



NOTTINGHAM TRENT STUDENTS' UNION

Nottingham Trent Students' Union Byelaws

**Subject to approval at Union Meeting on
Tuesday 29th April 2025**

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Part One – Making changes to Byelaws and Memorandum and Articles of Association

- 1) Changes to this document may be carried out by
 - 1.1 Two thirds majority vote at a Union Meeting or via a referendum.
 - 1.2 Through the process laid out in 6.1.1 within the Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- 2) Any changes will be subject to ratification by the Board of Trustees.
- 3) Amendments to Memorandum and Articles of Association are made through the process outlined in 1.7 within the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The student body will have no more than two weeks to make any amendments to proposals made by the Trustee Board.

Part Two – How decisions are made

- 1) Big Ideas are submitted via the NTSU website by student members. These proposals can include anything which could help to improve the student experience at NTU.
- 2) The Executive Committee meets at regular intervals to discuss student issues and the work of the Union. The Executive Committee is;
 - 2.1 President (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 2.2 Vice President Education (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 2.3 Vice President Postgraduate (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 2.4 Vice President Sport (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 2.5 Vice President Opportunities (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 2.6 Vice President Community and Welfare (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 2.7 Brackenhurst Officer (part time, unpaid).
- 3) Big Ideas that conflict with the Union's charitable purpose, regulatory requirements, or the law will not be permitted. This will be determined by the Executive Committee on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
- 4) Big ideas will be made available via the Union website to be voted upon and discussed. Each idea will be made available for at least ten working days. The proposer of the idea can request an idea is:
 - 4.1 For action by the Union.
 - 4.2 For discussion at a Union Select Committee.
 - 4.3 For the Union to convene a Union Action Committee.
- 5) For the Union to act under 4, a proposal must receive net fifty positive votes or carry the support of a two thirds majority of the Executive Committee.
- 6) For action by the Union, a member of the Executive Committee will then decide the course of action and report back to the student body.
- 7) A Union Select Committee is where a meeting is called for students, or specific groups of students, to discuss an issue. Those involved will be asked to provide evidence in advance of the meeting. Decision makers, such as university staff, will be invited to attend, and the Union will facilitate a session asking questions to them. The Union Select Committee can then propose solutions for decision makers to take forward.
- 8) A Union Action Committee is where a member of the Union's Executive Committee convenes a meeting of students based on proposals emerging from Big Ideas. The structure can be developed to suit the nature of the proposals but will generally involve getting groups of

students together, discussing a Big Idea, and proposing some solutions for the Union and students to take forward.

- 9) Where the Executive Committee do not consider any of 4.1–4.3 to be an appropriate route for a Big Idea, or consider it to require wider student consultation following 4.2 or 4.3, they may refer it to a Union meeting or referendum.
- 10) Union meetings shall be chaired by the President and the purpose of a Union meeting is to:
 - 10.1 Hold the Executive Committee to account for their work;
 - 10.2 Receive a report on the progress of Big Ideas;
 - 10.3 Receive an update on the work of NTSU;
 - 10.4 To discuss any proposed changes to NTSU governing documents;
 - 10.5 To discuss and vote upon any Big Ideas which the Executive Committee have referred to Union meeting.
- 11) The quoracy for a vote at a Union meeting shall be 100, however this is not required for all other business to go ahead. Union meeting is open to all full Union members.
- 12) Staff members may attend Union Meeting in a non-voting capacity to take minutes and provide advice and support if requested by the President.
- 13) Union Meetings shall occur at least twice per year; additional meetings may be called by a two thirds majority of the Executive Committee.
- 14) The outcomes of the Union's Select Committees, Action Committees, or Union Meetings, shall be reported to the student body on a termly basis.
- 15) Any Big Ideas that require the Union to take a position on an issue will expire after two years, unless the Executive Committee vote to retain them for another year.
- 16) Any Big Ideas that require ongoing action from the Union will continue until an issue is addressed, or a new Executive Committee is elected, who may decide an issue has been resolved.

Part Three – Annual Meetings

- 1) The Union shall hold an annual meeting of the Student Members once in each Academic Year. The meeting shall be chaired by the President or a Vice President in their absence.
- 2) The annual meeting of the Student Members shall be held at such time and place to allow the maximum number of Student Members to attend.
- 3) The business of the meeting shall include:
 - 3.1 Ratification of minutes of the previous annual meeting of the Student Members;
 - 3.2 Receiving the report of the Trustees on the Union's activities since the previous annual meeting of the Student Members;
 - 3.3 Receiving the accounts of the Union for the previous financial year;
 - 3.4 Approving the list of affiliations of the Union;
 - 3.5 Open questions to the Officer Trustees by the Student Members.
- 4) All Union members are invited to attend.
- 5) Staff members may attend in a non-voting capacity to take minutes and provide advice and support if requested by the President.
- 6) No business shall take place at the Annual Meeting unless 100 voting members are present. The meeting will be rearranged to a later date if there are not 100 voting members present.
- 7) Meetings shall take place once per year.

