

UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON STUDENTS' UNION

BYE LAW 3 (General Meetings)

May 2010

General Meetings

Constitution and Terms of Reference

1. **Constitution**

General Meetings are meetings of the University of Brighton Students' Union. There shall be two types of General Meetings, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).

2. **Membership**

The Chair of the General Meeting shall be the Union Council Chair, elected in accordance with the Election Regulations. The membership of a General Meeting shall include:

- the Chair of Union Council;
- the Student Officer Trustees (Sabbatical Officers); and
- all Ordinary Members of the University of Brighton Students' Union.

The quorum is 50 persons entitled to vote including at least 60% of the Student Officer Trustees. If the quorum is challenged the meeting must be stopped for the chair to make a judgement whether there are 50 voting members present. If the chair determines there to be insufficient members present the meeting will be adjourned in accordance with the Constitution. If the chair judges that the meeting has reached the required quorum then the meeting will proceed. If this is challenged further a head count will be essential before the meeting can continue.

If such a quorum is not present within half an hour from the start time appointed for the meeting, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place subject to room availability or to such other day, time and place as the Trustees may determine and if at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting the Members present shall be a quorum.

No member may hold more than one seat at a General Meeting at one time.

Proof of Union Membership may be required to vote or speak at the General Meeting.

The Deputy Chair of the Union Council shall also be the Deputy Chair of all General Meetings. In both of their absences the members present and entitled to vote shall choose one of their numbers to be chair.

Members of the floor shall be entitled to:

1. Propose or second a motion or amendments;
2. Speak on any motion or amendment;
3. Vote on any item of debate;
4. Raise a point of order;
5. Move any procedural motion;
6. Call for a quorum count;
7. Call for a recount;
8. Request a ruling from the chair;
9. Request that a guest speaker address the meeting.

For a vote to be valid members must raise a card in to the air which will be provided to them at the meeting. The Chair is to make a judgement on whether any part has passed or not. Members can request a card count if the vote appears close. If necessary, people may be appointed by the Chair to assist with a count if one is requested and agreed.

Only one motion or amendment shall be debated at any one time. The debating procedure shall be outlined by the Chair.

3. **Attendance at Meetings**

The General Manager or his/her nominee shall and the External Trustees may attend meetings. The External Trustees may also speak at all General Meetings, but have no vote. Other Students' Union or University staff may be invited by the Chair to attend for those items where business relevant to their responsibilities is to be discussed.

Speaking rights may be granted to non-members of the Union if a two-thirds majority of the meeting agree it.

4. **Frequency of Meetings**

The Union shall normally hold an Annual General Meeting once in each calendar year and by no later than the end of the second academic term. Not more than 18 months shall pass between the date of one AGM and another. The AGM shall be held at such a time and place as the Trustees shall think suitable to allow the maximum number of members to attend. The minimum capacity venue for a General Meeting shall hold 200 people. An Annual General Meeting shall be called by at least 12 clear days' written notice, via an email to all members, amongst other forms of media.

The Trustees may call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) at any time. The Trustees shall call an EGM on receiving a requisition to that effect, signed by at least 500 Members having the right to attend and vote at general meetings. Union Council can call an EGM on receiving a 2/3 majority vote of the voting members. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called by at least five clear days' written notice, and within 12 clear days of receiving the request.

Notice of a general meeting shall specify the place, day and time of the meeting and general nature of the business to be transacted. The notice shall clearly state if the meeting is an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting.

Notice of General Meetings shall be given to every member and to the Trustees and any patron of the Union. The method of notifying members shall include a mix of media including email, posters, notices and other methods to be decided by the Board of Trustees.

The agenda for any General Meeting shall be posted on the Union website and in a minimum of one Union notice board on each University campus, a minimum of five clear days' before the meeting.

All motions put to the General Meeting and minutes of the previous General Meeting shall be displayed on the Union website, and in a minimum of one notice board on each University campus, a minimum of five clear days' before the AGM or EGM.

Annual and extraordinary general meetings may be carried out at one single venue or simultaneously at a maximum of three separate venues with a video, audio or other real-time link between venues. At the start of such meetings, each venue must indicate by majority vote that they are satisfied with the meeting set-up and technology.

All General Meetings must be held in rooms that are accessible to all members.

The Chair may, with the consent of a meeting at which a quorum is present (and shall if so directed by the meeting), adjourn the meeting from time to time and from place to place, but no business shall be transacted at an adjourned meeting other than business which might properly have been transacted at the meeting had the adjournment not taken place. When a meeting is adjourned for fourteen days or more, at least seven clear days' notice shall be given, specifying the time and place of the adjourned meeting and the general nature of the business to be transacted.

5. **Authority**

The General Meeting is authorised to take decisions on issues in line with its terms of reference. It is not authorised to make decisions on those issues which are properly the responsibility of the Board of Trustees or other Committees of the Board of Trustees, as set out in their respective terms of reference.

General Meetings shall take precedence over Union Council. Policy passed at a General Meeting shall overrule that passed at Union Council. Policy passed at General Meetings can be overruled by policy passed by referenda or by the Board of Trustees in accordance with the Constitution.

The General Meeting shall conduct its business in accordance with the Constitution of the University of Brighton Students' Union and its Bye-Laws.

6. **Duties**

The duties of General Meetings shall be;

6.1 The order of business of the Annual General Meeting shall be as follows:

1. Announcements – any student member of the Union may make an announcement at the discretion of the chair;
2. Minutes – of the previous AGM and any EGMs to have taken place since the last AGM. Grammatical accuracy points may be raised and amended to the minutes and then accepted by a majority vote before moving onto the next item of business;
3. Matters Arising – Any matters from the previous meeting;
4. Acceptance of the Agenda – alterations to the agenda may be made here.
 - a. Each alteration, including the addition of any Emergency Motion, must have a proposer and seconder. There will be one speech in favour and one against if available, and then the meeting shall move straight to the vote. A simple majority is required to accept an alteration.
 - b. After five minutes no new alterations may be proposed and the chair shall move to the vote on any current alteration as soon as possible;
5. Trustee Report – a report from the Board of Trustees of the Union's previous years activities to include a summary of the audited accounts from the previous financial year;
6. Approving the list of affiliations of the Union;
7. President's plan – the plan of the Executive Committee for the rest of the current academic year;
8. Motions – to allow members to talk on the motions, for and against and then to vote; and
9. Any Other Business – this should only be urgent matters that have arisen since the close of the agenda and will only be heard at the discretion of the Chair.

6.2 The order of business of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be as follows:

1. Acceptance of the Agenda;
2. Motions(s) – relating to the matters giving rise to the calling of the meeting; and
3. Any Other Business

7. **Reporting Procedures**

A copy of the draft minutes and the motions passed must be displayed on the Union website and on a minimum of one Union notice board on each University campus within five clear days following the meeting. They must remain up for a minimum of 20 clear days.

8. **Clerking Arrangements**

The Committee Secretary and Clerk to the Annual General Meeting/Emergency General Meeting will be the Marketing and Communications Assistant or appropriate other Union staff member.