Rules and Safety Handbook

Before We Begin...
Those running a society or committee have a duty of care in law to ensure the safety of its members and any other people who may be affected by its activities and events. Therefore, if you organise an activity for people, you need to take the necessary precautions to keep the activity safe or otherwise the society could be liable for any accidents and injuries which occur as a result. You must also report any accidents/incidents to the Students’ Union.

At the beginning of the year, all committee members are asked to read and accept this Rules & Safety Handbook (this is a tick box on your online committee details form). This is to agree that you’ve read through this guide and you understand the necessary steps you need to take to ensure that your activities are safe and sound! There are key staff members to help you – please email society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk for advice and help.

Society and Committee Insurance...
Your society or committee is covered under the Students’ Union’s public liability insurance. Public liability insurance provides cover for injury or damage to people or property if negligence can be proved against your society or the Students’ Union, despite your or the Students’ Union’s efforts to prevent fault-based negligence. Member-to-member cover is also included (e.g. one ballroom dancer crashes into another, causing injury). Members are not insured against accidental injury or loss, nor for loss or damage to personal effects. Members can obtain their own personal accident insurance if they wish.

Negligence means the failure to use reasonable care, which results in damage or injury to another.

This insurance is essential for your society or committee in case:
- There is an accident or injury in your society/committee, and
- Your society/committee is blamed, and
- The person involved is seeking compensation.

IMPORTANT: This insurance only covers societies and committees for their ‘usual activities’ - the activities that were detailed in the original ‘new society application form’ and on your Constitution, as well as any other conditions that were applied at the time of approval/registration. You can ask to see these documents at the Activities Zone Desk.

Risk Assessment...What’s That?
As organisers of activities, societies and committees have a duty of care in law to assess the risks associated with the activity or event and take appropriate measures to reduce those risks as far as is reasonably and practicably possible. This is where a risk assessment form comes in! This is a written checklist which ensures that you are conducting everything as safely as possible, so that the chance of accidents is minimised or avoided – you’ll submit to relevant staff in the Activities & Sports Zone. In the event of an accident or incident, you’ll be asked to produce this documentation. There may be some instances where you simply need to ‘adhere’ to a risk assessment that’s already on the Zone Online - please get in touch and ask if you’re not sure.

How Do I Complete a Risk Assessment?
For hints and tips on how to complete a good risk assessment, see the guide ‘How to do a Risk Assessment’ on the Zone Online. You can also download a blank risk assessment template to complete and submit to society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk.
How ‘Risky’ is my Society or Committee? When should I do a Risk Assessment?

Each Society and Committee has its own ‘risk rating’ – Red, Yellow or Green – which is an indicator of the level of risk of your activities.

**RED:** If your Society or Committee is listed below, then your risk rating is ‘Red’ – this is because your usual or regular activities are higher risk than other groups’. Therefore, you must: a) submit an annual risk assessment; and b) attend risk assessment training or arrange a meeting with staff: society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk. As well as your annual risk assessment, you may also need to submit a risk assessment for one-off higher risk activities throughout the year. As an example, Dance Society will produce an annual risk assessment detailing their usual classes (as a ‘red risk’ society) but will also submit a specific risk assessment for a national competition.

**YELLOW:** Your Society or Committee has a ‘Yellow’ rating if you are running one or more high risk activities throughout the year (e.g. a large event, bar crawl, trip). You should familiarise yourself with this handbook to ensure you submit risk assessment(s) or the relevant online forms when needed. You may wish to attend risk assessment training and you can contact society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk for advice if needed.

**GREEN:** Your Society or Committee has a ‘Green’ rating if your usual and one-off activities are low risk. You should familiarise yourself this handbook and you can contact society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk for advice if needed.

