

Strath Union Affiliated Membership Organisations Policy

Version Control

Version: 1.1

Policy Owner: Head of Membership

Approval: Chief Executive

Effective Date: 25th August 2026

Review Cycle: Annually

Review Date: 30th June 2027

1 Definition and Scope

- 1.1 Strathclyde Students' Union (Strath Union) shall provide Affiliated Membership Organisations for students to support the objects outlined in Strath Union's Constitution.
- This Policy sets out the framework under which all Affiliated Membership Organisations recognised by Strath Union must operate, including governance, finance, risk management, conduct, and affiliation requirements.
- 1.2 Affiliated Membership Organisations include:
- Societies;
 - Membership Associations;
 - Action Groups.
- 1.3 Additional categories of Affiliated Membership Organisation may be established by Strath Union where appropriate.
- 1.4 All Affiliated Membership Organisations are required to comply with this Policy, the Strath Union Articles and Schedules, Standing Policies, the Code of Conduct, and any guidance or procedures issued by Strath Union.
- 1.5 Where additional requirements apply to a particular category of organisation, these are set out in the relevant Schedule to this Policy.

2 Aims, Objectives, Purpose and Values

- 2.1 Affiliated Membership Organisations aim to:
- Increase student involvement and participation in Strath Union.
 - Foster community and belonging amongst students.
 - Provide opportunities for social engagement, leadership, and personal development.
 - Bring together students with shared interests, beliefs, identities, or activities.
 - Operate in a manner that is open, inclusive and accessible.

- Contribute positively to the student experience.

2.2 Strath Union shall:

- Provide an appropriate structure of support, resources, guidance, and training to assist Affiliated Membership Organisations.

2.3 Support may include:

- Financial support and grant opportunities;
- Advice and guidance from Union staff and Elected Officers;
- Access to administrative systems and resources;
- Training and development opportunities.

2.4 Resources may include:

- Webpages;
- Finance systems;
- Grant systems;
- Room bookings;
- Transport bookings;
- Storage facilities.

2.5 Training may include:

- Committee training;
- Finance training;
- Grant training;
- Risk management training;
- Code of Conduct training.

2.6 Affiliated Membership Organisations must:

- Operate in accordance with Strath Union policies and procedures;
- Act in accordance with the objects of Strath Union as set out in its Articles;
- Promote equality, inclusion, and student wellbeing;
- Ensure all members are made aware of the Code of Conduct and encourage compliance with its requirements;
- Maintain activities consistent with their approved aims and objectives.

3 Membership

Membership Eligibility

3.1 Membership eligibility shall be determined by the relevant Schedule to this Policy.

Membership Records

3.2 Membership must be administered through Strath Union systems.

3.3 Personal information held outside Union systems must only be retained where approved by Strath Union and managed in accordance with data protection legislation.

Membership Fees

3.4 Affiliated Membership Organisations may charge membership fees where appropriate.

Responsibilities of Members

3.5 Members must comply with:

- This Policy;
- The Code of Conduct;
- All relevant Union policies.

3.6 Each organisation must ensure members are informed of these requirements.

Temporary Precautionary Measures

3.7 No Affiliated Membership Organisation may suspend or remove a member from membership.

3.8 Where immediate action is reasonably necessary to protect members or prevent further disruption, a committee may temporarily exclude an individual from meetings, activities or communication platforms for up to seven calendar days.

3.9 This is a precautionary safeguarding measure only and is not disciplinary action.

3.10 The decision must:

- Be agreed by at least two committee members, one of whom must be the President (or equivalent) or another committee member authorised by the Union;
- Be recorded in writing;
- Be reported to Strath Union as soon as possible and no later than 24 hours after the incident.

3.11 Upon notification, Strath Union shall review the matter in accordance with its Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures and determine whether any further action is required.

3.12 The temporary removal shall automatically expire after seven calendar days unless otherwise directed by Strath Union.

