

# **Code of Practice for Student Society Events**



**July 2010  
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This Code of Practice has been developed to ensure that all Societies, Auditors and Committee Members have access to and are informed of their general duties and responsibilities in the areas of event planning, safety and management, in particular the duty of care that must be applied in relation to the planning, organisation and running of all student events.

Guidelines contained herein are based on, inter alia, the official policies of University College Dublin, and official publications including the Code of Practice for Safety at Outdoor Pop Concerts; the Code of Practice for Safety at Sports Grounds; the Code of Practice for the Management of Fire Safety in Places of Assembly; the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act; and the Guide to Health, Safety & Welfare at Pop Concerts and Similar Events.

## **Financial Responsibilities**

- All Societies must issue their cheques with a business duplicate cheque book, to ensure that a copy of each cheque is kept.
- No cheques can be made out to cash, other than when there is no other alternative. In all such cases, a Society must gain agreement from their Senior Treasurer or the Societies Officer before making payment in such a manner.
- All cheques must be crossed 'Not Negotiable' and 'A/C Payee Only'.
- Where a Society requires a separate bank account for an event or activity, this must be for a specific other purpose relating to the Society, and may be temporary or permanent.
- All Societies must run their events on a cheque book basis. All participation fees, membership fees, ticket receipts and other cash receipts must, as soon as possible, and not later than the next banking day, be lodged to the account of the Society. All bills, invoices or other monies due must be paid by cheque. Door or other receipts from events or activities cannot be used to fund the event or activity directly, but must instead be lodged to the account, with the money then being withdrawn by cheque.
- The Auditor and Treasurer, in conjunction with the Senior Treasurer, must formulate a plan of activity for the year, incorporating adequate budgeting for all events. For events with a budget or turnover in excess of €2000, the Society must, in conjunction with the Senior Treasurer, prepare a separate financial plan.
- It is the responsibility of the Auditor and Treasurer to ensure that all budgeting and planning decisions err on the side of pessimism and operate from a worst case scenario viewpoint. As such, the onus of acting in a fiscally responsible manner lies with the Auditor and Treasurer.
- No major event contingent on ticket or other revenues may be planned by a Society for the third term of the College year, due to the resulting difficulty that a Society will face in attempting to balance the books for the year should such an event go wrong.
- All budgeting for the year, and specifically for major events, should take into account all relevant information, including dates, venues, capacities, break-even figures, complimentary tickets, sponsorship, transport, hire charges, security, event management, VAT, entertainment, accounts, food/drink, and any other expense relating to the session or to the individual event.
- Where application is made for use of the Societies Council credit card or bank transfer facilities, the Council must be immediately reimbursed for such expenditure.
- Contactless payments may only be facilitated via the card reader assigned by the Council to the Society.

- Card readers must be signed out, and returned, by the Auditor and the beginning/end of their session.
- Borrowing another societies card reader is prohibited.
- Using the society's card reader for a purpose other than society business is prohibited and will have penalties.
- Auditors and Treasurers must be familiar with the Contactless Payment Guidelines. These are available on the Auditor's section of the Societies Website.

## Planning Checklist

For all extraordinary or large scale events, the Societies Office must be notified, and for events that may be considered to offer an organisational challenge to the Committee, a basic preparatory checklist should be followed, to ensure that basic consideration has been given to critical factors that can impact on the event. Such a checklist should, in the first instance, be applied by the event organisers and Committee at initial concept stage, and should include consideration of the following;

- What is the event
  - For whom is the event being run – target market – are there event/exam/assignment/external (sporting fixture, public holiday etc) clashes
  - When is the event
  - Where is the event
  - What is the purpose of the event
  - Are there legal implications – alcohol, age limits etc
  - Are there safety implications – crowds, public order, security etc
  - Are there reputational risk implications – VIP, media etc
  - Does the required skill set to run the event exist within the Society
  - Are there complicating factors
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- Following the initial set of questions, if the event is proceeding, then planning should proceed with specific attention to the following portfolios/briefs;
  - Marketing & Promotion – branding, image, placement, media, printing
  - Finance - Income – tickets, sponsorship, grants
  - Finance - Expenditure – venue hire, decoration, production (sound, lighting, staging), printing, hospitality, travel, accommodation, entertainment, clothing, security, cleaning.
  - Staffing
  - Production, Security & Risk Management – production, staging, security, crowd control, patron safety, transport, VIP/close protection, external liaison (University, police, external security, government departments).

- **External Suppliers**

- Some events will require the engagement of external suppliers or contractors, or dealing with hotel, venue or location staff/management companies/owners.
- In most cases, what is agreed between the Society and the venue/contractor should either be in the contract/invoice, or in writing between the parties.
- Arrangements and agreements made in person between the Auditor/Committee and the venue/suppliers, if the agreed details are not going to be included in a contract, should be followed up with a post-meeting or post-conversation email, detailing what had just been discussed and agreed.

Details that should be agreed, either in contract or in writing, would include, but not be limited to, the following

- Cost of hire
- Payment terms (deposit, payment in advance, instalments, on the night, on invoice, post event, etc)
- Number of items (eg number of dinners served at a ball)
- Cancellation period (24 hours, 48 hours, 1 week in advance, etc)
- Date of hire/event
- Location
- Start & end time of event, access time, start and end time of hire period
- Delivery/pick up time
- Special terms (hotel offering wine reception, hotel offering organisers rooms, door ticket sales cut)
- Extras – security, bar extension, afters tickets.

## **Event Management Plan**

Some events will require the writing of an Event Management Plan. This will normally be the case in instances where the event in question may be deemed to have a higher safety or security risk, and especially where the event may be operated solely by the Auditor/designated Committee member, without direct University control, e.g. Faculty Day/Event, Large Faculty/College Ball, Mystery Tour.