**Contents**

1. Bar Crawls/Alcohol/Socials
2. Education, Self-Help and Party-Political Campaigning
3. Charitable Fundraising
4. Equipment
5. Events
6. External Bank Accounts
7. External Speakers
8. Film showings
9. Firework Displays
10. First Aid
11. Food
12. Inflatables (including Bouncy Castles)
13. Manual Handling
14. Non-Student Members and Associate Membership of the Students’ Union
15. Participation and Medical Statements
16. Consent for photographing/filming at society events
17. Receiving Payment for Services Provided
18. Recording Accidents and Near Misses
19. Room Bookings
20. Sport
21. Trainers and Instructors
22. Trips in the UK
23. Trips Abroad
24. Under-18s and Vulnerable Adults as Members
25. Vehicles: Hire and Driving Cars and Minibuses
26. Volunteering with Under-18s and Vulnerable Adults
27. Making a Claim under the Students’ Union’s Insurance Policy
1. **BAR CRAWLS / SOCIALS/ ALCOHOL**  

_**Bar crawls**_ are not encouraged by the Students’ Union due to their focus on excessive alcohol consumption. Social events must be organised to prevent any member feeling intimidated and making allowances for all cultural and personal beliefs.

As bar crawls and large alcohol-based socials are deemed to be higher risk than usual social events, Students’ Union staff advice is available to make them as safe as possible. Societies/committees are required to submit an online bar crawl form and adhere to the standard bar crawl risk assessment. You can submit this via the Zone Online: [www.sheffieldsu.com/zoneonline](http://www.sheffieldsu.com/zoneonline)

_**Small-scale socials**_ may not always require a risk assessment if they are low-risk (e.g. small group visiting a pub or bar, a ball held at reputable venue). However you still need to ensure that these are as safe as possible, considering the following:

- **Venue:** The venue(s) you attend should have their own venue insurance and/or event license and should comply with government health & safety standards. If you’re in doubt, then further checks might be required: contact society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk.
- **Transport:** In the interests of safety for your members check that there is adequate transportation to and from the venue(s) in case a student wants to leave the social early.

_**Alcohol:**_ For information around responsible drinking you should:

- Read the Alcohol Code of Practice under ‘Safety Matters’ section on the Zone Online
- Familiarise yourself with the Students’ Union Advice Centre’s guides to safe drinking ([www.sheffieldsu.com/advice](http://www.sheffieldsu.com/advice)), particularly the sections on _Drinking and Partying, ‘Out and About’_ and _‘Responsible Drinking’_.

Societies and committees must not:

a) hold _initiation ceremonies_ \(^1\)

b) apply peer pressure upon society/committee members in social situations or otherwise.

c) consume alcohol in minibuses, coaches, cars etc.

d) undertake any activity which brings the SU into disrepute OR damages its reputation.

- Sanctions may be imposed on any society found to be in breach of the above.
- Society’s/committee’s social activities must be organised in such a way that no member feels harassed, intimidated or bullied.
- Such activities must be inclusive and make allowances for all cultural and personal beliefs.
- Members should be able to opt out without fear of undue pressure, reprisal, non selection for teams, embarrassment or any form of discrimination.
- Social activities should not be organised which encourage the excessive consumption of alcohol.

2. **EDUCATION, SELF-HELP AND PARTY-POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING**

For insurance and legal reasons, societies and committees cannot engage in the following with students or with the general public:

- Counselling or self-help support
- Advice or advocacy (written or spoken)
- Information or guidance other than from official sources (e.g. NHS, government)
- Slander, libel or defamation
- Monetary donations to individuals or groups beyond the aims and objectives of the Students’ Union

However, societies and committees can engage in _peer to peer_ activities, in other words, sharing and debating information between members of their own society or committee.

