



# Clubs, Societies and Peer Support Groups

Handbook 2009/10



# Introduction

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## Welcome!

Clubs, societies and peer support groups make up one of the best parts of student life. The Union of UEA Students has funded these student groups for as long as anyone can remember, and because we're led by the same students who enjoy the activities you all offer, it's unlikely that's ever going to change.

Through clubs, societies and peer support groups you can learn new skills and develop existing ones. You can also meet some great people!

Getting involved in the organisational side of a club, society or peer support group can be even more rewarding and is a great service to your fellow students. So whether you've been left in charge of an existing group, or you want to set up a new one, read on and find out more.

The Union of UEA Students is here to help you achieve your goals. If you have any questions or comments about clubs, societies or peer support groups, please feel free to contact us.

Yours in unity,

**Martin Jopp**  
Finance Officer 2009/10  
Union of UEA Students

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# Setting up a club or society

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If you're taking over a club, society or peer support group that already exists, then you can skip this bit, as your predecessors have already fulfilled the necessary requirements. However, if you're thinking of setting up a new club, society or peer support group, then read on – this bit's for you.

First, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- 1. Does a club, society or peer support group exist that already does what I plan to do?**  
The Union of UEA Students can't have more than one club, society or peer support group that has the same objectives. This is our policy to prevent certain clubs, societies or peer support groups being forced out of existence because another similar group has recruited their members. It also ensures we don't waste our resources.
- 2. Are the aims of my club/society compatible with Union policy?**  
We ask you to make sure that the aims of your club, society or peer support group do not conflict with Union policy, as decided by a policy ballot, by Union Council, or by the Executive.
- 3. Are you able to recruit enough members who are happy to pay your subscription fee to operate?**  
We require you to have at least 20 members to be a society and at least 30 members to be a club. This is to make sure that we don't end up putting resources into a project that doesn't benefit many students.
- 4. Is it possible to find facilities at a reasonable cost?**  
Depending upon the club, society or peer support group the Union may be able to provide facilities either in-house or at the Sportspark. If not, alternative facilities will need to be sought and the cost implications considered by the Union.

If all of these answers to these questions point to you being a reasonable club, society or peer support group, then the next task is to write a constitution (available from the Finance Office). Most of it is already written, we merely require you to fill in a few specific details about your proposed group. Once you return it this will then be submitted to Union Council to be ratified.

With enough paid members and a ratified constitution and you will officially be a club, society or peer support group!

# Getting started

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So now that your club, society or peer support group exists, how do you get it up and running? People taking over a current club, society or peer support group must read this bit, as well as those who are creating new groups.

Clubs, societies and peer support groups need to complete the following requirements each year in order to be active:

## 1. Members

Every society must have at least 20 members and every club must have at least 30 members.

A committee member must collect the member's full name, school, year, campus card number (available on the back of a campus card, on the right just below the magnetic strip – if there's no number there then tell them to scan their card at the library). The committee member must also collect a subscription fee from the new member – the minimum fee for societies to charge is £3, and the minimum for clubs is £5. This money remains in the club/society's account for their own expenses, and therefore clubs and societies may choose to charge more than the minimum if they wish.

NOTE: Some clubs/societies find it difficult finding 20/30 members to begin with. The main way most recruit is through SocMart and SportsMart. These are held at the beginning of each semester in the LCR and the Sportspark, where clubs and societies are invited to set up stalls. You can also recruit members at any time in the year with a stall in the Hive or the Square, or with a good publicity campaign. For more information on how to recruit, contact the Sports Officer or Societies Officer.

## 2. SocWeb

Members must be recorded on SocWeb as soon as they've joined. This will mean that you always have an up-to-date record of who is a member of your club, society or peer support group and also allows the Finance Office staff to confirm to students whether they are members of your club or society.

SocWeb allows you to send messages to you members' UEA email account and allows students to contact committee members.

## 3. Committee

Every club, society and peer support group must be run by a committee of at least five members. There must be one President, one Treasurer and one Secretary. These three are responsible to the Union for all of the group's expenditure and are the signatories.

