

Constitution for ... 2021/2022

Volunteering Project Constitution:

Ultimate responsibility for the governance and discipline of the project lies with the Student Activities Officer, who has delegated operational responsibility to the Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator.

A copy of the constitution should be made available to all members.

If you have any queries please contact c.briggs@yusu.org

Purpose of having a Constitution:

To provide the University of York Students' Union (YUSU) Volunteering Projects with a constitution that outlines reasonable expectations for best practice which volunteers are expected to adhere to.

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1. Definitions

- 1.1. The volunteering project in this document will be referred to as the 'Project'.
- 1.2. Those chosen to collectively represent the Project, shall be referred to as the 'Committee'.

2. Name of the Project

- 2.1. The Project's name shall be:

Project Name:

- 2.2. The project shall be represented by the elected YUSU Volunteering Officers and members of the YUSU Volunteering Committee.

3. Aims and Objectives

- 3.1. The aims and objectives of the Project are to promote the interests and act on behalf of the Project volunteers.
- 3.2. To provide an opportunity for volunteers of the Project to meet and participate in the given activities together.
- 3.3. The Project's specific aims shall be:

Aims:
<i>What changes, improvements or differences will the Project make to students and the wider community, which should contravene the Union or be the same as another society or volunteering project.</i>

- 3.4. The Project's specific objectives shall be:

Objectives:
<i>The area or activity or overall practical steps the project plans to take to accomplish its aims.</i>

4. Membership

- 4.1. Membership to the project will be open to all members of YUSU unless the main activity of the Project stipulates the need for certain qualifications or experience.
- 4.2. The Project must be working towards a core membership of at least 10 YUSU members.
- 4.3. Students who volunteer with the project must purchase a free registration to the project on the YUSU website. This is so the project and YUSU are able to monitor levels of engagement throughout the year of volunteering projects.
- 4.4. The Project should also keep a record of the number of volunteers who actively engage in the Project each term, and the number of hours given. This is to be reported to the Volunteering Officer and Committee, and the Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator as part of the termly impact reporting minimum standard.

Associate Membership

For projects that have 'Associate Members' (members which are not current students at the University of York) please copy this text into the box below:

- 4.5. If a volunteer is not a registered student at the University of York, they will need to become an Associate Member of the Union and subsequently purchase a free registration to the Project. This is to ensure the Union has the correct information on its volunteers to appropriately fulfil its duty of care.

4.6 - 'Active' volunteers should purchase free membership to the project on the YUSU Website, and data should be collected by the Volunteering Project Committee for the number of volunteers and the hours given, and shared with YUSU during re-ratification as part of the End of Year Report.

4.7 The definition of an 'active' volunteer can be set by the Project.

An active volunteer for [volunteering project name] is:

How many sessions the volunteer has to attend / amount of time the volunteer has to give / termly or annual commitments.

Someone who must volunteer for at least one session per term and regularly attends general meetings

5. Code of Practice

- 5.1. As part of the ratification process, each incoming project committee must sign and agree to the YUSU Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Agreement and Room Bookings Agreement.
- 5.2. All volunteers must abide by the terms set out below:
 - 5.2.1. Volunteers must act responsibly at all times and avoid any actions or conduct which could bring the reputation of the student group, YUSU, the University or sponsors/funders, associates or partners into disrepute or be detrimental to the reasonable enjoyment of the Union by other members and their guests;
 - 5.2.2. Volunteers must not participate in any action which might cause damage to themselves or others;
 - 5.2.3. Volunteers must report any action that may cause or have caused damage to themselves and others;
 - 5.2.4. Volunteers must respect the property (and property under control) of the University, YUSU, the student group and of other members;
 - 5.2.5. Socials (and any related activity) must be opt-in only and have no effect on eligibility to hold membership of the student group or a committee position;
 - 5.2.6. Members of the student group should not pressure or coerce any other members into any action with which they feel uncomfortable;
 - 5.2.7. Members should be aware of how their actions may be perceived by others;
 - 5.2.8. Members must conduct themselves in a reasonable manner relating to language, noise and behaviour;
 - 5.2.9. Members must treat facilities, staff and students at the University and other institutions with respect and abide by any rules that may apply;
 - 5.2.10. Members must refrain from any form of harassment of others and respect the rights, dignity and values of others, refraining from behaviour that is unwelcome, uninvited and causes a detrimental effect;
 - 5.2.11. Members must not encourage or pressure others into acting against the Code of Conduct;
 - 5.2.12. Members must operate within the rules, including national guidelines or relevant student group constitutions and procedures which govern activity;
 - 5.2.13. Members must not carry out initiation ceremonies as detailed in bye-law 12;
 - 5.2.14. Members must not be unduly intoxicated at any event or activity where such behaviour could be deemed unacceptable or unprofessional; during social events, especially those involving the consumption of alcohol, members must be aware of behaviour and the impact on others, particularly members of the local community;