\(^1\) _Initiation ceremonies_ – events in which society/committee members are expected to perform any activity as a means of gaining entry, credibility and status within a society/committee. Examples are excessive consumption of alcohol and/or food concoctions, and any other form of bullying and behaviour that can cause intimidation, humiliation, danger and/or harm to society/committee members and non-members.
Societies or committees may wish to engage in awareness-raising and signposting, particularly if they are a political and campaigning society or committee. Please be aware that:

- Students’ Union resources and funding cannot be used for party political campaigns.
- Beyond peer to peer activity, awareness-raising can only be through the dissemination of official documents from government services (e.g. NHS), registered charities (e.g. MIND) or University Departments or Support Services (e.g. University Health or Careers Services). Society or committee members should not be the authors of such advice and guidance. See the University’s ‘Things Not Going Right?’ website for contact details: www.shef.ac.uk/ssid/sos

Students who are unwell must be referred to the trained professionals operating in the University Counselling Service, University Health Service and Disability and Dyslexia Support Service as appropriate. You can find out about these services here: www.shef.ac.uk/ssid

3. CHARITABLE FUNDRAISING

If your society or committee is keen to fundraise for a cause, then we strongly recommend you organise this through Sheffield RAG (Raising & Giving) as they can give you the best advice, support, charity expertise, as well as appropriate insurance cover. RAG is self-financing and as such, the costs of running the programme have to be covered by the programme itself: 10% from all fundraising goes toward covering RAG’s core costs including two staff members who provide expertise/guidance, first aid training for Committee to safely run events and charity resources.

For more information on how to get involved with RAG, see the ‘Adopt a Charity’ guide, located on the Zone Online (or email adoptacharity@sheffieldrag.com).

If you decide to fundraise independently as a society (i.e. not through RAG) then you must adhere to the ‘Society Charitable Fundraising’ guide on the Zone Online as there are legalities involved in fundraising efforts that you need to be aware of. Working and Representative Committees must fundraise through RAG due to ultra vires law.

Please note: the money your society or committee fundraises must go into a charity account through the Students’ Union. A-account money cannot be donated to charity, only to affiliate to a national body in accordance with the society’s usual activities.

4. EQUIPMENT

It is your responsibility and legal duty of care to ensure the any equipment that your society or committee owns and/or uses is safe and regularly inspected. If you fail to regularly inspect your equipment or if your equipment is not safe for use, you’re putting your participants at risk.

Remember that:

a) You should visually check/inspect your equipment regularly (e.g. every 3-12 months depending on the type of equipment)

b) If you are using electrical equipment as part of your activities, it must be PAT-tested (Portable Appliance Testing). PAT-tests certify that your electrical equipment isn’t faulty and is safe to use. You can pete.brenchley@shef.ac.uk to arrange PAT-testing;

c) The people using your equipment should be adequately experienced or trained to do so.

If you have any concerns about the safety of your equipment, or training needed to use it, please contact society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk.

Most society or committee equipment belongs to the Students’ Union and is therefore insured by the Students’ Union. All your equipment must be listed annually on your Committee Details Form Part A. You can insure any additional equipment that you buy throughout the year by
submitting details of the item(s) to society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk. If this equipment is damaged, lost or stolen, a claim can be made (so long as reasonable precautions have been taken to protect the equipment). The excess the society or committee would pay is £100. However, equipment is not covered if:

- It is damaged during use.
- It is left overnight (7pm-8am) in an unattended vehicle.
- It is left in a locked vehicle during the day but not covered up.
- It is not locked away (e.g. in a house/locker/cupboard).
- It does not belong to the Students’ Union, even if it belongs to society or committee members.

External Equipment: If you wish to hire or borrow equipment externally, contact society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk to arrange extra insurance cover.

Items from outside the EU that don’t carry the CE symbol must not be used.

All ladders, scaff towers, step ladders, step stools must be registered and tagged. If your society have one of these items please let us know and we will help to arrange this.

5. EVENTS
If your society or committee is organising an event which involves foreseeable risk (e.g. a dance competition, a summer fete, a large event involving the general public), then you must contact society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk at least 4 weeks before the event takes place. You will be advised on whether a risk assessment is needed and whether the event can be covered under the SU’s public liability policy.

