~
 - 4.8.1.5. ~~Chief Executive (in an advisory capacity)~~
- 4.8.3. **Student Trustees are recruited and ratified at a Scrutiny Session.**
- 4.8.2. ~~The Appointments Committee will be responsible for advertising Trustee vacancies, reviewing applications and interviewing applicants for External and Student Trustee positions. The Committee will then put forward a recommendation for selected candidates to be ratified by the Trustee Board and the Scrutiny Panel.~~
- 4.8.4. All appointed External and Student Trustees are required to be aged 18 or over and be eligible to hold the position of Trustee in accordance with Charity Commission guidelines.

Rationale for the change

What are the pros and cons of the change? How will any cons be managed/mitigated?

This proposal updates the terminology following changing societies to Communities, and implements the new processes that were recommended by the Student Voice Review. Updating the title of the Standing Order from Elected Representatives to Union Democracy reflects the focus of this Standing Order on the democratic processes and meetings.

This Standing Order previously included a section on the Executive Officers which has been moved to the new Standing Order 5.

What consideration or consultation have you taken prior to submitting this proposal? *All proposals go the exec team to be confirmed, so having insufficient consultation/consideration could mean the proposal is rejected.*

The Student Voice was conducted over the previous academic year and spoke to over 1,300 students as part of the consultation process.

Have you considered any impact of the new proposal on any of the protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010? *What are the impacts and how will any negative impacts be managed/mitigated? For more information on the protected characteristics please see [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)*

Appendices *if necessary.*