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**Staffing Protocol**

**Approved by:** Board of Trustees **Date:** \*

**Noted by:** Student Council **Date:** \*

**Implementation Date:** Immediate **Review date (by):** February 2017

**Manager responsible for implementation:** Chief Executive

**Trustee responsible for interpretation:** President

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## 1.0 Purpose

* 1. De Montfort University Students’ Union (DSU) is a democratic organisation which works under the direction of its students and officers. DSU employs staff to support its officers and provide professional advice, managerial expertise and continuity.
	2. DSU is committed to being an excellent employer, strives to create a positive and productive working environment and places a high level of importance on the relationship between staff and officers.
	3. This document aims to provide general guidance and broad principles, and to provide avenues for the resolution of problems as and when they may arise. The complex nature of DSU naturally leads to a number of ‘grey areas’ in terms of the role of staff, officers, trustees and managers that are, in most cases, managed informally. These relationships are expected to change periodically as new officers are elected, new policies developed and new initiatives are begun. Staff and officers are expected to take personal responsibility for the continuous development of an effective working environment, and to approach new or challenging situations in a professional, proactive and reasonable manner.

1.4 This document provides a set of guidelines which ensure that:

1.4.1 There is clarity over the respective roles and responsibilities of:

* Union Staff;
* Union Management;
* Union Trustees;
* Elected Officers;
* Student Staff.
	+ 1. The Union complies with all relevant employment legislation.

1.4.3 Staff are provided with an environment in which they are entitled to confidentiality and protection from unfair treatment.

* + 1. The Union is protected from undue interference from staff in the conduct of governance and political policy development.
1. **Definitions**

2.1 **‘Elected Officers’** (or ‘Officers’ or ‘Student Officers’) are current students serving in elected positions within DSU.

2.2 ‘**Political Policy’** is policy that is developed and approved by the elected officers through the democratic structures i.e. affiliation to NUS.

2.3 **‘Policies’** are documents, such as this one which provide frameworks and procedures for the day-to-day operations of the organisation.

2.4 **‘Staff’** are individuals or groups of individuals who are employed by DSU.

2.5 **‘Student Staff’** are students at DSU who are working during their period of study, but whose primary purpose at the University is as a student. Career staff who have chosen to undertake a course to complement their work are not normally regarded as student staff.

2.6 The distinction between ‘Staff’ (or ‘Career Staff’) and ‘Student Staff’ in this document exists to provide guidance on issues of conflicting priorities. If confusion over the status of an individual staff member arises, guidance from the Chief Executive Officer will be sought.

3.0 Human Resources

3.1 The Board of Trustees will ensure that in producing the strategy for DSU consideration is given to the human resources necessary to achieve its objectives.

3.2 If the Board of Trustees determine that significant change is required in its human resources arrangements in order to address particular challenges or opportunities, they will adopt good practice in consulting managers, staff representatives and staff in the formulation of these plans.

3.3 The management of Human Resources including implementation of the strategic plan, staff contracts of employment, terms and conditions, policies and procedures and day to day administration will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer of the Students’ Union in consultation with the President.

3.4 To ensure the integrity of the line management structure, all Students’ Union staff members will be line managed by a member of the Students’ Union staff with the exception of the Chief Executive Officer who will report to the of Board of Trustees via the President.

4.0 Staff / Officer Relationships

4.1 In order for the organisation to run smoothly and achieve its objectives it is essential that there are positive, courteous relationships and effective day to day communication between staff and officers. Staff and officers should be capable of both giving and receiving constructive criticism as part of their work.

4.2 Elected officers provide political leadership to the organisation, defining political policy through democratic means. They represent the members of the Union and work closely with staff to ensure that the operations of DSU, particularly those within an officer’s portfolio, cater for, and are responsive to, the needs of the membership.

4.3 DSU’s Chief Executive Officer has the responsibility for ensuring that organisational direction is informed and influenced by the political agendas of elected officers.

4.4 In many instances elected officers (in particular, but not exclusively, full time officers) work particularly closely with staff members. Staff members and officers are expected to invest time and effort to ensure that productive working relationships are developed. Broadly, however, the work of staff is directed through the management structure and elected officers’ impact on the day-to-day work of staff should in most cases be limited to the development of political policy, discussions within the Board of Trustees, and discussions with the Chief Executive Officer.

4.5 However, problems and complaints that have not been resolved as a result of informal discussion should be addressed through the line management structure. Instructions regarding job responsibilities should also be addressed through the line management structure. If a staff member has a problem with or complaint about an officer, or indeed vice versa, which has not been resolved as a result of informal discussion it may be addressed through the Grievance Procedure.

**5.0 The Role of Staff**

5.1 Staff are expected to provide professional advice to the elected officers in their areas of expertise, but should not seek to unduly influence political policy decisions or the political policy positions of officers.

5.2 Staff may not participate in, or seek to influence, the democratic processes of the Union.

5.3 Staff should not publicly comment on political policy or political direction, including:

* In University or external media;
* On online fora, social networking sites or websites;
* In formal or informal Union meetings.

5.4 Staff should not enter into discussion with Union members about the performance of elected officers or be encouraged to enter into such discussions by an elected officer.

5.5 Unless defined as ‘Student Staff’ in accordance with section 2.0 above, the responsibilities and restrictions placed on staff members override the privileges of Union membership. In practice this means that:

* Staff members cannot participate in democratic meetings;
* Staff members cannot stand or vote in Union elections.

5.6 Student Staff enjoy the full rights and privileges of membership, save for any restriction placed on that staff member whilst on duty. In particular:

* Student Staff may not campaign on an issue or in an election whilst at work for DSU;
* Points 5.1 to 5.4 above apply to Student Staff whilst at work for DSU.

**6.0 Complaints about Staff / Student Staff**

6.1 A member of the Union who wishes to complain about a member of staff should follow the procedure outlined in the Complaints Procedure.

6.2 Complaints about staff should take note of, and adhere to, the guidance contained within the staffing protocol; in particular, it is important that the role of staff is considered and fully understood.

1. **Complaints about Elected Officers**

7.1 Complaints about Union Officers from students will be referred to the Complaints Procedure.