Preferably you should also have a Union Council rep which can be any of the committee or be a post in itself. Other committee posts may be chosen relative to your objects. For example, a sports club may have a fixtures secretary, whereas some societies may benefit more from a

webmaster. All of your committee must be elected by your members. Elections may be as simple as a show of hands, but we do ask that meetings where elections are to take place are publicised as such at least five days in advance in order for as many members to attend as possible. A meeting can only make decisions if 1/4 of the membership attends. Election shall be by simple majority voting. More details of these procedures can be found in your constitution.

#### **4. Committee Information Booklets**

Subsequent to the committee elections, which ideally will be held every March, the committee must hand in a completed and signed copy of the Committee Information Booklet (available from the Finance Office) to Rosemary in the Finance Office.

This booklet also contains disclaimers that you must sign which protect the Union's legal status, reputation and finances.

Like any organisation, we expect you to take responsibility for your own actions, but the Union of UEA Students ultimately is responsible for the actions of its subsidiary groups. Therefore, by way of precaution, we ask every club, society and peer support group to sign a Publicity Disclaimer, a Finance Disclaimer, an Inappropriate Behaviour Disclaimer and an Interests Disclaimer. These then put the responsibility on the committee of the club, society or peer support group for ensuring they follow the Union's regulations.

All of the above forms can be collected from the Finance Office and only when they are completed and submitted does the club, society or peer support group become active.

# Membership

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OK, so your Constitution exists, you've got the members and you've completed the paperwork. You can get on with running your club/society. A few things to think about:

## 1. Equal Opportunities

The Union of UEA Students asks that all club, society and peer support group officials run their events in a way that is non-discriminatory. Every student must have an equal opportunity to participate in all Union activities, and although this seems obvious, it's sometimes hard to be inclusive of everyone when we're all so different.

It's not always easy to know if you are excluding people or even how you might be excluding them. You can include or exclude people by the way you communicate, in meetings, in the kind of social events you run, through your publicity, recruitment, and – less tangibly – by the culture of your club, society or peer support group.

Steps you could make to be more inclusive could include:

- Using a range of ways to communicate to your members e.g. e-mail, Facebook, newsletters, posters etc.
- Having some social events which don't include drinking alcohol, and always providing a non-alcoholic option.
- Having a meeting on Wednesday afternoons when students shouldn't have classes, and when students with caring responsibilities have day care arrangements.
- Publicise in all areas, including Mary Chapman Court.

By thinking along these lines, you're helping to make UEA the diverse community it is, and also fulfilling your part of the deal with the Union.

## 2. Members rights

When you sign the constitution acceptance form (in the Committee Information Booklet), you agree to play by the rules therein. Read it if you're unsure about your members rights. If any member disagrees with the way a committee is running a club, society or peer support group, then they can present a petition signed by at least a quarter of the members to the committee. The petition must request a meeting, which must be held within five days. If at least half the members present and voting at a meeting vote for a motion of resignation then all or any of the committee members shall resign. It sounds harsh, but it very rarely happens. However, it's important that the committee agree to these terms. For more information on this, see your constitution (held in the Finance Office).

## 3. Who can be a member?

Any student registered at the UEA may become a member of any club, society or peer support group as long as they are prepared to pay the subscription fee for that group. The committee has no power to refuse a member but if a member is causing problems the Union's Management Committee can exclude members on the committee's behalf.

Non-UEA students may not become club/society members unless:

- They become an Associate Member.

This is an annual membership open to any person with a particular ability or resource that is particularly useful to your club, society or peer support group. Associate Membership must be agreed by the Union's Executive.

- They become a Life Member.

Life members are ex-UEA students who have paid the life-membership fee. Proof is required that they are an ex-UEA student. Life membership costs £10, which can be paid to Jacki (along the corridor from the Finance Office).

You can then join the club or society as normal but still have to pay the joining fee.

For associate and life membership forms see the clubs and societies administrator, Jacki.

# Finance

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In return for sticking to the rules the Union lays out, clubs, societies and peer support groups can benefit from many advantages offered by the Union. One of the areas where the Union plays a big role is in the finances of your group.

Your Treasurer should liaise with the Finance Officer on the matter of your finances. Your Treasurer is responsible for the transfer of money in and out of your accounts, being up to date with the current and past funds, reporting regularly to the committee on the state of the finances and presenting an annual report to the members. However, the whole committee should read what's below.