6. EXTERNAL BANK ACCOUNTS
Societies and committees are not authorised to hold external bank accounts. The Students’ Union only recognises internal committee accounts and society A and B accounts. If a society or committee is found to have an external account (unless an exception has been granted by the Activities Officer) it will cease to be recognised as an SU society or committee and the SU will not accept any liability for the group.

7. EXTERNAL SPEAKERS
If your society or committee wishes to invite an external speaker as part of your activity/event, then you must submit an online External Speaker Form at least 3 weeks in advance. You can complete this form on the ‘External Speakers’ page of the Zone Online. This includes speakers at the Students’ Union or off-campus. This is due to new legislation around external speakers at Universities. If your request is not sent in time, the speaker will be unable to speak at your event. This is for speakers only. To find out about Trainers or Instructors, please see Section 20.

8. FILM SHOWINGS
If you’re hosting a film showing as part of an event, you need to have the appropriate film license.

For film-showings in the Students’ Union (but not the Auditorium), you can hold a free showing (already covered under the SU’s film licence). In this instance, you must ensure that:

- the show is free of charge (no indirect/direct charge, including charitable donations).
- the space is ‘communal’ (i.e. anyone is free to enter and leave the space as they wish
- there is no commercial activity attached
- Full guidelines are here: fbwebsites/defaultstorage.blob.core.windows.net/umbraco/1378/pvsl-guidelines.pdf
If you’re hosting a film in the Students’ Union which **you are charging** for (i.e. it’s not free), you need to obtain a Single Title Screening film licence via:

www.filmbank.co.uk/licences/single_title_screening.asp

For film-showings in the SU Auditorium, contact Film.Unit@shef.ac.uk - licenses cost around £120 and they’ll need at least 3 weeks notice.

**9. FIREWORK DISPLAYS**

Societies and committees organising firework displays must submit a risk assessment. You must comply with the following requirements:

- No fireworks to be lit or placed less than 25 metres from any building.
- Fireworks to be lit, and displays set up, within a roped-off safety area only.
- Fireworks to be handled by an Officer of the society or committee and/or authorised adult personnel only.
- An Officer of the society/committee to be in attendance on the display site at all times.
- The Police and Fire Brigade Authorities to be consulted at least 7 days before the firework display is held, and all recommendations complied with.
- At least one steward in attendance for every 100 spectators.
- Qualified First Aid Personnel to be in attendance at all times, and means of summoning emergency assistance available.
- Permission must be obtained from the land/premises owner beforehand.

**10. FIRST AID**

If you require First Aid cover for an event, then contact the St. John’s Ambulance Society (Sheffield Links) for a quote on providing first-aid cover: sheffieldlinks@gmail.com

If you feel your members would benefit from First Aid training to make things safer for your society or committee (e.g. for your usual activities or your trip abroad) then contact society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk – the Zone may be able to place you on a free course, giving you an accredited First Aid qualification.

For events which require extra safety, you can borrow First Aid kits and high visibility jackets—just ask at the Activities Zone Desk.

**11. FOOD**

Food safety regulations mean that the Students’ Union cannot allow societies and committees to prepare and **sell or distribute** food for consumption, either on or off Students’ Union premises.

You may be able to hold a charity cake sale – but you must ask for approval first from the Activities Zone Desk who will provide you with guidelines and a disclaimer notice.

You **can** share food if it is ‘member to member’ – i.e. if you are only giving it to registered members of your society or committee e.g. between members of the Baking Society. If you decide to do this then you must follow the food safety guidelines below:

**Food Safety Guidelines**

*When handling food:*
Pay attention to personal hygiene (washing hands, not touching face or hair). Wear clean, protective clothing and no jewellery.

