

Student Leader Performance and Behaviour Management Policy

Policy title	Student Leader Performance and Behaviour Management Policy
Applicable to	All student leaders, paid or voluntary
Date last reviewed	September 2026
Date of next review	August 2027
Owned by	Operations and HR department

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the process for addressing the underperformance and poor behaviour of Students' Union student leaders.
- 1.2 This policy outlines how student leaders can be fairly supported to meet the expectations of their role whilst prioritising their wellbeing.

2. Scope of Policy

- 2.1 This policy is applicable to all students who hold a leadership position within the Students' Union, whether self-selected, selected via recruitment panel, or elected. This includes, but is not limited to, Student Communities Officers, Student Voice Representatives, Course Representatives, Society Leaders, SU Buddies, and Student Recruiters.
- 2.2 This policy does not cover casual workers positions such as SU Crew or the voluntary role of Student Trustees. The relevant policy should be used to manage casual workers underperformance and behaviour.
- 2.3 The policy excludes the Presidents. Issues with attendance and behaviour of the Presidents shall be managed by the Students' Union CEO using the relevant policy.
- 2.4 This policy does not include accountability processes for student representatives. If students are unsatisfied by decisions made by their representatives, they can follow the relevant democratic procedure.

3. Main Principles

- 3.1 By holding a Students' Union leadership position, student leaders commit to upholding the values and policies of the organisation and performing their duties to the best of their ability.

- 3.2 Performance will be assessed against the relevant role description, agreed objectives, mandatory requirements and reasonable expectations that have been clearly communicated to the student leader.
- 3.3 Performance is monitored in different ways depending on the student leader role.

Role	Methods of performance management
Course Rep	Communication with the relevant Student Voice Rep
Event/Campaign Organiser	Communication with Students' Union staff
Society Leader	Committee development meetings with Students' Union staff
Student Communities Officer	Monthly one-to-one meetings with lead Students' Union staff support
Student Recruiter	Communication and briefings with Students' Union staff
Student Voice Rep	One-to-one meetings with Students' Union staff and relevant Student Communities Officer
SU Buddy	Communication and meetings with Students' Union staff

- 3.4 Examples of poor performance include:

- Failure to complete the mandatory training.
- Not fulfilling essential duties of the role.
- Persistent failure to attend meetings where attendance is expected, without proactive notice of extenuating circumstances.
- Not following the correct processes for organising activities and campaigns.
- Persistently poor communication with Students' Union staff and other student leaders, including not replying to emails requesting information or action.
- Making agreements or commitments on behalf of the Students' Union without prior discussion and approval with appropriate union staff.
- Not meeting deadlines without good reason, communicated in advance.
- Poor management of finances.

- 3.5 The student leader behaviour shall be assessed against Students' Union values, policies and codes of conduct.

- 3.6 As ambassadors of the Students' Union, conduct outside the direct performance of a student leadership role may be considered where there is a clear and material connection to the Students' Union, the student's leadership position, the safety or welfare of others, or the SU's ability to maintain trust and confidence in the individual as the student leader. Therefore, the determined sanctions shall impact all leadership roles a student holds with the Students' Union and may impact their eligibility for holding students' union roles in the future.

3.7 Examples of poor behaviour include:

- Being disrespectful, prejudiced, or aggressive to students, staff and members of the public.
- Any form of harassment, discrimination, and bullying or incitement of violence.
- Repeatedly preventing other from participating meaningfully in discussions or decision making, or intimidating, coercing or placing inappropriate pressures on other students.
- Deliberately disregarding correct procedures.
- Falsification of records or deliberate dishonesty connected with the role or Students' Union activities.
- Being under the influence of alcohol and recreational drugs resulting in impacted performance is impacted and putting at risk.
- Misuse of Students' Union funds.
- Illegal activity – Criminal conduct where it is relevant to the individual's role, the safety of others, or the legitimate interests of the Students' Union.

3.8 Serious breaches of the University Code of Conduct, including those where harm has been brought to individuals, shall bypass the process outlined in this policy and be handed over to the University disciplinary process. Where necessary to manage an immediate or significant risk, the student leader may be temporarily suspended from some or all duties or privileges while the matter is investigated or considered through the University process. Interim measures are precautionary, not disciplinary, and will be kept under review.

4. Reporting concerns

- 4.1 Concerns with student leader performance or behaviour can be raised by any party including university staff and members of the public.
- 4.2 Concerns should be reported as soon as possible to the team manager responsible for the student leader's support.
- 4.3 The manager will ensure that all necessary information is obtained including supporting evidence. This may include inviting the complainant(s) to a meeting to better understand the issue.
- 4.4 Information will be handled sensitively and shared only with those who reasonably need to know. The identity of a person raising a concern will not be disclosed unnecessarily; however, anonymity cannot be guaranteed where disclosure is necessary to investigate the matter fairly, manage risk or meet legal obligations
- 4.5 Where any behaviour is criminal, contravenes the University Code of Conduct, or raises concerns to student wellbeing, the Students' Union will need to share necessary details with the relevant authorities. Those concerned will be informed before disclosures are made.

5. Procedure

5.1 Stage 1 - Informal

If it is the first time an issue has arisen with the student leader, an informal and supportive approach will be taken in the first instance.