- 5.2.15. Members must not consume alcohol whilst being transported to or from any activity organised under the umbrella of the student group, YUSU or the UoY;
- 5.2.16. Members must not disclose any confidential material about the Union, other members or officers, unless prior permission has been granted by Officer Group;
- 5.2.17. Members must abide by the law at all times;
- 5.2.18. Members take responsibility for their own understanding of this Code of Conduct and the repercussions of any breaches and must seek further information or clarification if they are unsure about how it should be applied.
- 5.3. Any action taken by the volunteers on behalf of or while representing the Project in any way will also be accountable to the YUSU Code of Conduct found in bye-law 12.
- 5.4. Any questions regarding the Code of Conduct should be directed to the Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator in the first instance.
- 5.5. Additional code of practice

Additional Code of Practice

Any additional training or inductions that volunteers must carry out before getting involved in the project.

For DBS Checking, please copy this text into the box below:

- 5.6. *Volunteers, where required, must provide evidence of an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Check that has been completed at the University of York covering voluntary activity with Children and Young People or Vulnerable Adults before getting involved in project activity.*

For Safeguarding Training, please copy this text into the box below:

- 5.7. *Volunteers must complete YUSU's online Safeguarding Training covering Children and Young People or Vulnerable Adults, or attend a Safeguarding Introduction Training session that is delivered by YUSU before getting involved in project activity.*

6. Project Committee

- 6.1. The Committee will be collectively responsible for the effective management and day to day running of the Project.
- 6.2. All of the Committee must be current YUSU members who are enrolled and studying on a University of York programme.
- 6.3. The Committee shall have the power to set Project rules, in accordance with the Project Constitution.
- 6.4. A new Committee must be elected during the Project's Annual General Meeting, or appointed by a select committee comprising of members of YUSU staff, an elected sabbatical officer and an incoming or outgoing

Volunteering officer between Week 5 of Spring Term and Week 2 of Summer Term, unless otherwise decided with the approval of Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator. This is so that the new committee has a chance to shadow the existing committee (where necessary), and fulfill duties effectively from the start of the new academic year.

6.5. The committee must consist of:

- Project Coordinator
- Secretary
- Treasurer

6.6. The project committee will also consist of:

Project Committee Positions:
<i>Other roles on the Project Committee. Eg: Schools Liaison, Publicity Officer.</i>

6.7. The committee will ensure an up-to-date list of all committee members is provided to YUSU by Monday of Week 1, Summer Term, unless the new committee resumes duties before this date, in which case, an up-to-date list of all committee members must be provided to YUSU within 5 working days of the committee election or appointment.

7. Project Committee - Volunteer Role Expectations

7.1. The Project Coordinator is expected to:

- Provide leadership for the Project
- Be a spokesperson/figurehead and representing the Project to YUSU and relevant external stakeholders
- Ensure that Project adheres to relevant policies and to this constitution.
- Ensure the Project Committee contains officers named in section 6.5
- Attend any relevant training
- Call and chair meetings of the Project's committee
- Publicise the Project
- Undertake any other activities as mutually agreed by the Committee and the Project Coordinator

Any additional expectations of the Project Coordinator:

7.2. The Secretary is expected to:

- Attend any relevant training and the Project Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Take care of Project admin, ensuring that all information on YUSU's website and social media, including signatory form and list of volunteers is kept up to date
- Arrange meetings and book rooms or venues
- Create agendas and keeping minutes of meetings as necessary
- Communicate regularly with members
- Be aware of key dates for the Project throughout the year
- Organise the AGM or any EGM (Extraordinary General Meeting)
- Undertake any other activities as mutually agreed by the Secretary, Committee and Project Coordinator