4 Governance

Committee

- 4.1 Every Affiliated Membership Organisation must have a democratically elected committee responsible for administering its affairs.
- 4.2 Each organisation must have the minimum office-bearers specified within its relevant Schedule.
- 4.3 Affiliated Membership Organisations may establish Representative Committee Positions that are reserved for members of a specific cohort, such as year groups, widening participation groups, or inclusion-focused communities.
- 4.4 Where a Representative Committee Position is restricted on the basis of a widening participation or inclusion characteristic, eligibility must be based solely on self-identification. Organisations must not request or require members to provide evidence of their eligibility.
- 4.5 Only members who are eligible to stand for a Representative Committee Position may vote in the election for that role.
- 4.6 Additional committee positions may be established in accordance with the relevant Schedule.
- 4.7 All committee members must be student members of Strath Union.

Elections

- 4.8 Committee members must be elected annually by eligible members, unless otherwise provided in the relevant Schedule.
- 4.9 Election procedures must be fair, transparent and democratic.

Annual General Meeting (AGMs)

- 4.10 Each organisation must hold an Annual General Meeting during Semester 2 unless otherwise provided within the relevant Schedule or approved by Strath Union.
- 4.11 The AGM must:
 - Be open to all organisation members;
 - Be advertised to members at least one week in advance;
 - Include the election of committee members through a fair, democratic, and transparent process open to all eligible members;
 - Include the organisation's annual financial accounts;
 - Include any constitutional business; and
 - Be minuted, with the approved minutes uploaded to the Union website.

Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs)

- 4.12 Where committee or constitutional changes are required outside the AGM process, an Extraordinary General Meeting must be held.
- 4.13 EGMs must follow the same procedural standards as AGMs.

5 Affiliation

Applying for Affiliation

5.1 Applicants must:

- Agree to comply with Union policy;
- Submit committee details;
- Submit aims and objectives;
- Submit a constitution, terms of reference or other governing document in a format approved by Strath Union;
- Demonstrate that their purpose does not substantially duplicate another affiliated organisation;
- Not breach Union policy or charitable objectives.

New Organisations

5.2 Applications shall be considered in accordance with procedures approved by Strath Union.

Re-affiliation

5.3 Affiliation expires annually.

5.4 Failure to re-affiliate may result in:

- Loss of affiliation;
- Suspension of Union services;
- Freezing of accounts;
- Redistribution or disposal of equipment after one year.

5.5 Strath Union reserves the right to maintain or reinstate the affiliation of an organisation where it considers this necessary to support widening access, equality, inclusion or underrepresented student communities.

Withdrawal of Affiliation

5.6 Affiliation may be withdrawn:

- Voluntarily;
- Through Disciplinary Procedures;
- Where an organisation is inactive or fails to meet the requirements of this Policy.

6 Activities, Risk Management and Conduct

Access to Resources and Training

6.1 Organisations must complete any required training and comply with Union procedures before accessing specified Union systems or resources.

6.2 Mandatory training may include:

- Committee training;
- Finance training;
- Grant training;
- Risk assessment training.

Risk Assessments

6.3 Organisations must complete risk assessments for activities, events, trips, and other relevant operations as required by Strath Union.

6.4 An annual risk assessment must be completed covering ordinary activities.

6.5 Additional risk assessments and documentation may be required for trips, events, or activities outside ordinary operations.

6.6 Member participation in specified organisations or activities may be restricted where Strath Union determines, through risk assessment processes, that participation exceeds acceptable risk levels.

6.7 Strath Union reserves the right to impose additional safety requirements, restrictions, or conditions where necessary.

Events and Trips

6.8 Organisation committees are responsible for the planning and operation of all events and trips associated with the organisation.

6.9 For organised trips, organisations must provide the following:

- A risk assessment;
- Trip authorisation documentation;
- Full itineraries where requested;
- Student travel declarations.

6.10 Documentation must be submitted no later than 10 working days before the trip commences. Strath Union authorisation must be obtained in writing prior to the commencement of the trip.

Communications

6.11 Official organisation communications, including but not limited to notices of Annual General Meetings, Extraordinary General Meetings, constitutional changes, and information relating to Strath Union policies and the Code of Conduct, must be communicated through approved Strath Union systems.

- 6.12 Organisations may use alternative communication platforms for day-to-day activities and member engagement where these have been approved by the Committee.
- 6.13 All communications, regardless of platform, must comply with Strath Union policies, including the Code of Conduct, and any applicable legal requirements.

