Ethics and Environmental Policy

Introduction

The Students’ Union Royal Holloway, University of London (from herein “SURHUL”) recognises the need to promote and respond to local, national and international ethical and environmental issues. SURHUL aims to uphold national standards with regards to these issues, and hopes to contravene any negative environmental impact we may have against any of our stakeholders.

As an organisation responsible for representing all of its members, SURHUL aims to promote the benefits of ethical and environmental responsibility. These aims can be achieved throughout the organisation through its own responsible running and upkeep of all operations and within its buildings and venues. SURHUL also needs to take an active role in the promotion of good values to encourage a broad participation across its membership for an enhanced ethical and environmental understanding throughout the organisation. SURHUL has a responsibility to develop its members and hopes that a better ethical and environmental viewpoint will carry on through with our members into their future behaviour and opinions on such issues.

This Policy aims to reflect the beliefs of SURHUL as well as outline procedures recognising SURHUL’s actions towards a more environmentally and ethically responsible organisation.

1. Operations

SURHUL believes that within its operations it can make a difference across the board to improve its ethical and environmental standing. Ethical and environmental responsibilities will be inherent across the entire organisation.

- **1.1 Campaigns**
  SURHUL understands that to promote awareness of ethical and environmental issues it needs to establish a number of campaigns to highlight the importance of these issues to its membership. *(see Point 2 for more information on Ethical and Environmental Campaign Work).*
  All campaigns should make an effort to be more creative in their marketing and should seek ensure that all materials are ethically and environmentally sourced.
    - **1.1.2 Elections**
      Elections, as a large scale campaign, should adhere to ethical and environmental issues by implementing the Reduction in Paper Usage Policy, as well as ensuring all campaign materials are ethically and environmentally sourced.

      Recycling points should be provided in areas where campaign fliers may be mass distributed (including but not limited to public areas, with a large footfall) to ensure that materials can be disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner.

      **NB** *It should be suggested to candidates to reuse those materials.*

- **1.2 Commercial Services**
  The Commercial Services department at SURHUL recognises the organisations efforts to be ethically and environmentally friendly and should endeavour to be responsible in its operations from purchasing to storage, upkeep of the environment to waste. The Commercial Services department supports the Green Impact accreditation scheme and provides a large amount of
input into this area through its operations throughout the year (e.g. recycling is in place throughout the department). New technology and equipment bought should be ethically sourced and environmentally responsible where available. The Ethics and Environment Officer sits on the Entertainments Committee to provide guidance and monitor future Entertainments initiatives.

- **1.3 Communications**

SURHUL should seek to look into alternative ways to communicate with its members, reducing paper usage and wasteful communication methods. SURHUL realises the importance of online resources and aims to provide an effective website, and effective use of social networking websites. Poster boards should be maintained and kept tidy in order to reduce unnecessary excess printing for replacement posters. SURHUL should endeavour to be creative in its communications through initiating a sustainable approach to further communications provisions.

  - **1.3.1 Printing**

Printing practices throughout the organisation will adhere to ethical and environmental responsibility. This includes any printing from individual usage, to marketing resources and publication printing.

- **1.4 Energy and Resources**

SURHUL will be committed to responsible activities with regards to energy usage throughout all operations. SURHUL will aim to ensure that all equipment will be turned off when not in use, including lights, computers and television screens. Heating usage will be monitored through College until an alternative in house heating billing procedure is achieved. SURHUL will seek out alternative renewable sources of energy and will adopt them where feasible.

  - **1.4.1 Non-Residential Bus Service**

The Non-Residential Bus Service will have its usage monitored and SURHUL will seek environmentally responsible provisions within the service where and when necessary. Currently SURHUL monitors mileage and usage of the buses.

- **1.5 Ethical Purchase/Investment Choices**

SURHUL aims to not purchase from, deal with or invest in any organisations associated with the following:

  - Unnecessary environmental destructions
  - Unnecessary exploitation of animals
  - Trade with oppressive regimes
  - Weapons manufacture
  - Exploitation of Peripheral States
  - Exploitation of people (EG sweat shops)
  - Offensive advertising

SURHUL aims to also consider ethically sourcing when purchasing items of clothing and items that may be purchased within Bars and Catering.

