Society Meetings

To get the best out of your Society, regular meetings should be held to allow for members and the Committee to communicate, touch base on things that are being planned and allow everyone to have input in the direction of the Society.

**Committee Meetings**

* Committee meetings should be held regularly, and in a suitable location; e.g. Union meeting rooms, preferably not a Committee member's house.
* Any Society member is welcome to attend as an observer unless the meeting is specifically defined as closed, but without voting rights (unless the Society Committee agree on an open member vote - in which case, a members meeting should be called)

**Members Meetings**

* Open to all members of the Society (ordinary and associate)
* All ordinary members have voting rights

**All Meetings**

* The Society Secretary should advertise the date, time and location for a proposed meeting at least one week prior.
* If a member has an item for discussion on the agenda, they should submit it in writing to the Society secretary at least 3 days before the meeting.
* At the meeting, the Society Secretary should take minutes, and distribute them to the Committee/members after the meeting.
* External speakers who are not members of the Society should be agreed upon by the Committee prior to the meeting.

**Writing an Agenda**An agenda is important to keep the meeting on track and to ensure everything important is discussed. The Secretary is usually responsible for putting the agenda together and should request items for discussion, and then distribute the agenda to all attendees in advance of the meeting.

A basic agenda template looks like this:

[Meeting Name (e.g. – Anime Society Committee Meeting)]

[Date, time and location]

1. Apologies for Absence (this is where apologies from those who do not attend should be read out, and the minute taker should note this)
2. Approval of last meeting’s minutes (in case anyone has any issues with them)
   1. Action points from last minutes
3. Officer’s review
4. Agenda Item 1
5. Agenda Item 2 (etc)
6. AOB (Stands for ‘Any Other Business)
7. Date and Time of Next Meeting

**Society Secretary Sanity Checklist**

Below is a checklist in order to support Society Secretary’s in successfully delivering Society meetings and the action points that come out of them.

* Create the agenda for the meeting
* Send out an email and post a message on all your social media about the meeting a week before it is going to happen. Include:
  1. Date of meeting
  2. Time
  3. Location
  4. Agenda (Follow agenda template in bible)
  5. Society email address if anyone wants to add anything to the agenda (must arrive to you 3 days before!)
* As the members come in, ask to see their Societies Federation card or ask their name so you can check that they are actually members, as if they are not they can only observe and NOT vote.
* You must have a minimum of 10 people in attendance for the meeting to go ahead or 25% of your total membership, whichever is greater. If you don’t the meeting cannot go ahead and so you will need to rearrange it for another date.
* Pass some copies of the agenda around just in case people want them (I am happy to print some if you tell me how many you want)
* Put down how many people are in attendance.
* Let the chair welcome everyone and introduce the Committee so everyone knows who you are and what your role is.
* You then read out any apologies.
* Hand back over to the chair to start on the agenda and the run the meeting.
* Remember to remind the chair, (if needed) when they are asking if you all want to do something that a vote needs to happen. Make note of any votes that occur (Remember to put the votes for, against and any abstention’s). If the majority vote for, then it goes ahead, if not then it doesn’t.
* From here on in, you just need to make notes on everything discussed and also include any action points if anyone gets allocated a job to do.
* Make sure a date, time and location of the next meeting gets confirmed.
* After the meeting:
  1. Type up the minutes.
  2. Put them on all your social media avenues
  3. Email the Volunteering & Activities Coordinator the minutes

**Minute Taking**Minutes are simply notes that provide a record of the meeting and should be taken at all Society meetings and they should be made available to all members of the Society. A copy should also be circulated to the Societies Federation President or the Volunteering & Activities Co-Coordinator and kept for reference. (The best way of communicating your minutes is to upload them to your page on the UCSU website).

Minutes should be laid out in a similar format to the agenda, with each agenda item serving as a heading for the discussion in that section.

The minutes should feature the meeting name, date, time and location, as well as a list of who was in attendance, and who sent apologies.

Society Committee meetings should be recorded in note format with action points. Action points should detail the task, who is responsible; and any deadlines that have been set.

Tip: Use initials to save writing out full names!

After the meeting, the minute taker should proof read the minutes for errors, and type them up if they’ve been written by hand, then distribute them to all relevant parties.

Minute taking is much less daunting than it sounds, but if you’re still confused, come to one of our Society Committee Training sessions on administration, get in touch the Societies Federation President or the Volunteering & Activities Co-Coordinator or search the web to find a wealth of in depth tips on minute taking.

**Tips for Running Your Meetings**

* Make sure an agenda is distributed beforehand - Sample Agenda templates can be found in the Societies Resources section on the UCSU website.
* In order to ensure that your meeting doesn’t overrun and that you are rushed towards the end of your meeting, it is generally good practice to allocate a time restriction to each agenda item.
* It is the responsibility of the President, chairing the meeting, to make sure the agenda is kept to - and that any other points of discussion are saved for 'Any Other Business'.
* Allow everyone to speak - but avoid going off-topic.
* Keep meetings direct and to the point so attendees don't lose interest - and keep general chit-chat for after the meeting.
* Creating 'action points' for people to follow up and referring back to the progress of these at the next meeting is a great way to make sure progress is being made.
* Personal comments should not be made to other members - keep the discussion positive and focused on improving the Society experience for members.

**Your Society AGM**

**What is an AGM?**

* AGM stands for Annual General Meeting
* All members can attend, but only ordinary members of the Union who are paid members of the Society have voting rights.
* Your Annual General Meeting is to be held in April each year. This meeting is the most important meeting within a Society as it is when an election for the new Committee is held. A point to remember is that only those members that are ordinary members at the time of the AGM can vote.

**Meeting**The structure of the AGM should be run along the lines of a regular Committee meeting and the agenda should be available at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

**Agenda**Your AGM Agenda should feature the following items, as well as any other discussions/presentations necessary to your Society:

* Apologies and attendance.
* Approval of previous AGM minutes.
* Year Overview - the outgoing Committee deliver a presentation of what the Society has achieved throughout the year and how it has grown. This must be a realistic account including problems that have occurred and the highlights of the year. This is also a chance for the President to offer thanks to members they feel have been instrumental during the year.
* Elections - The Union is a democratically run organisation and all groups within the Union are run in the same way. All Societies must have a Committee selected by the Society’s members in an election. The elections are internally run and usually occur in semester 2 to elect a Committee for the upcoming academic year. The Volunteering & Activities Co-Coordinator or Societies Federation Pres can offer advice and some conditions on how to run the elections for the Society.
* Approve budget proposals for the following year.
* Any motions submitted by ordinary members for discussion and vote.
* Any other business
* Thanks and goodbye from the outgoing president.