Every club, society and peer support group has two accounts which must be held with the Union. A subscriptions account and a grant account.

External bank accounts are prohibited.

## 1. The Subs Account

All the money that you make as a club, society or peer support group should be paid into the Finance Office. This money will then be put into your subs account. The biggest income you're likely to generate is at SocMart/SportsMart when you recruit members and charge them a subscriptions fee, but also any money you make at social events or by fund-raising will also be paid into your subs account. Cash or cheques can be paid in, but note that cheques must be made payable to 'The Union of UEA Students' and your club, society or peer support group's name must be on the back of the cheque.

Expenditure can be made from your subs account on anything the committee deems to be of a benefit to the members, providing it is within the objects of their constitution. However, receipts must be provided for all expenditure.

## 2. The Grant Account

This is slightly more complex. This is the money the Union grants to each club, society and peer support group to help them perform their objectives, as laid out in their constitution. Club, society and peer support group treasurers should apply for a grant over SocWeb (<https://www.socweb.org.uk>). Applications are usually agreed by outgoing and incoming committees at the end of the academic year. If this doesn't happen or other items are needed, you can apply at any time during the year but submitting forms in the summer term before the Union's budgets are set is a better bet to getting your application approved.

To help you complete it, the grant form is in categories. They are:

- Stationery: For printing of internal newsletters, publicity and photocopying, and letters etc. Usually a £50 maximum.
- Speakers: Travelling expenses to a maximum of £50 per person will be paid for outside speakers to come to the University. Usually a £150 maximum.

- DVDs/CDs/Books: For the purchase and hire of any DVDs/CDs/Books relevant to your club/society. Please bear in mind the Union's limited storage facilities before applying for a library's worth of books!
- Conferences: For either one delegate to go to two conferences, or two delegates to go to one conference. Travel costs will be covered, as well as registration and accommodation if necessary. There must be a demonstrable benefit to the members of the club/society in order for this to be approved.
- Subscriptions and Affiliations: For affiliating to external organisations which can provide relevant information and support. Again, there must be a demonstrable benefit to the members for this to be approved. Affiliation fees to national governing bodies shall become the responsibility of the Union to be paid over the course of the year. If you're a sports club, you shouldn't apply for this through this method, but should talk to Ian Welch who will sort this out for you.
- Training: Coaching and training for sports clubs will be paid for by the Sports Association through Ian Welch and it is therefore not necessary to apply for this over SocWeb. Societies and peer support groups may apply for small amounts of funding for training and this is what this section should be used for.
- Equipment: Essential equipment, whether new or replacement, can be paid for by the Union. However, it must be kept on the inventory and produced at the request of the Finance Officer for inspection. Items worth over £100 and with an expected life of over four years must be applied for as 'Capital Expenditure'. This becomes part of our capital expenditure, and should definitely be applied for before the start of a new academic year, so that it can be budgeted for.
- Miscellaneous: Anything else, which should be specifically listed.

### **3. The 75% Rule**

Your club, society or peer support group should complete the grant application on this basis over SocWeb. Once your annual grant has been approved, 75% of the money will be transferred into your grant account. The remaining 25% will be allocated in January, subject to a review of your expenditure so far. Clubs, societies and peer support groups that have not spent half of their original 75% are unlikely to be allocated the remainder, unless they explain why they still need it to the Finance Officer. You will be given a chance to explain why you need it in December/January when the Finance Officer contacts you.

This rule is to prevent money sitting unused in accounts when it could be allocated to clubs, societies or peer support groups that would use it.

#### **4. Expenditure**

To spend money from either the subs account or the grant account, the relevant form must be collected from the Finance Office, Subscriptions Request Form (blue) or a Grant Request Form (green). These must then be signed by your President, Treasurer, and Secretary, and handed in along with receipts to prove the purchase to the Finance Office. The Finance Office will check the signatures, and reimburse the money in either cash (anything under £50) or a cheque (anything over £50).

