

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FORUM TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. STATUS

- 1.1. The Lancaster University Students With Disabilities Forum, herein referred to as 'the Forum', is an association of members, governed by an executive committee as a sub-division of Lancaster University Students Union.

2. ROLE

- 2.1. The forum shall exist to:
 - 2.1.1. Represent members to Lancaster University Students Union, the National Student's Union (NUS), the local community, and other relevant bodies, and advise to ensure policy, activities, and services are inclusive;
 - 2.1.2. Actively challenge hate incidents on campus and in the local community;
 - 2.1.3. Care for the welfare of members by providing support, information, and resources.
 - 2.1.4. Actively campaign at a campus and local level for disability equality and rights, and to increase understanding of disability issues and communities;
 - 2.1.5. Organise a diverse range of social events where members can socialise and ensure that a safe space exists during all affiliated events and meetings;
 - 2.1.6. Publicise its existence, its role, the services it offers, and its contact details to students using a wide range of media and outreach channels.
 - 2.1.7. To promote equality and inclusivity of all self-defining groups.

3. THE FORUM MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. Membership shall comprise all full Lancaster University Students Union members. Lancaster University Students Union or University staff members can request membership from the Committee.
- 3.2. Members shall have the right to speak and vote at any General Meeting, and vote and stand in any election, providing they self-define for the self-defining positions.
- 3.3. Members shall have the right to be represented by the Committee officers.
- 3.4. Members and associate members shall have the right to attend all Forum events and meetings.
- 3.5. The Forum shall not charge any fee for membership.
- 3.6. Non-members are welcome providing they adhere to Lancaster University Students Union and Forum governance documents and policies. If concerns are

raised about non-members attending a specific event, the committee shall address these prior to the event.

4. THE FORUM COMMITTEE

4.1. The Forum shall be run by a Committee that shall comprise the following officers:

4.1.1. The Lancaster University Students Union Vice-President: Welfare and Community (ex-officio);

4.1.2. The Lancaster University Students Union Students with Disabilities Officer (ex-officio);

4.2. The Forum shall elect to the committee the following portfolio officers:

4.2.1. One General Secretary;

4.2.2. One Publicity and Communications Officer;

4.2.3. One Socials and Events Officer;

4.2.4. One Accessibility Officer;

4.2.5. One Mental Health Officer;

4.2.6. One Students with Physical Disabilities Officer;

4.2.7. One Students with Specific Learning Difficulties Officer;

4.2.8. One Neurodiversity Officer;

4.3. Portfolio officers shall ordinarily take office on the last day of the term elected in.

4.4. No member may hold more than one portfolio position. If elected to another position, the officer must resign their present post if the two would be concurrent.

4.5. Officers may resign by submitting written resignation to the Lancaster University Students Union SWD Officer(s) or verbally to the Lancaster University Students Union SWD Officer and one other portfolio officer present.

4.6. An officer's position will be reviewed through the vote of no confidence (VNC) process if they are absent without giving acceptable apologies from three consecutive meetings.

4.7. **Standing Mandates**

4.7.1. All officers shall be permanently mandated to:

- 4.7.1.1. To help and Collaborate with all other officers when necessary;
- 4.7.1.2. Not bring the Committee and Forum into disrepute through their actions or inactions;
- 4.7.1.3. Represent the interests of members and the disabled community through their actions and decisions;
- 4.7.1.4. Remain strictly confidential on all matters when appropriate;
- 4.7.1.5. Contribute to all SWD campaigns and activities when required;
- 4.7.1.6. Adhere to all Lancaster University Students Union and Forum governance documents and policies;
- 4.7.1.7. Attend or submit acceptable apologies to the SWD PTO or general secretary in writing or verbally for all mandated meetings;
- 4.7.1.8. Collectively stand in if portfolio officer vacancies arise, until positions are filled.

