Developing Membership

In order to be recognized as a UCSU Society, you’ll need to have at least 10 members. This is easy to achieve, but here are some guidelines on developing your membership.

* Once members have signed up, make sure you communicate with them regularly about what’s going on in the Society. Organise regular, diverse events to keep interest. Asking members what they want to see the Society provide for them is a great way to keep them involved.
* If you’re organising an event, use various forms of marketing to promote the event to potential new members – posters around the Union and University, flyers and web marketing all help (see ‘Marketing’)
* In an Academic Society? Approach your department about promoting the Society in lectures and through student emails.

**Barriers to involvement**

University is a great opportunity to participate in a diverse community and take part in various student activities. However, if you want to increase your membership you may want to consider why some groups of students are discouraged from joining your Society. It may mean that you need to communicate to students slightly differently or think about how your activities could be made more accessible.

**Some tips to break down barriers:**

* Plan some simple and free or cheap social events - maybe sports on the field, games night, pub quizzes or bike rides and picnics. Try something not related to the Society’s core activities so members can interact in a different way.
* Try having some socials that do not include alcohol, for those who choose not to drink – and make sure the Society doesn’t enforce a ‘drinking culture’.
* Plan major social events at beginning of terms to welcome people back, this will be when their work load is reduced and loans may have been paid.
* Have meetings at a different time of day and different days. Don’t always have events or meetings in a bar or somewhere far to travel, maybe book a University lecture room or the chapel.
* Make sure meetings and socials are accessible – think about those that may need assistance, as well as choosing meeting points that are easy to locate and get to.
* Communicate the actual costs involved with being a member, sometimes people over estimate costs involved with certain activities, especially Physical Activities.
* Most importantly, make sure your Committee is friendly and approachable – avoid the Society becoming a ‘clique’, which will discourage potential members.