

Societies Event Guidance

A society event is anything that falls outside of your regular activity or meets the criteria of:

- A guest speaker external to the University or where member(s) of the University host and/or speak on behalf of an external organisation
- 50+ attendees
- A need for a space that does not list on Resource Booker including SU spaces, the Void or a lecture theatre
- Potential risk of physical, psychological or emotional harm to anyone involved in the event
- Potential issue relating to freedom of speech / academic freedom
- Having other potential risks – e.g. is the subject matter contested or controversial, of heightened media interest, risks protests, demonstrations or disruptions, impact on good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, or otherwise risk discrimination, harassment or sexual misconduct.
- Trip outside of Sheffield
- Making or serving food
- Requires a large payment to an external organisation (i.e. a deposit or payment in full)

Planning an event is a great way to engage new members, showcase your society, and bring people together. To make your event as successful as possible you should follow the guidance below. ***Failure to do so will result in the event not being recognised and supported as an official society event and will leave the organiser personally liable for costs and responsibility.*** Please note we have dedicated guidance documents for Society Balls on the [Committee Portal](#).

Before you begin planning your event here are some things you should consider:

- Do you have enough time to plan the event?
- What are the costs of your event?
- What is the purpose of your event?
- When and where would you like your event to be held?
- What equipment do you need?
- How many people are you expecting to attend?
- Is your event inclusive and accessible?
- Are you having catering at your event?
- How will you promote your event?
- How will you make your event safe?
- What is your venue capacity?

- Will your event have a guest speaker?

If you are planning an event and would like to discuss your ideas with a member of the Societies Team, please email activitiesadmin@shu.ac.uk to arrange a meeting.

1. Initial Paperwork

1.1 Event Proposal Form

The first step in planning an event is to submit a HSU [Event Proposal Form](#), this gives the SU an overview of what you have planned and enables us to support you further. This should be completed **at least 4 weeks prior to your event**. An Event Proposal Form can be found on the Committee Portal on the [Events and Trips](#) page.

1.2 Risk Assessment

At the start of the year, you will have completed a Risk Assessment for your regular activities. You will need to complete a separate Risk Assessment for any event that is additional or different to your regular activities. The Risk Assessment template can be found on the Committee Portal on the [Health and Safety](#) page. This also includes guidance and an example for you to get started. Risk Assessments should be emailed to activitiesadmin@shu.ac.uk **at least 1 week prior to your event**.

2. Event Spaces and Locations

2.1 Events on campus

Hallam Students' Union does not have authority to approve events taking place on university campus and must seek approval for any booking with the university.

Failure to follow the guidance below can result in security/staff ending your event if the details are incorrect or not provided in the correct way.

For all events taking place on campus you will need to complete a [Hallam University Event Form](#) in addition to the HSU Event Proposal Form and Risk Assessment. The form can be found on the [Events and Trips](#) page and should be emailed to activitiesadmin@shu.ac.uk **at least 4 weeks (20 clear working days) prior to the date of your event**. The Societies Team will send this to the university on your behalf. Please do not send this directly to the university.

Please provide as much detail as possible on the form to avoid delay in the approval process. You should have alternate dates and times in mind in case your first choice is not available.

2.2 Events at external locations

There are many external venues that you can work with across the city that could be a great space to host your event. This might be a venue you already visit during your regular activity, a business you have a sponsorship with or somewhere new.

When reaching out to venues it's important to know your budget and enquire about any costs associated with using the space, or any conditions they may have. You should not agree to or sign anything without speaking with the Societies team first.

3. Guest speakers and Freedom of Speech

If your event includes a guest speaker you will need to complete a [Guest Speaker Form](#). The form must be completed and submitted for approval **at least 3 weeks (15 clear working days) prior to the date of your event.**

A guest speaker describes any individual or organisation external to Sheffield Hallam University or its Students' Union (or where member(s) of the University community host and/or speak on behalf of an external organisation) that is invited to provide an opinion, exhibit, perform or speak publicly at an in-person or online event, meeting or organised activity.

You should not invite the external speaker, nor confirm the event/activity booking, until you have received full and final approval from the Students' Union.

You should also consider if your guest speaker has a cost attached to them and factor this in when budgeting.

Societies should also consider Freedom of Speech when planning your events (including whether the subject matter is contested or controversial, of heightened media interest, risks protests, demonstrations or disruptions, impacts on good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, or otherwise risks discrimination, harassment or sexual misconduct). You should speak with the Societies team if you have any concerns or questions regarding Freedom of Speech in your activity.

The SU and members of its societies are subject to, and must comply with, the [University's Freedom of Speech Code of Practice and the Visiting External Speaker Procedure](#). You should familiarise yourself with both the Code and Procedure (Hallam SU completes the procedure for societies based on what is submitted in the Guest Speaker Form).

4. Food and Drinks

Any food that is served in university buildings must be provided by the university catering team. If you would like to book catering, you should state this on your University Event Form. Guidance on university catering can be found on the [University Events Catering](#) document. Please contact activitiesadmin@shu.ac.uk if you have any questions on catering on campus.

If you are providing food off campus then there are multiple ways to do this including packaged snacks, homemade dishes, or external catering services. Depending on which method of catering you are using you must follow the requirements below.

4.1 Packaged snacks

- All packaging must be made available on request for attendees to identify ingredients.
- A Food Safety Disclaimer Form must be completed and displayed at the event.

4.2 Homemade dishes

- At least 1 member of the committee should have a completed food hygiene qualification. If you would like to provide homemade food and do not currently hold a food hygiene certificate please contact the Societies Team at activitiesadmin@shu.ac.uk.
- The process of preparing and cooking the food should be included on the Event Risk Assessment.
- A food disclaimer form must be completed and displayed at the event.
- A list of ingredients must be displayed at the event with any allergens in bold. See allergens list here: Food Standards Agency - Food labelling e-learning course.

4.3 External catering

If you are using an external catering supplier, they must be an approved supplier, to have a supplier added to the approved supplier list they must provide the following information:

- Public liability insurance certificate with a minimum of £10 million cover
- Copy of EHO rating with a minimum of 3-star rating
- Completed traceability form
- Bank details, contact details and business address

5. Inclusivity and Accessibility

You should all, as a committee, think about the inclusivity and accessibility of your event. For guidance on how to plan a more inclusive event check out the [Inclusivity and Accessibility](#) page on the Committee Portal.

6. Ticketing

All events should be ticketed through [Native](#), this includes both free and paid for events. On Native you can monitor ticket sales, contact purchasers, and ask for any details needed such as dietary and access needs. We have a video dedicated to adding events and tickets to Native on the [Training and How-to Guides](#) page on the Committee Portal. Hallam Students' Union also monitors engagement with societies through ticket sales so it's crucial to ensure your events are ticketed!

7. Finances and Budget

Before committing to any spending as a committee, you should ensure that you have enough funds in your society account. Once you are aware of your society's financial situation you should agree on a budget for the event. You should not only rely on ticket sales to cover your event costs as you cannot guarantee that you will make enough sales to cover your expenses.

Before making any purchases, you should request a Purchase Order (PO) from the Students' Union, once a purchase order has been approved you are then free to purchase the required items. If an invoice needs to be paid, it **must** be with the finance team a minimum of two weeks before it is due to be paid. **Additional payments cannot be made if the deadline is missed.** Please see the [Finance](#) page of the Committee Portal for more information.

Committee members can purchase items on behalf of the society and claim back their expenses by completing a claims form, the usual expenses procedures are applied.

8. Funding



Societies can apply for funding to support events. Please refer to the [Funding](#) page on Committee Portal for more information on the funding available to you.