4.8. The Lancaster University Students Union Students with Disabilities Part time officer(s)

(PTOs) shall:

- 4.8.1. Liaise with Lancaster University Students Union, JCR's, the University, the NUS, and the local community, and report on behalf of the Forum as required;
- 4.8.2. Authorize the social media and website only to ensure they follow Lancaster University Students Union governance -documents and are not open to legal proceedings;
- 4.8.3. Co-ordinate the activities of the Committee;
- 4.8.4. Manage finances in conjunction with the general secretary;
- 4.8.5. Be the primary point of contact;
- 4.8.6. Make sure that all officers receive an adequate handover in a timely manner;

4.9. The General Secretary shall:

- 4.9.1. Take minutes of meetings and circulate -them within 48 hours, to the committee as well as all members, through the most relevant platform at the time;
- 4.9.2. Complete risk assessments for all events and activities;
- 4.9.3. Keep an archive of standing policies and motions available to members;
- 4.9.4. Make a copy of the Terms of Reference available at all meetings;
- 4.9.5. Make sure that all business and procedures of the [fourmforum](#) are articulated to all

committee;

4.9.6. Manage the Forum's finances in conjunction with the PTO(s).

4.9.7. Collaborate with the Accessibility Officer to ensure access needs for meetings and alternative minutes formats are met where possible.

4.10.1 The Publicity and Communications Officer shall:

4.10.1. Design, produce, and circulate publicity advertising the Forum, events, campaigns, and welfare support;

4.10.2. Using an appropriate range to maximise outreach to all students across campus;

4.10.3. Liaise with JCR's and PG Board to distribute publicity across campus;

4.10.4. Moderate social media accounts and update content in a timely fashion;

4.10.5. Communicate with all relevant officers in the Forum.

4.11. The Social and Events Officer shall:

4.11.1. Organise a range of alcoholic (if requested) and non-alcoholic events and activities that cater to a range of members' interests and encourage them to socialise in a safe space;

4.11.2. Make sure all details for social and events are articulated to the General Secretary for the completion of risk assessments;

4.11.3. Facilitate a sober duty schedule for all necessary events;

4.11.4. Ensure all events are safe, and made open to all students;

4.11.5. Shall Work together with the PTO(s) to organise the Forum's external and ticketed events.

4.11.6. Shall be responsible for the production of a Socials timetable for each term, to be presented to the committee in a meeting in a timely manner;

4.11.7. Shall be responsible for arranging regular meetings with the SWD PTO and the other Socials officers to discuss upcoming and future socials;

4.11.8. Shall coordinate communication of relevant Events information to the Publicity officers;

4.11.9. Liaise with the Accessibility Officer to ensure that all events are accessible to members of the forum where possible.

4.12. The Accessibility Officer shall:

4.12.1. Collaborate with the relevant officers to ensure meetings, events, minutes and campaigns are accessible to all members of the Forum where possible;

4.12.2. Where access needs of any forum member cannot be reasonably met, the

Officer shall inform the PTO(s) and other relevant committee members the justifications and/or apologies for not being able to do so;

4.12.3. Attend meetings with Facilities Staff, the Disability Service and other Staff members of the University and Union to discuss access needs of Disabled Students;

4.12.4. Act as a point of Reference alongside the PTO(s) for those with accessibility Issues on campus.

4.13. The Mental health officer shall:

4.13.1. Be primarily responsible for ensuring that the forum reflects the diverse nature of Students with Mental Health Conditions;

4.13.2. Maintain a solid working relationship with the relevant societies and communities; this includes but is not limited to the LU Mental Health Society;

4.13.3. Must self-define as a Student with a Mental Health condition;

4.13.4. Collaborate with the appropriate members of the Committee and PTO(s) to ensure all events, meetings and campaigns meet accessibility requirements of Students with Mental Health Conditions where possible;

4.13.5. Propose and assist campaigns that affect Students with Mental Health Conditions.

4.14. The Students with Physical Disabilities Officer shall:

4.14.1. Be primarily responsible for ensuring that the forum reflects the diverse nature of Students with Physical Disabilities;

4.14.2. Maintain a solid working relationship with the relevant societies and communities;

4.14.3. Must self-define as a Student with a Physical Disability;

4.14.4. Collaborate with the appropriate members of the Committee and PTO(s) to ensure all events, meetings and campaigns meet accessibility requirements of Students with Physical Disabilities where possible;

4.14.5. Propose and assist campaigns that affect Students with Physical Disabilities.

4.15. The Students with Specific Learning Disabilities Officer shall:

4.15.1. Be Primarily responsible for ensuring that the forum reflects the diverse nature of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities.

