



Societies Guide

Written by Adwoa Darko (2016/17) and Peadar Connolly-Davey (2019/20)

It will be assumed that societies leaders are aware of the information & rules contained in this Guide
– ignorance won't pass for an excuse.

Contents

Introduction	3
Safer Spaces Policy	
1. Setting up a society	
2. Your Responsibilities	
3. Finance	
4. Communications	
5. Organising Events	
6. Health and Safety	
7. Discipline	

Introduction

Without clubs and societies the Students' Union would not be what it is and without the support of the Union, clubs and societies would not be able to achieve as many of their aims as they do. In this important relationship there are rights and requirements for both the Union and clubs/societies.

Getting involved with societies will give you the chance to meet people with similar interests and more often than not your group of friends will be made around the society or sports team you're involved in. It is also a vital way of getting involved with the Student body. Teams and societies are run by SOAS students and funded by the Students' Union so that YOU can get more out of your time here. Membership of all the teams and societies is open to every SOAS student. So you don't have to be Muslim to join the Islamic Society or Southeast Asian to enjoy their delicious dinner-parties. So what are you waiting for, follow the instructions on setting up a society!

The Students' Union provides clubs and societies with:

- Access to SOAS facilities and use of Union facilities
- Funding
- Assistance from officers and staff
- Opportunities to participate in the Societies Fayre and to publicity in the Union Handbook

In return, clubs and societies must, for example:

- Be open to all SOAS students
- Elect a president, treasurer and secretary
- Accept responsibility for safety and freedom of speech
- Attend UGMs

This Guide is designed to give you more detailed information about these and other rights and responsibilities so that your Society can run as smoothly as possible.

This booklet is also *the* law on SOAS SU societies: if you ever receive contradictory information, believe this Guide.

Please remember: it will be assumed that you are aware of the information and the rules contained in this Handbook – ignorance won't pass for an excuse.

For all enquiries about societies contact
SU Co-President Activities & Events Peadar Connolly-Davey.
Tel: 020 7898 4994 Email: pc61@soas.ac.uk

You can also contact:
Sports, Activities & Events Co-Ordinator Jesse Doodoo, jd124@soas.ac.uk
General Manager Anna Dodridge, ad88@soas.ac.uk

SAFER SPACE POLICY

SOAS Students' Union safer space policy is intended to help SOAS SU be a supportive, non-threatening environment for all who participate. We want our spaces to be welcoming and engaging, and we encourage everyone, both from the SOAS community and beyond, to be proactive in creating an atmosphere where the safety of others is validated. In this spirit, we are survivor-centric and survivor-oriented, and all forms of violence, abuse, sexual assault and discrimination will not be tolerated.

Everyone entering SOAS Students' Union spaces is asked to be aware of their language and behavior, and to think about whether it might be harmful to others. We define oppressive behavior as any conduct that demeans, marginalizes, rejects, threatens or harms anyone on the basis of ability, activist experience, age, cultural background, education, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, language, nationality, physical appearance, race, religion, self-expression, sexual orientation, species, status as a parent or other such factors.

By entering SOAS Students' Union and/or participating in SOAS SU events and activities, you agree to abide by the following guidelines:

- Respect people's opinions, beliefs, experiences and differing points of view.
- Respect everyone's identity and background, including pronouns and names. Do not assume anyone's gender identity, sexual preference, survivor status, economic status, background, health, etc.
- Respect everyone's physical and emotional boundaries. Check in before discussing topics that may be triggering (e.g. sexual abuse, physical violence or encounters with police), and use trigger warning during presentations and events. Physical and/or verbal threats will not be tolerated at SOAS SU under any circumstances. Disruptive individuals may be asked to leave the space.

- Be responsible for your own actions; be aware that your actions have an effect on others, despite what your intentions may be. Listen and change your behavior if someone tells you that you are making them uncomfortable.
- Be aware of your prejudices and privileges and the space you take up.

The SOAS SU staff members and officers are empowered to enforce these rules. If you cannot abide by the guidelines mentioned above, SOAS SU reserves the right to ask you to leave.

If you experience harassment, abuse, or sexual assault, or if a perpetrator of sexual violence is interfering with your participation or presence at an event or in a space, please approach a Welfare Contact or an SOAS SU staff member whom you feel comfortable talking to in person or via email. They are here to help with any conflicts arising from the violation of our policies.

We welcome the continuing discussion about and improvement of this policy.