Part Four – Student Liberation, Equality, Diversity & inclusion Groups (LEDI Groups)

- 1) Groups of interested students shall submit an expression of interest to establish a Student Liberation, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Group through the Big Ideas process outlined in Part Two.
- 2) The approval of a Student Liberation, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Group will be considered by the Union's Executive Committee for approval.
- 3) The Executive Committee shall report to the Annual Meeting on the establishment of Student Liberation, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Groups.
- 4) The purpose of the Student Liberation, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Groups will be to:
 - 4.1 To improve the University and wider experience of students;
 - 4.2 To discuss policy, practice and campaigns;
 - 4.3 To keep the Executive Committee informed on issues affecting students;
 - 4.4 To work with NTSU Societies and other Union-affiliated organisations to identify areas where University or Union activities or facilities could be implemented or improved to enhance the experience for students;
 - 4.5 To encourage engagement with the Union and submit ideas through the Big Ideas platform.
- 5) Each group will work with NTSU to discuss resources and support for activity.
- 6) Any student member who self-identifies as a member of the demographic for one or more of the Student Liberation, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Groups may join as a member of that Group.
- 7) Each group is empowered to make their own meeting arrangements in discussion with NTSU staff and officers.

Part Five – Referenda

- 1) A referendum should consist of a question that is put to the membership which requires a 'yes' or 'no' answer.
- 2) All proposals which involve a Union-wide disaffiliation must be decided by a referendum.
- 3) Referenda that conflict with the Union's charitable purpose, regulatory requirements, or the law will not be permitted. This will be determined by the Executive Committee on behalf of the Board of Trustees.
- 4) All referenda that pass are subject to ratification by the Board of Trustees, who reserve the right to overturn the result of a referendum.
- 5) A referendum may be called by:
 - 5.1 a resolution of the Board;
 - 5.2 in writing by a majority of Sabbatical Officers;
 - 5.3 a resolution of the Student Members; or
 - 5.4 a Secure Petition signed by at least 200 Student Members. This should be submitted to the Union's Deputy Returning Officer.
- 6) The timing and length of the referendum voting period will be decided by the Union's Deputy Returning Officer.
- 7) The Deputy Returning Officer will create a set of regulations for each referendum.
- 8) All referenda shall be passed with a simple majority where at least 400 student members cast a vote.
- 9) All referendum votes shall be carried out online using a secret ballot.

Part Six – Elections

Section One: Purpose

- 1) These rules are to be used for any election which involves electing Executive Officers, or Mansfield Officers.
- 2) Elections for Executive Officers and Mansfield Officers will be carried out by cross-campus secret ballots.

Section Two: Returning Officer

- 1) The Returning Officer will be a nominee of the National Union of Students unless any conflict exists. In the event of a conflict, the CEO will select an alternative external Returning Officer. They will be presented with a copy of the Election Regulations.
- 2) The Election Regulations can be amended by the Returning Officer if it is deemed necessary for the free and fair running of the election.
- 3) The Deputy Returning Officer will be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer and shall assist the Returning Officer in advising and ruling on all elections-related matters.

Section Three: Election Rules

- 1) A copy of the rules and regulations will be issued to all candidates who will sign to say they have received them.
- 2) A formal notice of elections should be issued no later than 21 days before the start of voting and 7 days before the opening of nominations.
- 3) The notice of elections should include:
 - 3.1 Date and time when nominations open and close;
 - 3.2 Procedure for nomination;
 - 3.3 Date and location of any Q&A's;
 - 3.4 Rules and regulations for elections;
 - 3.5 Date and time when voting opens and closes;
 - 3.6 Date and time when the results will be announced;
 - 3.7 Contact details for election queries;
 - 3.8 The voting mechanism to be used for the election.
- 4) Nominations shall open no later than 14 days before the start of voting.
- 5) Nominations shall close no later than 7 days before the start of voting.
- 6) Members eligible to stand for election must submit an official online nomination form, before the close of nominations, the requirements of which will be set out in the Election Regulations.

