# Clubs and Societies By Law

Any club or society shall be recognised by the Union provided:

* That seven LHSU members sign a standard registration form
* That the aims and objectives of the society are not in conflict with the constitution of the LHSU.
* That the proposed student group does not replicate the activities or objectives of an existing club/society.
* That the activities of the proposed student group can operate within the financial constraints of LHSU

The form shall be presented in to the Activities and Engagement Co-ordinator who will raise any issues of clarification about aims and objectives of the proposed society. Following this the proposed society form is sent for approval by the Vice President Sports and Activities. If the society is not formally approved then the Vice President Sports and Activities shall provide the reason for non-approval to the proposer in writing.

LHSU shall reserve the right to establish prospective groups on topics or activities that LHSU deem will be of interest to students and are in line with charitable and strategic objectives of LHSU. In these cases the prospective groups shall be discontinued if they are not formalised as student group within three months of original promotion.

If approved the Student Activities and Engagement Coordinator shall: arrange an induction meeting with the society President which shall cover

* finance procedures,
* the Students Union web site,
* data protection issues,
* health and safety procedures
* support the Students Union can offer

Only sporting teams that play in competitive leagues or tournaments e.g. BUCS shall be recognised as clubs. All recreational sporting groups will be constituted as societies.

A sporting society may apply to become a club upon a minimum of one year’s activity. The Activities and Engagement Co-ordinator shall present a list to the Students Union President for establishing clubs. Key criteria shall include:

* The level of student participation
* How well managed the club is
* Availability and cost of facilities

**Benefits of being a society**

Upon approval the club/society will be able to:

* Pay money into their Union accounts
* Apply for funding from the LHSU
* Access to support and training from the LHSU
* Book rooms within the university
* Have a dedicated page on LHSU web site and training on how to use it.
* Have a free stall at LHSU’s fresher’s and refreshers fairs.
* Access mediation services from the LHSU in the case of internal disputes within the club/society.
* Have dedicated staff support to assistant with society development
* Eligible to win a LHSU society award
* Be able to represent their society on university open days
* Committee members can have the hours they volunteer for the society accredited towards SALA (Service and Leadership) award or any other eligible volunteer accreditation system.

**Responsibilities**

As a minimum there should be three officers for the group these shall be:

* 1. **President,** who shall;
* Convene and chair Society meetings.
* Liaise with LHSU officers and staff on all Society issues
* Be responsible for ensuring compliance with all Union policies and regulations.
	1. **Treasurer,** who shall;
* Administer and keep a record of the finances of the Society.
* Be responsible for abiding by Union financial procedures.
	1. **Secretary,** who shall;
* Act as liaison between the Society Committee and Members.
* Be responsible for sending out Society communications
* Take minutes of all Society Committee Meetings, AGMs, and ordinary meetings

The officers of the society shall also be

* Authorised signatories to the account
* Administrators of the web page once they have undergone training

**Membership**

* Membership of the society shall be restricted to LHSU members.
* Only those who have formally signed up via the LHSU web site will be regarded as members.
* The period of membership shall run from 1st August to 31st July
* In order to access support from the LHSU all groups shall have a minimum of seven members
* Groups will be able to charge for membership. If a fee is charged a decision so do should be recorded at a formally convened meeting. All transactions must be conducted via the online membership system on the LHSU website.
* Clubs must set a minimum membership fee in line with the Athletic Union membership fee which will be determined at the start of the financial year.
* Non-payment of AU membership will be addressed in the operational guidance (AU Membership)
* The Students’ Union reserves the right to cap fees if they deem the fee to be so high that it is a barrier to participation.
* Students will be able to claim refunds on any membership fee in line with the operational guidance

**Governance**

All decisions shall be made at properly convened and properly recorded meeting. All members shall be given advance notice of any meetings.

The quorum for meetings shall be three members or 5% of the membership whichever is greater.

Minutes and notes of any meetings shall be kept by the secretary and be available on request to any society member or the Students’ Union.

External speakers for society meetings will only be permitted by completing of the external speakers request form in accordance with LHSU’s external speakers policy. The external speaker’s policy shall apply to all society meetings irrespective of venue

No group shall affiliate to or seek sponsorship from any external organisation without the prior approval of LHSU. Any contracts or Service Level Agreements must be referred to the LHSU for approval.

Officers for the forthcoming year should be elected in March or April by either

* A meeting at which the Activities and Engagement Co-ordinator or their nominee is present
* Via the elections platform on LHSU web site.

**Deactivation of Student Groups**

Those student groups who become inactive shall be subject to the deactivation and de registering operational guidance.

**Health and Safety**

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Before any activity is undertaken a standardised risk assessment form should be completed. The Students Union will provide guidance and support in the completion of the risk assessment.

If any activities are organised off site a copy of the venues personal liability insurance and forward this to the Students’ Union.

**Publicity**

All student groups are entitled to produce and distribute their own promotional material in so far as:

* The content of such material does not bring either LHSU or the university into disrepute
* That any material is not of a defamatory or discriminatory nature
* That the distribution of material complies with local university procedures on appropriate spaces for display of materials.

The Students Union shall provide guidance and support in the formatting and distribution of publicity material if required.