1. Setting Up A Society

We hope this section will encourage and help you to start a new SU club or society from scratch.

If you would like to register a society first have a look at the existing list of active societies to make sure something similar doesn't already exist and then follow the 5 steps below to create a new society. You will be emailed the forms after you complete the online registration.

1. **Register Online**
2. **Submit governance documents (Constitution, Indemnity Form)**
3. **Provide Society information (Blurb, Annual Plan and Budget)**
4. **Submit Membership List**
5. **Complete Annual Risk Assessment**

1. **Register Online:** All Societies are required to register every year. This is to ensure we have a live list of all our active societies and sports teams as well as an up to date database of contacts so we can share important updates and information. This is also the first step when creating a new society. Head over to this link to register:

<https://soasunion.org/getinvolved/societies/new-society/registration/>

2. **Submit Forms (via email):**
 - **Constitution:** The constitution describes the aims and objectives of your society and how it will be governed. There is a model constitution you can use for this.
 - **Indemnity Form:** We ask you to sign an indemnity form as well as the equality and diversity statement so that you affirm that you understand and will uphold equality and diversity standards in the running of your society/club.
3. **Provide information about your society and budget:**
 - **Society Blurb** This is a brief overview of the society, its aims and objectives, and the types of activities/events you plan to host. This may be used in the SU Handbook and on the Website.
 - **Annual Plan:** The annual plan gives you a better idea of what you want to achieve; plans for the year ahead, the society's aims and will be a starting point for planning the society's year. It will also help with preparing your budget as you will have laid out your ambitions for the year and be able to estimate costs
 - **Budget Form:** This is a bid/request for a budget for the society. This should be calculated based on the activities you plan to host over the year. The more detail provided, the more likely bids are to be successful. Budgets will only be allocated after you have completed all aspects of registration.
4. **4) Submit Membership List:** All societies/Clubs must have a minimum of 16 active participants. When starting a new society once you have

collated interest, complete excel spreadsheet of the names/Student IDs and send it in for them to be added as members on the SU Website.

If someone signs up for your society, you may under no circumstances exclude any student(s) from the society, unless for a reason agreed upon with the Co-President Activities and Events.

- 5. Complete Annual Risk Assessment:** The annual risk assessment asks you to consider potential risks related to the regular/key events you plan to host. By considering potential risks and putting in place control measures you will create safer, more welcoming and better activities

New societies are entitled to a stall at the Freshers' Fayre, as well as one room booking before your Society is recognised, to help you attract members.

2. Your responsibilities

This section provides you with a concise summary of all the responsibilities clubs & societies have: SOAS SU Regulations.

We have also included further information on how to:

- Enforce equal opportunities,
- Comply with charity law,
- Organise democratic elections
- Ensure compliance with Freedom Of Expression statement
- Divide responsibilities amongst the society's committee members.

SOAS SU clubs & societies responsibilities:

General:

- 2.1 To abide by the Society's Constitution and the Students' Union Constitution, Clubs and Societies Regulations and Union policy. The union constitution can be found here:
<https://soasunion.org/democracy/constitution>
- 2.2 To submit a Membership List, Union Indemnity Form and Committee details in the beginning of each academic year (or the summer before)
- 2.3 To ensure the SU holds an updated Constitution of the Society, which states at least
 - a. The aims and objectives of the Society
 - b. The number of Society Committee members and their respective functions.
 - c. The procedure for the election of new committee members.
 - d. The procedure for amending the society's Constitution
- 2.4 The Students' Union may add to, delete, and amend the Societies' Responsibilities

Membership:

- 2.5 To be open to all SOAS students. A General Meeting of the Society may also elect other than SOAS students to honorary membership. However no more than 20% of the membership may be made up of non-SOAS Union members without explicit permission from the Co-President Activities & Events (as this affects funding)
- 2.6 To ensure that membership of the Society shall not confer automatic membership of any other organisation, unless specified on enrolment.
- 2.7 To form, each society must have at least 16 SOAS Union members, a society with less must make representation to the Co-President

Activities & Events who will make a decision whether the society can be ratified.

Leadership:

- 2.8 To elect its Committee (at least a President, a Secretary and a Treasurer) and inform the SU of the results of any election within two weeks. No member can hold more than one post at the time. All officers must be SOAS Students. If for some reason an officer is elected who is not a SOAS Student, this must be cleared with the Co-President Activities & Events.
- 2.9 To elect at least one of the Committee members for the next academic year before the end of the second term to ensure SU has a main contact.**
- 2.10 To hold at least one General Meeting every academic year in order to discuss the activities and finances since the last Meeting.

