

# THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON STUDENTS' UNION THEATRE GROUP

## CONSTITUTION 2024/2025

### 1. Name

- a. The name of the society will be "The University of Southampton Students' Union Theatre Group" known simply as "SUSU Theatre Group" or "Theatre Group" (hereinafter referred to as **the Society**)

### 2. Aims

- a. The aim of **the Society** is to provide opportunities to students interested in pursuing any area of the theatrical arts. These areas include performing in, writing, directing, producing, and viewing shows. **The Society** is there to provide a training service in all of these areas.

### 3. Membership

- a. Any student union member shall be eligible to become a member of **the Society** upon payment of a subscription fee determined by the committee.
- b. In order for a student union member to participate in **Society** productions they must hold **Theatre Group** membership.
  - i. Associate members shall be entitled to the rights and privileges of members except that they may not hold office or vote.
  - ii. Persons who have ceased to be members of **the Society** shall have no rights or interests in the property and funds of **the Society**.
  - iii. Any member expelled from **the Society** for whatever reason, or who resigns, cannot obtain a refund in their membership fee.
  - iv. Members can be expelled from **the Society** at Committee's discretion (see section 5c.).
  - v. Any member expelled from **the Society** for whatever reason may appeal to the **Student Union**.

### 4. Officers

- a. A committee of elected representatives will oversee and be responsible for (with limited liability) the actions of **the Society**.
- b. This committee will consist of the following officers with their roles being defined below:
  - i. President: will organise and chair all **society** meetings where possible and be responsible for overseeing the general running of **the Society**. They are also responsible for overseeing the wellbeing of the committee members.
  - ii. Vice-President: Will fulfil the responsibilities of the President when they are otherwise indisposed, aid the president with responsibilities tasked to them by the Committee, and be responsible for the booking of space for committee meetings.
  - iii. Secretary: responsible for taking minutes at every society meeting, following upon action points before committee, and oversees the Committee swear jar.
  - iv. Treasurer: responsible for maintaining **the Society's** accounts, assisting in the budgeting and claiming process for all productions, as well as monitoring membership of **the Society**.
  - v. Publicity Officer: responsible for promoting **the Society** as a whole and, the management of social media, liaising with media outlets and producing specific publicity

for individual productions and events when necessary. Responsible for maintaining and updating **the Society's** members through online mediums.

- vi. Social Secretary (up to 2): responsible for organising any social trips and events for **the Society**. Each social secretary will have one vote each. Social Secretaries will run alone but can favour a running mate.
  1. If two social secretaries have been elected, they must meet and discuss delegation of roles. If they agree to take on 50% or more, they will be elected as the role of Primary Social Secretary (there can be 2 primary social secretaries) if they agree to take on less than this, they will be given the role of Secondary Social Secretary. There must be at least one Primary Social Secretary. This clause must be made clear at the AGM.
- vii. Tours Officer: responsible for organising the accommodation, transport and venue applications for **the Society's** Edinburgh show(s) as well as acting as Show Liaison for any and all Edinburgh shows if possible. If not possible, the Committee will elect a show liaison as usual. If possible, this elected liaison will be present in Edinburgh and in Southampton for the rehearsal process. They also assume responsibility for finding new opportunities for **the society** to attend or perform at other festivals throughout their tenure.
  1. The Tours Officer will be elected at an EGM in October and their term will last from their election until the next Tours EGM so that they can provide show feedback and handover within two weeks of the EGM.
- viii. Workshop Officer (up to 2): responsible for organising and running the weekly workshops, any professional workshops and overseeing the Showcase production, including finding a venue. Up to two people can run together for this position, if elected they will have one committee vote each. They are responsible for ensuring that jams are held at least once a term, but it is recommended once every two months. Each Workshops Officer will have one vote each. Workshops Officer will run alone but can favour a running mate.
- ix. Webmaster: responsible for maintaining and developing **the Society's** online infrastructure and keeping content accurate and up-to-date.
- x. Original Writing Officer: (This role will be elected from within the existing committee or as its own role) responsible for overseeing and promoting original writing feedback through regular drop-in sessions and any other form of support that is deemed appropriate by the officer and committee, when there is interest from writers. The officer will liaise with the Workshops Officers regarding the organisation of TG Showcase. The officer will be responsible for maintaining and running the play library as well as adding to it. It is up to the discretion of the Committee as to how much money is dedicated to the Play Library. They are also responsible for ensuring that all original writing submitted to TG for performance or affiliation meets **the society's** standards and requirements, such as TG Jam, Showcase and pitches.
- xi. Welfare Officer (up to 2): assists with any tasks not explicitly covered by other positions. They will also function as a point of contact between members of **the Society** and the committee. In this capacity they should hold drop in sessions at least once a month in order for **society** members to feel supported and have an opportunity to discuss anything.

