



Setting up a New Media Group: The Process

Here at York, we really do have the best of student media. Having your student group ratified by York SU will give you **training** and **funding opportunities**, access to **resources**, and **support** from your **Union staff**. Running your society will bring a huge host of benefits to you, your Committee, and your members. This document outlines the straightforward process to ratification which all of York SU's 200+ student societies have to follow; explains what you'll need to do if you're successful; and signposts you to all the contacts you'll need along the way.

If you're ratified, there are a number of things you'll be required to do, and lots of additional responsibility. This document will explain some of these requirements in more detail, so make sure you read it carefully and are sure you can take it on before filling out your application.

Is Ratification Right?

You can run your student group without being ratified by York SU. **Ratification comes with a host of benefits, but we will ask things of you in return.** There will be documents you need to fill out; meetings you need to attend; and minimum standards you must fulfil in order to continue. You'll need to reach a minimum of 10 paid members, or be able to provide proof of your regular activity when requested, and you'll have to follow our [Code of Conduct](#).

Before you start the ratification process, **think carefully** about whether becoming a York SU-ratified society is the right option for your student group, or if it's best to run it your own way. This document will go some way towards helping you make that decision, but if you need further guidance on what ratification will involve, email societies@yorksu.org.

Get In Touch

If you decide you'd like to go ahead with ratification, the first step is to get in touch with the relevant Media Committee member. If your proposed media group will be a publication (e.g. a newspaper or magazine, in print and/or online), you'll want to contact the Print Media Rep; if not, you'll fall under the Multimedia category. If you're not sure, drop an email to the Student Activities Officer at activitiesofficer@yorksu.org who will be able to provide you with some advice and guidance. Otherwise, find the Reps' details below:

Will Hemmings
Print Media Rep
printmediarep@yorksu.org

Erin Chappell
Multimedia Rep
multimediarep@yorksu.org

Provide the Rep with as much information about your proposed media group as you can. Tell them what your group's aims and focus will be; how it will be funded, put together, and distributed to the student body; and where the resources for the group will be obtained from. You'll need to fulfil our criteria for new media groups, which can be found below:

Requirement	Questions
Compliant	You must be able to answer yes to the following questions: Can the activity be covered under the Students' Union public liability insurance? Can the activity be covered under the Students' Union personal accident cover? Are the aims and objectives in line with Students' Union's Memorandum and Articles of Association, Code of Conduct and Equal Opportunities Policies? Does the University and Students' Union have sufficient facilities (including storage) for the group to run successfully? You must be able to answer no to the following questions: Does the group aim to provide counselling, advice or advocacy, or is the society a support group? Does the group have the potential to bring the Students' Union/University into disrepute?
Exclusive from other areas of Union	You must be able to answer no to the following question: Will the group conflict or disadvantage any other areas of the Union? (Fundraising, Volunteering, Campaigns, Societies etc.)
Unique demand	At York we have a number of well established groups that cover key areas of student media activity. Therefore new groups must bring value in a new/different form to the existing offer. You must be able to answer no to the following questions: Is there a current media group with a similar output? Would your group's output directly compete with another media group? Are you producing news content?
Inclusive	You must be able to answer yes to the following question: Is the group inclusive? i.e is it open and accessible to all students?
Development of and benefit to members	You must be able to answer yes to the following questions: Does the group have the potential to develop its members? Does it demonstrate a benefit to the student body? You must be able to answer no to the following question: Does the group have a purely social purpose?
Sustainable	You must be able to answer yes to the following question: Does the group display sustainability? i.e Is it likely to attract and retain members?

Financially & Resource viable	You must be able to answer yes to the following question: Is it financially viable and sustainable (would the group be sustainable without York SU grants)? You must be able to answer no to the following question: Will your group be producing print content that will require regular checking by York SU?
Welfare and health & safety Approved	You must be able to answer no to the following question: Are there any health and safety or welfare concerns or implications for this group that can't be mitigated through following health and safety guidelines and a risk assessment?

