

## **LANCASTER NIGHTLINE BYE LAW**

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### **1. OBJECTS**

- 1.1. The primary objective of Lancaster Nightline is to provide a non-directive, non-judgmental, confidential, anonymous and empathetic listening service.
- 1.2. Lancaster Nightline shall be run solely by students, for students.
- 1.3. Lancaster Nightline shall ordinarily be open to receive telephone calls every night during term-time between 2200-0800, and for the same hours during Intro Week at the start of each academic year.
- 1.4. Lancaster Nightline shall provide an Electronic Listening Service to be operated during normal opening hours.
- 1.5. Lancaster Nightline will effectively train volunteers to offer these services in line with the terms of sub-section 2.6 and national good practice.

### **2. GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

- 2.1. LUSU shall be ultimately responsible for the government and administration of Nightline in conjunction with the Nightline Executive Committee, through liaison with the Service Director.
- 2.2. Nightline is a sub-committee of the LUSU Council. As such all affiliations and amendments to this Bye Law require LUSU Council approval before taking effect.
- 2.3. The sovereign body of Nightline shall be a General Meeting, subject to the ultimate authority of the LUSU Council.
- 2.4. All financial matters are subject to Schedule 1: Bye Law 4 (Financial Regulations).
- 2.5. Nightline, as a sub-committee of LUSU, is subject to the terms and conditions of the Safety Framework. Nightline must also abide by all University Rules and relevant procedures (including Safety and Security procedures).
- 2.6. A statistical report regarding the number and type of calls, and the number of e-mails received must be provided to the VP (Equality, Welfare and Diversity) and Communications and Support Services Manager every term, detailing calls received during the previous term.

- 2.7. The Service Director will make a termly report to LUSU Council on the service.
- 2.8. At least two Nightline members must be on duty at all times when the service is operating.

### 3. **MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1. Any member of LUSU is entitled to attend training sessions and apply for selection of the service.
- 3.2. Only upon successful completion of all requirements of the training and selection can a person become a member of Lancaster Nightline.
- 3.3. The Service Director shall, in consultation with the selectors and Training Officer, have the final decision in all matters related to admission of new members.
- 3.4. Having fulfilled the training requirements a member must adhere to all policies, frameworks, guidelines and procedures laid out in, or referred to by this Bye Law, and all policies passed by a general meeting that satisfies the requirements of quoracy.
- 3.5. Only members of Lancaster Nightline can vote at Nightline meetings, propose motions to Nightline meetings or be a candidate in any Nightline elections.
- 3.6. No subscription fee will be charged for membership of Lancaster Nightline.
- 3.7. Nightline has two types of members, Active and Inactive:
  - 3.7.1. Active Members are able to participate in duties, socials and must attend General Meetings and Emergency Meetings subject to the provisions in this Bye Law under section 4.
  - 3.7.2. Members may become Inactive Members when there are serious personal or academic issues where a student feels that they may not be able to complete duties effectively. This status and period of time will be agreed upon between the member and the Volunteer Coordinator at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator.
  - 3.7.3. A status of inactivity only affects the placement of a member on the duty rota. Inactive members are still expected to attend General Meetings and Emergency Meetings and are able to attend socials.

#### **4. MEETINGS**

- 4.1. There shall be a General Meeting held at least once during each term, at a time and venue determined by the Service Director, and members shall be notified no less than 5 days before the scheduled meeting.
- 4.2. The Annual General Meeting will:
  - 4.2.1. Take place each academic year, in the eighth week of the Summer Term,
  - 4.2.2. Have the Nightline Executive Committee present a report of all activities for the previous year,
  - 4.2.3. Hold the elections for the Nightline Executive Committee.
- 4.3. Where appropriate, Emergency General Meetings may be called by the Service Director, or by three quarters of the Committee. No less than 24 hours notice must be given to members for an Emergency Meeting.
- 4.4. The Emergency Meeting shall:
  - 4.4.1. Only discuss the matter for which the meeting was called;
  - 4.4.2. Not be competent to transact any financial business or to confirm any minutes of previous meetings.
- 4.5. All resolutions passed at any meeting shall be carried by a simple majority of all those present and voting, other than a vote of censure or no confidence in an officer, or to make a constitutional amendment, when a qualified majority shall be required.
- 4.6. In the case of amendments to this Bye Law, or a motion of no confidence or censure in any officer, at least five days written notice must be given to all Executive Committee members.
- 4.7. No General or Emergency Meetings shall be held during University vacations.
- 4.8. The VP (Equality, Welfare and Diversity) and the Communications and Support Services Manager may attend any Nightline meeting by giving notice to the Service Director,
- 4.9. The quorum of General and Emergency Meetings shall be one half of the registered members of Nightline.