Equality and Accessibility

- 6.14 Organisations must consider accessibility and equal participation when planning activities and communications.
- 6.15 Where feasible, organisations should consider hybrid or digital engagement methods to improve accessibility.

7 Financial Regulations

General Financial Requirements

- 7.1 All organisation finances must be administered through Strath Union accounts and systems unless otherwise permitted in writing by Strath Union.
- 7.2 Without the prior written approval from Strath Union, organisations are prohibited from:
- Holding independent bank accounts outside Union control;
 - Depositing organisation funds into personal accounts;
 - Processing unofficial cash transactions outside approved procedures.
 - Undertaking crowdfunding unless approved in accordance with the Crowdfunding Policy. This is defined as raising funds from a large number of individuals, typically via designated online platforms.
- 7.3 The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring proper administration of organisation finances.
- 7.4 Strath Union reserves the right to investigate suspected financial misconduct and take action through Disciplinary Procedures.

Use of Organisation Funds

- 7.5 Organisation funds may only be used to further the aims and objectives of the organisation and benefit members.
- 7.6 Expenditure must comply with:
- Union policies and financial procedures;
 - Grant conditions;
 - Relevant legislation and charity obligations.
- 7.7 Organisations must declare any conflicts of interest between suppliers and members.
- 7.8 Failure to declare a conflict of interest may result in funding being withdrawn or disciplinary action.

- 7.9 Societies may not use Strath Union or society accounts to fundraise for the direct financial benefit of a named individual.

Grant Applications

- 7.10 Organisations may apply for funding through the relevant Union grant processes.
- 7.11 Organisations must have completed finance training and grant training prior to submitting a grant application. Applications submitted by organisations that have not completed both training requirements will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered.
- 7.12 When submitting a grant application, organisations must:
- Obtain and submit three quotations from different suppliers where expenditure exceeds a threshold specified by Union procedures;
 - Include evidence of quotations within the application.
- 7.13 Where obtaining three quotations is not reasonably possible, organisations must provide written justification for review by the staff or committee designated by Strath Union to administer funding.
- 7.14 Exceptions may be considered in circumstances including:
- Sole suppliers or specialist providers;
 - Charity shop or second-hand purchases;
 - Limited supplier availability.
- 7.15 Strath Union may require organisations to complete a grant report detailing how awarded funds were used as a condition of funding.
- 7.16 Grant reports are mandatory for all awards from the Arts and Culture Fund.

Grants

- 7.17 Unused grant funding may be withdrawn according to timelines set by Strath Union.
- 7.18 All remaining grant balances may be reclaimed at the end of the academic year unless otherwise agreed.

External Funding

- 7.19 Organisations may seek external sponsorship or funding, provided such funding does not conflict with Union policy.
- 7.20 Organisations must ensure that all external funding is paid directly into their Strath Union account and not into any personal or external account.
- 7.21 Organisations must not accept support from organisations or individuals prohibited by Union policy.

Spot Checks and Financial Oversight

- 7.22 Strath Union shall conduct annual spot checks on organisation finances during the months of May, June, and July.

- 7.23 A minimum of ten organisations holding Union funds shall be selected at random each year for spot checks.
- 7.24 Additional spot checks may be conducted at the direction of Strath Union Senior Management.
- 7.25 Spot checks shall normally be conducted jointly by the Opportunities Team and Finance Team, with oversight from Strath Union Senior Management.
- 7.26 The scope of spot checks may include:
- Review of expenditure and receipts;
 - Verification of grant spending;
 - Compliance with procurement procedures;
 - Compliance with financial controls and Union procedures;
 - Review of cash handling or event income where relevant.
- 7.27 Any exceptions, concerns, or suspected irregularities identified through spot checks shall be escalated to Strath Union Senior Management.
- 7.28 Serious concerns may additionally be reported to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

8 Discipline and Dispute Resolution

- 8.1 Disputes within organisations should first be addressed internally where appropriate.
- 8.2 Where issues cannot be resolved informally, matters shall be referred to relevant Strath Union Complaints or Disciplinary Procedures.
- 8.3 Breaches of this Policy may result in sanctions including:
- Restrictions on organisation activities;
 - Withdrawal of funding;
 - Suspension of privileges;
 - Withdrawal of affiliation.
 - Suspension or termination of Strath Union membership, where permitted under the relevant Strath Union policies and Disciplinary Procedures.