- xii. Tech Liaison: (This role will be elected from within the existing committee within the first two weeks of a new committee) is responsible for liaising between **Theatre Group** Committee and the **Stage Technicians' Society Committee (herein referred to as StageSoc) and, if possible, providing tech support for any Independent shows.** Additionally, they are responsible for the safe storage of TG equipment and technology as well as ensuring they are available for hire and use by members when appropriate.
- c. In addition to duties listed above, all officers may be required to fulfil ad hoc duties at the discretion of the committee.
- d. There is an expectation for all officers to frequently attend key TG events including workshops, jams, socials, and fundraisers. The expected frequency of attendance is up to the discretion of the President.

## 5. Committee

- a. The President shall chair all meetings. In their absence, the Vice-President will assume responsibility. The President or Vice-President must be present at all meetings.
- b. All committee members are subject to expulsion if they fail to adhere to their duties in an appropriate manner. This decision must be voted on and passed by consensus of the remainder of committee.
- c. The quorum for any committee meeting shall be 50% plus 1 additional officer, including either the President or Vice-President in the chair. (i.e., for a committee of 12, the quorum will be 7).
- d. Any member of **the Society** may attend committee meetings but shall not be entitled to vote upon matters discussed at that meeting.
- e. Any member of the committee, who fails to attend 3 consecutive committee meetings without sufficient reason or consistently fails to attend committee meetings without appropriate reason, may be asked to resign their post at the discretion of the committee. This will not affect their membership of **the Society**.

## 6. General Meetings

- a. Where possible, the **PA committee** and the **student's union** shall be informed of, and invited to at least seven days beforehand, any General Meeting held by **the Society**.
- b. Quorum plus a minimum of ten additional non-committee members of the society are required to hold a General Meeting.
- c. Where possible, the President and/or Vice-President will be responsible for informing all members at least seven days before any general meeting, through **the Society's** social media. If this is unfeasible, members should be informed as soon as possible. This must be at least twenty-four hours in advance.
- d. Annual General Meetings:
  - i. There shall be an Annual General Meeting in the spring term at which officers for the coming session shall be elected.
  - ii. Individual's own nominations should be opened at least seven days before but will also be received at the meeting.
- e. Extraordinary General Meetings:
  - i. Extraordinary General Meetings may be called by the President, Vice-President, or Secretary or on written application from at least 20% of **the Society's** membership giving reasons for which the meeting is desired.
  - ii. An Extraordinary General Meeting requested by **Society** members should be held within

two weeks of being called.