Finance and Money:

- 2.11 To nominate a member of the society (usually the Treasurer) to take responsibility of the society's finances.
- 2.12 Any debts incurred by the society shall be the sole responsibility of the society's Committee as per the Union Indemnity Form. The Union will reimburse properly documented expenses up to the amount of a society's budget, however the SU shall hold no responsibility for the financial state of any Society. The Union will not reimburse or pay for anything which does not have proper supporting evidence or that it believes does not fit the Union's finance regulations.
- 2.13 To keep accurate and up-to-date accounts of all income and expenditure
- 2.14 To submit the accounts to the Union whenever requested and to submit a photocopy of the accounts or the Society Expenditure Sheet at the end of the academic year.

Communications:

- 2.15 Each Society has a page on the Students Union website to keep membership lists, sign up new members and send emails
- 2.16 To add all events to the SU Website (see page **X** for more details)
- 2.17 To submit summaries of organised and planned events in the end of each term and a brief introduction to the Society at the end of the academic year
- 2.18 To send a representative of the society to Societies Forums and Union General Meetings.

Equal opportunities policy:

- 2.19 The SOAS SU is committed to Freedom of Expression as outlined in the Union Constitution.**

2.20 In all functions at SOAS, or whilst using the name of the SOAS SU in publication of any sort, clubs and societies must ensure that prejudice based on race, nationality, gender identity, sexuality, disability, religion, social class, financial capability or age is not disseminated in any form.

2.21 Any allegation against a Society will be thoroughly investigated by the SU under the Union Constitution complaints procedure and might result in action taken towards the Officers of the society in the forms of restriction from budget/room bookings and in extreme cases, the dissolving of the Society.

Charity law:

2.22 The SOAS SU and thus also its clubs and societies have a charitable status.

2.23 Charities Guidelines, published by Charity Commission, stipulate that a charity can't have political objectives as its main aim and political activities must not dominate charity's activities. Charity can, however, engage in political activity if it will further the stated aims of the charity.

2.24 Charities may also seek to inform and educate the public on particular issues, including information about the solution they advocate. But they must do so on the basis of a reasoned case and their views must be expressed with a proper sense of proportion.

2.25 The Union allows political societies under its aim to further the educational aims of the School, however this cannot be the main aim of the Union. It is particularly important for societies with political aims therefore to observe the rules on freedom of speech.

Democratic elections:

2.30 The SU expects societies to elect their leaders in a democratic and orderly fashion. If for some reason you feel that these guidelines are unrealistic in relation to your Society, please consult the Co-President Activities & Events.

2.31 At least one Officer for the next academic year must be elected during the second term.

2.32 The Society shall run an open election, the method of election shall be determined by the club or society but shall be publicised at least one week in advance. Should there be any complaints about the fairness of the elections, the Co-President Activities & Events will investigate and may facilitate another election.

2.33 Only members of a Society shall be eligible to vote or stand as candidates in that society's election.

2.34 Where the method of election is by a show of hands, the candidates must not be present during the vote.

- 2.35 The result of the election shall be posted on the day following the election and communicated to the Co-President Activities & Events.
- 2.36 The Co-President Activities & Events must be informed of any irregularities during the election within 72 hours of the election having taken place.
- 2.37 Complaints will be handled by the Union Complaints Procedure as outlined in the Union Constitution.

Committee's responsibilities:

- 2.38 Each Society must have at least three Committee members (generally a president, a treasurer and a secretary), but are free to choose the number and functions of its other committee members (e.g. events co-ordinator)
- 2.39 The role of the President includes:
- Being the main liason with the Students Union
 - Attending Union General Meetings (UGMs)
 - Being the principal organizer for events and room bookings (you are responsible for its usage/any damage)
 - Submitting the Risk Assessments for events
 - Devising and submit an Annual Plan
 - Planning Annual General Meetings (AGM)
 - Dealing with any complaints from members/Union
 - Ensuring compliance with Union policies in particular the Equality and Diversity Policy
- 2.40 The role of the Treasurer includes:
- Monitoring expenditure
 - Attending UGMs
 - Overseeing the appropriate transfer of money for any charity fundraising events
 - Being responsible for the collection and deposit of money raised
 - Looking for sponsorships/alternative sources of funding
 - Submitting annual budget
- 2.41 The role of the secretary includes:
- Manage calendar of events (UGMs/AGM)
 - Manage minutes from meetings
 - Manage membership lists
 - Coordinate society's internal and public communications (i.e. social media)
 - Post events on the SU website
- 2.42 The division of responsibilities outlined above is a recommendation rather than a regulation – society's leaders will be held jointly responsible for fulfilling all these basic responsibilities.