- **1.6 Recycling**

SURHUL will be committed to reduce waste generated daily throughout the organisation. Recycling points are available throughout all venues, and staff are encouraged to recycle individual use waste. SURHUL aims to consider the slogan “Reduce, Reuse then Recycle” during the waste reduction process. Non-recyclable materials will be limited, and as and when new recycled/recyclable materials and technologies become available, SURHUL will opt for those which improve the provisions already in place. Electronic equipment including, but not limited to, old computers, phones, toner and ink cartridges will be recycled when necessary. SURHUL also aims to support College to support recycling in Halls and Academic buildings.

  - **1.6.1 Plastic bags**
SURHUL will do its utmost to not use plastic carrier bags, particularly in large scale events such as the sports and societies fayre or when giving 'goody bags' to students in halls. If the use of plastic carrier bags is unavoidable, every effort should be made to ensure that they are recycled afterwards.

- **1.7 Staffing**
  SURHUL will endeavour to encourage environmental and ethical behaviour within the role of all permanent staff and try - when possible - to include it in the job description of staff, particularly senior managers.

- **1.8 Legislation**
  SURHUL will strive to comply with environmental legislation.

### 2. Ethical and Environmental Campaign Work

SURHUL aims to support and encourage ethical and environmental responsibility throughout the organisation, the institution, its membership and the wider world. Through campaigning on small scale local initiatives, to supporting the NUS and other external supporters on nationwide campaigns, SURHUL maintains an understanding to sponsor campaigns that look to a better future in this respect. With the support of the Campaigns Officer, the Vice President (Communications and Campaigns) and the Communications Officer campaigns should take place to improve awareness and lobby for better ethical and environmental standards across the board.

At a time where funding for Higher Education is uncertain and sparse, it is important that SURHUL acts to ensure that the University is funded ethically. SURHUL will take a principled stance that the education of our members should not be funded by the likes of war or environmental destruction. As such SURHUL will campaign against Royal Holloway investing in, purchasing from or dealing with any organisations associated with:

- Unnecessary environmental destructions
- Unnecessary exploitation of animals
- Trade with oppressive regimes
- Weapons manufacture
- Exploitation of Peripheral States
- Offensive advertising
- Exploitation of people (EG sweat shops)
- Tax Evasion or Avoidance

### 3. College Support

SURHUL will work alongside the institution to promote better ethical and environmental standards to all stakeholders. The Vice President (Communications and Campaigns) and the Ethics and Environment Officer will work with the Sustainability Officer at RHUL to ensure all new projects and initiatives within the college are ethically and environmentally responsible and will seek to campaign and lobby alongside the institution for improved services and facilities. All ethical and environmental campaigning initiatives should have sought support and informed advice from the Sustainability Officer.

### 4. Accreditation

SURHUL should be working to national standards of ethical and environmental responsibility and so should seek accreditation from various external supporters. Accreditation encourages best practice
across Students’ Unions and organisations nationally, providing SURHUL with current levels of performance to match then surpass.

- **4.1 Green Impact**

SURHUL currently takes part in the NUS accreditation scheme, Green Impact, which provides a work plan for Students’ Unions nationally. SURHUL should continue to take part in the scheme and the Vice President (Communications and Campaigns) and the Ethics and Environment Officer should act as the project managers, with the support of various staff members taking part in providing information to complete the workbook. The General Manager will act as the project champion with Sound Impact (and subsequently any further accreditation schemes of this nature that SURHUL aims to take part in).

SURHUL should also try, when possible, to enter additional ‘special awards’ as part of Green Impact, such as the Epona Ethical Procurement Award, The Co-Operative International Development Award, HEA Education for Sustainable Development Award, Resurgence & Ecologist Communications Challenge Award.

**5. Further Action**

SURHUL should continue to further develop its practice and responsibilities with regards to this area, both through campaigning and strategic management of further initiatives. In any new projects or provision development SURHUL should ensure ethical and environmental responsibility is part of any decision making, and those championing the cause should be involved in all decisions of this type.