

J21-09 Motion to Add a ‘Special Arrangements’ Clause to the Societies Committee’s Laws.

Owner: Avery Kitchens

In effect: Immediately

Review Date: N/A

This Council Notes:

1. Appendix C has been written in conjunction with the School of Medicine President, the Director of Student Development and Activities, and the Societies Committee as a result of a Forum conducted on 10 February 2020 with two members of each Medical Society present.
 - a. The School of Medicine Director of Teaching has also voiced support for this proposal in Appendix B.
2. The SSC Societies Committee has implemented the proposal attached as Appendix B.
3. Currently the Students’ Association has 14 affiliated Medical Societies (Bute Medical Society, BMA St Andrews, Mackenzie General Practice Society, St Andrews Oncology Society, Psychiatry Society, PreMedical Society, St Andrews Sport and Exercise Medicine Society, Students for Global Health, Surgical Society, Wilderness Medics, Medical Ethics Society, Womens Health Society, Drug Science Society, Nutritank Society).
4. The School of Medicine has more affiliated societies than any other school, the next highest is the School of Biology with 4 affiliated societies.
5. The minimum membership fee for joining a society is £3.
6. Society subcommittees are not bound to the £3 membership requirement.
7. If a student wished to purchase membership for each Medical Society individually, they would pay £83.50 for one year of membership.
8. The majority of medical students are members of at least two Medical societies.
9. Every society must annually submit a General Risk Assessment, List of 25 Paid Members, Constitution and Affiliation Agreement, along with completing three training sessions and holding an AGM.

This Council Believes:

1. There exists a severe risk of future Societies Committees assuming how best to group or decrease the number of societies in an academic discipline
2. It is possible that a future Societies Officer may attempt to place an arbitrary cap on the number of societies in an academic discipline in the future (against the wishes of affiliated societies).
3. Allowing a way in which societies within academic disciplines can effectively merge as subcommittees would:
 - a. Decrease the likelihood of a future Societies Committee taking drastic action to combine societies without consultation of the societies affected.
 - b. Widen access for students by waiving the £3 membership fee requirement for each society.
 - c. Increase society member engagement.

- d. Decrease the amount of administration required for societies that possess similar aims and activities.

This Council Resolves:

1. Amends Chapter 9 to add Section 9 (Appendix A).

Proposed:

Avery Kitchens (SSC Societies Officer; SSC Senior Officer)

Seconded:

Amy Feakes (SSC Charities Officer)

Joe Horsnell (SRC Arts & Divinity Faculty President; SRC Senior Officer)

Toni Valencia (SSC Member Without Portfolio)

Annie Smith (SRC Member Without Portfolio)

Gavin Sandford (Director of Student Development and Activities)

SSC Societies Committee

APPENDIX A: Chapter Nine: Affiliated Societies

1. Association Committees

1.1. There shall be a Societies Committee, which shall have powers, duties and responsibilities as laid out in Chapter 14 of the Laws governing Association Subcommittee.

2. Affiliation to the Association

2.1. There shall be an Affiliation Agreement, proposed by the Societies Committee and ratified by the Students' Association Board, defining the terms of Affiliation between Societies and the Association.

2.2. The new or continued affiliation to the Association of a society shall be conditional upon:

2.2.1. The adherence to the society's constitution and policies;

2.2.2. The responsible management of the society and its accounts as recommended in the publications of the Societies Committee, in particular audits; and

2.2.3. The adherence to the terms of the Affiliation Agreement.

2.2.4. Any other conditions that the Societies Committee may adopt.

3. Membership

3.1. Any society wishing to affiliate must make ordinary membership open to all matriculated students of the University of St Andrews. Only matriculated students shall be eligible for ordinary membership. Other persons may be eligible for other classes of membership, as defined in the society's constitution.

3.2. The Performing Arts Officer shall be an honorary member of all affiliated performing arts-related societies.

3.2.1. Definitions of such societies shall be determined by the Societies Committee.

4. Constitutions

4.1. The aims of a society, as declared in its constitution, must not be incompatible with those of the Students' Association.

4.2. A society, in its constitution, must declare all outside affiliations and their aims will be subject to the same scrutiny as the society itself.

4.3. The Societies Elections Officer shall be notified of any amendment to the constitution of a society.

5. Grants and Loans

5.1. Grants may be made to affiliated societies by the Societies Committee in accordance with such limitations and conditions as the Societies Committee may from time to time adopt.

5.2. Student-run projects shall not be eligible for Grants from the Societies Committee, unless the Committee explicitly agrees to exempt the project from this restriction.

5.3. Notwithstanding subsections 1 and 2 of this section, grants shall be made at the discretion of the Societies Committee.

5.4. Loans may be made to affiliated societies at the discretion of the Societies Committee.

5.4.1. All loans will be under the terms of the Societies Loan Contract.

6. Arbitration

6.1. The Societies Committee shall be competent to arbitrate disputes amongst a society and its members, officers, and/or another society with the consent of the parties to arbitration.

6.2. The decision of the Societies Committee in arbitration shall be subject to appeal to SAEC, provided that an appeal is lodged within 72 hours of the transmission of notice of the decision and right to appeal, and only on the following grounds:

6.2.1. Information not known at the time of the original decision.

6.2.2. Procedural irregularity that could make a material difference to the original decision (including inaccurate information, etc.)