Any additional expectations of the Secretary:

7.3. The Treasurer is expected to:

- Administer the Project's finances in accordance with the systems, Constitution, Laws and Bye-Laws of YUSU
- Attend any relevant training and Project AGM
- Undertake training on the Students' Union financial system
- Apply for the annual grant and extra funding from YUSU as necessary
- Keep track of all income/expenditure
- Keep the committee and members informed of the Project's financial situation
- Organise fundraising or sponsorship for the Project if needed
- Countersign claims forms and transport forms
- Create a budget for each event and ensuring that the committee has agreed to it
- Undertake any other activities as mutually agreed by the Treasurer, Committee and Project Coordinator.

Any additional expectations of the Treasurer:

7.4. Roles and expectations of any additional committee members:

Role expectations of other committee members:

Any additional committee roles and their expectations. Eg: Schools Liaison will establish contact with new schools, arrange workshops in schools.

7.5. No committee member should be expected to provide support and advice to any individual student, and when these cases present they must be referred promptly to the YUSU Advice and Support Centre or Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator who can ensure proper support is made available.

8. Project Finance

- 8.1. All Project income and expenditure shall be conducted through the YUSU Finance Office unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Union. Holding funds externally will constitute grounds for de-ratification and/or disciplinary procedures.
- 8.2. The Project Coordinator, Secretary and Treasurer shall automatically be signatories to the Project accounts once YUSU has received an up-to-date signatory list.
- 8.3. Two of these signatories shall be required for each expense claim and for any contract or undertaking, financial or otherwise, on behalf of the Project; one of which must be the Treasurer, unless the treasurer is making the claim.
- 8.4. Project accounts shall be available for inspection at any reasonable time by YUSU staff.
- 8.5. YUSU members shall receive no remuneration from the Project, except in legitimate expenses incurred in connection with Project business.

9. Meetings

- 9.1. The primary decision making bodies of the Project are the Committee meetings and Annual General Meetings (AGMs)
- 9.2. All general meetings must be open and advertised to all members.
- 9.3. Minutes should be taken at each meeting and published to all members. A copy of the minutes must also be made available to the Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator upon request.
- 9.4. The Committee shall give at least 7 days notice of any general meeting
- 9.5. The quorum of a general meeting shall be 25% of Project volunteers or 5 Project volunteers, whichever is greater.
- 9.6. The committee for the new academic year must either be appointed by YUSU or elected at the Annual General Meeting which shall be between Week 7 of Spring Term and Week 2 of Summer Term, unless otherwise agreed with the Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator

- 9.7. An EGM can be called by the Project Committee, the Volunteering Committee or a petition signed by 25% of Project volunteers or 5 Project volunteers, whichever is greater.

10. Selection of the Committee

- 10.1. The Project Committee will decide on restrictions for those wishing to stand for committee roles.

Restrictions on those standing for committee positions:

- 10.2. The committee for the Project including the signatories must be elected once in every 12 month period or be appointed by YUSU in the same period of time.
- 10.3. All volunteers should be made aware of their ability to stand for Committee roles.
- 10.4. Only full members of YUSU shall be entitled to vote.
- 10.5. The Committee must be democratically elected in a free and fair election.
- 10.6. If desired, YUSU can provide assistance in the running of any election to ensure fairness or to count votes where necessary.
- 10.7. If any vacancies occur in the committee during the academic year, they shall be democratically filled through an EGM as soon as possible.

11. Project Complaints Procedure

- 11.1. This procedure allows volunteers to raise complaints about any issues relating to the Project, including (but not limited to):
- The safety of activities
 - The standards of instruction
 - The standard of equipment used for the activities
 - Bullying and harassment
 - Disregard of operational policies of YUSU including the Equal Opportunities and Safeguarding policies
- 11.2. Complaints should first be addressed in writing to the Activities Officer.
- 11.3. Some minor cases of misconduct and poor performance are best dealt with informally by student members, outwith the formal disciplinary procedure. Such an approach may be appropriate in cases including but not limited to minor disagreements in student groups or matters where allegations may have been made in error.
- 11.4. If this initial process does not provide a satisfactory outcome, or is deemed inappropriate by YUSU for the issue under consideration, a formal complaint should be made to the Student Activities Officer in writing, triggering the

use of YUSU's Code of Conduct (bye-law 12) which will be followed in addressing formal complaints.

