

Guidelines for the recognition of student societies

PREAMBLE

A student society is an organisation whose membership, which shall not be less than fifteen natural persons, is principally or solely composed of students registered at the University of Malta. Such an organisation shall be constituted in accordance with, and by virtue of, the 'Guidelines for the Recognition of Student Societies' issued by the Senate of the University of Malta. Its mission shall not be inconsistent with the role of higher education as a public good. Its statute, objectives, functions, actions, events and activities shall not, in any manner whatsoever, hinder the aims or jeopardize the reputation of the University of Malta. It shall be intended to prepare students to become active participants in the democratic processes within the remit of civil society.

1. **Pre-Requisites for Recognition**

1.1 The Senate may, after due application made to it, recognize a society as a 'student society', provided its membership and its executive committee are either principally or exclusively composed of students registered at the University of Malta. For the avoidance of doubt, the word 'principally' denotes that at least three-fourths of the members (75 %) be students registered at the University of Malta.

Provided that Senate will not proceed to recognize a society as a student society unless that society satisfies, in the opinion of Senate, the requirements laid out in these Guidelines.

1.2 When a student society does not satisfy all criteria set out in these Guidelines, Senate may still opt to grant interim (provisional/temporary) recognition to such society, but in this event, the society shall not be entitled to receive grants from the University of Malta. Such interim/provisional temporary recognition shall not exceed the period of six (6) months, upon the lapse of which the application will be considered as withdrawn *ipso facto*.

2. **Criteria for Recognition**

2.1 The Statute of every student society must, for the purposes of recognition by Senate as such, include:

- (i) a clear statement of the aims and/or activities of the society, which shall not conflict or be inconsistent with any provision of the Laws of Malta;
- (ii) a provision for the composition of the executive committee;
- (iii) a brief definition of the functions and associated duties of each of the officers comprising the executive committee;
- (iv) a fair and transparent mode of election of the executive committee, which system ought to be duly implemented;
- (v) a provision for the holding of Annual General Meetings;
- (vi) procedures to be adopted in connection with Annual or other General Meetings;
- (vii) procedures to be adopted when amendments are made to existing statutes; and
- (viii) procedures to be adopted for the purpose of the dissolution of the student society and the devolution of its assets.

2.2 A student society which no longer satisfies the conditions contained in these Guidelines or which, in the opinion of Senate, has either not conducted its affairs in a proper manner or has breached the Guidelines herein, may have its recognition revoked by Senate.

3. **Application**

3.1 Every society applying to Senate for recognition as a student society, must complete in full the relevant application form, also attaching the following:

- (i) a copy of the Statute of the society containing the signatures of the authorised representatives of the society, in terms of their respective statutes, on every page;
- (ii) a statement whether the society is organised on a University or Faculty level;
- (iii) an updated list of members of the society at the time of its application, together with a declaration by the authorised representatives of the society, confirming the authenticity of the signatures of its members. The University of Malta reserves the

right to request further details of the members of the society in order to ensure that the list provided constitutes a faithful representation of its true members; and
(iv) a brief statement setting out the aims and purposes of the society.

3.2 For the avoidance of doubt and for the purpose of these Guidelines, a Faculty level society, as per Clause 3(ii), shall include Societies established within the parameters of a Faculty, Department, Centre, Institute, School or College of the University of Malta.

4. **Adoption of Statutes**

Student Societies shall adopt a Statute in adherence with *inter alia* Clause 2.1 of these Guidelines, which Statute shall be promptly sent to Senate for the purposes of recognition.

5. **Membership**

5.1 A student society may be organised either on a University level (that is, the membership is open to all University students) or on a Faculty level in terms of Clause 3.2 of these Guidelines.

5.2 When a student society is organised on a University level, its minimum membership shall be of 100 members.

5.3 When a student society is organised at Faculty level, its minimum membership shall be one-third of the students registered within the Faculty.

6. **Relevant Information for University Records and Default**

6.1 A student society shall, within a month following its Annual General Meeting, submit to the Registrar of the University an Annual Return containing the following information:

- (i) a brief report of the activities of the society during the year;
- (ii) the names of the persons forming the executive committee of the society;
- (iii) a detailed statement of the income and expenditure of the society, supported by receipts. The accounts so submitted shall be subject to audit by the Finance Office of the University; and

- (iv) notification on any amendments effected to the Statute to be approved by Senate, if applicable.
- 6.2 An updated list of its current members retained by the society, which shall be available for audit purposes only to the University of Malta at any time.
- 6.3 In addition, the Registrar shall keep:
- (i) a list of societies approved by Senate;
 - (ii) the status of these societies;
 - (iii) the dates of the respective Annual General Meetings of these societies;
 - (iv) a copy of statutes with highlighted changes and/or tracked changes (if any); and
 - (v) details of the authorised representatives of the societies.
- 6.4 Failure to submit the information mentioned in Clause 6.1 and 6.2 of these Guidelines shall entail initially the suspension by the Registrar of such recognition. In the event that the society remains in default of filing such information for a period of six months from notice being given to it that it has failed to file such information, the Registrar may recommend to Senate the revocation of recognition enjoyed by the society. Revocation shall, *ipso facto* have the effect of striking off the student society from the registered list of student societies.

7. **Dormancy**

- 7.1 No society shall be eligible for recognition unless it has been functioning for a minimum period of three calendar months, during which the Statute is approved.
- 7.2 Societies which do not hold an Annual General Meeting or do not hold any activity throughout a whole year shall be deemed to be dormant. There shall subsist a presumption that societies which do not inform the Registrar to the effect that they have held an Annual General Meeting, or at least an activity throughout the year following the last Annual General Meeting, shall be dormant. Such information shall be provided faithfully by the authorised representative of the Society. The presumption referred to here above shall be of a rebuttable nature and therefore subject to evidence to the contrary.
- 7.3 Should a society be declared dormant, it may re-activate its status by remedying the omission/default, by means of a fresh application to re-activate such status, which

application shall be sent to Senate for its consideration. Senate may revoke the membership of societies which have been dormant for a minimum of two years, in which case the name of the society shall be struck off the list of student societies.

7.4 A dormant society shall be precluded from reactivating its status:

- (i) as a result of a substantial change in its purposes, functions or objectives; or
- (ii) further to its repeated non-disclosure of the absence of an Annual General Meeting or the absence of any activity.

7.5 Provided that for the purpose of Clause 7, any dispute relating to the interpretation, application, validity, enforcement or execution thereof, shall be dealt with by the Registrar and conclusively decided upon by Senate.

7.6 For the purposes of Clause 7 the phrase “an activity” shall be construed to mean functions or events which are either substantial in nature, in that they involve considerable participation or functions which have been reported within the media (excluding the Internet).

8. **Senate Approval**

No student society shall be officially recognised unless and until it receives Senate’s written approval.

9. **Financial Affairs**

Proper records of all financial transactions shall be kept by the student society, and may be viewed at any time, by the Director of Finance of the University of Malta or his delegate.