#### **5. Buying Items Over £50**

If you want to spend more than £50 on an item, don't do so until you have informed the Finance Office. Take the relevant authorised finance request to the Finance Office, and an order form will be supplied. Take this to the supplier, who will then invoice the Union for the goods. If you don't you could be fined 10% of the total cost by the Finance Officer for breaking our regulations. Purchase order forms are also required when you buy any goods that cost more than £50.

#### **6. Photocopying**

Photocopying made at the Union's facilities will be deducted automatically from your account at the end of the year. Also, clubs, societies and peer support groups that use headed paper must ensure that 'nothing in this letter constitutes an official order' is clearly visible at the bottom of the page.

#### **7. Account Statements**

These are available from the Finance Office with one days notice. The Finance Office is open Monday-Friday 11am-3.30pm (2.30pm outside term-time). This year we will be trialling sending your Treasurer a weekly statement to their email account. If you would like to opt out of this service, just contact the Finance Office.

## Tips for filling in your grant form

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It can be a bit of a nightmare when it's the end of term and you've got a stupid amount of work to do. The last thing you need is the Finance Officer chasing you to fill in a confusing form over the internet. Here's some advice on filling in your SocWeb grant application and getting what you want from it.

The considerations for allocating grant money are:

- Is it legal?
- Is it fair?
- Is it within the objectives laid out in the club/society constitution?
- What have they needed in the past?
- How many members does the club, society or peer support group serve?

Please only put down what you need. It's tempting to request more in case you don't get as much as you want or to put down money in case you do something. This isn't the best way to get allocated more money because it will detract away from what you really want to do.

Don't fill in sections of the form for the sake of it. Not all sections of the form apply to everyone as it is designed for a variety of clubs and societies. For example, the speakers section usually applies to societies more than clubs. Only fill in a section if there's something specific you want from it.

Affiliations and Conferences - Please provide additional information for affiliations and conferences, as there are very specific rules regarding funding for affiliations and conferences.

Inventory - If the Finance Officer knows what the club/society presently has then it is easier to see what it requires, so you're more likely to get it.

# Sponsorship

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Many clubs and societies seek sponsorship from local businesses as it can be a good way of generating more funds. However there are a few areas to consider.

## **Your Primary Sponsor is the Union**

You are part of the union – the money it has is your money, and vice-versa. Money that the union has is spent on a variety of things like clubs/societies, representation, advice, campaigns etc. So approaching companies that compete with the union for business (like pubs or night-clubs) is self defeating. If the Union loses revenue, you lose funding. Therefore you cannot get sponsorship from any company that competes with the Union (nightclubs, food shops etc.)

## **Who are you approaching?**

The supreme decision making body of the Union is Union Council which decides on policy. As Union clubs/societies have to stick to policy that applies to you. For example, we currently have a boycott of a variety of unethical companies that you can't get sponsorship from. Check the list of these companies from the Finance Office.

We are an ethical bunch here and it's worth checking out how ethical your potential sponsor is. You will be promoting your sponsor – ask yourself whether promoting this company gives a positive impression of you and the Union?

## **Help is at Hand!**

The Union employs an Advertising Salesperson, Jean Wills, who can help you to find willing local sponsors who could pay considerable sums of money to get their name out to your members. Her email address is [jean.wills@ueastudent.com](mailto:jean.wills@ueastudent.com). Please contact her if you want to know more.

# Clothing

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Many clubs, societies and peer support groups decide to get branded clothing made for their members to purchase. It can be a great way of getting your group out there to prospective members, and helps people to feel like they are a real part of your club, society or peer support group.

We can order you such clothing through the Union Post Office, or help you to get a good deal with a local print firm through the Finance Office.

If you're going to do this there are a few things to bear in mind.

## **1. Use of UEA logo and Crest**

All use of the UEA Logo is required to follow the UEA logo guidelines. These can be found at

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/mac/comm/publicationsoffice/Logos>

The University of East Anglia will allow the university crest to be used solely on the official University of East Anglia Sports Clothing.

For more information about how this affects your club, society or peer support group visit Ian Welch (clubs) or the Finance Office (societies and peer support groups).

## **2. Committee Freebies**

Members of the committee are not allowed to give themselves free branded clothing if they are charging members for it. Although you may put more time and more effort into your club, society or peer support group than anyone else, that doesn't entitle you to give yourself a present at your members' expense.