- 7) If any of the information set out in the Elections Regulations is missing from the candidate's nomination, the nomination may become invalid, and the candidate will be asked to resubmit the nomination. If the nomination is not submitted in full by the nomination deadline, the candidate will be excluded from the election.
- 8) A candidate may only stand for one position at a time.

Section Four: Breaches of Rules and Regulations

- 1) All suspected rule breaches must be made in writing to the Deputy Returning Officer and emailed to elections@su.ntu.ac.uk no later than 24 hours after the incident has occurred or the concern has been realised.
- 2) The Deputy Returning Officer will communicate with all parties involved in any dispute electronically via email.
- 3) For a complaint to be considered, clear evidence must be attached which warrants the Deputy Returning Officer making a judgement. Acceptable forms of evidence include but are not limited to:
 - 3.1 Photographs and videos;
 - 3.2 Screen shots of web pages;
 - 3.3 Copies of emails;
 - 3.4 Witnesses.
- 4) The Deputy Returning Officer will investigate any reported rule breaches and make a decision on any potential sanctions normally within 24 hours. The Deputy Returning Officer has the power to choose a range of sanctions at their discretion, ranging from limited campaigning bans to exclusion from the election.
- 5) For issues of gross misconduct concerning candidates and/or their campaigners, the Union reserves the right to use another policy or procedure, for example the 'NTSU Members' Code of Conduct' in addition to these Election Rules.
- 6) The absolute deadline for receiving complaints will be one hour after voting has closed.

Section Five: Appeal Process

- 1) Where candidates, have received a sanction, they have the right to appeal to the Returning Officer. The Deputy Returning Officer will submit the appeal on behalf of the candidate.
- 2) The Returning Officer will hear the complaint made against a candidate or their supporters and will take action if they feel a rule has been broken.
- 3) The Returning Officer can rule that there is insufficient evidence that a rule has been broken and can overrule the original decision of the Deputy Returning Officer.
- 4) If the Returning Officer reaches the decision that the complaint should be upheld, they can either agree with the original decision of the Deputy Returning Officer or decide to increase or decrease the original penalty imposed.

- 5) If a candidate submits an appeal to a sanction levied by the Deputy Returning Officer, the sanction in question is suspended until the Returning Officer rules on the appeal.

5.1 In the event that the Returning Officer rejects the Appeal and chooses to uphold the Deputy Returning Officer's sanction (or increase the severity of said sanction), and there is insufficient time to carry out the sanction, the candidate may be excluded from the election.

- 6) The Deputy Returning Officer will inform the candidate of the Returning Officer's ruling within 24 hours of the ruling being taken.
- 7) The Returning Officer's ruling is final.

Section Six: Election Results

- 1) The results for the elections will be calculated within 24 working hours after the close of the voting period, subject to the following:
 - 1.1 Calculation of the voting must take place within the presence of the Deputy Returning Officer.
 - 1.2 Calculation of the voting taking place where there are no candidates or campaigners present;
 - 1.3 All complaints being settled as per Section 4, Point 6.
- 2) The results will be announced by the Deputy Returning Officer or their nominee.

Section Seven: Executive Officer Elections Arrangements

- 1) Executive Officer positions will be elected in the second term of the academic year. The positions available will be reviewed on an annual basis. They are currently:
 - 1.1 President (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 1.2 Vice President Education (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 1.3 Vice President Postgraduate (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 1.4 Vice President Sport (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 1.5 Vice President Opportunities (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 1.6 Vice President Community and Welfare (full time sabbatical, paid);
 - 1.7 Brackenhurst Officer (part time non-sabbatical, unpaid).
- 2) The Executive Officers will serve for a period of one calendar year from the first working day of July until the last working day of June of the next calendar year.
- 3) To stand for an Executive Officer position the individual must be a fully enrolled student at Nottingham Trent University at the time of nomination. An incumbent Executive Officer can seek re-election only once as stipulated by the Education Act 1994:
 - 3.1 To stand for Vice President Postgraduate the individual must be a fully enrolled postgraduate student at Nottingham Trent University at the time of nomination;

3.2 To stand for Brackenhurst Officer the individual must be a fully enrolled student studying at Brackenhurst Campus at the time of nomination and throughout their term in office.

- 4) An incoming Executive Officer will not be able to take up their role and the position will be considered vacant if, prior to the commencement of their term in office:

4.1 They cease to be a member of the Union;

4.2 Their student status is revoked or materially affected;

4.3 The University refuses to recognise the individual as a representative, in line with the Education Act 1994.

- 5) If, in line with the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Union, the Board of Trustees opt to fill a vacant Executive Officer position, the arrangements for the by-election will be decided by the Deputy Returning Officer.

