The Mature Students’ Committee

Constitution
Last revised: November 2016

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### 1 Definitions

- **Mature Student** is defined as someone who will be over the age of 21 in their first year of study at the University of Sheffield. We also welcome students who identify as mature to join.
- **The Mature Student Committee (MSC)** refers to the members of the Committee, whose roles are detailed in section 5, who are elected at each Annual General Meeting (AGM), or by by-election at a General Meeting (GM).
- **Quorum** refers to the minimum number of committee members who must be present at a meeting for decisions to be binding. For committee to have quorum, two thirds of the members (8) must be present.

### 2 Role

The Mature Student Committee exists to:

- Promote the views and interests of mature students within the Students Union and the University of Sheffield.
- Provide support and signposting through organising events, activities and services for mature students.

### 3 Objectives

#### 3.1 Socials

The Mature Student Committee aims to:

- Provide regular meetings/activities catering both to non-drinking and drinking students
• Provide an opportunity for mature students to meet other mature students during organised activities at convenient times.

3.2 Other Socials
The Committee also aims to provide other socials outside the regular socials, including, for example:

• Money Workshops
• Trips to the Peak District
• Socials where students can bring their children and families along

3.3 Campaigning
The Committee remains an active voice in campaigning, and campaigns should:

• Raise awareness to the issues affecting and that are important to mature students; bringing the mature student community together.

4 Membership

• The full Mature Student Committee consists of eleven positions. An officer of the Union, as agreed by the Committee, is also present as a nonvoting member.

• The Committee are voted for annually by AGM, open to any University of Sheffield student who defines as mature at the normal time the University usually holds AGMs.

• The Committee may also call a by-election to fill any unfilled positions after the AGM, and may temporarily co-opt members to fill any empty roles until a by-election can take place. At the committee’s discretion, if a by-election is not appropriate (due to insufficient time before the AGM or other concerns), members may be co-opted until the next AGM. If possible, a by-election is always preferred. The committee’s decision to postpone a by-election until the AGM will be ratified by an Officer of the Union and/or relevant staff support.

5 Responsibilities of individual members

Each Committee member is expected to maintain a visible presence at socials and campaigns organised by the Committee. The Committee may elect sub-committees in order to deal with issues more efficiently.

5.1 Chair

Chairs meetings of the Committee, except at their own discretion. Motivates and aides Committee members in their roles and facilitates and mediates discussion between Committee members, and keeps Committee members accountable for their roles. Develops agendas with the vice chair and secretary. Acts as a spokesperson for the Committee when necessary. Is jointly responsible for overseeing executive committee members alongside the vice chair (i.e. secretary, treasurer and inclusions officer). It is suggested but not required that the chair oversees Campaigns, Volunteering and fundraising, and the welfare officers.
5.2 Vice Chair
Chairs meetings of the Committee when the chair is not present. Develops agendas with the chair and secretary. Motivates and aides Committee members in their roles. Is jointly responsible for overseeing executive committee members alongside the chair (i.e. secretary, treasurer and inclusions officer). It is suggested but not required that the vice chair oversees events, publicity and social media.

5.3 Secretary
Agrees the agendas for meetings with the chair and vice chair. Takes responsibility for minutes of meetings. Takes responsibility for the majority of the Committee’s communication with other organisations, both within and outside the Students Union.

5.4 Treasurer
Oversees the finances of the Committee. Submits budget proposals to the Union when required and maintains a projection of expenditure throughout the year. Takes responsibility for completing and authorising all finance forms. Liaises with the appointed officer of the union.

5.5 Inclusions and Welfare Officer
Ensures that the Committee and any activities organised by the Committee remain accessible to any students who belong to underrepresented groups and/or may identify as having specific needs. This includes, but is not limited to BME, disabled and mature students, as well as students who do not drink and students of faith. Ensuring that everybody in the mature student community feels considered and represented by the Committee.

5.6 International Officer
Liaises with the inclusions and welfare officer to ensure that interests of international mature students are represented and included in the Committee.

5.7 Events Officer
Takes responsibility for planning and arranging all the social activities organised by the Committee, including regular events and any other, one-off events. The events officer (with the support of the Committee) should ensure that at least one member of the Committee is present and visible at all socials. Liaises with both publicity officers and the secretary to ensure adequate publicity for all events.

