

UEA Student Activity events and groups

Introduction

As part of the process of auditing finance and risk issues relating to student led activity within the Students' Union, we have identified two types of specific issue:

- Students running unofficial clubs and societies who are using the UEA name but that are not a part of the Union (or University) procedures
- Students working with external promoters/agencies to run events, parties, trips, balls etc who are using the UEA name

In both of these cases it is impossible for us to establish that the two key tests that the union would usually use to protect students' interests are being met:

- are finances being operated securely/effectively, and
- how is health and safety/risk being handled to minimise risk

Examples include:

- "Rogue" Sports Clubs generating problematic press coverage
- School based sports clubs operating without appropriate risk management
- Fake student events (particularly during welcome and Graduation period) being branded as "official"
- Events organised in good faith by students that are cancelled with complaints from students

This is clearly a problem both for the union and for the University- if we know a group of students are organising an event or trip or activity that is not risk assessed and something bad happens, or if an event is cancelled and students lose their money, reputational damage and blame and some legal risk will rest with both the Union and University.

There are four elements to a strategy that can address this issue:

- Putting in place adequate support to students that want to run activities or events
- Setting clear rules that prevent the use of the UEA name for the above types of activity unless run **through** the University or the Union
- Taking clear action to prevent University staff at any level from "aiding and abetting" (helping book a room, being guest of honour, etc)
- Ensuring that the University disciplinary regime supports this approach

From a union perspective the first of the above has been developed, working with SportsPark and Estates (Events) to ensure that students that want to organise things are supported.

In relation to rules, having carried out a review of the General Regulations for students in conjunction with DOS we are satisfied that the existing regime is sufficiently comprehensive on the issues relating to IP, Health and Safety and Finance. In addition, whilst we are focussed on supporting students, in extremis we are satisfied that the University disciplinary regime does indeed support this approach.

However we also need formal university support on the setting of rules of the use of the UEA name, and ensuring staff in schools and departments are aware of the rules.

It is therefore proposed that:

- SEC approves this broad approach
- ARM develop clear rules/guidelines on the use of the UEA name/brand in conjunction with the union, and a briefing is issued to all University staff to this end
- The Union works closely with existing events and groups falling into this category to directly offer or signpost the appropriate level of support