## 7. Elections

- a. Elections to the committee shall take place at the Annual General Meeting.
- b. Only **Society** members who are students of the University may nominate themselves for positions. This can be done in one of the following ways:
  - i. By stating their intent in written form at or before the Annual General Meeting.
  - ii. By informing the President or Vice-President of their intention once nominations open.
- c. Elections shall be by ballot.
- d. The chair of the meeting (it is recommended that this is the president) will not vote in elections, however in the event of a tie, their vote will act as the decider. An unbiased non-member of the society and a member of the outgoing committee will be required to count the votes for the sake of impartiality
- e. At the AGM, candidates running for the role of President will have a maximum of 5 minutes to speak before answering questions. All candidates running for other roles will have a maximum of 3 minutes. After a maximum of 10 minutes of questions to each candidate the vote will be cast.
- f. If for any reason **the Society** decides not to elect a full committee before the end of the season, a President, Secretary and Treasurer at least shall be elected, and they shall be responsible for ensuring remaining members are elected at the beginning of the following season.
- g. In the case where a committee member resigns or is expelled before the end of their session then an Extraordinary General Meeting will be held, and the same voting process will be conducted as the Annual General Meeting but for the one position that is vacant only. Until this meeting, the committee will either share the responsibilities of the vacant position or delegate to another committee member.
- h. All outgoing committee members must give their corresponding incoming member a hand over within 4 weeks of term time after the AGM. Outgoing committee members should continue to attend weekly committee meetings for an additional 2 weeks after their term to support and aid the new members of committee.

## 8. Society Administration

- a. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all Committee Meetings and General Meetings which should be available to **Society** members, the **PA committee** and the **Student's union** on request.
  - i. Minutes can only be made public after being approved by the committee.
- b. The Treasurer shall maintain the accounts of **the Society**, which shall be available for examination and discussion at the Annual General Meeting, and to **Society** members, the **PA committee** and the **Student's Union** within seven days of being requested.
- c. The **Officers of the Society** are jointly liable for the proper management of **the Society's** finances and ensuring that the Union's Grant Aid (funding) regulations are applied.

## 9. Productions

- a. It is recommended that the committee hold pitches for a set number of productions per year subject to availability. Any other ideas for performances outside of these slots must be presented to committee in an independent pitching slot for full discussion. The current specific slots are:

- i. Halloween Show.
  1. Pitches and auditions will need to be held after Easter the previous University year.
  2. This can only be performed by **Society** members that will still be students of the University of Southampton after the summer break.
  3. This show does not strictly have to adhere to the usual 8-weeks of rehearsal, but does have to adhere to the mandatory 2-week notice period before pitches. Up to the committee's discretion, a shorter show can be pitched with a shorter 4-week rehearsal schedule before show week.
- ii. Winter Show in Semester 1.
- iii. Freshers' Show in Semester 1.
  1. This can only be performed by **Society** members who has not been cast in any other Theatre Group production, with the exception of Showcase and Show In A Week.
- iv. Show in a Week.
  1. **The Society** may have up to two Show in a Week's per academic year. Committee must open pitches at least once for the slot.
  2. The pitching team must select a week which coincides with as few PA productions as possible, and should take into consideration time needed for members' revision during exam period
  3. This show will have a limited budget when needed, and one week to rehearse and perform in.
  4. All proceeds of this show will go to a charity chosen by the pitching team or selected collectively by the cast and crew of the production before the week starts. In the latter case, the production team must consult with committee once a charity has been chosen.
- v. Spring Show in Semester 2.
- vi. Summer Show in Semester 2.
- vii. At least one Edinburgh Play in August when a viable option (either through funding from TG or through fundraising for costs).
- viii. A Showcase of original writing by **SUSU** members, excerpts of shows and improvisation that can be performed at any time throughout the year, usually Semester 2. Originally written pieces must take priority and excerpts of pre-written shows must only be used in cases where not enough originally written pieces are put forward/approved.
- b. In addition to these slots, **the Society** will provide at least one opportunity a year for teams to pitch for an independent slot. (See Article 11)
- c. Every production must have at least one director and at least one producer directly responsible for seeing the play through from start to finish.
- d. **Committee** should ensure no director should have precast a production before auditions and call-backs. If a director is found to be doing so, **the committee** may take action as they feel is suitable from asking the director to not have a say in casting to requesting they step down from the production, or even **the society**.
  - i. This includes approaching individuals to audition stating that the member would be suited for a specific part. Any director may encourage anyone to audition, but it should not be implied that they are wanted for a specific role.
  - ii. This also includes any Director found to be discussing roles with members before auditions happen, in a manner that would suggest favouritism of casting over other members. Directors should be approaching auditions with an open mind and open to

any possibility of cast, and not holding favourites.

