

BYE LAW | STUDENT MEDIA

Last updated: 4th June 2014

The Media Group

1. The Students' Union will provide for a student-led Media Group, which will be composed of three Media Outlets:
 - a. The Mancunian, a newspaper;
 - b. Fuse TV, a TV station;
 - c. Fuse FM, a radio station.
2. Each Media Outlet will have a Head, who shall be the person responsible for its activities and content. The Heads of the Media Outlets are:
 - a. For the Mancunian, the Editor;
 - b. For Fuse TV, the Station Manager;
 - c. For Fuse FM, the Station Manager.
3. The objective of the Media Group is to benefit students at Manchester University by:
 - a. Reporting and commenting on matters affecting students and of interest to them in a fair, accurate but critical manner, and at all times in compliance with national standards of reporting;
 - b. Stimulating interest in and knowledge of a full range of subjects and issues affecting students, and through this enrich cultural life, foster creativity and talent and promote cultural dialogue and awareness in Manchester;
 - c. Informing students of current affairs including activities and campaigns inside the University of Manchester and the Students' Union, and promoting understanding of the University of Manchester's governance and the Students' Union's democratic processes;
 - d. Providing a platform to students to express and communicate their views, and developing and giving opportunities for students to obtain skills in broadcasting, journalism and publishing;
 - e. Seeking to provide an excellent standard of content, and recognising and championing outstanding content produced by students.
4. Each Media Outlet will have a constitution, which will prescribe rules for the operation of that Media Outlet. Media Outlets must be run in accordance with their constitutions.
5. The constitution of a Media Outlet and any amendments proposed to it must be approved by both:
 - a. A 2/3 vote of those present at a meeting of the members of that Media Outlet, and
 - b. The Media Group Committee.

The Media Group Committee

6. The Media Group shall be overseen by the Media Group Committee, which will be composed of:
 - a. The Activities and Development Officer, who shall be Chair of the Committee;
 - b. The Heads of the Media Outlets;
 - c. One other member from each of the Media Outlets.

7. The Media Group Committee will appoint a member of the Committee to be Secretary, who will take minutes and distribute these to the members of the Committee, and who will organise meetings.
8. The Media Group Committee will be open for any student to observe, and meeting dates will be published on the Students' Union website.
9. The remit of the Media Group Committee is:
 - a. To create, assist and review the creation of long-term development plans for each Media Outlet;
 - b. To discuss issues of shared concern including finance, membership, inclusivity, standards and value for money;
 - c. To coordinate joint activity between the Media Outlets;
 - d. To agree on the distribution of any funds provided to the Media Outlets jointly;
 - e. To hold the Heads of the Media Outlets to account for their compliance with this Bye-Law and to examine whether their published content meets all required standards set out in this Bye-Law.
10. The Media Group Committee will meet at least twice each term, and any member may call for a meeting with at least one week's notice.

Student Media Finance

11. The Media Group will receive funding out of a budget agreed upon by the Trustees of the Students' Union.
12. The distribution of any joint funding of the Media Group will only be made following applications from the Media Outlets. These will be made by written application forms, and the design of these forms will be agreed on by the Media Group Committee.
13. Funding may only be given to and spent by Media Outlets for the purpose of furthering their objectives.
14. Any request from a Media Outlet for additional funding in excess of previously agreed amounts must be approved by the Media Group Committee.

Editorial independence and responsibilities

15. All Media Outlets have the right to editorial independence in their published content, which is the right to print or broadcast content as the Head of that Media Outlet sees fit.
16. The right to editorial independence of each Media Outlet is subject to the following provisions:
 - a. Publications and broadcasts by media outlets must make clear that the views expressed in all content are those of the contributor and not necessarily the views of the Students' Union;
 - b. All content must be produced in accordance with the Student Media Code of Conduct;
 - c. All facts used in content must be accurate and verifiable;
 - d. Content must not express a preference (either positive or negative) towards any candidate running in any election within in the Students' Union, and coverage must be impartial between candidates during any election period;

- e. The Head of each Media Outlet must give due consideration and weight to any comments made by the Students' Union on any content that is proposed to be published;
 - f. Coverage of any Elections, Referenda, Student Assemblies (and proposed ideas) and other democratic Union events must be balanced, impartial, accurate and fair;
 - g. Content must be produced in a manner compatible with the Students' Union's staff protocol.
17. The Trustees of the Students' Union are the publishers of all content of the Media Group and therefore reserve the right to remove or stop the publication or broadcast of any content on the grounds that it is either:
- a. Defamatory,
 - b. Illegal,
 - c. Not in compliance with this Bye-Law, or
 - d. Against the Articles of Association of the Students' Union.
18. The Returning Officer is overall responsible for the conduct of elections and referenda and therefore reserves the right to remove or stop the publication or broadcast of any content on the grounds that it is biased, partial or otherwise prejudicial to the fair conduct of an election or referendum.

Resolution of disputes between Media Outlets and the Board of Trustees

- 19. The rights of the Trustees to remove or prevent the publication of any content on the grounds mentioned above shall be exercised jointly by the General Secretary and the Activities and Development Officer only.
- 20. If there is a dispute between those Officer Trustees and the Head of the relevant Media Outlet on a decision to exercise these rights, then the Head of that Media Outlet may appeal to the Board of Trustees to review this decision.
- 21. When the Board of Trustees considers any appeal, the General Secretary and Activities and Development Officer shall not take part in the discussion or vote on the matter.
- 22. For the avoidance of doubt, if such an appeal is made, the decision of the General Secretary and Activities and Development Officer shall stand valid and shall not be questioned until and unless the Board overturns the decision.

Complaints and appeals

- 23. A complaint concerning any content that has been published or broadcast by a Media Outlet must be made in writing to the relevant Head of that Media Outlet.
- 24. Complaints must be made by a standard form, the design of which shall be agreed by the Media Group Committee.
- 25. All Media Outlets must make reasonable efforts to advertise their complaints procedure.
- 26. The Head of that Media Outlet will respond to a complaint within seven days.
- 27. If the Head of that Media Outlet upholds the complaint, they may offer the complainant either:
 - a. A retraction and apology, or
 - b. The opportunity to an alternative view, which should be given reasonably similar prominence to the content giving rise to the complaint.

28. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the complaint, or does not receive a response within seven days of submitting their complaint, then they may appeal by writing to the Activities and Development Officer.
29. Appeals will be heard by a panel of three members of the Media Group Committee. No members of the Media Outlet which is the subject of the complaint may sit on this panel.
30. The decision of this panel will be final and may not be appealed further.

Advertising

31. The Students' Union will provide advertisements to be included in the broadcasts and publications of the Media Group.
32. The Students' Union shall have complete discretion as to the choice of advertisements that are provided to the Media Group.
33. All revenues from the sale or other provision of advertisements shall accrue directly to the Students' Union.
34. No Media Outlet will produce or sell advertising of its own accord without the authorisation of the Activities and Development Officer.
35. Any requests to vary existing advertising or incorporate additional advertisements must be authorised by the Activities and Development Officer.

Copyright

36. All content, publications and broadcasts produced by the Media Group is exclusive copyright of the Students' Union.
37. For the avoidance of doubt, this shall include the trademarks, names, brands, designs and logos of the Media Outlets.

Student Media Code of Conduct

38. The Activities and Development Officer will specify the Student Media Code of Conduct.
39. Amendments to the Code of Conduct will be produced in consultation with the Media Group Committee, and must be presented to a meeting of the Media Group Committee before being made.

Original Bye-Law made by referendum 08.02.2012
Revised by decision of Trustee Board 04.06.2014