Section Eight: NUS Democratic Event Arrangements

- 1) The Union will adhere to the rules of NUS UK/NUS Charity in electing and selecting its participants for NUS democratic events.
- 2) The Union President will attend all NUS democratic events where they are entitled to do so. They may appoint a nominee on their behalf if they wish.

Section Nine: Mansfield Officer Election Arrangements

- 1) The Mansfield Officer is an unpaid voluntary role which does not fall under the role of the Executive Officers.
- 2) The Mansfield Officer position will be elected in the second term of the academic year.
- 3) The Mansfield Officer will serve for a period of one calendar year from the first working day of July to the final working day of June of the following calendar year.
- 4) To stand for Mansfield Officer, the individual must be a fully enrolled student at Nottingham Trent University at the time of nomination and throughout their term in office and must be studying at Mansfield campus.
- 5) If the Mansfield Officer position becomes vacant, a by-election may take place during a time and place decided by the Executive Committee.

Part Seven – Trustee Board

Section One: Roles and Responsibilities

- 1) All matters pertaining to the governance and duties of the Trustee Board are outlined in the Memorandum and Articles of Association except for matters relating to the selection of members of the Appeals Panel and its procedures following the removal of a trustee.

Section Two: Appeals Panel for the Removal of Trustees

- 1) The Appeals Panel shall consist of the members stated in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and will be appointed by the Supervising Trustee (or their nominated representative):
 - 1.1 one nominee of Nottingham Trent University;
 - 1.2 one independent student member who is not a Trustee;
 - 1.3 one Chief Executive of another Students' Union;
 - 1.4 one student officer of another Students' Union.
- 2) The Supervising Trustee (or their nominated representative) will appoint a chair from the members listed above and will:
 - 2.1 Approach the University Secretary and Clerk to the Board of Governors for a nominee from Nottingham Trent University;
 - 2.2 Appoint an independent person who is a student member and not a trustee;
 - 2.3 Approach an appropriate body, for example the National Union of Students', to appoint a Chief Executive of another students' union;
 - 2.4 Approach an appropriate body, for example the National Union of Students', to appoint a student officer of another students' union.
- 3) The Supervising Trustee (or their nominated representative) will ensure that no person is appointed who has any conflict of interest or prior involvement in the case.
- 4) The Supervising Trustee (or their nominated representative) will ensure the Appeals Panel has all the support and guidance required to adequately fulfil their role.

Section Three: Appeals Panel Procedures

- 1) A Trustee removed from office in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles Association shall be informed in writing of their right to appeal along with a copy of these procedures.
- 2) An appeal can only be made on any of the following grounds:
 - 2.1 Any procedural error(s) but only if substantial as to undermine the fairness of the resolution to remove the Trustee;
 - 2.2 Any errors of fact which were fundamental to the Boards decision;
 - 2.3 That the decision was unreasonable and should not be allowed to stand.

- 3) A Trustee removed from office who wishes to appeal must do so in writing to the Chair of the Board and Supervising Trustee within 14 days of receiving the resolution in writing from the Board.
- 4) The appeal must contain the grounds for appeal stated in Section 3 Point 2 and include any evidence to be relied on to support the appeal.
- 5) The Union will endeavour to appoint the Appeals Panel in Section 2 within 10 days and process the appeal within a further 10 days.
- 6) Where circumstances beyond the control of the Union impact these timelines, the Supervising Trustee will keep the removed Trustee informed of the expected timeline.
- 7) The Appeals Panel will review the appeal, taking account of any regulation(s) or best practice issued by the Charity Commission. It is not expected that Trustees, removed Trustees, or other parties will be required to attend the Appeals Panel however the panel may request additional evidence.
- 8) The Appeals Panel will make a decision based on the balance of probabilities and by a simple majority of the Panel. If required, the Chair of the Appeals Panel will hold a casting vote.
- 9) The Appeals Panel can make either of the following decisions:
 - 8.1 Reject the appeal or
 - 8.2 Uphold the appeal.
- 9) If the appeal is rejected, the Chair of the Appeals Panel will write to the Chair of the Board and Supervising Trustee, and the removed Trustee, to inform them of this decision, the rationale, and note that there is no further right of appeal.
- 10) If the appeal is upheld the Chair of the Appeals Panel will write to the Chair of the Board and Supervising Trustee and the removed Trustee to inform them of this decision, the rationale, and the removed Trustee will be reinstated subject to the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- 11) As far as is reasonably practicable the Appeals Panel procedure should be conducted in a private and confidential manner with all associated documents lodged with the CEO for storage in line with Data Protection policies.