- iii. In original writing pieces, roles should not be written for specific actors.
- e. At least one producer or director is required to give a production update to the committee every week. Where this is not possible, the liaison(s) will give updates.
- f. Every production (including show in a week, showcase and independent shows) will also be allocated a Show Liaison from the committee. They will be responsible for collecting and compiling show feedback (in conjunction with the Production Liaison), giving feedback at each committee meeting on the progress of the rehearsal process and liaising with cast and production team. They must not be involved in any way with the production.
  - i. Any prevalent issues that are raised during this feedback will be discussed by the committee, and any recommendations the committee have for future production teams will be made available to the wider society through the production handbook on the **Theatre Group** website. If issues continue, it will be up to the President to decide if any action be taken.
  - ii. When presenting the feedback at each committee meeting all production team members of the show in question, as well as non-committee members, can be asked to leave at the Show Liaison's discretion.
  - iii. In the case that an issue during the show does arise, the Show Liaison may discuss with the committee first how to proceed or use their discretion to decide on the appropriate course of action, ensuring they inform committee as soon as possible.
  - iv. If a show contains a scene that may be deemed to be potentially uncomfortable or distressing for the cast as a whole, a cast member or the production team, it is the responsibility of the Show Liaison to ensure they have spoken to the parties involved and to make sure these scenes are handled with care and sensitivity before they are rehearsed.
- g. In addition to the Show Liaison, a Production Liaison may be allocated from the committee to any given production, at the discretion of the committee. This role manages relations between the directors and the rest of the production team. This includes, but is not limited to, offering advice and support to the production team, attempting to resolve disputes amicably, and ensuring that production teams meet the targets set in their production schedule. Unlike the Show Liaison, Production Liaisons are not required to attend regular meetings. However, they must be responsive if called upon by any members of the production team.
- h. Directly after a production's performance run, the cast, production team, members of **the society** and audience members will be encouraged to leave feedback on the production online. This feedback will only be available to the Show and Production Liaison, who will organise and compile it to present it in a committee meeting.
  - i. This post-show feedback will be made anonymous and stripped of any material deemed non-constructive by the show liaisons, for instance comments of a personal nature, shall be omitted by the show liaison before being presented to the committee. Before presenting post-show feedback, the Show Liaison may use their discretion to inform the most senior member of committee who is not involved in the production in order to seek advice regarding feedback that may be highly sensitive and upsetting (but still necessary for discussion) for anyone involved in the production. In the unlikely event that feedback is deemed to be of a nature that may be highly

emotionally/psychologically distressing for anyone involved, the committee may use their discretion to give this feedback privately to the parties concerned and not release it publicly to other members.

- i. Every production must have a budget devised by the production team, which must be presented to the committee upon request and then passed. An initial budget must first be presented to and passed by the Committee at the beginning of the production process and then finalised no less than three weeks before the show's opening night. If necessary edits to the budget must occur between the budget's finalisation and the show's run, the production team must ask permission of committee. If permission is not granted, any losses resulting from spending not approved by committee will not be covered.
  - i. When requested, the Treasurer will provide help in creating an initial budget and/or previous budgets can be requested from the Webmaster.
- j. It is recommended that production team and cast members should not be committed to more than one overlapping production slot (not including Independents). This is up to the discretion of the committee.
- k. The committee will liaise with the Student's Union Performing Arts Committee regarding the proposed production dates and venues for productions for the coming year.
- l. **The Society** is committed to gender parity, and this will be reflected in how **the committee** assesses pitches in terms of acting opportunities for our members. As with the whole pitching process, all decisions are down to discretion of **the committee**.
- m. In the event that a cast member of a production has to be recast, if there is at least 3 weeks until the production then the directing team must hold auditions to find a suitable replacement. If there is less than 3 weeks, a replacement will be chosen at the discretion of the direction team and help will be provided by committee if requested.