3. Finance

This section will enlighten you on the financial side of running a club or society:

- Bank accounts
- Income – SU grants
- Expenditure
- Rules on Reimbursements
- Affiliations
- Reimbursement Procedure
- Income – profits & sponsorships

This section may seem long, but we do not want you to be out of pocket. Nevertheless, this is public money we are using and therefore must be accounted for properly.

Bank accounts:

- 3.1 Societies are not permitted to have their own individual bank accounts. Bank accounts which are already opened should be closed money passed to the SU for administration. Please contact Anna Dodridge, the SU General Manager for information on how this will be done.
- 3.2 You can check your society's budget and spending on the students union website:
<https://soasunion.org/getinvolved/societies/budgets/>

Income – SU grants:

- 3.3 SOAS SU provides financial support to each of its societies.
- 3.4 The overall Societies Budget will be set by the Co-President Activities & Events, Sports, Activities and Events Co-Ordinator and General Manager which is later approved by the Executive in the beginning of the academic year.
- 3.5 Grants have to be spent during the year they have been awarded. Funds can't be carried over into the next academic year, because the Students' Union must spend its budget by the end of the financial year. All bids for reimbursement must therefore be entered by the end of the third term.
- 3.6 Every society will be allocated a minimum amount of funding (approximately £100) even if they do not submit a budget in time. However they cannot claim this until they submit a budget to the Union.
- 3.7 The Union match funds up to £250 of income that is deposited by a society with the Union. This is added to the society budget for the year and is carried over to the next year.

- 3.8 New societies are limited to a budget of £300 if they register before the first week of teaching, otherwise it will be limited to £200. This can be increased after the first year of operation.

Expenditure:

- 3.9 All expenses must either have been specified in the bid for funding or be agreed with the Co-President Activities & Events in advance.
- 3.10 The SU shall hold no responsibility for the financial state of any club or society. Any debts incurred shall be the sole responsibility of the Society's committee as specified in the Indemnity Form.
- 3.11 Orders made under the Union name must be cleared by the Co-President Activities & Events.
- 3.12 When allocating expenditure, the Union will spend money from the society budget first and then the societies own funds.

Rules on Reimbursements:

- 3.13 All society expenditure is expected to be reasonable and related to fulfilling the aims and objectives of the society. Be sure to clear anything you are unsure about beforehand.
- 3.14 The Union will not fund anything without a receipt.**
- 3.15 The union will only pay half for food and do not pay for alcohol. Exceptions to this rule must be cleared in advance by the Co-President Activities & Events
- 3.16 How to claim: The Treasurer should submit completed claims form (available outside G6) to the General Manager in the first instance (if they are not available then see the Co-President Activities & Events). The receipts should be presented, and attached to a Claim Form.

Affiliations:

- 3.17 Permission must be sought from the SU before a Society can affiliate to any external organisations. This includes advertising in external publications.

Income – profits & sponsorships:

- 3.18 You may also wish to generate income from profits or sponsorships to support the aims, objectives and activities of the society.

- a. Income generated from profit or sponsorship can be carried over to the next academic year unlike SU grants
 - b. Any income generated must be given in to the General Manager who will add it to your society budget.
- 3.19 A few ideas of how you could generate income:
- a. Ticket profits from social events e.g. party at SOAS, dinner, theme night, etc.
 - b. Membership fees
 - c. Organising competitions amongst UoL societies
 - d. Apply for external sponsorship
- 3.20 It's worth thinking imaginatively about the type of company that could sponsor you; several companies may have never given money to a club or society before simply because they have never been asked. Also consider asking for support in other than financial forms such as training or materials.
- 3.21 Sponsorship applications should include some information about SOAS SU in general, something like a business plan for your society and a letter outlining the benefits, for the company, of sponsoring your society members or your activity. Please contact Co-President Activities & Events for support.
- 3.22 For legal and political reasons, SOAS SU reserves the right to refuse any proposed sponsorship deal.**
- 3.23 Money raised by sponsorship will be held by the Union. The same is true of membership fees, however if a society collects membership fees it must register this with the Union.