# The law

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Obviously, apart from the Union rules governing what you can and can't do, there's also a few other laws you need to watch out for. Although for most clubs, societies and peer support groups these won't ever be a problem (fingers crossed!), you still need to know them.

## 1. **Ultra Vires**

This Latin phrase is a legal term for 'beyond the powers of', which means that all the money entrusted to your club, society or peer support group must be spent solely for the benefit of that group's members, in line with what you exist for according to your constitution. That includes both the subs account and the grant account. This means that you can't make any donations to other organisations, unless money is specifically collected for those organisations, or you are getting something in return which is for the benefit of your members in line with your constitution.

If you want to raise money for a charity, make sure that you make it very clear that what you are doing is for a charity, and do not use any of your resources to do so. You cannot, for example, use a grant given to you by the Union to run an expensive event, and then give the ticket money to a different charity. When you have raised money for charity, make sure the money is paid into the Finance Office and make it clear that it is not going into your subs account but a charities account, so it does not enter the Union accounts at all. A cheque will then be issued for the total paid in (having taken out any costs of setting up the event).

## 2). **Party-Political Activity**

At UEA we have many political and campaigning societies. However, since the Education Act of 1994, students' unions are not allowed to spend money promoting party-political activity, or any political activity that doesn't benefit students as students.

However, this doesn't stop us funding political groups in other ways, so long as what is funded is solely for the purposes of educating students at UEA and encouraging political debate on campus. So if you've been left in charge of a political society, or are looking to set one up, don't despair. The Union's political societies are very often the most active.

If you need more information on the 1994 Education Act, do drop by to see the Finance Officer.

# Communication

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Every successful club and society must have mastered good communication. Communication is vital between committee members, between the committee and the members, and with the student body as a whole.

## 1. Communicating with your committee

This really is the starting point. Nobody ever successfully runs a club, society or peer support group without help from his/her committee. Or at least, if they do, it's likely to be a fulltime job, and we all have studying to do! Here are some hints as to how to communicate with your committee:

- Make sure they all have clearly defined roles which are important, and have some responsibility.
- Try to maintain a relaxed but professional manner in your dealings.
- Make sure all the committee have a committee list with all the phone numbers and email addresses on it.
- Delegate small tasks to them. Don't over-load them with things to do, but make sure they all have some responsibilities.
- Make sure a certain number agree to turn up to certain socials.
- Make sure everything you print and produce is seen by most of the committee.
- Have regular meetings to keep each other up to date.

## 2. Communicating with your membership

This is the cornerstone of every successful club, society and peer support group. Don't forget that your members have a right to know what you're doing, and what you're spending their money on. Here are a few ideas on how to keep your membership in touch:

- Send out regular e-mails over SocWeb. Emailing updates whether an event is imminent or not lets members know that you are still doing your job.
- Send out newsletters to their pigeon-holes. Having a hard copy of events and updates at home is a good way to keep them informed. It also allows you to lighten the tone with less detailed information/reviews/humour. Internal mail envelopes can be collected from the Finance Officer on weekdays.
- Create a Facebook group for your club, society or peer support group. You can then use the group to create events. This helps to keep your members in the loop, but also serves as a way of attracting new members.
- Have a range of different social activities, so that members with differing interests can all feel welcome. Make sure all of your socials are welcoming to students who don't drink.
- Don't be shy of chatting to your members when you see them, it will make you seem friendly and approachable. Remember - your members are likely to be much shyer than you are!

### 3. Communicating with non-members

Obviously, members have to come from somewhere, and non-members are also a good way of generating extra crowds and extra funds at events. The key is communicating to them. Here are a few ideas:

- You can put up posters. They should be given to reception if you want them in the boxes on the street or to school secretaries if you want them in schools. Anywhere else they are liable to be taken down quickly so don't put them up too far in advance of an event.
- You can book time on the plasma screen in the Hive. Make a Power Point slide of what you want displayed and ask at reception for help getting it displayed.
- You can advertise for free in the Union newsletter, Rabbit, which gets delivered to all schools and residences. Contact the Communications Officer to do this ([su.comms@uea.ac.uk](mailto:su.comms@uea.ac.uk)).
- You may be able to advertise in the student media. Check out Nexus, Concrete, and Livewire for more details.
- You can book a stall in the Hive at reception. You can have the stall all day, inside, or out in the square, and you can borrow a blue backing-board as well if you like.