An Event Management Plan will require details on the following;

- Event Summary
- Admission Control
- Capacity (including detailed extrapolations)
- Entrance, Exit & Circulation Routes
- Traffic Control
- Event Management
- Event Controller
- Event Safety Officer
- Key Personnel
- Stewarding/Marshalling - Duties
- Campus Operations
- Pre Planning Meetings
- Responsibility for the Event
- Event Management Structure

- Communications
  
- Procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency
  
- Emergency Messages
  
- Medical Emergency
  
- Evacuation of Event Site
  
- Post Event
  - Clean Up
  - Site Restoration
  - Environmental Issues



## Fundraising Activities

- All fundraising activities must be carried out under the auspices of a student organisation. All such activities will be in accordance with the Code of Practice for Student Society Finances.
- **Permission for all society fundraising activities must be sought from and granted by the Societies Officer.**
- The purpose of all fundraising must be clearly communicated by the promotional material, tee-shirts/buckets etc, used by all collectors and at all collection points.
- Where such fundraising activity is in the name of a specific charitable organisation, permission to use the name and logo of that organisation must be sought and granted in advance. Such permission will form part of the basis for permission being granted by the University.
- All Faculty/School/Programme days must take place under the auspices of a student society.
- As a general rule, dates for Faculty/School/Programme Days and/or collecting activities will be allocated on a first come basis.
- Bookings should be made at minimum 2 months in advance; bookings not made in a timely manner may not be granted permission to proceed.
- All street collections off campus in a public space must be carried out under permit from An Garda Siochana, and in accordance with such stipulations and conditions as may be directed.
- All collecting activities on campus must be carried out under licence from the University, and in accordance with such stipulations and conditions as may be directed by the Societies Council or the University authorities through the Council.
- All public and street collections must use only sealed and tamper proof buckets and containers. Each container should be numbered and should be signed out and signed in by the person to who that number has been assigned. Where necessary, extra card readers can be supplied through engagement with the Council.
- All collectors must operate at least in groups of 2.
- All collection buckets must be returned to a central point for counting. Only authorised counting personnel will be allowed to remain in the counting room. All monies must be counted and lodged to the main Society account or specific, approved, event account on the same banking day.

- Where lodgement is not possible, remaining monies must be lodged, sealed and secured with University authorities. Monies should not be left under the personal control of any one individual.
- ***Money collection, counting & lodging procedures*** should be included as a separate appendix in the Event Management Plan for all Faculty/School/Programme Days.

## Safety

- The safety and wellbeing of all attendees, volunteers and Committee is the primary concern for the organisers.
- Primary responsibility for the safety of attendees at an event lies with the management of the venue concerned. Concerns around patron/attendee safety must be reported to the senior staff member responsible for the venue. This also applies to cases where transportation is provided to an event, in which case the responsibility for safety lies with the transport company and the bus driver(s) concerned.
- All venues/transport companies must be suitably licensed and insured for the event they are undertaking, confirmation/details of such should be ascertained by the Auditor.
- Responsibility for the safety of, and duty of care to, patrons can only reasonably be considered as resting with the promoters, security or venue management when the patron(s) are under the control, supervision or authority of the event, e.g. in the venue/on the vehicle; queuing for, entering or boarding the venue or vehicle, where such queue is under the control of the venue or vehicle company; exiting/disembarking the venue/vehicle.
- Travelling to or from the venue/vehicle, by means of private or public transport or by any other means not provided specifically for the event, can generally not be considered a time when the promoter/venue etc are responsible for the actions of private individuals.
- Notwithstanding the sanctions and penalties, outlined elsewhere in this document, which may be applied for unsafe or irresponsible behaviour, certain actions, behaviours or activities, which may either be so serious or urgent as to warrant immediate intervention, or may be sufficiently serious that they lie outside the authority of the Disciplinary Committee or Societies Council, should be reported immediately to the relevant person(s) or statutory authorities. Such behaviours or instances may include, but may not be limited to, an extreme threat to safety or life, such as a fire hazard, crowd unrest or overcrowding; physical assault; sexual assault; poisoning; abduction; imprisonment; or any other such activity or action that may reasonably be considered as sitting in the aforementioned categories.

## Penalties

- The Auditor and Treasurer of the Society, as well as committee members or other individuals with independent or delegated responsibility in relation to society and student events are the Officers with principal responsibility for the management of the Society. The responsibility of knowing and adhering to this Code of Practice lies with these Officers.
- Ignorance of guidelines contained herein will not be considered a reasonable excuse.
- The responsible Officer(s) must prepare for the event exercising due diligence with regard to plans and cost exposure, and seeking to plan from a worst case scenario viewpoint.
- Breaches of this Code of Practice will be taken into account by the Finance Committee during their adjudication, and this may result in the reduction, non-awarding or reclamation of any grant.
- Serious breaches of this Code of Practice will be considered by the Disciplinary Committee, who have wide powers to deal with Society discipline. In cases where the Disciplinary Committee is satisfied that an Officer, or an individual with independent or delegated responsibility within the Society, has acted irresponsibly and/or without authorisation in relation to their management of the event(s) of a Society, the Committee may impose a penalty or penalties. Penalties may include fines, withdrawal of funds, suspension from office, withdrawal of facilities or de-recognition. Penalties may extend over a period of time.
- In the event of any inability on the part of the Disciplinary Committee to deal with any matter, on the grounds of the gravity of the offence(s) or for any other reason, or in relation to former officers of a Society over whom the Committee has no jurisdiction, the case may be referred to the Registrar of the College, who bears ultimate responsibility for student discipline.

This Code of Practice will come into operation immediately, and may be altered from time to time by the Societies Officer, Council Executive Committee, Recognition Committee or Disciplinary Committee.