*When serving food:*
Protect food from cross-contamination between raw and cooked products.
When preparing food:
- Hands must be washed frequently on site with hot water, antibacterial soap and dried with paper towels or a hot air dryer.
- You must wash your hands: before handing food; after handling meat, poultry, fish and eggs; after visiting the toilet; after touching face or hair; after smoking; after blowing nose.
- Cuts must be covered with a blue waterproof plaster.
- Use a spoon (not finger) to taste food and wash it before re-tasting.
- Separate chopping boards/knives must be used to prepare raw meat and fish.
- All leftover food must be disposed of immediately.

External Caterers or Restaurants:
When using external caterers, societies/committees should ensure that the caterers have public liability insurance. External caterers invited into the Students’ Union or University must have a Food Hygiene Rating of 4 or 5 and you must seek approval in advance from the Activities & Sports Zone. The rating for various external caterers can be found at www.food.gov.uk

12. INFLATABLES (INCLUDING BOUNCY CASTLES)
In order to hire a bouncy castle or other inflatable for an event, your society or committee must provide the following to society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk:
- a copy of the company's public liability insurance (£5m indemnity minimum)
- a copy of the company's risk assessment
- confirmation that the equipment has a current PIPA certificate
- a risk assessment for the event
In respect of Bouncy Castles, it is also recommended that the equipment:
(a) is supervised by a responsible adult at all times
(b) shall not be used by more than 15 persons at all times (common sense should prevail where a smaller sized castle is used)
(c) shall have a barrier to keep onlookers at least one metre from the entry and any generator will be fitted with a guard
(d) will not be used during periods of rain or when the inflatable surface is wet

13. MANUAL HANDLING
If you feel your members would benefit from Manual Handling training to make things safer for your society or committee then contact society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk as we may be able to help arrange a course for you. You can also find out some basic advice on Manual Handling on the HSE (Health & Safety Executive) website: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/manlinde.htm

14. NON-STUDENT MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP OF THE STUDENTS’ UNION
Society and committee constitutions do allow non-students to become members; however non University of Sheffield students must become ‘Associate’ members. This costs £10 and can be done by submitting an application form at the Welcome Desk. There is no charge for Sheffield Hallam University students if they apply showing their Hallam Cards.

However, as with claims made by student members, if such a person were to cause injury to someone else or damage their property, then a claim under the Students’ Union's public liability cover would only succeed if negligence could be proved against the Students’ Union, not the person.

N.B. Only University of Sheffield students can hold the four ‘executive’ positions of a committee (President, Secretary, Treasurer, Inclusion Officer). Associate or Life members of the Union can hold optional committee roles.
15. PARTICIPATION AND MEDICAL STATEMENTS
For some activities involving risk, it is advisable to ask members to complete a Participation & Medical Statement. This is to make it clear they agree to take part in an activity which involves an element of possible risk and asks them to inform activity organisers of any medical conditions which may affect their safe participation in activities.

However, this still means you have a duty of care in law to ensure any activities you arrange are as safe as possible, with a risk assessment being submitted.

*Please see the example ‘Participation and Medical Statement’ for a useful template which can be adapted, located in the Zone Online: www.sheffieldsu.com/zoneonline

16. CONSENT FOR PHOTOGRAPHING/FILMING AT SOCIETY EVENTS
It can be really useful to take photos or videos at your event. You can use them afterwards to publicise your activities and people often like to see photos of their Society or Committee having fun together. However, you should make sure the people you are photographing/filming are happy with this and understand how the images will be used.

Remember that people might have their own reasons for not wanting themselves to be photographed/filmed, and it is important to respect this. It is particularly important to make sure that everyone knows if the images or footage might be used on a website or on social media. With this in mind we have produced a simple consent form which you can ask your members to sign: Filming and Photography Consent Form.

If you are organising an event for non-Society members you can let those attending know they are being photographed/filmed by:

- Displaying signs at the event – this is one our Events Team use.
- Advertising in the publicity for the event
- If practical, making an announcement.