## 10. Pitching process

- a. For every production slot there will be a pitching meeting where any union member may pitch a play to the committee. This can be attended by any member of **the Society**.
- b. The meetings shall be chaired by the President or Vice-President. The chair must not be a member of the production team for any pitch and will still be eligible to vote. If both the President and Vice-President are unable, then a member of the committee will be assigned as Chair at the discretion of the committee prior to the meeting.
- c. If a committee member is part of the production team for any show pitched at the time of pitching, then that member shall not be allowed to vote on that specific slot.
- d. The quorum of voters for any specific pitching meeting slot shall be 50% of the committee including one out of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. (i.e. for a committee of 13, only 6 may pitch with the quorum being 7).
  - i. In the instance where this quorum is not met, an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be held with the voting process following the same format as for elections, but with a discussion.
- e. All pitches must be submitted to the chair by the date specified by the committee. This date must be made known to **the Society** members at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
  - i. This chair in question must comply with Article 10(b)
- f. All committee members must read all information about each pitch before the decision

meeting.

- g. The presentation of the pitch should be no longer than ten minutes. However, if the committee deem it appropriate, this may be extended. There should be ten minutes for questions after the presentation which should be capped at ten minutes, unless deemed unsatisfactory by the committee.
- h. The committee requires as complete a version of the script as possible to be submitted with the pitch by the deadline stated above.
- i. If it is a devised piece, then sufficient evidence of intended content and devising process must be provided that satisfies committee.
- j. The committee reserves the right to re-open nominations (RON) for any pitch.
- k. The committee shall assign dates for pitches as soon as possible in their tenure. These dates should give the production that is being pitched at least eight weeks of rehearsals within term time.
- l. Any potentially sensitive scenes must be highlighted to committee during the pitching process.
- m. When opening and publicising pitching sessions, it is recommended that the committee should give a rough suggestion (with a minimum and maximum) on the cast size that they deem is appropriate for each specific slot based on the size of and interest shown by **the society**.
  - i. Any member of **the society** may pitch a show that is smaller than the recommended minimum cast size, but the committee reserves the right to use cast size as a deciding factor in voting on the pitch.
  - ii. Any member of **the society** may pitch a double-bill for Annex slots to increase cast size of the production, but there should be at least one director and producer on each individual show.
  - iii. In the situation where there is one pitch vs RON for a slot, **the committee** must make a clear decision based on the pitch in its current state to whether the show is selected or if the committee must RON. However, **the committee** may suggest in pitch feedback that if the team were to double-bill, it potentially would be more successful, but it is up to the pitching team to decide if they wish to and to then find a corresponding show and team members. If asked by the pitch team, the **Committee** should help with this process.
- n. If a show slot receives no pitches, with Committee having opened the slot twice, it is up to Committee to decide whether to take the show into 'Committee Care'.
  - i. 'Committee Care' means that the Committee take the responsibility of the show slot into their own hands, generating a production team (that doesn't have to be within Committee, just approved and organised by), selecting a show (a show that, rather than satisfying creative impulse, adheres logistically to the demands of the slot and provides equal opportunities for members).
  - ii. In compiling a 'Committee Care' show, it is important the Committee is aware of the importance of the nature of the issue and do best to make themselves free for any emergency meetings. In times of hostility, it is important that issues are dealt with in person.
  - iii. The show committee choose must be as appropriate for the slot as possible. As Committee is putting on the show, it is imperative no committee positions are abused. The show must be executed with a professionalism that represents the society's ethos.



- iv. 'Committee Care' should be about creating opportunity for the members of **the society** rather than satisfying the creative desires of a committee member.
- v. A working budget should be generated, and the show should aim to be as financially sustainable as possible.
- vi. Throughout the preliminary discussion period, nothing about the show should be announced to **society** members until Committee have confirmed the budget, production team, rights (in event of) and show itself.