- 11.5. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions in bye-law 12 supersede this constitution for conduct matters.
- 11.6. YUSU reserves the right to refer alleged breaches of the University of York's regulations or policies to relevant bodies within the institution, as appropriate.

12. Dismissal and Resignation of Committee Members

- 12.1. No committee member shall be deemed to be dismissed unless they have received during their term of office a vote of 'no confidence' from the Project Committee.
- 12.2. Before a vote of 'no confidence' can be considered against a committee member, the complainant must have attempted to settle the matter informally, and one of the committee members named in section 6.5 will be responsible to oversee this informal process with the support of the Activities Officer, and facilitate discussion when and where they deem necessary.
- 12.3. Any incident which cannot be satisfactorily resolved in this way must be referred to the Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator, who will facilitate a vote of 'no confidence'. This request must be accompanied by a petition of 25% of YUSU Project Volunteers or 5 YUSU Project Volunteers, whichever is greater.
- 12.4. If a 'no confidence' motion is called then a Project EGM (see section 9) must be held, and in order for a vote of 'no confidence' motion to be carried it must be supported by two-thirds of those voting.
- 12.5. If the no confidence motion is successful or a committee member resigns, then a committee member must inform YUSU immediately. The Project will then need to hold an EGM to elect a new person to the position (see section 9)
- 12.6. If the no confidence motion is unsuccessful:
 - YUSU will facilitate support with the committee to resolve any outstanding issues.
 - Further 'no confidence' motions must be on different grounds and not within one calendar month of the general meeting at which the last 'no confidence' motion against that committee member was heard.

13. Suspension and Exclusion of Volunteers

- 13.1. No volunteer shall be deemed to be suspended or excluded without a formal process involving YUSU. This is to ensure fairness and transparency of processes.
- 13.2. In certain circumstances, for example cases involving gross misconduct; where relationships have broken down; issues are of a highly sensitive nature or threaten serious disruption to students or YUSU activities; where it is considered there are risks to property or the Union's responsibilities to

other parties; or safeguarding/ health and safety risks are identified in relation to one or more parties, consideration should be given to a period of suspension of membership rights with or without entitlements whilst an unhindered investigation using the process set out in bye-law 12 takes place.

- 13.3. Decisions on suspension should be undertaken by a YUSU manager with responsibility for complaint handling as set out under bye-law 12. Such a suspension should only be imposed after careful consideration and should be reviewed regularly under provisions set out in bye-law 12.

14. Amendments to the Project Constitution

- 14.1. The Constitution may be amended by two thirds of the volunteers present at an AGM or EGM.
- 14.2. If amended, the constitution shall be submitted to the Fundraising and Volunteering Coordinator for review before being re-ratified by the Volunteering Committee before coming into effect, this includes a change of name.

15. Dissolution

- 15.1. The Project may be dissolved if deemed necessary by the Project Volunteers in a simple majority vote at an AGM or EGM. Any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall revert to YUSU, in line with charity law requirements.
- 15.2. In exceptional circumstances, the Project may also be dissolved by the Volunteering Committee if deemed necessary, subject to the approval of the Activities Officer.

16. Data Protection

- 16.1. All membership personal data is subject to the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, related legislation and YUSU procedures.
- 16.2. The Project Coordinator is responsible for the safety and security of all membership personal data held outside of YUSU software and systems and must take all reasonable steps to ensure access to YUSU software and systems is not shared without YUSU consent.
- 16.3. The Project Coordinator, Secretary and Treasurer are required to successfully undertake data protection awareness and compliance training supplied by YUSU.
- 16.4. The Project Coordinator must advise YUSU of any breaches of data protection as soon as they are made aware of any such breach.
- 16.5. The President can formally nominate a Data Protection Officer from the President who is responsible for overseeing the society's compliance to GDPR and YUSU procedures.
- 16.6. Key responsibilities include:
Membership personal data including email addresses are private and confidential and should only be used for society membership purposes and

Position:	Name:
Project Coordinator	
Secretary	
Treasurer	