Photographs, videos and other media (e.g. audio) in which individuals can be identified can be seen as personal data in the eyes of the law, and must be taken, stored and used in line with data protection principles. This means that:

- They must only be used for the purpose they were taken for, and no other purpose. So, if you took the photos to help your Society to publicise your activities, you should only use them for this purpose.
- They must be suitable for the purpose they are taken for, and not excessive. So, for example, in order to publicise your Society you probably don’t need hundreds of photos of the same person, or photos of someone doing something which is nothing to do with your Society’s activities.
- They must not be held longer than necessary. So, once they have been used as intended, you should no longer keep the photos.
- They must be destroyed if the people in them ask you to destroy them.
- They must be held, and disposed of, securely so that they don’t end up in the hands of a third party.

In most cases, it is against the law to take and use photos of people without their consent. There are some exemptions to this – photos and videos can be taken and used without consent if they will be used for journalistic, literary or artistic purposes that are in the public interest but you shouldn’t rely on this unless you are sure it applies to your Society.

17. RECEIVING PAYMENT FOR SERVICES PROVIDED
Societies and committees can provide a service (e.g. put on a workshop or performance) for an external organisation or for another society or committee and receive payment for this, but the
generated income must be paid into the society’s B account, and not used for the benefit of the individual(s) who have done the work or performance.

In addition, society or committee members cannot receive payment for any training or teaching done for their society or committee. Any work done by members must be done on a voluntary basis, and money raised through these sessions must be paid into the society’s B account (or committee account); it cannot be used to benefit its own members as individuals.

If an individual requires payment for work done for an external organisation or person, and they are also a society or committee member, then this activity would NOT be considered society or committee activities, and therefore would NOT be covered under the Students’ Union’s insurance policy. In addition, these individuals would be responsible for declaring the income they received to HMRC (unless they are paid through the Students’ Union’s payroll).

18. **RECORDING ACCIDENTS AND NEAR MISSES**
Any accidents, incidents or near misses (unplanned events that did not result in injury, illness, or damage – but had the potential to do so) that occur during society or committee events or practice sessions must be reported with 24 hours. You must complete an Accident Reporting Form (you can find this on the Zone Online) and submit this to society.coordinator@shef.ac.uk.

19. **ROOM BOOKINGS**
Societies and committees are responsible for knowing some relevant safety procedures so that you can inform others in the unlikely event of an emergency in an SU or University room/venue.

- **Emergency services:** If emergency services are required, dial 0114 222 4444 (University Emergency Control Centre). The staff there will alert the appropriate services.
- **Fire:** On arrival to the room, please be aware of the location of the various escape routes, the nearest telephone and fire extinguisher. On discovering a fire, raise the alarm by breaking a call-point (or shouting ‘Fire’) and dial 0114 222 4444. Only if it safe to do so should the fire be tackled with an appropriate portable extinguisher. A continuously sounding fire alarm warns you to leave the building immediately - ALL occupants MUST evacuate the building immediately by the nearest available exit and proceed to the designated evacuation assembly point. Lifts must not be used.
- **Accident or medical emergency:** Call a qualified First Aider or Appointed person to the as soon as possible. If you’re in the Students’ Union, dial 0114 222 8500 (when Welcome Desk is open), or at other times or in University venues dial 0114 222 4444 (University security).

20. **SPORT**
Societies and committees can take advantage of Sport Sheffield’s Intra-Mural leagues. Please email: IntraMural@sheffield.ac.uk for more information.

If your society or committee wishes to organise sporting events other than Intra-Mural, you must first seek approval from the Activities & Sports Zone to check whether this can be permitted and covered under the Students’ Union’s public liability insurance. This may involve completing a risk assessment and agreeing to adhere to rules of national governing bodies where appropriate.

Please note that some sports cannot be authorised or insured.