## 11. Independent Shows

- a. The Society will provide at least one opportunity a year for a team to pitch for the Independent Show Slot. No more than 3 to be performed in a year, but this will be dependent on the committee's discretion.
- b. These shows have no restrictions in cast size, gender split, performance location or length.
- c. The Society shall provide a maximum of a £350 loan from the Independent Theatre Fund for each Independent Show that may run within term time.
  - i. The Independent Theatre Fund exists within the Theatre Group bank account, and does not need to be separated. The Treasurer must keep it in mind that a portion of the overall money is specifically for Independent Show Slot.
  - ii. Any money given by The Society towards an Independent Show will be paid back in full, regardless if the Independent show generated any profits.
  - iii. In the case where profits have been made, The Society will be paid back a further 5% of net profits.
- d. Any successful pitching teams will have to sign and abide by the Independent Show Contract (see Appendix A). Any infringement of this will result in the Society withdrawing their funding and support.
- e. See Appendix A for more information on independent shows

## 12. Edinburgh

- a. **The Society** will endeavour to take up at least one show per year to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe under the name of **Paperlight Theatre**.
- b. Shows must pitch to the **Theatre Group** committee with a provisional fundraising plan to be developed with the Tours Officer if the pitch is successful.
- c. **The Society** takes ultimate financial responsibility for any and all shows.
- d. TG will pay for the pitch costs (excluding venue) that are presented and decided on in the pitch.
- e. In line with the Tours Officer's responsibilities, they will take charge of accommodation, transport and venue application for any and all shows and act as their Show Liaison where possible (see above – 4.b.vii).
- f. Committee reserves the right to recall the show in lieu of any behaviour it deems unacceptable.

## 13. Constitutional matters

- a. The Secretary of **the Society** and the **Democracy and Creative Industries Department** shall both keep a copy of the constitution, and it shall be available to the membership at all times.

- b. The committee shall have the power to interpret any matter within this constitution.
- c. This constitution shall be reviewed by the Officers at the end of each active session.
- d. It can only be changed subject to a 2/3 majority at a General Meeting. All changes must be ratified by the **PA Committee**.

This constitution was written by **Theatre Group's** Secretary and Treasurer Eliya Beachy and Sam Beath and passed at the Annual General Meeting on 15th March 2010 under the presidency of Alexis Forss. Amended by committees 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-18, 2018-2019, 2022-2023, 2023-2024. This replaces all previous constitutions recorded.

## **APPENDIX A: INDEPENDENT SHOW CONTRACT**

### **Pitching and Finance**

Theatre Group will provide £ \_\_\_ which will be allocated in discussion with Theatre Group Committee. In the event of a loss, the production team will still be expected to pay back any funds that have been allocated by Theatre Group in full. The Independent Theatre slot has no restrictions on cast size or gender split, it has no restriction on length of performance or venue. The creative decisions lie entirely with the production team, provided they comply with Theatre Group's present values. Teams must have an approved budget and a rationale for the investment from Theatre Group. Theatre Group committee has the right to reclaim their funding based on the intention to show inappropriate content that is not endorsed by the society. The team's own money can be invested into the project in addition to the amount asked for from Theatre Group but Theatre Group is not liable for loss of that money. Theatre Group will receive 5% of any profits generated by the Independent Show, and the production team will be expected to return that within 2 weeks of the final performance. Failure in doing so will result in expulsion from The Society effective immediately past the 2 week deadline.

