

# Social Events and Initiations Policy

## USSU Societies & Sports Clubs – 2018/19

### 1. Introduction

The University of Salford Students' Union believes that conducting initiations is a degrading and exclusive way to welcome new members into a student group and jeopardises both the safety of members and the reputation of the University. As such, **initiations are not permitted** on or off campus. Any individual or group in breach of this policy will be subject to a disciplinary investigation, in accordance with the disciplinary procedures of the University of Salford Students' Union.

The University of Salford Students' Union has a duty to ensure it is acting within the best interest of the University of Salford students, and creates an environment where any member can participate in student led activities in a safe, non-threatening and enjoyable space whilst removing potential barriers to inclusive opportunities. Social events can act as a beneficial team building exercise when conducted in a positive and appropriate way. The below regulations must be adhered to in order to build strong communities and to be open and fully inclusive to participation.

It is imperative that all student groups recognise when a social event or induction becomes an initiation ceremony, in order to prevent them taking place.

*An 'Initiation Ceremony' is an event in which members (often new members) of a group are expected to perform a task or tasks, as a means to gain credibility, status or entry in to the group. This may be achieved by peer pressure (although not explicitly) and may compromise a person's inherent dignity by forcing or requiring an individual to partake in activities such as: drinking alcohol, eating mixtures of various foodstuffs, nudity and any other behaviour that may be deemed humiliating or inappropriate. This also extends to online initiation activities on social networking sites or platforms etc. Individuals should not be pressured into divulging personal information, be subject to comments, photos or images that demean or compromise the dignity of individuals or groups.*

### 2. Code of Conduct

**It is the policy of the University of Salford Students' Union and University of Salford that no student, University or Union employee, student group or other recognised group or association shall conduct or condone initiation activities.**

- 2.1 All representatives of the student group have a duty of care to all its members.
- 2.2 Under no circumstances can the membership of a group or team selection (if a sports club) be awarded upon the completion of tasks defined in the above definition of an 'Initiation Ceremony'. It is an individual's choice whether or not they attend any social event. Non-attendance should not be a barrier within the activity.

- 2.3 Individuals should be made to feel part of the team and celebrate regardless of their willingness to participate in social activities.
- 2.4 All student group members must recognise and adhere to the Students' Union Equality and Diversity Policy, as discriminatory behavior in any form is not tolerated.
- 2.5 Students should not feel pressured or forced into taking part in any games, ceremonies or activities (including online activities), unless they so choose. Peer pressure is not acceptable.
- 2.6 All students should be made aware that at no time is the consumption of drink (alcoholic or not) or foodstuffs mandatory at any social event.
- 2.7 All members of sports clubs or societies must show respect towards members of the public and other members of the University at all times.
- 2.8 It remains the right of the sabbatical officers, staff and any student to challenge any discriminatory behaviour. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary measures being taken.
- 2.9 The committee of each student group is responsible for the welfare of all members and must take the necessary measure to ensure that an adequate level of safety is maintained at all time.
- 2.10 Representing the University of Salford Students' Union and University of Salford is a privilege. When representing the Students' Union or University it is imperative that you present and conduct yourselves appropriately and avoid behaviour that will cause reputational risk or damage.

All student group members must adhere to this policy and are accountable to the Students' Union.

Individuals or groups in breach of this policy may result in (but are not limited to) the following sanctions:

- Group funding removed/frozen
- Removal of individuals from the group
- Removal of individuals from the committee
- All group activity frozen or withdrawn (facility access, training or competitions)
- Suspension or closure of the student group

Disciplinary action of individuals will be in line with the Students' Union and University disciplinary procedure