21. **TRAINERS AND INSTRUCTORS**
**Society or committee members acting as trainers, instructors or speakers:**
Members acting as leaders or instructors must be adequately qualified or experienced to do so. Otherwise a claim might be made against the Students’ Union, under public liability cover, on
the grounds of negligence. In addition, such members cannot be paid for any training they provide. Please see the Section 16 for more details. Training must be provided for novices in the society before they take part in any activity or use Students’ Union equipment which could pose a risk to their safety.

**External trainers or instructors:**
If your society or committee hires an external trainer or instructor then that person is not covered under the Students’ Union’s public liability insurance. If the person is engaged in training or instructing your members, a copy of their public liability cover must be obtained by the society or committee organising the activity. You can check that these are acceptable by sending them to society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk.

You should be aware that, even when inviting external trainers instructors or speakers, your society or committee is still responsible for the activity. You should ensure that the individual/service are appropriate to your group’s aims and objectives, and are not exploiting your group for the benefit of their business.

External speakers are not required to have insurance. However, if your society or committee is inviting a speaker as part of your activities, you must complete an External Speakers Form (online) via the Zone Online (see Section 7).

**Paying an external speaker or trainer:**
A society or committee may choose to pay an external speaker/trainer to provide a service (please see Section 16) and this may be a student, so long as they are not a society or committee member. Payment of students must be made through the Students’ Union’s payroll. For information on paying externals, please read the Treasurer guide (Zone Online).

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**22. TRIPS IN THE UK**
Societies and committees may wish to organise day trips or residential trips in the UK. For both of these, attention must be given to ensure that participants as kept as safe as possible. For each trip, a trip leader must be nominated to take responsibility for safety, and is required to submit an online Trip Form at least two weeks before the trip departs, and adhere to a standard UK trip risk assessment. These can be submitted via an online form on the Zone Online (‘Trips’ section).

**23. TRIPS ABROAD**
There are two types of trips abroad that a society or committee might engage in:

a) **Trip abroad with a tour operator:**
It is generally safer to organise a trip abroad via a reputable tour operator. The trip leader must be nominated to take responsibility for safety and is required to submit an online Trip Form at least two weeks before the trip departs. The society/committee must adhere to the standard risk assessment which is attached to the trip form. This can be submitted via the Zone Online. If you’re participating in an activity that isn’t covered by this risk assessment and you deem to be higher risk, you must inform staff.

In addition, the trip organiser should ensure that:
- the tour company is ABTA registered. If travelling by plane, they should also check that the company is licensed with ATOL and has supplier failure cover.
- the tour has a safety management system, in case of emergency.
- all participants take a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) available from www.ehic.org.uk on the trip, plus appropriate travel and medical insurance (unless this is arranged by the tour company).
b) Trip organised by the society/committee:
If a society or committee wishes to organise a trip abroad without a tour operator, they must nominate a society/committee trip organiser to take responsibility for safety. The trip organiser must:

- Provide society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk with initial details of the trip (e.g. dates, location) at least four weeks before departure. This is in order to inform the Students’ Union’s insurers. There may be an extra charge to extend public liability insurance cover for the trip.
- Meet with relevant Zone staff to run through a trip form and discuss a risk assessment.
- Return the completed trip form, risk assessment, next of kin’s contact details (to be passed onto University Security) to Zone staff at least two weeks before the trip.
- Check that society and committee members organise their own travel and medical insurance and have European Health Insurance Cards (www.ehic.org.uk).
- Ask members to complete Participation and Medical Statements as appropriate (please see Section 15: Participation and Medical Statements).
- Adhere to health & safety advice provided in ‘How to organise a trip’ guidance (Zone Online).

If you need help or advice as to which travel companies to use, or are unsure about any element of planning a trip safely then contact society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk for guidance.

Society and committee equipment is not insured when taken abroad. If you wish to organise an extension of your insurance cover, please speak to the Activities & Sports Zone.

24. UNDER-18s AND VULNERABLE ADULTS AS MEMBERS
For reasons of child protection and legal liability, societies and committees cannot accept as members, nor provide services for, anyone under 18 years of age or vulnerable adults*.