### **Conditions of the Independent Slot**

Any breach of these will result in a withdrawal of Theatre Group support. The Independent Theatre Slots are provided 'In association with SUSU Theatre Group'. Participants must be fully paid Theatre Group members. Theatre Group and Performing Arts logos must be used on any promotional materials produced for the project. Insurance must be fully covered for any and all performances. If for any reason the insurance of the performance is not covered by the Theatre Group insurance, it is the responsibility of both the production team of the project and Theatre Group committee to ensure cover is secured before any performance is carried out. Shows must be cast via open auditions. The Independent shows can be performed at any time, but they cannot clash directly (the same days as) with any other Theatre Group show slot. Theatre Group committee has the right to select up to two Show Liaisons to provide communication and feedback between the production team and the committee. Theatre Group committee has the right to be provided with any information regarding the show by the production team both during the production and after the production has been concluded. Feedback will be provided via the Show Liaison(s) in accordance with (Article 9.e, Theatre Group constitution). Any props and/or costumes purchased for the production will be given to Theatre Group to be added to the Performing Arts house or auctioned off.

## Theatre Group committee

Theatre Group committee promises to provide support to the crew and cast of the winning team(s) for the independent slot. The teams have the right to advice and assistance from the committee including production assistance and tech support from their Tech Liaison. Their Production Liaison will provide production support to the team and feedback to committee on any issues. Theatre Group committee will promote winning pitches through the newsletter, on the website and through social media.

## Signatures

### THEATRE GROUP

I, a representative of Theatre Group committee, understand and agree to the terms of this contract, and agree to provide funding and support to the specifications laid out above:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### PRODUCTION TEAM

I, a representative of the Independent show production team, hereby understand and agree to the conditions set forth in this contract and sign representing the entirety of the production team:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### WITNESS

I, the undersigned, have witnessed the signing of this contract:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX B: DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

## SUSU Theatre Group Dignity at Work and Study Policy

### Statement of Policy

1. SUSU Theatre Group (hereafter referred to as TG) is committed to encouraging and maintaining good relations within the society and creating an environment which fosters team working and encourages members to give their best. Everyone within the society and those who have external dealings with the society has a responsibility to maintain good working relationships with each other and not use words or deeds that may harm the wellbeing of others. In addition to the obligations placed upon members of the society by the Equality and Human Rights legislation, everyone has the right to be treated with consideration, fairness, dignity, and respect. This contributes to a workplace environment in which individuals feel safe and can work effectively, competently, and confidently.
2. TG's policy applies to all members working within the organisation. It extends to all members working on or off the premises of the University of Southampton. It extends to everyone who has purchased TG membership and anyone working under the society's banner. This includes but is not limited to: Directors, Producers, Assistant producers, assistant directors, supervising directors, supervising producers, cast members, choreographers, stage designers, musical directors, publicity designers and all members of TG committee. The policy, in addition, covers the behaviour of members outside of working hours which may impact upon work or working relations.
3. TG has a 'zero tolerance' policy and will investigate vigorously any allegations of bullying or harassment, regardless of whether the matter has been raised formally or informally.

### Objectives of this policy

The aims of this policy and accompanying guidance is to:

- Promote a positive environment in which people are treated fairly and with respect.
- Encourage all members of TG to play a role in creating and maintaining an environment in which harassment, bullying and victimisation are understood to be unacceptable behaviour.
- Provide a framework of support for members who feel that they have been the subject of harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- Ensure that allegations of harassment, bullying or victimisation are addressed fairly, with respect for the rights and dignity of all involved.
- Identify the appropriate processes by which complaints can be raised.

### Application of this policy and key principles

1. This policy applies to the conduct of the current members of TG in the context of their work or social environment with the society. This can include conduct towards people who are not members of TG or the university in the context of TG business for example socials, cast meals, PA ball or external companies working with TG.
2. TG will provide and sustain a safe working environment in which everyone is treated fairly and with respect. Those working or dealing with TG must not encounter harassment, intimidation, or victimisation on the basis of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, trade union membership, disability, offending background or any other personal characteristic, in accordance with the 2010 Equality Act.

