

## **Byelaw I: Student Communities**

### 1. Purpose

This Byelaw has been established to provide further details regarding the operation of Student Communities, under Article 21 of the Constitution.

### 2. Definition

Student Communities are autonomous bodies that are responsible for working with the Union to secure the general interests and collective rights of the students that define into the relevant group. There will be two categories of Communities, one for Inclusion based Communities and one for Academic based Communities.

They will also coordinate activities, events and campaigns relevant to that agenda, which may include supporting and working across different Student Groups.

The Inclusion Communities are as follows:

- I. Women Students
- II. LGBT+ Students
- III. Disabled Students
- IV. Black & Global Majority Students
- V. International Students
- VI. Students of Faith
- VII. Mature, Parent and Carer Students

The Academic Communities are as follows:

- I. Postgraduate Research Students
- II. Postgraduate Taught Students
- III. Commuting Students

The Officer Group will consider further applications and make recommendations to the Board for further groups as required.

### 3. Membership

Inclusion based communities:

Only those Student Members that self-define as being a part of that group shall be entitled to participate in the formal governance of the inclusion-based Communities. Supporters and other interested students are free to participate in activities and events, but not vote or hold leadership roles.

Students will automatically have the right to be a member of the Student Community they define into upon registration with the union but will be asked to opt in via a website hub promoted during the first weeks of term.

Students will be able to opt in at any point.

Membership of each Community will be free.

Academic based Communities:

Only those student members that are enrolled in the relevant academic department or mode of study shall be entitled to participate in the formal governance of the Academic based Communities. Supporters and other interested students are free to participate in activities and events, but not vote or hold leadership roles.

Students will automatically have the right to be a member of the Community they fit into upon registration with the union, but they can opt in at any point.

Any membership fees of each Community will be set by the community themselves.

#### 4. Leadership

The leadership of each Student Community will be determined by an online election of those who have opted in and hold full membership in the relevant community.

The elected leadership role for each Student Community will be known as a Community Officer. This will normally be held by one individual, but the communities have the autonomy to add as they see fit, they can also use job shares if appropriate.

#### 5. Associated Student Groups

Student groups who wish to become associated with a Community will be free to do so. This should be done by a vote of the entire membership of each group.

The WCD Executive will have the power to approve Associated Status but must provide a rationale for why an application is rejected, which is subject to appeal by the Officer Group.

#### 6. Community Councils

Both the International Students and Students of Faith Communities will have a council, chaired by the respective Community Officer.

The councils would be made up of an opt-in membership by relevant student groups as deemed appropriate by the community in question.

#### 7. Funding of Student Communities

The WCD Executive oversee the process for Student Communities to access funding and set priorities for distribution.

The WCD Executive will be the principal body to distribute this funding, although it will be required to consider input from the professional staff team of the Union.

#### 8. Amendments

This Byelaw may be amended where Student Communities choose to operate in a different manner. Such approval by the Board shall not be unreasonably withheld, to ensure the autonomous operation of each Community.