

Starting a society – A Guide

So you'd like to start a society?

This is a step by step guide to starting a society with Sunderland Students' Union (Your SU).

The mission of Your SU (Sunderland Student' Union) is to make your university experience valuable for life. One of our objectives: Your Voice, sets out our aim to be fully student led, with students directing their own activities within the Union and engaging in opportunities such as Your Societies.

What is a society?

A society is student led, student run group, registered with Your SU.

A group can be formed when four or more students who share a common interest join together to take part in related activities. It's really simple to start a society and you can do this at any time throughout the academic year - though the start of the academic year is a really great time to get people involved.

Every society needs a committee with a President, a Treasurer then you can develop other committee roles as required.

Societies can raise funds to support their activities through membership fees, fund raising and through Your SU grant funding. Societies can apply for a grant as soon as they have 10 members.

How will Your SU help?

Your SU's Activities and Opportunities Team are here to support all societies; helping them to develop in line with their objectives and aspirations.

This might be about increasing membership numbers or it might be about achieving other goals and highlights. Last year we supported our societies to travel, to learn, to socialise and to have brand new experiences.

Contact the team by emailing them at yoursocieties@sunderland.ac.uk

So what do I need to do?

Before you set off on starting a new society its worth checking whether a society already exists that covers your interest. Your SU cannot register multiple groups with the same interests. We prefer instead to join likeminded people together and support them collectively.

The **first step** to starting a new society is to complete the **Your Societies Application Form** – online form. This gives you the opportunity to tell the Activities and Opportunities Team about your plans.



The team will contact you to offer support and guidance with the **next step** which, if everything looks okay*, is completing the Your Societies Registration Process.

This is generally a face to face appointment with the Your Societies Team and the President of Activities. We'll go through all of the information about the society, agree the Group Agreement_Code of Conduct and if we have everything we need you'll be able to go ahead and join up. Once your society has the first four members signed up you'll get your own space on the Your SU website and society membership can be opened up to everyone else.

**If we can't register your society we'll contact you to discuss this and to explore alternatives and other opportunities. We want to support as wide a range of positive and unique student led activities as possible. We can't support anything unlawful or potentially harmful but we will look at each group on a case by case basis and work with you. Also we don't run Sports Clubs and the Elite Athletes programme. These are with the University's Institute of Sport.*

What happens next?

So your society is fully registered and open to new members...what now?

Well your committee will be invited to attend Your Societies training which covers everything you need to know about running a society. It is compulsory for at least the President and Treasurer so that they have all of the right information.

The training will give you access to your society area on the SU website – from here you can monitor membership, communicate with the society and organise events and activities.

Throughout the year Your SU's Activities and Opportunities Team will continue to offer support to all Your Societies and will develop opportunities for societies to collaborate and share. We'll help you to raise funds, to access grant funding and to promote your society across the University.

The Your Societies Drop In is every Wednesday, during term time, between 1-3pm and rotates across the campus sites. Check the website to see where we'll be each week and pop along to chat to us about all things societies.