# Non-Financial resources provided by the Union

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As well as money, the Union provides many other resources. Here is a comprehensive list. For any further information, contact the Finance Officer.

## 1. Training

The Union provides training in the basic skills necessary to run a club, society or peer support group. Sessions include the compulsory 'Finance' training and optional hour-long modules such as 'Publicising Your Activities', 'How to Get the Most from SocWeb' and 'Running Fun and Inclusive Socials'. There is also training available for your Union Council Rep – please get them to use it!

The Union can look into providing training in other areas upon request – just let us know if there's anything else you need.

All of the training events are provided free of charge to anyone, but are particularly interesting for club, society and peer support group committee members, and people interested in setting up a group. It's a good idea to bring along your whole committee; it's a good bonding experience if nothing else. For information about training dates, make sure you look out for emails from the Finance Officer.

## 2. Storage

Sports equipment should only be stored at the Sportspark, the Union sports store or the kit storage room. Speak to Ian Welch for help with this.

Society equipment should be stored in the Societies Storeroom (next to Livewire, upstairs in Union House). If you're not sure about whether or not you have space, speak to the Finance Officer.

To get the key for the storage room, ask at reception, and make sure you have your registration card with you to leave as a deposit. Clearing out the storage space at the beginning of the year is a necessity. All equipment should be kept safely in lockers. If equipment is left on top of the cupboards or on the floor then it may be thrown away.

## 3. Rooms

You may hire many rooms free of charge if you are a club or society.

The following three rooms are available for events:

- Room 1.28 (up to 150 capacity)
- Room 1.33 (up to 50 capacity – good for meetings)
- Room 1.31 (up to 40 capacity)
- Bill Wilson Room (up to 100 capacity)

These rooms may be booked with Val Baker at reception, though we recommend you book in advance as they are quite popular. Please note that the upstairs of Union House is a designated alcohol-free zone.

The following areas may be booked for events where you may want to consume alcohol!

- The Hive (capacity 400, although the bar area may be closed off for smaller functions - capacity 200)
- The LCR (capacity 1250 or 1,700 with the Hive)
- The Waterfront main room (capacity 700)
- The Waterfront Studio (capacity 200)
- Blue Bar (capacity 400)

Booking these venues is subject to availability. The booking procedure is also more complicated so ask at the Entertainments Office (next to the Finance Office, upstairs in Union House) for help. The easiest way to organise a social in the Hive is to ask to book the Hive space from 7/8pm before a Tuesday or Saturday LCR. This is completely free so long as all of your members have a ticket to the LCR. That way you can have your social and then roll straight into the LCR. It's been very popular this year.

The University will also let you hire a lecture theatre, a residential common room, or a classroom for free if you are a club, society or peer support group. However, there may be a charge for electrical equipment if you need to use it – ask when you book. You can contact Room Bookings for help with this at [roombookings@uea.ac.uk](mailto:roombookings@uea.ac.uk) or 01603 59 3824.

## 5. Pigeon-Holes

Every club and society will have a pigeon-hole upstairs outside the Finance Office. You should check your pigeon-hole regularly as it is an important form of communication from the Union to you. You can receive post to the pigeon-hole if it is address to:

<<Name of your club, society or peer support group>>  
Union of UEA Students  
Union House  
University of East Anglia  
Norwich  
NR4 7TJ

## 6. Minibuses

Minibuses can be hired from the Union. To book them, see Val Baker at reception. However, you must have a member who is qualified to drive a minibus. The Union can run minibus tests for students who are over 21 and have held a valid UK driving licence for 2 years. The test costs £22 (unless a group of you are taking it, in which case it's £20 each). Alternative arrangements must be made for younger drivers. See Jacki, the Clubs and Societies Administrator, with queries regarding other transport such as coaches.