9 Review

- 9.1 This Policy shall be reviewed periodically by Strath Union to ensure compliance with legal, financial, governance, and operational requirements.
- 9.2 Strath Union reserves the right to amend procedures, guidance, and operational requirements where necessary.

Schedule 1 – Societies

This Schedule applies only to organisations recognised by Strath Union as Societies.

1 Definition

- 1.1 A Society is an Affiliated Membership Organisation established to bring together students around a shared academic, cultural, creative, recreational, political, faith-based, volunteering or social interest.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 Societies exist to:
- Develop shared interests;
 - Organise activities and events;
 - Provide opportunities for participation;
 - Build communities and a sense of belonging around common interests;
 - Provide opportunities for social engagement, leadership, and personal development.

3 Membership

- 3.1 Membership is ordinarily open to all members of Strath Union.
- 3.2 Restrictions on membership may only apply where approved by Strath Union for widening participation or inclusion purposes.
- 3.3 At least 75% of members must be current University of Strathclyde students.

4 Governance

Committee

- 4.1 Societies must comply with the governance requirements set out in the Affiliated Membership Organisations Policy.
- 4.2 Each Society must have:
- a President (or equivalent);
 - a Treasurer; and
 - any additional committee positions considered necessary by the Society.
- 4.3 Committee positions must ordinarily be open to all eligible members of the Society.

5 Society Assemblies

Purpose

- 5.1 The Society Assembly shall comprise all affiliated Societies and provide the principal forum for consultation, discussion and decision-making on matters relating to societies.

Meetings

5.2 Society Assembly meetings shall normally take place four times per academic year. Assemblies shall be open to all affiliated societies and members of the Societies Executive.

Voting

5.3 Each affiliated society shall be entitled to one vote.

5.4 Societies are expected to send a representative to each Society Assembly.

5.5 Failure to attend two or more meetings, unless the Society has provided reasonable justification accepted by Strath Union, may result in sanctions including:

- Temporary suspension of room booking privileges;
- Restrictions on grant access;
- Temporary freezing of society accounts.

Emergency Meetings

5.6 Emergency Society Assemblies may be convened at the request of:

- A majority of the Societies Executive; or
- A majority of affiliated societies.

6 Societies Executive

Composition

6.1 The Societies Executive shall consist of:

- The Activities President; and
- Six elected student members.

Elections

6.2 Societies Executive members, excluding the Activities President, shall be elected at the final Societies Assembly of each academic year.

6.3 Candidates must be current or previous committee members of an affiliated society.

6.4 Societies Executive members shall normally serve a one-year term, aligned with the academic calendar.

6.5 No Societies Executive member may serve more than two full terms in office.

6.6 Any vacancies or unfilled positions shall be filled by election at the next Societies Assembly, with successful candidates taking office immediately and serving until the end of the academic year.

Responsibilities

6.7 The Societies Executive is responsible for making decisions on society matters, including:

- Society affiliations;
- Society name and constitution changes;
- Grant applications.

Meetings

- 6.8 The quorum for Societies Executive meetings shall be 50% of elected members plus one but must never be less than three.

Conflict of Interest

- 6.9 Members of the Societies Executive must declare the nature and extent of any direct or indirect interest they have in an affiliated society, supplier, or any matter under consideration.
- 6.10 Where a member has, or could reasonably be perceived to have, a conflict of interest or conflict of duties, they must:
- Declare the conflict before the matter is considered;
 - Take no part in the discussion or decision-making process relating to the matter;
 - Not be counted towards the quorum for that item of business; and
 - Withdraw for the duration of any vote on the matter and not cast a vote.

7 Society Funding

- 7.1 Where funding is delegated to the Societies Executive, decisions shall be made in accordance with this Policy and any published grant guidance.
- 7.2 Each organisation is entitled to one Welcome Grant and one AGM Grant per academic year, subject to Union procedures and deadlines.
- 7.3 Unused Welcome Grant or AGM Grant funding may be withdrawn according to timelines set by Strath Union.

