

# Leeds University Union

## LUU Media Policy

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### **The benefits of student media**

LUU believes that effectively run Media Groups provide a vital means of reflecting the student voice. Media Groups also provide challenging and rewarding opportunities for our members, enhancing the student experience and providing an opportunity for skills development that has led to successful careers in the media for many former students.

The purpose of media groups can be summarised as follows:

- To produce student publications/programming that is originated by students for students.
- To act as a forum for student debate, reflecting as accurately as possible campus life and the views of LUU members.
- To act as a platform for members to gain skills and experience in the organisation and distribution of media publications and outlets.
- To produce as accurately as possible content which, informs, entertains and instructs its audiences with truth and fairness at its forefront.

An up to date list of the responsible individuals from each Media Group will be published annually on the LUU website.

### **Code of conduct and ethical standards**

Student media groups are subject to the scrutiny of the law but will also adhere to their relevant professional code of conduct:

Print media: Press Complaints Commission

National Union of Journalists

Broadcast media: Ofcom

In line with the above the following principles are highlighted for the purposes of clarity:

- Media Groups will not comment or report on the personal lives of any students, including elected representatives unless it is in the public interest to do so in which case the public interest reason

will be formerly recorded by the Media Group and logged with the Development Co-ordinator.

- Media Groups will not comment or report on LUU members of staff, unless it is in the public interest to do so in which case the public interest reason will be formerly recorded by the Media Group and logged with the Development Co-ordinator.
- Media Groups will adhere to LUU policy and the Freedom of Expression Protocol. Groups can however comment or report on ideas and policy and can hold elected representatives to account. Where Media Groups criticise an elected representative they will offer that elected representative the right to reply in the same output.
- Individual members of Media Groups shall not hold themselves out to speak on behalf of their group by reference to their position title or otherwise without the express written permission of the responsible person.
- When researching potential articles/news stories Media Groups will be sensitive to making use of information gained via Social Media.
- In addition, as members of the wider University community, Media Groups will take account of the University's values of Community, Integrity, Inclusiveness and Professionalism.

### **Responsibility for media content and output**

LUU is ultimately responsible for the content and output of its Media Groups.

Three of our Media Groups, Leeds Student, LSR and LSTV are responsible for the vast majority of media output and therefore represent the greater relative risk to LUU. The responsibility to ensure adherence to relevant professional codes and the LUU Media Policy rests with the Leeds Student Editor or LSR or LSTV Station Manager.

Complaints about content and/or output will be dealt with under the process outlined below. However any subsequent discipline against the Leeds Student Editor, or LSR or LSTV Station Manager, as a result of such a complaint, would be dealt with under LUU staffing procedures, and not under the student Disciplinary Procedure.

For our smaller groups, responsibility to adhere to relevant professional codes will still lie with the Editor, or President (as detailed in the list of responsible individuals that will be published on the LUU Website). They will also be supported by the Development Co-ordinator for Media and Performing Groups. However any failure to act appropriately will for

these groups be dealt with solely under the LUU Student Disciplinary Procedures.

The Development Co-ordinator for Media and Performing Groups will review the job descriptions and roles of the leaders of all Media Groups on an annual basis. The responsibilities of student media journalists will also be reviewed annually. These reviews will take place in the third term and a report will go to the Activities Executive for question and review.

The terms of this policy are without prejudice to LUU's right to discipline any individual member, in accordance with the provisions of bye-law #16 "Disciplinary procedures".

### **Managing Risk**

Certain topics present a particular risk for Media Groups to cover in their output. Media Groups will consult LUU's nominated Legal Expert before releasing output on these topics.

A list of these topics will be reviewed each year by the Activities Officer, Leeds Student Editor, the Leeds Student Radio and Leeds Student TV Station Manager, Media Development Co-ordinator and Legal Expert and then agreed by the LUU Media Assembly. Media Groups must consult the Legal Expert when creating output on these topics.

In the case of printed media this consultation means seeking advice from the Legal Expert in advance of drafting an article and, where the Legal Expert advises, ensuring the final copy is approved by the Legal Expert prior to publication.

In the case of broadcast media this consultation means seeking advice from the Legal Expert prior to broadcast.

When a Media Group consults the Legal Advisor they must notify the Media Development Co-ordinator who will keep a log of all consultations and outcomes.

### **Online content – websites and blogs**

Where groups frequently publish copies of their publication or host blogs, their website must include the following disclaimer:

*"The information and views provided in these web pages are not those of Leeds University Union. They are those of LUU <name of group>"*

Furthermore, where groups regularly engage in debate through their webpage the following statements should be posted on the page as guidance to contributors:

***"Please make contributions civil and tasteful and constructive. No disruptive, offensive or abusive behaviour.***

***No unlawful or objectionable content.*** *Unlawful, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, racially offensive or otherwise objectionable material is not acceptable."*

*"Offensive content brought to the attention of the Editor/Station Manager will be dealt with at the discretion of the responsible person, this may include exercising the right to remove reported content."*

## **Plagiarism and Copyright**

LUU Media Groups do not permit acts of Plagiarism and breaches of copyright by their members.

### Use of images, audio, text and video by an LUU Student Media Group

By submitting a photo, text or video to an LUU Media Group authors are agreeing to give an unlimited, perpetual, royalty free licence of any and all rights subsisting in the photo or video for use by LUU and all LUU media groups for any and all purposes that LUU and the LUU Media Groups may consider appropriate within the terms of this policy (including, without limitation, for use on websites and in published material, and for sale to the University and certain selected student groups.

### Use of images, audio, text and video from other sources

LUU Media Groups only reproduce images with permission of the person/company that holds the copyright or those that are copyright free.

## **Complaints**

Each Media Group will have in place and publish on the LUU website a complaints procedure that will outline how they will deal with complaints in line with the LUU Complaints Procedure detailed in bye-

law (15). All Media Groups' complaints procedures shall be reviewed annually.

Feedback on media publications and output should be encouraged by all groups and each group should make it clear how complaints can be made.

The responsibility for investigating a complaint shall rest with the Editor, Station Manager or President. However they must on receipt of a complaint inform the Development Co-ordinator.

If the complainant is unhappy about the response to a complaint, responsibility for further investigation will pass to the Student Activities Manager, or their nominee.

If the complaint concerns an interpretation of a failure to adhere to LUU policy, then the issue will be considered at the next available Activities Executive who will decide:

- whether or not to uphold the complaint,
- any appropriate remedial action required by the Media Group e.g. a published apology,
- referral to the appropriate disciplinary procedure for further investigation and action.

If the complaint raises a legal concern, e.g. defamation, then legal advice will be sought from LUU's Legal Expert and their advice will be final.