4. Communications

Many students query about clubs' and societies' activities in the SU offices every day. We suggest that you keep your page on the Students' Union website up-to-date with information, events and contact details.

Publicity:

- 4.1 Clubs and societies can set up **a stall in JCR** any time - to advertise, sell tickets or campaign. You however need to book this with the SU. To do this, please email the Co-President Activities and Events.
- 4.2 All societies are entitled to a page on the Students' Union Website "Societies" page of which they can edit the Logo, email address, web address, social media usernames and society description. Try to use this to the best of your ability as people can sign up to your society on this page by clicking "Join Society" and confirming membership afterwards in their basket. To edit your society webpage:
 1. Log into the Students' Union Website using your SOAS student email and password
 2. Click the pencil tool in the top right corner and select "[Society name] admin tools"
 3. Select "Edit Details" and edit any of the details on the subsequent page
- 4.3 Please note: SOAS students constantly complain about the untidiness of notice boards. So please help us keep SOAS tidy. The SU have allocated dedicated notice boards for events and societies, check with the sabbaticals. Most importantly people do not look at messy notice boards.
- 4.4 Postering on walls outside of the Students Union, windows or doors is not allowed.
- 4.5 Posters outside Union areas may be removed by the department or cleaners. Placing stickers, or hard to remove posters in these places may result in a complaint against the society.
- 4.6 All publicity must be in English. This is to ensure that the Equal Opportunities Policy is adhered to, as all students at SOAS have a good standard of English.
- 4.7 It is advised that societies add their events to the Students' Union Website. To do this:
 1. Log into the Students' Union website using your SOAS email and password
 2. Click the pencil tool in the top right corner and select "[Society name] admin tools"
 3. Select "Events"
 4. Click "Add new event" under the large "Events" headline
 5. Fill in all of the details (the "Event types" section is not necessary)

6. The "Display dates" section allows you to select the range of dates that you would like the event to be shown on the SOAS Students' Union Website Events for
 7. Click "Save" at the bottom of the page to add it to our list of events
- 4.8 All posters must make it clear that this is a Students' Union event.
 - 4.9 Any publicity outside of SOAS must be clear on the entrance requirements and fit with our licences.
 - 4.10 Breaches of the postering policy will lead to posters being removed
 - 4.11 Make sure to add the SOAS Students' Union Facebook page as a co-host on your Facebook event pages. This will allow the event to be seen by all of the people who have liked our page.
 - 4.12 All events must have venue accessibility clearly outline on any event pages

Mail & Electronic Mail:

- 4.13 Sending emails to all the members of a Society is easiest through the Students' Union website as often times mass emails are blocked on regular email accounts. Please try and keep society mails relevant and to the point, if people think they are being spammed, they will not read your mails.
- 4.14 To send an email to your mailing list on the SU Website:
 1. Log into the Students Union Website using your soas email and password
 2. Go to your society page under "Activities" and then "Societies"
 3. Select the pencil tool in the top right corner and then go to [Society Name] admin tools
 4. Select "Messages"
 5. Click "Send email" under the large "Messaging" text
 6. Select whether you'd like the email to be sent from your society email or your SOAS Student Email
 7. Click on "To" to select the recipients, select all recipients or the individuals you'd like to email, and click "Add Recipients" at the end of the page
 8. Add your Subject Line and Email text body
 9. Click send
- 4.15 The Union General E-mail is sent regularly by the Governance & Communications Coordinator. If you would like to advertise an event in it please e-mail the message in full with a subject line to Jack at jd126@soas.ac.uk. Only events with take place in SOAS and directly affect SOAS Students' can be advertised in this mail. Events can only be added to the email if they have been uploaded to the SOAS SU website (see page X).

Keeping in touch

- 4.16 Many students query about clubs' and societies' activities in the SU offices every day. Please help us to help you:
 - a. Include Co-President Activities & Events on your mailing list
 - b. Come to discuss your biggest projects face to face
 - c. Add your events to the Students' Union Website

d. Submit a brief summary of organised / planned events in the end of each term

- 4.17 When planning a big function, keeping the SU informed may save us all from a lot of hassle. The SU will also have access to cheap equipment, relationships with venues which may help large scale events. All phone calls with queries about society events come to the Union, if we do not know, we cannot publicise.
- 4.18 If nothing is heard from a Society for three consecutive months, the SU assumes the Society has been dissolved. To regain access to the budget and retain the Society, consult the Co-President Activities & Events.