- 4.15.2. Maintain a solid working relationship with the relevant societies and communities.
- 4.15.3 Must self-define as a Student with a Specific Learning Disability;
- 4.15.4. Collaborate with the appropriate members of the Committee and PTO(s) to ensure all events, meetings and campaigns meet accessibility requirements of Students with Specific Learning Disabilities where possible;
- 4.15.5. Propose and assist campaigns that affect Students with Specific Learning Disabilities.

4.16. The Neurodiversity Officer shall:

- 4.15.1. Be primarily responsible for ensuring that the forum reflects the diverse nature of neurodiversity.
- 4.15.2. Maintain a solid working relationship with the relevant societies and communities; this includes but is not limited to the Smart Start Program for students with autism.
- 4.15.3 Must self-define as being neurodiverse;
- 4.15.4. Collaborate with the appropriate members of the Committee and PTO(s) to ensure all events, meetings and campaigns meet accessibility requirements of students who are neurodiverse where possible;
- 4.15.5. Propose and assist campaigns that affect students who are neurodiverse.

5. MEETINGS

- 5.1. Committee Meetings shall exist to plan officer specific activities and discuss issues.
- 5.2. All business and voting shall adopt the procedure for Executive Committee.
- 5.3. All votes shall carry by a simple majority, except for amendments to this- Terms of Reference.
- 5.4. All meetings shall be chaired by the SWD Officer and convened at a suitable time.
- 5.5. Minutes shall be taken by the General Secretary, and ratified at the next meeting. If the General Secretary is -unavailable, the PTO(s) shall select another officer to take minutes.
- 5.6. Non-members may attend at the discretion of the PTO(s), or chairing officer in absence of the PTO(s).
- 5.7. If the PTO(s) step down, a temporary chair may be elected by a simple majority vote.
- 5.8. All Committee members will make an officer report at the last meeting of Summer term
- 5.9. **General Meetings**

- 5.9.1. Weekly meeting of the Forum unless otherwise specified by the SWD Officer;
- 5.9.2. Facilitate constitutional and electoral business;
- 5.9.3. All members may attend, speak and vote;
- 5.9.4. All motions must be on the agenda;
- 5.9.5. General Meetings must be called by the SWD PTO(s), a simple majority vote by the committee or a petition of 10 members;
- 5.9.6. Quoracy shall be up to 2 committee members with portfolio in addition to 5 members, or it is the third consecutive non- quorate meeting.
- 5.9.7. At least five days' notice shall be given of a General Meeting, specifying the date, time

and venue. Notice must be publicised widely and shall include general details of business to be transacted.

- 5.9.1. Amendments to motions may be proposed at any time prior to the vote.

5.10 Closed Meetings

- 5.10.1 Meeting of the Forum's committee;
- 5.10.2 Officers are mandated to attend and society members are welcome but are not obligated to attend;
- 5.10.3 Quoracy is 3 portfolio officers

5.2. Emergency General Meetings (EGM)

- 5.2.1. EGM's shall only be called when failure to discuss an item of business is harmful or detrimental to the Forum or its members.
- 5.2.2. EGM's shall be called by either: the SWD PTO(s), 3 committee members with portfolio, or a petition of 10 members.
- 5.2.3. EGM's shall follow all procedures for General Meetings, except notice period is reduced to next calendar day. EGM's must be publicised as widely as possible.
- 5.2.4. In the event of the SWD PTO(s) resigning there shall be an EGM arranged by Lancaster University Students Union FTO team or the remaining PTO at their discretion in the instance of two PTOs holding the position at concurrent times. ▸

5.3. Annual General Meetings

- 5.3.1. AGM's shall follow the same procedure as General Meetings.
- 5.3.2. AGM's shall be held in the summer term, and include:
 - 5.3.2.1. An open forum for members to suggest structure changes for the following year.
 - 5.3.2.2. Presentation of any changes to the Terms of Reference by the committee.