**Finance**

The Students’ Union will provide a comprehensive banking and finance function to all student groups. This includes but is not limited to:

Ability to order services and goods from external suppliers

Use of Student’s Union credit card to make purchases

Account balances for student groups will be made available on request

Minor petty cash advances can be made available for small purchases

Use of LHSU on line accounts (e.g. Train line.)

No society shall have a separate bank account from the LHSU. The presence of such an account can result in activities being frozen and the activity de-ratified.

All Student Group requests for expenditure should be made by completing a Payment Voucher These should include all receipts and or invoices and be signed by 2 officials (e.g. President, Vice President or Treasurer) of the Student Group.

Under no circumstances will cash amounts greater than £10 be paid to Student Groups in relation to expenditure incurred. As an example this includes payments for sports coaches, deposits for event hire or room bookings. Payment for such items will be made by direct bank transfer as detailed above based upon a valid submission of an authorised invoice(s) and receipts where applicable.

Society memberships are available via the LHSU website. Membership money for each Student Group is posted to an Own Income Account on the bespoke Cashbook facility.

Any affiliated student group can bid for funding through the Forum system.  The application form can be found on the LHSU website and must be submitted electronically. These applications are approved by the Student Union President. Notifications of whether applications are successful or not are provided to the Union Office so a credit can be placed on the Student Groups Own Income Account where successful.

 A new Student Group can be set up at any time on completion of the relevant documentation from the LHSU website. This is processed by the Union Office once the Student Union President has approved it so that the Student Group can be set up on the Cashbook.

All Student Group payments will be chargeable to their Own Income Account.

 Balance and details of group transactions can be requested at any time by authorised officers of the group. The Students Union will respond within five working days to such requests.

All expenditure must be for activities that benefit the entire membership of the group. In no circumstance can money be spent on activities not relevant to the aims of the group. For further guidance please contact the Students Union office.

Money raised by either fundraising, forum funding allocation or external sponsorship can only be spent on the items or activities it was originally advertised for. Student groups will not be allowed to substitute items/activities afterwards

Any member deemed to have breached financial procedures outlined may be liable for any monies owed, potential criminal prosecution or disciplinary actions deemed necessary by LHSU.

Any queries relating to student group finance should be direct either sufiance@hope.ac.uk or union@hope.ac.uk

Appendix 1

Athletic Union Membership Operational Guidance

All students who play in competitive teams or represent LHSU in competitive individual sports are required to become Athletic Union members.

AU membership will confer the following rights

* Access to two hours training time per week during the season.
* Free travel to away games (up to spending cap determined at the start of the academic year )
* Dedicated staff support from the LHSU
* Personal accident Insurance paid by LHSU
* Affiliation to National governing bodies and payment of individual player registration
* Facility hire for competitive matches

Sanctions for non-payment

All memberships must be bought before any competitive games are played

Sanctions for non-payment shall be on the following sliding scale

Any non-payment within the team two weeks after first competitive match

* Withdraw of training facilities
* If after a further two weeks memberships still outstanding the then LHSU shall not book nor fund away travel
* The ultimate sanction for non-payment (implemented after a further two weeks of noncompliance) shall be the withdrawal of teams from the league for the season.

The level of cooperation of clubs with the process shall determine if they are formally entered into leagues for subsequent seasons.

Refunds or part payment will only be considered on the following basis:

If the AU member ceases to be a student part way through the season

If the AU member incurs an injury which prevents them playing sport for a significant time.

Part payment will only be considered where the AU member is not a hope student for the full year, e.g. January International student starters.

If a pro rata refund can be applied for this will be calculated on a monthly basis.

Appendix 2

**Operational guidance on De activation and De Registering of Student Groups**

At the end of each term the Activities and Engagement Co-ordinator shall conduct an audit of all clubs and societies to establish level of activity. This will consist of evidence of regular activity (meetings, events, sporting competitions.). This will involve direct contact with clubs and societies, social media searches and in the case of academic societies contact with course reps.

If there can be no evidence found of any activity for a full academic year the Activities and Engagement Co-ordinator shall recommend that the club/society be deactivated. The club/society will be deactivated on the web site but not removed from the formal list and funds shall remain in the budget heading. The exceptions to this shall be

1. if the Club/ Society is linked to a national organisation
2. The society is a university academic department society

In these cases such a club/society shall be listed as active. In all of these cases the Activities and Engagement Coordinator shall be the point of contact

If there is no evidence of club/society after three years then the Activities and Engagement co-ordinator shall recommend that the club/society be deregistered. Students will need to formally set up the club/society again if there is interest in the future. The club and society will be deleted from the web site. Where there are funds which originate from Students Union grants these monies shall be transferred in to participation development funds (for either clubs or societies). This shall be used to fund projects to increase student engagement and a start-up grant for new student groups.

Appendix 3

Student Group Refund Process Operational Guidance

To claim a refund for any membership fees, a student must contact the Students’ Union with reason for refund:

If membership bought Within 30 days of purchase then automatic refund will be generated

If the membership was bought after the 30 day cut off period the request (with supporting reasons) will be referred to student group for a decision.

If the student group fails to respond to the request within 14 days then the decision shall be referred to the SU Executive for final decision.

In all cases all refunds must be processed within the financial year.