

What is a society?

RGU:Union Societies are groups made up of members who share a common interest and are supported by RGU:Union.

Societies are a fantastic way of meeting new people, having fun, sharing ideas and receiving volunteering recognition for your CV. You might even win an award!

Start a society in 3 easy steps...

STEP 1 - CONTACT US

Send an email to our Student Development and Volunteering Co-ordinator on societies@rguunion.co.uk (or pop in and see us), letting us know your ideas. Then an informal meeting will be arranged where you will receive your New Society Application Form, Constitution Form and Budget Application Forms

STEP 2 - COMPLETE YOUR PAPERWORK

You will need a minimum of 10 interested students to start a society.

You should write out your aims and objectives, giving as much detail as possible, making it clear what the society is all about and what it aims to achieve.

Prepare a brief overview of planned society activities for the year. This will aid any applications for financial support you make as it will show you are organised and focused on what you want to achieve.

STEP 3 - HOLD YOUR FIRST MEETING

Invite students to come along. RGU:Union can help you set up and advertise the meeting through their (social) media channels.

Make sure everyone attending has the opportunity to input their ideas for the development of the society.

Ask if anyone would be interested in committee positions and vote in your first committee.

Inform RGU:Union about your new committee and plans for the year.



WHAT DOES THE UNION EXPECT?

FINANCES

- Your society must charge a minimum membership fee of £5 for a full year. This money is used as your basic spending account for the society for the year. You can charge more for membership if you wish, for example to subsidise equipment costs.
- PLEASE NOTE: AT ALL TIMES, IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF YOUR SOCIETY TREASURER TO KEEP UP-TO-DATE ACCOUNTS AND TO KNOW HOW MUCH MONEY IS IN EACH OF THE SOCIETY'S BANK ACCOUNTS (more info later in this chapter).

MEMBERSHIP

- A committee of at least four fully-matriculated students should be elected into the positions of: President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Communication & Engagement Lead. You may want to create other positions also – for example, a Socials Coordinator or Fundraising Coordinator – this is entirely up to you.
- A minimum of ten fully-matriculated students of Robert Gordon University must be paid members of the society. However new memberships can be commenced at any point in the year – we want to see every society expand and flourish, so keep inviting new members to come along!
- 51% of the members of the society must be Robert Gordon University students. Some members might be staff or alumni, and sometimes RGU societies merge with the societies of other universities, but in order to be financially supported by RGU:Union, 51% must be students of this university.
- Membership of the society shall run from August to July each year.
- Membership of a society is open to all members of RGU:Union without discrimination. . All RGU students are automatically members of RGU:Union unless they opt out.

AGM

- All societies must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) before the end of the academic year. See page 12 for a full description of the AGM.



RUNNING YOUR SOCIETY

HOW CAN THE UNION SUPPORT YOUR SOCIETY?

- The Union will provide access to support from staff and officers.
- Your society is welcome to use the office facilities within RGU:Union.
- RGU:Union can help advertise your society events and announcements on RGU:Union (social) media
- The Union can help you to set up a stall at both Freshers' and Refreshers' Fayres to promote your society, create awareness and attract new members.
- In-house training can be provided in order to help committee members fulfil their roles within their societies.
- You'll have the option to apply for a grant from the Union.
- You will have an RGU:Union email address.
- You'll be given a print code for use within RGU:Union to help with printing your flyers and posters.
- Your society will be listed on our website, helping the wider student body to find out about you.

COMMUNICATION WITH SOCIETIES

- Do your best to keep regular contact with the Union in order to make the most of their resources and support. It is a good idea to include the
- Student Development and Volunteering Coordinator into your mailing lists (societies@rguunion.co.uk) so that they are aware of your activities and can continue to promote them on your behalf.
- Keep an eye out on your Society email important society information will be send to this address and it's a good way to communicate with external parties.
- A Societies Forum, organised by RGU:Union, will be held twice a semester in order to ensure that effective communication is being maintained between societies and the Union. This is your opportunity for your input and to have an formal meeting where you can discuss what the Union is doing, the successes of all societies and how the societies can be better supported by the Union.
- The registered President must attend or provide apologies and send a replacement to each Societies Forum. Should any RGU:Union Society fail to attend or send apologies to 3 consecutive meetings, they are liable to have their budget suspended.



What does the committee do?

The committee represents the views of all society members in the decisions made about the society. Generally the committee takes responsibility for staying in touch with the Union, organises, publicises and runs events, keeps in contact with members, and has financial and democratic powers and responsibilities.

Apart from the essential roles of President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Communications & Engagement Lead (This has recently replaced the Secretary Position), many society committees choose to offer various other leadership positions. If you feel that your society has not been running effectively, it could be because the committee is too small. Have a look at some of the following positions to consider if they might ease some pressure:

- Publicity/Marketing Coordinator
- Social/Events Coordinator
- Fundraising/Sponsorship Coordinator
- ...and many more!

If you would like help in defining what these roles should do, please email societies@rguunion.co.uk. The following notes may be of assistance to you as you plan your roles and responsibilities. These lists are not exhaustive.

President's Mandatory Duties:

- Chair regular committee meetings.
- Ensure each committee member understands their role and meets their action points and duties.
- Approve the agenda of the committee meetings.
- Ensure the society functions to the best of its ability.
- Ensure the goals for the year set by the committee are met.
- Authorise society expenses.
- Submit all end of year paperwork, including the Annual Report.
- Attend society training.
- Attend RGU:Union Societies Forum (or make sure someone else of the committee attends)
- Safeguard the sustainability of the society, ensuring the AGM and committee handover take place in a timely manner and RGU:Union are kept informed.
- Liaise with the Union and the Student Executive.



- In the event of a committee vote, the President (Chair) will have the casting vote.
- Signatory for society's bank accounts.

Vice-President's Mandatory Duties:

- Chair regular committee meetings in the absence of the President.
- Ensure each committee member understands their role and meets their action points and duties.
- Ensure the society is up-to-date with all administrative forms and requirements of the Union.
- Ensure committee minutes are recorded and kept for distribution to society members and the Union.
- Ensure the goals for the year set by the committee are met.
- Attend society training.

Treasurer's Mandatory Duties:

- Manage the finances of the society.
- Authorise society expenses with the President.
- Provide commentary detailing expenses purpose
- Signatory for society's bank accounts.
- Attend society training.
- Submit grant application forms on time to ensure society funding.
- Submit membership fees and form to the Union.
- Investigate sponsorship opportunities

Communications & Engagement Lead's Mandatory Duties:

- Manage and maintain communications for the society.
- Ensure the e-mail account is checked and any notification from the Union is dealt with appropriately
- Keep society members informed with regular up-to-date e-mails.
- Keep Social Media updated including Microsoft Teams
- Ensure committee minutes are recorded.
- Provide information to RGU:Union on any external speakers taking part in society events.
- Attend society training.

