

Student Societies Policy

1. Introduction

A student society is defined as a group consisting of at least five current higher education students, either full- or part-time, who wish to form an organisation to participate in a particular activity or for a specific purpose. This policy does not constitute a Students' Union or Association.

Societies play an important role in the social and personal experience of students at higher education institutions.

They are a means by which students can develop transferable skills, explore interests, expand their social networks and contribute to the educational community.

This policy sets out how a society can be formally recognised by Walbrook and what support (funding and grants) is available to recognised societies.

The term "student" in this policy covers learners all on higher education programmes, including apprentices.

2. Eligibility criteria

Students who wish to have a society recognised by Walbrook need to meet the following requirements.

- it must have a minimum of five higher education student members of Walbrook;
 - it must have in place a society management committee, consisting of, at minimum, a President, Treasurer and Secretary. For a full definition of these roles, please refer to the Society Guidance document.
 - it must have a written constitution or statement of purpose outlining the society's aims and objectives, which must be in line with, and not contravene, Walbrook's Student Charter, General and Academic Regulations for Students [a](#)

3. Application process

Students who wish to have their application formally considered are required to complete the Society Recognition application form. The application will request the following information:

- the name of the society;
- a statement of purpose/constitution;
- members, including the management committee, and evidence of their application to join the society (membership application form, to be included with the Society Recognition application form);
- proposed fees, if applicable.

Applications for recognition can be made at any point during the academic year.

Once an application has been made, it will be submitted to the Student Council team for processing and formal approval.

The Student Council team may decide to approve the application with or without conditions or recommendations, request further information from the applicant(s) in order for a final decision to be made, or reject it outright (for example where the stated objectives and aims of the society directly conflict with Walbrook policies and regulations).

4. Funding and grants

All recognised societies are eligible to apply to Walbrook for a grant to fund on-going and/or one-off activities.

Each society can apply for funding up to a maximum of £200 during the course of each academic year. Funding will be limited to £1,000 per annum for all student societies. Grants will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis.

Grants will only be awarded for activities that support the society's core aims and objectives and are deemed appropriate to be funded by Walbrook. Examples of activities eligible for funding might include:

- room or venue hire costs;
- refreshments and/or food for events appropriate to the society's aims, for example networking events with external speakers and attendees;
- fees or expenses for external speakers;
- sports venue or equipment hire;
- printing of publicity material, such as posters or newsletters;
- subsidy of entry fees and/or travel costs related to relevant conferences or events.

Grants will not be awarded for activities that are considered unrelated to supporting a society's objectives or deemed inappropriate to be funded by Walbrook. Examples of activities ineligible for funding might include:

- refreshments at regular meetings/socials;
- incomplete or unclear requests;
- membership cards;
- direct charitable donations;
- any activity that contravenes Walbrook's Student Charter, policies, regulations and Code of Practice.

Grant applications for societies need to be submitted using the Society Grant application form. Applications submitted in any other way will be rejected.

Applications will be reviewed by the Provost for formal approval. The decision to award a grant is based on:

- the relevance of the proposed activity to the stated aims and objectives of the society;
- the potential impact in helping the society meet its aims;
- the extent to which it adheres to the policies and regulations previously mentioned;
- its proportionality in terms of the number of society members, the size of grants made elsewhere, and the total amount of funding available.

The Provost may decide to approve the grant with or without conditions, request further information from the applicant(s) in order for a final decision to be made, or reject it outright (for example where the proposed activity conflicts with the society's aims).

Payments are made either directly by Walbrook to suppliers on behalf of a society, on production of an invoice, or as reimbursements to society members on production of a receipt.

Societies are not permitted to enter into contracts for goods or services until their grant application has been confirmed in writing.

5. Annual reporting

To receive on-going recognition, each society is required to submit an annual report for review by LTQC. Failure to do so may result in withdrawal of recognition.

The report will need to detail the activities undertaken by the society. In particular, consideration should be given to:

- what aims and objectives of the society have been met over the year;
- what activities have been undertaken to achieve these aims and objectives;
- how the activities have benefited the wider student community of Walbrook;
- confirmation that the society has met the eligibility criteria throughout the year.

If a society has received a grant or funding, it must also provide a breakdown of how the grant or funding has been spent, including receipts and/or invoices.

6. Suspension of recognition and de-recognition process

Walbrook expects all societies to operate within the boundaries of Walbrook's Student Charter, policies, regulations and Code of Practice, and not to promote or engage in behaviour or activities that may bring Walbrook into disrepute.

Walbrook reserves the right to suspend or withdraw recognition at any time.

If a complaint is received by Walbrook regarding the behaviour or activities of a recognised society, the complaint will be investigated and reviewed in accordance with the principles of Walbrook's Code of Practice, General and Academic Regulations for Students, Student Charter and policies (in particular the Equality and Diversity Policy and the Student Disciplinary Policy).

Should a complaint be upheld, the Provost may decide to suspend recognition, pending corrective action being taken by the society within a specific timeframe, or may choose to withdraw recognition entirely.

Suspension or withdrawal of recognition prohibits the following:

- applications for funding;
- use of all support services available to the society (for example room hire);
- any promotion which Walbrook undertakes on behalf of the society;
- the society's right to use any branding or logos associated with Walbrook.

De-recognition of a student society based on lack of membership or a management committee will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Higher Education Services team.

Role of the Higher Education Services teamThe Higher Education Services is responsible for:

- receiving applications, checking that applications are complete, reviewing and formally approving or declining recognition of the society, and informing students accordingly;
- advising the society management committee of the final decision regarding their grant application;
- maintaining and updating the Register of Student Societies;
- ensuring that the annual monitoring of societies aligns with the annual reporting requirements set out in this policy;
- providing regular summary reports to LTQC on the operation of the policy, as applicable.

7. External speakers

Walbrook regularly welcomes visiting speakers to events organised by student societies. All bookings of external speakers by student societies must be made in accordance with Walbrook's Freedom of Speech Code of Practice and Visiting Speaker Policy, which set out the current legal framework, including the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, and the applicable booking, risk-assessment and code of conduct requirements. The detailed procedures previously set out in this section (booking process, local assessment questions and referral thresholds) have been removed from this policy to avoid duplication and potential inconsistency; society organisers should follow the Visiting Speaker Policy in full.

8. Policy approval and review

This policy is subject to regular monitoring and review by the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee .

9. Document Governance

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