#### **5. NIGHTLINE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- 5.1. The Nightline Executive Committee shall consist of:

- 5.1.1. Service Director;
  - 5.1.2. Volunteer Coordinator;
  - 5.1.3. Treasurer;
  - 5.1.4. General Secretary;
  - 5.1.5. Welfare Officer;
  - 5.1.6. Rota Officer;
  - 5.1.7. Information Officer;
  - 5.1.8. 2 x Social Secretary;
  - 5.1.9. Advertising and Creativity Officer;
  - 5.1.10. Health, Safety and Maintenance Officer;
  - 5.1.11. Training Officer.
- 5.2. Executive Committee members should perform their duties in accordance with the outlines and guidance in the Executive Officers Handbook.
- 5.3. The Nightline Executive committee shall be responsible for:
- 5.3.1. Ensuring that at all times Nightline acts in full pursuit of the aims and objects of this Bye Law and any subsequent procedures or regulations are adhered to;
  - 5.3.2. Their individual duties as outlined in the Executive Officers Handbook;
  - 5.3.3. Anything mandated to it by a General Meeting or a weekly meeting;
  - 5.3.4. Running the training programme including ongoing training as required;
  - 5.3.5. Informing the membership of the location and time of training, social events, meetings, matters arising from calls, conferences etc;
  - 5.3.6. Seeing that all safety and training requirements are fulfilled.
- 5.4. Members of the Nightline Executive Committee shall take office from Monday in Week 10 of the Summer Term following the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.5. The period between the AGM and the Monday in Week 10 of Summer Term shall be a hand over period between the incoming and outgoing Executives.
- 5.6. Any member of the Executive may resign, but must give one week's notice in writing to the Service Director who will report this to the Executive Committee. In the case of the Service Director resigning, written notification must be handed to the Executive Committee and the LUSU President, giving two weeks' notice.

- 5.7. In the event of the Executive Committee being temporarily without any of its members, excluding the Service Director, the Service Director may reallocate their duties to other members of the Committee until such time as a successor has been elected.
- 5.8. In the case of the Service Director resigning, the Executive Committee shall elect from within the Committee an officer who shall act as temporary Service Director, liaising anonymously with LUSU, submitting apologies to meetings as required and will run elections for a new Service Director, to be elected within ten days.
- 5.9. Failure of Executive Committee members to fulfill their duties and responsibilities as laid out in the Executive Officers Handbook or by resolutions of general meetings, without reasonable excuse is sufficient grounds for a motion of no confidence.
- 5.10. Nightline Committee meetings can be called:
- 5.10.1. By the Service Director;
- 5.10.2. By the request of at least five Executive Committee members in writing to the Service Director.
- 5.11. The Executive Committee shall meet once every two weeks in term time, and shall be called, convened and chaired by the Service Director. If necessary a second meeting may be reconvened to resolve any unfinished business.
- 5.12. Any member of the Executive Committee shall automatically be subject to a Vote of No Confidence if they are absent, for three meetings in a term, two consecutive General Meetings, or if they fail to provide acceptable apologies for any meeting on more than two occasions in one term of office.
- 5.13. The Volunteer Coordinator shall have the final say in the determination of whether or not an apology is deemed to be reasonable, having regard at all times for the responsibility placed upon Officers to carry out the duties for which they were elected, and the guidelines in the executive officers handbook.

## 6. **ELECTIONS**

- 6.1. All elections will be run in accordance with LUSU guidelines as outlined in Schedule 2: Bye Law 1 (Elections).

- 6.2. Nightline's Service Director will take the role of acting returning officer (ARO) unless standing for a position themselves in which another member of the Executive Committee will become ARO.
- 6.3. All elections are preceded by speeches by the candidates not exceeding five minutes in the cases of Service Director and Volunteer Coordinator and two minutes for all other posts. This is followed by questions to the candidates, which the Service Director shall direct.
- 6.4. Candidates unable to attend must send written confirmation of their intention to stand and this must be read out by the ARO after the speeches from the other candidates. If no confirmation is received, exclusion from the election will result. A vote shall then be taken by secret ballot.
- 6.5. Any complaints regarding elections should at first be taken to the ARO. Their decision can be appealed to the LUSU Elections sub-committee whose decision is final.

## **7. BYE LAW**

- 7.1. In the event of any disagreement as to the meaning of this Bye Law, the decision of a General Meeting shall be final and binding, subject to the authority of the LUSU Council.