Schedule 2 – Membership Associations

1 Definition

- 1.1 A Membership Association is an Affiliated Membership Organisation established by, or recognised by, Strath Union to represent, support and foster community amongst a defined category of students.
- 1.2 Membership Associations exist to enhance the student experience of a recognised student community through social, academic, professional, cultural or peer-support activities and by identifying matters affecting their members.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 Membership Associations exist to:
- Foster a sense of belonging and community amongst their members;
 - Organise activities, events and initiatives that support the interests and wellbeing of their members;
 - Promote opportunities for networking, peer support and personal development;
 - Identify matters affecting their membership and engage constructively with Strath Union to improve the student experience;
 - Encourage participation in the wider activities and democratic life of Strath Union.
- 2.2 Membership Associations must operate in a manner that supports the charitable objectives and strategic priorities of Strath Union.

3 Membership

- 3.1 Membership must be open to all students who meet the eligibility criteria established for the Association by Strath Union.
- 3.2 Eligibility may be determined by:
- Programme or mode of study;
 - Student status;
 - Self-identification;
 - Another characteristic approved by Strath Union.
- 3.3 Where membership is based on self-identification, members must not be required to provide evidence of their eligibility.
- 3.4 Membership records must be maintained in accordance with the Affiliated Membership Organisations Policy.

4 Governance

- 4.1 Membership Associations must comply with the governance requirements set out in the Affiliated Membership Organisations Policy.
- 4.2 Each Association must have:
- a Chair (or equivalent);
 - a Treasurer; and
 - any additional committee positions considered necessary by the Association.
- 4.3 Committee positions must ordinarily be open to all eligible members of the Association.

5 Relationship with Strath Union

- 5.1 Membership Associations may raise matters affecting their membership with Strath Union and work collaboratively with Union staff and elected representatives to improve the student experience.
- 5.2 Membership Associations provide a valuable voice for their communities but do not replace or duplicate the representative functions of:
- Strath Union's Elected Officers;
 - Academic Representatives including Programme, Department, or Faculty Representatives; or
 - any other representative structures established by the Union's Constitution or Standing Policies.
- 5.3 Nothing in this Schedule prevents a Membership Association from contributing to consultation exercises, policy development or campaigns led by Strath Union.

6 Affiliation

- 6.1 Applications for recognition as a Membership Association shall be determined by Strath Union in accordance with the Affiliated Membership Organisations Policy.
- 6.2 In considering an application, Strath Union shall have regard to:
- Whether the proposed Association serves a clearly defined student community;
 - Whether there is sufficient evidence of student demand;
 - Whether the proposed aims and objectives align with Strath Union's charitable purposes and strategic priorities; and
 - Whether the proposed Association substantially duplicates the purpose of an existing Affiliated Membership Organisation or representative structure.

7 Support and Oversight

- 7.1 Membership Associations shall have access to resources, training, finance systems and support available under the Affiliated Membership Organisations Policy.

- 7.2 Strath Union may establish additional support arrangements, forums or engagement mechanisms for Membership Associations where considered appropriate.

8 Additional Provisions

- 8.1 Where Strath Union considers it necessary to ensure the continued support or representation of a recognised student community, it may:
- establish a Membership Association;
 - maintain the affiliation of a Membership Association notwithstanding the annual re-affiliation process; or
 - impose additional conditions of affiliation appropriate to the Association's purpose.

Schedule 3 – Action Groups

1 Definition

- 1.1 An Action Group is an Affiliated Membership Organisation established to enable students to organise collectively around a defined issue, campaign or objective.
- 1.2 Action Groups provide students with opportunities to research issues, develop campaigns, organise activities and advocate for positive change within the University, the wider community or society, in a manner consistent with the charitable purposes of Strath Union.
- 1.3 Action Groups are distinct from Societies and Membership Associations. They exist to pursue a defined purpose or campaign rather than to provide ongoing membership activities centred around a shared interest or student community.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 Action Groups exist to:
 - Identify issues affecting students or wider society;
 - Organise campaigns and activities that promote positive change;
 - Undertake research and gather evidence to inform campaigns;
 - Raise awareness of issues affecting students;
 - Encourage student participation in civic engagement and democratic activity;
 - Work collaboratively with Strath Union, students and external partners where appropriate.

