

Passed 24 Nov 11

### **Focus Societies**

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### **Union Notes:**

1. Focus Sport was set up last year and has been a success
2. Feedback from presidents meetings in January 2011 suggested that societies would benefit hugely from better opportunities to plan their activities in a structured way and that opportunities to advertise their activities would be hugely beneficial
3. Societies Council has recommended this policy to Union Council

### **Union Believes:**

1. That Societies should have access to the same sort of programmes as Sports Clubs
2. That the Union should provide opportunities for societies that want to develop provision for their members
3. That programmes such as focus societies create a great deal of opportunities to learn employable skills for the committees and members of societies that participate

### **Union Resolves:**

1. To adopt and implement the attached focus societies programme as prepared by the Finance Officer and societies council
2. To allocate £500 to create the small pot of funding for focus societies to access.
3. To maintain the baseline of funding for all clubs and societies

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### **Focus Societies**

Focus Societies is a programme designed to encourage development of our societies through planning, volunteering, engagement with the community and widening access to the Union's membership.

This gives societies who manage to achieve all the prerequisites of „focus societies“ access to a number of benefits, including a small fund which can be accessed through the Union's management committee.

The Union recognises that societies are incredibly different from each other. In this respect we have tried to make the goals and the rewards relatively fluid, to be dealt with by the clubs and societies team in Union House, with the intention of best benefitting the societies that achieve focus societies.

The requirements of Focus Societies for any society are:

1. A full inventory of what the society has available to it
2. Complete attendance at Union meetings when requested
3. Detailed committee role and responsibility descriptions
4. A three year plan of where the society is going
5. A set of targets over the three year period, including membership numbers, volunteering hours achieved by the Society and other measures that are relevant to the society in question
6. An action plan to increase volunteering and community engagement, either as part of the year's action plan or distinct
7. Fundraising plan- what the society will expect to get from subs/other fundraising/union grants

The Union undertakes to provide some of the following where appropriate in return:

1. Access to a focus societies grant pot of £500
2. Workshops with members of Union staff to help on relevant issues- for example an afternoon talking about organisation and strategy with the Chief Executive, or an afternoon designing branding for the society with marketing staff.
3. Priority for fundraising research and support from the fundraising and volunteers co-ordinator
4. Advertising space in union publications etc.
5. Dedicated space for focus societies on the balcony in Union House
6. Access to additional bookable space in the form of the Union House Boardroom, booked through the Finance Officer, and a commitment from the Union to helping develop access to bookable space

All decisions relating to focus societies will be taken by the management committee or the recommendation of the Finance Officer, The Membership Services Manager and at least one other student officer.

Focus Society as a badge, and the rewards that go with it can be removed at any time if the society does not uphold its end of the bargain.