## **8. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

- 8.1. The following complaints procedure exists for the members of Nightline to lodge a complaint involving Nightline;
- 8.2. If a member is unhappy with any aspect of Nightline, the way they have been treated by a member of the Nightline Executive Committee, or have any other issue which they feel needs to be formally addressed they should follow the procedure below:
- 8.3. In the first instance, the member should contact an experienced member of their village. If they are unable to assist, or the member is unhappy with their response, they will direct the member to the Welfare Officer or another Executive Committee member if the Welfare Officer is at question.
- 8.4. The Welfare Officer will listen to the member's complaint, and will take all reasonable steps to resolve it. If the member remains dissatisfied, or the Welfare

Officer feels that it is necessary to, they will refer the matter to the Service Director. In this instance, the Welfare Officer or appointed Executive Committee member will attend meetings with the member, and assist them in raising the complaint.

- 8.5. It is the Service Director's responsibility to act in good faith and in an unbiased manner at all times, and to strive to resolve the member's complaint as amicably and positively as possible.
- 8.6. If it is thought necessary, i.e. where the Service Director is at question or involved in a conflict of interest, the Service Director will involve the VP (Equality, Welfare and Diversity) for guidance in the matter.

## **9. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

- 9.1. Disciplinary procedures will be followed for breaches of policies, tenets, frameworks and/or procedures.
- 9.2. All registered members of Nightline are subject to the disciplinary procedure.
- 9.3. The Service Director and the Volunteer Coordinator shall have responsibility for the disciplinary procedures, having in mind that the Service Director has overall responsibility for the operation and administration of Nightline.
- 9.4. Should disciplinary procedures be required to be taken against the Service Director or the Volunteer Coordinator, the Nightline Executive Committee shall follow this procedure acting when a three-fourths majority (excluding the officer/s subject to disciplinary procedures) is achieved.
- 9.5. There shall be two areas of disciplinary action: those within the organization and running of Lancaster Nightline and those involving strong breaches of the tenets to which all members of Nightline should adhere with further guidance in the Anonymity Framework.
- 9.6. Disciplinary action required for the internal organization and running of Lancaster Nightline shall be governed by the Four Strikes Policy governed by the Volunteer Coordinator.
  - 9.6.1. Lancaster Nightline will also provide ways in which a member can redeem strikes and an appeal procedure in the event that the member disagrees with the sanctions of the Four Strikes Policy.

- 9.7. Where there are breaches of the tenets the severity of the breach shall be addressed by the Nightline Executive.
- 9.7.1. The Nightline Executive will take into account:
- 9.7.1.1. the tenet that has been breached;
  - 9.7.1.2. the location of the breach;
  - 9.7.1.3. other non-members or members that have been involved;
  - 9.7.1.4. any threat to the security and reputation of Nightline that has been created;
  - 9.7.1.5. any prior breaches and the frequency of them;
  - 9.7.1.6. any other issues that may affect the decision including any reason given by the member(s);
- 9.7.2. The Nightline Executive will then vote, by simple majority, whether the member should be disciplined using the Four Strikes Policy or further action is required.
- 9.7.3. In the event that an Executive Member breaches a tenet, they will be subject to the same procedure but will not be permitted to vote
- 9.8. If further disciplinary action is deemed necessary, then the Service Director will seek advice and guidance from the VP (Equality, Welfare and Diversity).
- 9.9. Further disciplinary action may involve a suspension from Nightline for a period of between one and five weeks or, in severe breaches where the security and safety of Nightline is brought into question, expulsion from the service.
- 9.10. Suspension will mean the member cannot take part in duties, socials or vote at meetings but must still remain up to date with all further training and minutes from meetings.
- 9.11. If a member is expelled from Nightline, they will not be permitted to rejoin until the next academic year, and must go through all training and selection again.

## 10. **THE 5 TENETS**

### 10.1. **Anonymity**

All Nightliners must try to remain anonymous in order to protect themselves and their callers.

### 10.2. **Confidentiality**

All calls to Nightline are completely confidential and details may never go out of the office.

**10.3. Non-Judgmental**

Members never judge their callers; all callers will be received in an equal and unbiased manner regardless of personal views of the caller or the member.

**10.4. Non-Directive**

Members may never advise callers on any situation.

**10.5. Empathy**

Members will to put themselves in the caller's place and understand how they feel.

**11. POLICIES, PROCEDURES, FRAMEWORKS AND GUIDELINES**

11.1. To ensure this list is kept updated this Bye Law should be added to every January.

**11.2. Policies**

11.2.1. Equality and Diversity Policy;

11.2.2. Four Strikes Policy;

11.2.3. Manipulative, Abusive and Threatening Calls Policy;

11.2.4. Silent Call Policy;

11.2.5. Suicide Policy;

11.2.6. Telephone Masturbator Policy;

11.2.7. Terrorist Policy.

**11.3. Frameworks**

11.3.1. Anonymity Framework;

11.3.2. Safety Framework;

11.3.3. Training Framework;

11.3.4. Village Support System Framework.

**11.4. Guidelines**

11.4.1. Code of Ethics;

11.4.2. Executive Officers Handbook.