## **7. Photocopying**

Photocopying will usually work out cheapest if you do it in Union House. The first step is to get your photocopy code from Reception ([v.baker@uea.ac.uk](mailto:v.baker@uea.ac.uk)). This records over the year how much you've used the photocopier and will indicate how much we are to deduct from your grant/subs account. If you need assistance with photocopying you can ask at reception.

## **8. IT Support**

Our IT support worker, Mark Baldry, is more than happy to help you with any IT difficulties you may have. He can be found upstairs in Union House weekdays, or e-mailed at [mark@ueastudent.com](mailto:mark@ueastudent.com). You can also see Mark for a club, society or peer support group email address which can forward all mail to a specified persons inbox.

## **9. Faxes**

These can be sent and received from reception in Union House without charge.

## **10. Union Website**

All clubs, societies and peer support groups have the opportunity to have their own mini-site on, or a link to an already established website from, the Union website. To find out more about it, speak to the Communications Officer or visit it at <http://www.ueastudent.com>.

## **11. Sound Equipment**

If you're having a social and want amplified music, you'll need to speak to the Entertainments department about hiring equipment. From lighting to amps, in the Entertainments department they have it all. If it's just a small CD player you want, you can hire them at reception, where projection screens and projectors and display boards are also available.

## **12. Audio-Visual Equipment**

If you want to show a film or DVD there are various places you can do it in. The Blue Bar, Hive or even lecture theatres can be booked. See the Entertainments department for info on copyright law and help in setting it up.

# Representation - how to change things

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The Union is a democracy and as such it's the students who make the rules, including the club, society and peer support group rules. Club, society and peer support group committee members can be very influential, and there are bodies set up to listen to them. So don't just sit there and complain – learn how to use the democracy to get things running the way you want them to be run!

## 1. Union Council

Union Council is the supreme decision making body of the Union.

All Union staff and student representatives have to follow decisions made by Union Council. This is laid down in the Union Constitution, which can also be changed by Union Council. So who sits on Union Council?

- The 11 members of the Union executive sit on Union Council and are accountable to it.
- The 4 Equal Opportunities Campaign Convenors and the 4 Faculty Convenors.
- There are 92 places available for School Representatives, four from each of the 23 schools of study, one from the first year, one from any other year, one final year, and one postgraduate.
- There are a further 23 places available for School Board Reps, one from each school.
- And finally, each club and society has one representative on Union Council. This is a crucial factor, as this means currently between 130-140 seats, and therefore a potential absolute majority, is held by clubs, societies and peer support groups. Your club, society or peer support group rep must be elected in the same way as your committee, and should ideally be on the committee. They should be committed to coming to four meetings of Union Council per semester, which are usually held on Thursday nights, each lasting around two hours.

## 2. Societies Council

If there are any major changes to the way societies are governed or any other major developments then the Societies Officer will call a meeting of Societies Council. This is not a formal decision-making body of the Union, but it is a great way to influence the way the Finance Officer and Societies Officer represent you, and to share issues of mutual concern to societies and to hear best-practise from other Societies. These are likely to happen either once or twice a semester.

## 3. Sports Council

The Sports Council consists of all of the sports club presidents and may propose changes in the way sports clubs are run and funded. The Sports Officer will call a Sports Council meeting when there are issues that need to be addressed, and they will usually take place either once or twice a semester.

# CASAs

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The Union recognises how much time and effort people voluntarily put into clubs, societies and peer support groups, and presents various awards available at the end of the year for a number of reasons. This happens in an awards ceremony known as the Clubs and Societies Awards (CASAs for short). The awards include but are not limited to:

- 1) Service to a Club/Society - Awarded to individuals who've helped their club or society invaluable through out the year.
- 2) Club/Society of the Year - This award is granted to the Club/Society of the Year, be it through increased membership, excellent activities or BUCS results etc.
- 3) The Outstanding Achievement Awards - These award can go to either a person that has had very good results within their society/sport, or to an overall club/society achievement.

The awards ceremony took place in the Sainsbury Centre last year during March and is free for committees to go to. It is normally followed by an LCR which is always good fun. Performances and displays from clubs and societies often make up an important part of the night so contact an officer if you want to get involved!

A panel including both executive and staff decide who receives an award from nominations which are open to any student.