5. Organising Events

An Event is anything the Society puts on. The more notice and the more information we have the more we can help your society. This section should be all you need to know about putting on events, and your responsibilities.

Room & equipment bookings

- 5.1 SOAS allows no room bookings for individual students: all rooms must be booked on behalf of societies or clubs by their president, secretary or treasurer.
- 5.2 All room bookings are to be made by a societies committee (who must be students) through SOAS Students' Union on the official SOAS Room Booking form: <https://soasunion.org/activities/rooms/>
- 5.3 Please give as many details as possible on the form. It is the Union's job to verify that the meeting is organised under the School's booking rules, therefore if the name of an open meeting, or speakers names are omitted a booking may not be granted.
- 5.4 All meetings must have an identified Principal Organiser who will be present and responsible for the good order of the meeting.
- 5.5 Any request for Audio-Visual Equipment must be emailed to the Co-president Activities and Events with enough notice. For basic audio set ups in the JCR/LLT, the SU can provide equipment, but for other rooms and other audio visual tech, this must be logged with the AV department. They require 1 months notice and will not give any equipment out without the months notice. Please contact the Co-President Activities and Events to see how you can do this. Access to AV equipment is subject to availability and training. Any equipment borrowed from the Union in connection with a room booking must not be removed from the building under any circumstances.
- 5.6 All premises must be left in the state they are found - furniture returned to its original position, windows closed etc - by the end of the meeting. Breaking this rule may jeopardise future room bookings.
- 5.7 The majority of attendants at any SOAS SU Society function must be SOAS students. A list of non-SOAS attendants should be left with the front desk to ensure entry. Membership of a SOAS society does not guarantee entry to the building.
- 5.8 No tickets may be sold at the door for any SOAS event as the School does not have a Public Entertainments Licence. If you intend to charge for a meeting, please put this on the booking form. The Union has blank tickets you can use to sell.

- 5.9 Any changes in the details of a meeting must be reported to the Union in advance of the meeting.
- 5.10 Note, the Co-President Activities & Events does not have over-riding authority over room bookings. Sometimes rooms are just not available, and we have to book through the School.

Freedom Of Speech & Diversity

- 5.11 SOAS Students' Union is committed to freedom of speech and equality of opportunity for all its members. All meetings should be run with this in mind and moderated in such a way that no member feels they are being unfairly discriminated against.
- 5.12 The Union will run diversity briefings at the start of the year with the School's Diversity Advisor. The President of each society should attend these such briefings or arrange a meeting with the Diversity Advisor, so they fully understand the implications of the Union's diversity code.
- 5.13 The Union's Equality and Diversity Policy (Schedule 3 of the Union Constitution) is attached as an appendix. The President and Principle Organisers of any event should be aware of this policy and our safer spaces policy and run meetings accordingly.
- 5.14 Breaches of this code will be taken seriously and are grounds for disciplinary action against the societies officers, normally the President and the Principal Organiser (where different).
- 5.15 If in the view of the President or Principal Organiser, there is a probability for a proposed meeting or activity that a speaker, including any external speaker may not be able to enter or speak or leave the premises safely without probably threat to public order this should be indicated on the booking form. The Union and School will endeavour to facilitate all meetings, and arrange security as appropriate; however this may require more notice (under the School's booking procedures for notifiable meetings).

External Room Bookings

- 5.16 Obviously, there are countless venues outside the Union and the University. The main disadvantage of these is that generally you will have to pay to use them. The Students' Union may fund or subsidize the hiring of external venues if there are no suitable, free alternatives.
- 5.17 If you do choose to book externally, be VERY careful about signing documents. If in any doubt, ask the Co-President Activities & Events or the General Manager for advice.
- 5.18 The Union will still require all details of external room bookings, and require the same information regarding topic and speakers for any meeting under their name.

Parties

- 5.19 If you wish to organise a party at SOAS, book your party date at least two weeks before the event with the SU Co-President Activities & Events

- this time is required by SOAS Estates & Services Department for arranging the security.