If your Rep agrees you fulfil the criteria, you will then be asked to [create a presentation to be delivered to the Media Committee](#).

Media Committee is composed of a representative from every ratified media group at York SU , as well as the Print and Multimedia Reps. It is chaired by the Student Activities Officer. Meetings take place every three weeks during Semesters One and Two.

Your presentation must cover the following:

- **Name** of Media Group
- **Aims & objectives**
- **Committee structure**
- Proof that you comply with the **requirements** as stated above
- **A financial plan** (you must be sustainable for a year before you can ask for grant funding)

You can either present this in person, or ask for it to be presented on your behalf. Please note that the latter option may cause delays as the Committee may want to ask questions for clarification.

The Media Committee will then discuss and vote on whether your media group should be ratified or not. If you're successful, we'll let you know in the following week.

Next Steps...

If the Committee decides to recommend your media group for ratification, you'll receive an email and some guidance explaining your next steps. This involves filling in some important documents and directing you towards contacts you'll need as a media group.

If you are not ratified, you'll receive an email explaining the reason(s) behind the decision. It'll include recommendations of what to do next, and our guide for non-successful media groups.

Fill Out Your Documents

Often, new committees don't realise just how much is involved in running a student group, so understanding these documents **before** submitting your application will mean you're better prepared! If the Media Committee votes to ratify your group, you're going to receive a huge amount of information very quickly, and it can be a bit overwhelming.

Firstly, you'll get an **@yorksu.org email address** and access to the full [Student Group Resource Hub](#), which is packed with all the information you need to run your group successfully. Next, you'll receive a **ratification pack** which includes a **submission form** and a number of **document templates**.

One such document is the **Constitution**. This looks like a big document, but it's actually fairly straightforward to fill out. It sets out what your group's **aims** and **objectives** are; how it's **structured**; and any additional **codes of practice** you'd like to set out for your members. It's the first thing you'll refer to in the case of any issues or complaints. (This is also why we need a copy.)

The next document is the **Risk Assessment**. This is a legal requirement so we can ensure that all groups understand their obligation to make their activities safe for attendees, and to fulfil our insurance obligations. You'll be provided with lots of guidance to help you complete your risk assessment.

Thirdly is the **Committee List**. This is a spreadsheet that your committee must complete, and allows staff to give your committee relevant access to your society's backpages (member dashboard) and storage access (if required).

Finally, we have the **Inventory**. This is a spreadsheet containing everything you own as a student group, and should be updated as and when you buy or sell items. This allows us to insure your items for you.

Until the ratification process is complete, your group's ratification is **provisional**. It is **conditional** on you completing the process within a month of receiving your recommendation for ratification email. If you don't complete these forms on time, you may need to start the process all over again. You'll receive information about how to book rooms and how to access the website backpages, which will help you manage the operational side of running your society.

If you're confused about any of this, **don't worry**. You're not left alone to work it all out yourself: York SU has a dedicated staff member who works specifically to support societies and student media groups (societies@yorksu.org).

Questions?

Now you've read through this document, you're ready to get the ball rolling on the ratification process for your new media group! However, if you've still got questions, we understand - there's a lot of information to take in. Please get in touch with us! Email societies@yorksu.org or get in touch with your relevant Media Rep as signposted above.

Good luck!

Whether you just want advice about starting a media group, or you've been running a group on campus for a while and now want to consider ratifying, we're always keen to hear from students with great ideas. Don't forget to chat to the Activities Officer and your Rep first to discuss your plans, and, if you're sure that ratification is the best way forward for you, put as much detail into your application as you can. We can't wait to hear from you! Drop an email to activitiesofficer@yorksu.org to get the ball rolling on your plans.

GDPR Statement

By completing this process you are giving consent for York SU to hold this data on file for the purposes of administering your application. York SU will retain this information on file for one year at which time it will be deleted from our records.

Further information on how York SU use student data and what your rights are can be found within the York SU Student Data Privacy Statement on our Website. If you have any queries please contact dataprotection@yorksu.org