5.8 Publicity Officer
Organises and oversees all aspects of the Committees campaigning within the University and wider community and events. Remains aware of issues affecting mature students in order to respond effectively. Liaises both with the events officers and the secretary to ensure adequate publicity for all campaigns. Oversees and updates the Committee’s social media pages (i.e. SU website, Facebook, Twitter).
5.9 Parents’ Officer

Represents students who are parents and/or students with caring responsibilities to ensure that these students feel included and considered within the Committee and events.

6 Representative Positions

The MSC is committed to inclusion and representation for all students who identify as mature in the university, regardless of age.

6.1 Unfilled Positions

Any position not filled by a committee member following the AGM should be open to a by-election in a general meeting. Members elected to fill such a position will be considered full members of the committee with a vote in all committee decisions until the next AGM.

6.2 Additional Positions

Additional positions should be considered by the committee upon student request and established by a majority vote of committee members. Upon the addition of a new representative position, a general meeting should be held to conduct a by-election for the new role.

6.3 Responsibilities

Committee members holding a representative position should be a point of contact for students and should keep in mind the issues faced by mature students in the meetings of the committee. The committee should use this consultation as an opportunity to gain feedback and information about issues faced by mature students and ways in which the committee could address any such issues.

7 Arrangements for support from the Students’ Union

The designated Students Union Officer is responsible for overseeing the budget and general finances of the committee as well as providing general support to the treasurer. The Officer and/or the Specialist Development Coordinator (Equality and Liberation) support the Committee by:

- Giving logistical help in liaising with other Union staff and departments.
- Advising in matters of policy.
- Ensuring action has been taken on decisions made by the Committee.
- Liaises with the Committee members on issues facing the Committee.

It is also important that the relevant staff members consider and act in accordance with the views and opinions of the Committee in all other areas of their work.

8 Arrangements for meetings

The Mature Students’ Committee meets regularly during term (and where possible during examination periods. Quorum shall be required for any binding decision to be made. Most decisions require a simple majority; however, a two thirds majority vote shall be required for any decisions which are felt to fundamentally affect the running of the Committee or any of its activities.
9  Budget and resources
The MSC applies for and is allocated a yearly budget. This money is then to be allocated to fulfil each of the objectives as appropriate. A majority vote of the Committee shall agree any expenditure of £50 or more, with the treasurer overseeing day-to-day expenses. Comprehensive records should be kept of all expenditure.

10  Procedures for grievances and non-performance

10.1 Committee or a Committee member not complying with role
If any person wishes to file a complaint about the Committee, an individual Committee member or the general performance of the Committee, they should submit (in writing or by email) a formal complaint to the supporting Students Union Officer. This will be raised for discussion at the next Committee meeting. The supporting Officer will reply to the complainant within 14 days, outlining any decisions made as a result of the complaint.

10.2 Removal of office or duties
If any Committee member misses three meetings in a row or five in a semester without good reason and formal apologies which are acceptable to the rest of the Committee, the secretary will put forward a vote of no confidence to the Committee.

A no confidence vote may also be raised at any time if a Committee member is deemed not to be fulfilling their role (e.g. gross misconduct). If a two-thirds majority of the Committee agrees, that member will then be removed from their position on the Committee. A vote of no confidence requires a member of committee to propose and one to second.

A Committee member may be removed from their position or may have specific responsibilities removed by a simple majority resolution of a General Meeting of mature students. A GM may be called at the request of at least 20 mature students. Any person deemed to have resigned following a resolution of no confidence may stand again in any subsequent election or by-election.

11  The status of the committee within the government of the Students’ Union
The Mature Students’ Committee is an elected Representative Committee of the University of Sheffield Students Union. It is accountable to the Students Union Council, the Student Executive Committee and ultimately Union Membership.

12  Accountability
Copies of minutes from each meeting are made available on the Committee website. This constitution is also published on the Committee website. Committee meetings should remain open to students at the discretion of the Committee. The expected behaviour of Committee members are outlined in the Code of Conduct of the MSC (found in appendix).