6. ELECTIONS

- 6.1. The Forum shall run elections for all portfolio positions, in the last 2 weeks of Michaelmas term
- 6.2. All elections shall follow Lancaster University Students Union Election regulations. Where procedure is unclear, the Vice-President: Union Development shall decide on an appropriate course of action. Should a candidate not adhere to regulations, the Vice- President: Union Development can disqualify them from the election.
- 6.3. In all elections, the SWD Officer shall be Acting Returning Officer. In the instance of more than one SWD Officer, only one officer will act as Acting Returning Officer and rescind their voting capabilities. Where the SWD Officer cannot be ARO, the Committee shall vote on an appropriate substitute.

- 6.4. All self-identity based elections shall be decided via secret ballot. All non-identity based elections shall be voted on by show of hands to determine whether they should be a secret ballot.

6.5. Hustings procedure

- 6.5.1. When called to hust, each candidate shall speak for up to two minutes, or submit a written hust of up to 500 words which shall be read by the SWD PTO. Candidates may also submit a “video” hust lasting no longer than two minutes, which must be submitted to the SWD PTO no later than 1 hour before hustings begin.
- 6.5.2. Once all candidates have had the opportunity to hust, the SWD Officer shall invite questions from attendants. The SWD Officer can end question time at their discretion.

7. FINANCES

- 7.1. The Forum’s finances shall adhere to Lancaster University Students Union Financial Regulations.
- 7.2. The General Secretary shall give an account update when requested or appropriate;
- 7.3. The ordinary signatories of the account with Lancaster University Students Union shall be the General Secretary, the Lancaster University Students Union SWD Officer(s), and one other portfolio officers elected at a General Meeting.
- 7.4. The Lancaster University Students Union SWD Officer(s) and the General Secretary shall decide internal budgets in the first meeting of each term.
- 7.5. The Lancaster Students’ Union SWD Officer(s) and the General Secretary shall manage any petty cash up to £20 that is required for the day to day running’s of the association;

8. DISCIPLINARY AND COMPLAINTS

8.1. Disciplinary Procedures for Members

- 8.1.1. All disciplinary matters should be dealt with following Lancaster University Students Union procedures.
- 8.1.2. If the Committee deem conduct at activities or online inappropriate, members may have their membership temporarily suspended by the portfolio officers.
- 8.1.3. Inappropriate conduct shall include:
 - 8.1.3.1. Behaviour that is illegal or deemed misconduct by Lancaster University Students Union;
 - 8.1.3.2. Abuse, harassment, or displays of discrimination or prejudice of any kind;
 - 8.1.3.3. Repeated or malicious breaches of confidentiality and safe space principles;
 - 8.1.3.4. Behaviour at Forum functions likely to bring the Forum into disrepute.

8.1.4. The Committee may refer any disciplinary matter to Lancaster University Students Union.

8.2. Disciplinary Procedures for Officer

8.2.1. Failure of officers to fulfil responsibilities or meeting mandates, without reasonable excuse, is sufficient grounds for a vote of no confidence.

8.2.2. For a vote of no confidence in the SWD PTO(s), please refer to Lancaster University Student's Union Guidance

8.2.3. A vote of no confidence in an officer must be proposed by at least five officers with portfolio or a petition of twenty members. It must be proposed with clear and sufficient grounds in advance as a motion at a General Meeting, where it can either be upheld or overturned by a simple majority vote. Once proposed, the officer shall be suspended, which means that they are prevented from carrying out their duties. If upheld, the officer is removed from office. If overturned, the officer shall return to duties. The officer can follow Lancaster University Students Union Appeals procedure with the Lancaster University Students Union Vice-President: Welfare and Community.

8.3. Complaints Procedures

8.3.1. All complaints shall be dealt with following Lancaster University Students Union procedures.

9. TERMS OF REFERENCE GOVERNANCE AND REVIEW

9.1. These Terms of Reference must be publicly available on the Forum and Lancaster University Students Union websites.

9.2. Amendments to these terms of reference shall be made following the motion being carried by a simple majority vote at a General Meeting and ratified at Executive Committee. Changes shall not come into operation until ratified at Executive Committee.

9.3. The SWD Officer(s) shall convene a general meeting to review this Terms of Reference once every two years, and widely consult members and the Committee before proposing amendments. Changes shall be approved and ratified as above.

**These Terms of Reference were last amended and approved at the 27/02/2019
Emergency General Meeting**