Exceptions to this (e.g. offering membership to a registered student aged 17) will only be allowed with prior and specific agreement from the Activities & Sports Zone.

(* Vulnerable adults – persons who are unable to take care of themselves, or who may be unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation e.g. refugees or older people.)

Where society or committee events are open to the general public and/or under-18s might attend, it is essential that children are accompanied and supervised by a parent/guardian throughout. In these instances, societies and committees must follow the guidance provided in the Child Safeguarding Protocol for Societies & Committees (available on the Zone Online).

In activities or events where parents/guardians may not be present, societies and committees must seek prior approval from Sheffield Volunteering (see Section 25) and comply with any relevant requirements.

25. VEHICLES: HIRE AND DRIVING CARS & MINIBUSES

Hire
If you’re hiring a minibus or coach, then it’s essential that the operator can provide evidence of the list below. We may already know if the operator is approved: contact activities@shef.ac.uk for advice. Operators need:

1. Valid and appropriate PSV Operator Licences (you can check this through the VOSA website); and
2. Valid and appropriate vehicle insurance; and
3. Employ/contract only with drivers in possession of appropriate and valid driver qualifications and licences; and
4. Valid and appropriate Public Liability and Employers’ Liability insurance (when applicable).
Private vehicles

If you are using your own private vehicle to for society or committee business, you are responsible for ensuring that:

1. you have a valid driving licence;
2. the vehicle is fully taxed, has valid insurance and is covered for business use;
3. the vehicle has a valid MOT Certificate;
4. the vehicle is technically safe and roadworthy;
5. you abide by the Highway Code and all relevant Road & Traffic legislation.

If you wish to claim petrol costs back from your society or committee, you must sign a Vehicle Form (Mileage) at the Zone Desk to say that you have complied with the above. Please note that mileage costs can only be reimbursed from a society’s B account (not A account).

If you are taking a private car abroad, it is essential to obtain a green card from the vehicle’s insurers in order to extend UK insurance cover. If you are hiring a vehicle, then you will need to ensure that the hire company obtain a green card from their insurers (allow plenty of notice for this). Please notify the Activities & Sports Zone you are intending to drive a minibus abroad as there may be specific laws to be aware of.

Minibuses

If your society or committee drives minibuses, then you are advised to ensure that the member(s) driving the vehicle have passed the MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) driving test. Please contact society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk for help.

If you are driving a minibus without an additional PCV Licence, then you must display a Small Bus Permit at all times (available from the Activities Zone Desk). You must also:

- have held a full B licence for a total of 2 years;
- receive no payment or other consideration for driving the vehicle other than out-of-pocket expenses;
- the vehicle must weigh less than 3500kg fully loaded;
- no trailer must be attached;
- the driver must be over 21 and under 70.

Whether you are driving a car or a minibus you are also advised to drive responsibly and carefully, making sure that you comply with all Road and Traffic legalisation.

26. VOLUNTEERING WITH UNDER-18s AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Societies and committees are not allowed to undertake volunteering work/projects involving under-18s or vulnerable adults unless they are supported and approved by Sheffield Volunteering. Projects must meet Sheffield Volunteering’s aims and objectives and societies and committees must abide by Sheffield Volunteering’s policies and procedures. If Sheffield Volunteering is unable to support the project, the society or committee must not proceed with the project independently.

Societies and committees are not permitted to volunteer abroad (unless this is within their usual activities and prior permission has been granted (i.e. Tenteleni and Students for Estelí).

27. MAKING A CLAIM UNDER THE STUDENTS’ UNION’S INSURANCE POLICY

If you need to make a claim under the Students’ Union’s public liability insurance policy, contact society.coordinator@sheffield.ac.uk. If a theft, malicious damage or impact has occurred, the police must be informed immediately and an incident number obtained from them.