- 5.20 Some music equipment required by DJs or smallish bands is available from the SU. Confirm the availability with the Co-President Activities & Events / General Manager.
- 5.21 The Society will need to provide staff to
 - a. check the tickets at the doors:
 - b. move the equipment and furniture before and after the party
 - c. tidy up before and after the party

Opening hours

- 5.22 Parties can start anytime after 5pm Mon-Fri. The bar is open till 11pm on standard evenings.
- 5.23 All music equipment must have been returned to storage rooms and furniture in the Junior Common Room reinstated by 12 midnight
- 5.24 If you wish to continue your party beyond midnight, contact SU Co-President Activities & Events and Finance & Communications at least 6 weeks before your party to apply for a late bar licence from the Police. The society may be liable to pay for additional security.
- 5.25 SU provides clubs and societies with tickets - contact Co-President Activities & Events to obtain them. Tickets can only be sold up to half an hour before the event and must not under any circumstances be sold at the door.
- 5.26 The JCR/Bar cannot be ticketed as they are public spaces.
- 5.27 Health and safety regulations limit the number of attendants to 250.

Serving food

- 5.28 Health and safety regulations set strict limitations on the kind of food that can be served in SOAS premises.
- 5.29 Liability for any illness caused by the serving of food in a society meeting is the responsibility of the society; food safety regulations will make you liable for a very large fine. Food handling is highly specialised and will require preparation and serving certificates.

6. Health and Safety

These guidelines are designed to keep people well and alive. Please show your respect towards your Society members and others – follow these simple rules.

Officers of the SOAS SU and the Society may be personally liable for any damages caused by their negligent acts or omissions.

Introduction

- 6.1 The law relating to sports injuries and accidents is still sketchy at best, and only test cases will change this.
- 6.2 Two points are clear, however, from recent notable cases in the media and the courts:
 - a. Participants have a Duty of Care to all other individuals involved or affected by that activity,
 - b. Failure to carry out this Duty of Care could be construed as negligence.
- 6.3 Failure to implement national and local codes of conduct, rules and regulations set out by reasonably competent bodies could also be construed as negligent.
- 6.4 These guidelines are based on ULU procedures, which were drawn up in consultation with external bodies.

Duty of care

- 6.5 The principle of an existent duty of care to your neighbour is enshrined under Common (Case) Law of the United Kingdom.
- 6.6 By extension to recreational activities organised or recognised by SOAS SU, each person involved in SOAS SU clubs & societies owes a duty of care to their neighbour not to injure them by their negligent acts or omissions.

Club / society leaders' responsibilities

- 6.7 As the Union has no legal identity, officers of SOAS SU and SOAS SU clubs & societies may be personally liable for any damages caused by their negligent acts or omissions.
- 6.8 In providing these guidelines and overseeing the organisation of the Union, Officers of the Union are displaying their awareness of their duty of care to societies. It will be assumed by the Union that signing the Indemnity Form mean societies leaders are aware and have considered their responsibility of duty of care to members.
- 6.9 Society leaders must ensure that no members are being excluded

from their mailing lists or any forms of communications. Failure to do so may lead to a disciplinary procedure.

- 6.10 Society leaders are expected to consider the safety implications of their societies activities and carry out duties as appropriate to the well running of the activity, for example:
- a. Maintaining an inventory of all equipment and a logbook of its safety status and usage,
 - b. Carry out the Risk Assessment for events,
 - c. Ensuring a phone is close by for emergency calls,
 - d. Ensuring that national ruling body guidelines are followed
 - e. That the Union is aware of all trips and any advice on this has been taken

Trip registration & risk assessment

- 6.11 A trip is any society event which takes place outside of London, has a duration of one overnight stay or involves activities which may be deemed to be dangerous. If in doubt about registering a trip you should take advice from the Co-President Activities and Events or Sports, Activities and Events Coordinator.
- 6.12 Completion of the external activities form and register must be completed with a risk assessment before a trip is authorised. Organising an unauthorised trip for a SOAS Society is an automatic disciplinary offence and will be reported to the School.
- 6.13 All trips must have a group leader, who will be the main contact for the Union and will be deemed to be responsible for the conduct and safety of the trip.
- 6.14 The trip is authorised by the agreement of the Co-President Activities & Events and General Manager (SOAS SU Safety Officer). If the trip may be deemed unsafe and not authorised, the reasons must be submitted in writing to the executive committee, where decisions can be over turned, and to the Society. The Society/Club has a right of appeal to the executive. Clearly this takes time and therefore the earlier a trip is organised, the more likely it will get authorisation.
- 6.15 A significant change in the trips itinerary, which has health and safety implications, occurs while the trip is in progress, the group leader should contact the Sports, Activities and Events Coordinator by telephone or email leaving a message, stating:
- a. The society/club and the group leader
 - b. The activity that is no longer taking place or the change in the location of the activity,
 - c. The new activity and length of time (start and finish)
 - d. Who is taking part in the activity?
- 6.16 Risk assessment involves two key definitions:
Hazard – means anything that can cause harm (e.g. bottled gases, unseasonable weather, electricity)
Risk - is the chance, high or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard.
- 6.17 There are five simple steps in Risk Assessment:

- a. Look for the Hazards
- b. Decide who might be harmed and how
- c. Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are sufficient, or whether more needs doing
- d. Record your findings
- e. Review your assessment and revise it if necessary.

Incident response procedure

- 6.18 In the event of an incident the group leader should take responsibility for co-ordinating the response. If this is not possible the senior member of the party shall take charge.
- 6.19 Ensure safety of uninjured members of a group and move away from hazards
- 6.20 Contact the nearest first aider where possible and where possible without risk to anyone, treat any casualties
- 6.21 Call the appropriate emergency services if necessary: Give details of group location, location of any casualties, number of casualties, nature of injuries sustained, and type of incident. Assist the uniformed emergency services on scene as requested
- 6.22 Contact SOAS Students' Union. If during a weekday between 9:00-18:00 ring the General Manager on 020 7898 4996. If no reply leave a message and then try other Union telephone numbers: 020 7898 4994, 020 7898 4995 or 020 7898 4997. Ask to speak to a Co-President or the General Manager. Again leave a message if no reply. In cases of serious injury, loss of life or other major emergencies contact security at the Brunei Gallery, tel: 020 7898 4459, who will put you in touch with the responsible officer of the School who deals with emergencies.
- 6.23 Avoid contact with any representatives of the media. If pressed for any information answer "No Comment": in previous incidents at other institutions, the press has caused stress to the relatives of the casualties by contacting them abruptly and without information of their condition.

Accident and near miss reporting

- 6.24 It is a responsibility of the Group Leaders/Society President to ensure that all accidents and near misses are reported to SOAS SU (on trips or during regular activities).
- 6.25 Please give details of the accident or near miss, including
 - a. name
 - b. SOAS ID card no. (shorter)
 - c. date and time of accident/near miss
 - d. exact location
 - e. details of injury
 - f. first aid administered and
 - g. whether any further medical action was taken (ambulance called/referred to casualty)

7. Discipline

- 7.1 Failure of the Society to comply with the SOAS SU Constitution, Societies Guidelines or policy may result in disciplinary action against the officers of the Society.
- 7.2 Unacceptable behaviour by any Society Officer or member may also result in disciplinary action
- 7.3 Disciplinary action open to the Co-President Activities & Events are as follows:
 - a. a written warning
 - b. suspension of room and equipment booking rights
 - c. suspension of financial support
 - d. suspension of society activities including room and equipment bookings, financial support and publicity
 - e. dissolving
 - f. a fine to cover any costs involved
 - g. a formal disciplinary hearing against an individual or group of individuals in accordance with the SOAS SU and/or SOAS disciplinary procedure.

Procedure

- 7.4 SU Co-President Activities & Events will put any alleged misconduct in writing to the President of the Society.
- 7.5 The Co-President Activities & Events shall inform the Society in writing of the nature of that alleged misconduct and their ruling on the alleged misconduct, along with any penalties and suspension of activities deemed necessary. The Co-President may also decide to refer the case to the Disciplinary code in the constitution. All other resolutions will be deemed to be informal under the Union's disciplinary code.
- 7.6 The Co-President must report any such alleged acts of misconduct or action to a Union Executive. The Society also has a right to appeal to the Executive. The Executive may overturn the ruling, enforce a different penalty or refer the complaint to the procedure under the Constitution.

We hope we have answered all questions in this guide. If you require further support, please contact the Co-President Activities and Events at pc61@soas.ac.uk or visit them in room G8. You can also contact the Sports, Activities and Events Coordinator at jd124@soas.ac.uk or visit him in room G8. You can contact General Manager at ad88@soas.ac.uk or visit her in room G6.

Best of luck running your society and have fun!