6.2.3. Bias or prejudice.

7. Disaffiliation

7.1. The Societies Committee may disaffiliate a society in accordance with the terms of the Affiliation Agreement.

7.2. The decision of the Societies Committee to disaffiliate a society shall be subject to appeal to SAEC, provided that an appeal is lodged within 72 hours of the transmission of notice of the decision and right to appeal, and only on the following grounds:

7.2.1. Information not known at the time of the original decision

7.2.2. Procedural irregularity that could make a material difference to the original decision (including inaccurate information, etc.)

7.2.3. Bias or prejudice.

8. Re-affiliation

8.1. Any Affiliated Society meeting the requirements for re-affiliation set out by the Societies Committee on the date that its Affiliation Agreement expires shall be offered a new Affiliation Agreement.

8.1.1. The terms of new Affiliation Agreements may differ from the terms of any previous ones.

8.2. Any Society not offered a new Affiliation Agreement may appeal the decision to by petition.

9. Special Arrangements

9.1 The formation of like-society Networks may be arranged at the discretion of the Societies Committee.

9.2 Consultation between the relevant parties involved must be executed before a Special Arrangement is undertaken.

9.3 A formal proposition must be transcribed and approved by the Societies Committee and each body wishing to become involved.

APPENDIX B: Medical Societies Proposal

Proposers:

Avery Kitchens (SSC Societies Officer)

Gavin Sandford (Director of Student Development and Activities)

Orrin McAleer (School of Medicine President)

Students' Association Societies Committee

This proposal is a result of the Medical Societies Forum (10 February 2021) and is set to re-organise the way that Medical Societies affiliate to the Students' Association on an annual basis.

This is an opt-in system for existing medical societies. Your society does not have to affiliate through the Medical Societies Network (especially if your society is fundamentally unable to). New societies will be required to join the Medical Societies Network if their aims are not classified as charitable. This reorganisation is purely administrative and will help the continued success and affiliation of medical societies.

What will change?

a. The Creation of the Medical Societies Network

- i. This would serve as an 'ecosystem' for Medical Societies and would maintain the freedoms they currently have.
- ii. Each Medical Society will be affiliated to the Students Association through the Medical Societies Network
 1. This makes the organisation of our medical societies more in line with other Universities and Students' Associations
 2. Your societies would no longer be tied to the £3 membership requirement
- iii. The elected School of Medicine School President would serve as the ex-officio president of the Medical Societies Network, responsible for the administrative upkeep of the network.
 1. This is the most fair solution, as the Medicine President is an elected official, normally neutral and outwith a specific society
 2. There is an opportunity to elect the Medicine President every March
- iv. There would also be a Secretary (a Class Rep) to support the President with the Network's admin.
 1. Their jobs would be to minute meetings between members of the MSN and collate constitution
 2. The Class Rep would be Co-Opted into the role of MSN Secretary
- v. Each Individual Medical Society would have less paperwork to submit on an annual basis.

b. Bank Accounts

- i. The Network itself will not have its own bank account

c. Emails

- i. The MSN's email account would be registered as medicinepresident@st-andrews.ac.uk

d. Affiliation to the Students Association

- i. The MSN will be responsible for signing the annual Affiliation Agreement, maintaining the Constitution and submitting a General Risk Assessment
- ii. Affiliation Agreement - the MSN will complete this on behalf of each affiliated Medical Society. Each Medical Society will sign a MSN Agreement.
- iii. Constitution - The MSN will have its own constitution, based on our Constitution template. This constitution will refer to each Medical Society's already written Constitution.
- iv. This would include different membership payments, affiliations, committee positions etc.
- v. General Risk Assessment - The MSN will submit a GRA covering speaker events, Balls and other annual events which the current medical societies perform. Each medical society will be responsible for submitting Supplemental Risk Assessments for their own one-off events, like any other year

e. Semesterly Catch-Up

- i. The Societies Committee would have a Semesterly Catch Up with the School of Medicine President to make sure everything is going smoothly.

What will remain the same?

a. Bank Accounts

- i. Societies will not be required to merge bank accounts
- ii. Each society that is a member of the MSN will retain their own individual bank account

b. Emails

- i. Societies will not be required to merge or give up email addresses
- ii. Each society that is a member of the Network will retain their own email address

c. Union Website

- i. Medical Societies will continue to have their own webpages on the Union Website

d. Affiliation to the Students Association

- i. While Medical Societies will have a collective group known as the Medical Societies Network, each society will continue to be affiliated to the Students' Association
- ii. Medical Societies will still have access to Societies Committee Grants, room bookings, Society Fayres, the Students' Association's Public Liability Insurance and general support by Union staff

e. Elections

- i. The election process will continue as it did before. Societies are responsible for their own elections and the Societies Committee would continue to reserve the right to attend any AGMs or EGMs if they do see fit.
- ii. The Societies Committee's Elections Officer would continue to be the first point of contact for these events.

f. Grants

- i. Societies affiliated to the MSN would still be able to apply to Societies Committee Grants
- ii. Each Medical Society would be responsible for applying for grants themselves

g. Semesterly Catch-Up

- i. The Societies Committee would have a Semesterly Catch Up with the School of Medicine President to make sure everything is going smoothly.