3 Principles

- 3.1 Action Groups must operate in accordance with the following principles:
 - Student leadership;
 - Peaceful and lawful campaigning;
 - Respect for differing opinions;
 - Evidence-informed campaigning;
 - Equality, diversity and inclusion;
 - Compliance with Strath Union's charitable purposes and governing documents.
- 3.2 Action Groups must not undertake activities that are unlawful or which place Strath Union in breach of charity law or any legal obligation.

4 Membership

- 4.1 Membership must ordinarily be open to all members of Strath Union.

4.2 Where an Action Group exists to campaign on issues affecting a particular student community, participation should remain open wherever reasonably practicable while ensuring those directly affected are central to the Group's work.

4.3 Membership must be administered through Strath Union systems.

5 Leadership

5.1 Each Action Group must appoint, at minimum:

- a Lead Organiser (or Chair, or equivalent); and
- one additional student organiser.

5.2 Action Groups are not required to appoint a Treasurer unless they intend to apply for funding or manage expenditure.

5.3 Leadership appointments must be made through fair and democratic processes approved by Strath Union.

6 Campaign Objectives

6.1 Action Groups must maintain a clear statement of:

- Their aims and objectives;
- Campaign priorities;
- Planned activities; and
- Intended outcomes.

6.2 Campaign objectives must be submitted to Strath Union for approval and should be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant and achievable.

6.3 Where an Action Group has achieved its objectives or is no longer active, Strath Union may review its continued affiliation.

7 Activities

7.1 Action Groups may undertake activities including:

- Awareness campaigns;
- Consultations;
- Surveys and research;
- Petitions;
- Meetings and discussions;
- Educational events;
- Demonstrations or public events;

- Collaboration with other student groups;
- Submission of policy proposals through the Union's democratic structures.

7.2 Activities must comply with all Strath Union policies and applicable legislation.

8 Campaigning and Political Activity

8.1 Action Groups may campaign on issues affecting students and matters relevant to the charitable purposes of Strath Union.

8.2 Campaigns must:

- Be lawful;
- Be evidence-based where factual claims are made;
- Respect the rights of others to participate or disagree;
- Not present the views of the Action Group as official Strath Union policy unless adopted through the Union's democratic procedures.

8.3 Where activities may involve external organisations, political parties, elected representatives or public bodies, Action Groups must consult with Strath Union in advance where required by Union procedures.

9 Risk Management

9.1 Action Groups must complete any risk assessments required by Strath Union before undertaking activities.

9.2 Where activities involve demonstrations, public events, external speakers or activities away from campus, additional approval or documentation may be required.

9.3 Strath Union reserves the right to impose conditions or restrictions where this is necessary to protect participants, comply with legal obligations or manage reputational risk.

10 Finance

10.1 Action Groups may apply for funding where funding opportunities are made available by Strath Union.

10.2 Any expenditure must comply with the Financial Regulations contained within the Affiliated Membership Organisations Policy.

10.3 Action Groups must not establish independent bank accounts or hold funds outside Strath Union systems.

11 Communications

11.1 Action Groups may use Union systems and other appropriate communication platforms to engage members and promote their activities.

11.2 All communications must:

- Comply with the Code of Conduct;
- Comply with applicable law;
- Be respectful and evidence-based;
- Clearly distinguish between Action Group views and official Strath Union policy where appropriate.

12 External Relationships

12.1 Action Groups may collaborate with charities, community organisations, trade unions, campaign groups or public bodies where such collaboration supports their objectives and is consistent with Union policy.

12.2 No external organisation may direct or control the activities, decision-making or governance of an Action Group.

12.3 Any formal partnerships or funding arrangements must be approved by Strath Union.

13 Review and Dissolution

13.1 Strath Union may review the affiliation of an Action Group where:

- Its objectives have been achieved;
- It has become inactive;
- It no longer aligns with the charitable purposes or strategic priorities of Strath Union;
- It breaches Union policy.

13.2 Following consultation with the Action Group, Strath Union may withdraw affiliation in accordance with the Affiliated Membership Organisations Policy.