- i. An appropriate Students' Union staff member who usually supports the student with their role(s) will raise the issue in a private meeting with the student leader within 5 working days of the concern being raised. This may be during a scheduled 1:1 or any additional meeting may be arranged, in person or on online.
- ii. the student will be informed of the issue via email in advance, to enable them to prepare for the discussion.
- iii. In the meeting the student shall be given the chance to respond to the issues raised, and any contributing factors they feel have impacted their performance or behaviour, such as personal problems, ill health and disabilities, and reflect on how to avoid a recurrence. The staff member will invite the student to identify any support or reasonable adjustments that may be need.
- iv. The staff member will make notes of the discussion, which shall be shared with the student following the meeting, and ensure any agreed actions are carried out.

5.2 **Stage 2 - Formal**

If an issue with performance or behaviour has previously arisen with a student leader, then a more formalised approach will be taken.

- i. An appropriate Students' Union staff member will raise the issue in a private meeting, ideally in person, with the student leader within 5 working days of the concern being raised.
- ii. The student leader will be informed of the purpose of the meeting in advance and provided with relevant documentation, such as their role description and Students' Union policies.
- iii. For example. If the issue identified is regarding a student leader not attending meetings, they are expected to attend, then this will be highlighted on the role description and dates provided of the meetings they have missed.
- iv. In the meeting the student shall be given the chance to respond to the issues raised and reflect on why issues have occurred again. The student will have the opportunity to share any contributing factors they feel have impacted their performance or behaviour, such as personal problems, ill health and disabilities.
- v. An open conversation will be encouraged, and the student will be asked to reflect on whether their student leader role(s) is something they can continue to commit to, or whether they feel they need to take a temporary break from the role(s). A break period will be agreed if the latter if it is reasonable to do so within the role. All Students' Union leadership roles that a student holds will be in scope of the discussion.

I.e. It is reasonable for a Course Rep to take a break from their role for 2 months during a very busy placement. It would, however, not be reasonable for a Student Voice Rep to take a 6-month break from their role, given the impact this would have on the student body.

- vi. If the student does wish to continue in their role(s), an action plan will be created collaboratively between the student and the Students' Union staff member. The action plan will focus on the improvements required within the period of 1 month to fully meet the expectations of the role(s).
- vii. The staff member will help the student identify any support or reasonable adjustments that may be required to complete the action plan and address any underlying issues. For academic representatives, this may include consulting a relevant university staff member to provide support.
- viii. The staff member will make notes of the discussion, which shall be shared with the student following the meeting, and ensure any additional support that has been identified is actioned. If a break has been agreed, all relevant stakeholders will be informed.
- ix. The student leader's performance and behaviour will be monitored, and additional 1:1 meetings may be scheduled if the student feels this would be helpful.
- x. A meeting will be scheduled 1 month later to review progress made on the action plan.

5.3 **Stage 3 - Formal**

If the required improvements have not been made by the end of the action plan timeframe, or the student fails to attend the stage 2 meeting without adequate reason, then the issue will progress to stage 3.

Stage 3 will also be initiated if a new concern is raised for a student leader who has previously been through stage 1 regarding another issue, regardless of the outcome of this, or if the issue is of significant concern.

E.g. if the health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff were compromised because of the student leader's action or inaction.

- i. A meeting will be scheduled with the student, to be held in person wherever possible.
- ii. As in stage 2, information of the issue to be discussed and supporting documentation will be provided to the student in advance of the meeting.
- iii. The student leader will be invited to bring a friend or supporter to the meeting, if they wish. This person will be there to support not be able to speak on behalf of the student leader.
- iv. Another Students' Union staff member will attend the meeting to take notes, which shall be shared with the student following the meeting.
- v. An honest conversation will be encouraged to identify why issues have continued to occur with the student. The Students' Union staff member leading the meeting shall make clear the seriousness of the situation.
- vi. The student leader will receive the formal outcome in writing, including whether each concern was upheld, the reasons for the decision, any action or sanction imposed, its duration, any review arrangements and the right of appeal:

- An extension of up to 1 additional month to the action plan timeframe from stage 2, with further support identified.
- A suspension of student leader privileges, such as access to the Student Communities Fund or society funds, room bookings, and invitations to special events.
- Mandatory attendance at training.
- An appropriate restorative action, where suitable and agreed, which may include an apology, facilitated conversation or reflective action.
- A temporary break from the role(s), if reasonable and feasible for the role(s).
- A mutual agreement to retire from the role(s).
- Disqualification from the role(s).
- Disqualification from the role(s) and being barred from holding a student leader role or running for a President position for the rest of their time as a Students' Union member.
- Being barred from Students' Union events.
- Referral to the University's disciplinary procedure.

5.4 If the student fails to respond to communications regarding any stage of the process within 10 working days, they will be removed from their role(s) and may be barred from holding a student leader role or running for a President position for the rest of their time as a Students' Union member.

5.5 If the student fails to attend a meeting without adequate reason in stage 3, they will be removed from their role(s) and may be barred from holding a student leader role or running for a President position for the rest of their time as a Students' Union member.

5.6 **Society and event committees**

Where performance or behavioural issues relate to a whole committee, the full committee will need to meet with staff either together or individually, based on the circumstances. The outcome of the process may differ for individuals.

6. **Appeals**

There is no right to appeal the outcome of the procedure. If a student feels that there are grounds to make a complaint about their experience of going through the process, then they should do so through the Students' Union's [Complaints Procedure](#).