3. Any member of TG who wishes to make a complaint of harassment or bullying is encouraged to first discuss matters informally with the show liaison of the production (if applicable), a welfare officer or any member of committee, provided they feel able to do so. Should the issues not be resolved at this stage, or the person feels unable to raise the issue informally, then a formal resolution should be sought.
4. All matters relating to the investigation of complaints of harassment or bullying will be treated in strict confidence. Any breach of confidentiality in this regard may render those responsible liable to disciplinary actions. However, it may be necessary that any alleged perpetrator is made aware of the allegations against them and the name(s) of those making the allegations together with the name(s) of any witnesses, this will be up to the discretion of the committee/ panel.
5. No member will be victimised or suffer detriment within the society for making a complaint of harassment or bullying. No member of seniority (either on a production team or committee) shall threaten either explicitly or implicitly that a member's complaint will be used as the basis for decisions affecting that member, i.e., passing pitches or future committee roles. Such conduct will be treated as a very serious disciplinary offence. Similarly, members of committee are required to act on any complaint of harassment or bullying. Failure to do so will be regarded as misconduct which if proven, will result in disciplinary action.
6. This policy and procedure will be reviewed periodically giving due consideration to legislative change.

### **Definitions of Harassment and Bullying**

Harassment may be defined as any conduct which is:

- unwanted by the recipient
- is considered objectionable
- causes humiliation, offence, distress, or other detrimental effect.

Harassment may be an isolated occurrence or repetitive. It may occur against one or more individuals.

Harassment may be, but is not limited to:

- Physical contact – ranging from touching to serious assault, gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour.
- Verbal – unwelcome remarks, suggestions and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter, offensive language.
- Non-verbal – offensive literature or pictures, graffiti and computer imagery, isolation or non-co-operation and exclusion or isolation from social activities.

Bullying is unlikely to be a single or isolated instance. It is usually, but not exclusively repeated and persistent behaviour, which is offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting. Bullying includes but is not limited to:

- Conduct which is intimidating, physically abusive or threatening
- Conduct that denigrates, ridicules, or humiliates an individual, especially in front of colleagues
- Humiliating an individual in front of colleagues
- Singling out one person when there is a larger problem
- Shouting at an individual to get things done
- Consistently undermining someone and their ability to do the job
- Setting unrealistic targets or excessive workloads
- "Cyber bullying" i.e., bullying via e-mail or social media.

- Setting an individual up to fail e.g., by giving inadequate instructions or unreasonable deadlines.

**Harassment and Bullying may be summarised as any behaviour that is unwanted by the person to whom it is directed. It is the impact of the behaviour rather than the intent of the perpetrator that is the determinant as to whether harassment or bullying has occurred. It is crucial this is remembered by all members of committee when dealing with complaints of harassment or bullying.**

### **Procedure:**

#### **1. Informal Resolution:**

- 1.1 Very often people are not aware that their behaviour is unwelcome or misunderstood, and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and agreement that the unwanted behaviour will cease.
- 1.2 Complainants are therefore encouraged to try, if they feel able to do so, to resolve the problem informally by making it clear to the alleged harasser that his/her actions are unwanted and should not be repeated. This may be done verbally or in writing in which case the complainant should keep a copy of the documentation and, where possible, the times and dates of incidents should be recorded.
- 1.3 Should the complainant not feel able to approach the alleged harasser, the show liaison or a welfare officer of TG committee could be asked to speak to the alleged harasser on behalf of the complainant. A note should be made of the action taken and the matter recorded in committee only minutes of the next committee meeting.
- 1.4 An individual who has been made aware their behaviour is unacceptable should:
  - Listen carefully to the complaints and concerns raised,
  - Respect the other person's point of view: everyone has a right to work in an environment free from harassment/intimidation.
  - Understand and acknowledge that it is the other person's reaction/perception to another's behaviour that is important.
  - Agree the aspects of behaviour that will change.
  - Review their general conduct/behaviour at TG events and with colleagues of TG.

#### **2. Formal Resolution**

- 2.1 If the alleged harassment continues, the complainant feels unable or unwilling to deal with the matter informally, or the allegation is so serious as to prevent use of the informal procedure, a complaint should then be raised formally with a panel of committee members
- 2.2 This panel should consist of: The President, Vice President, Secretary, both Welfare officers, the Performing Arts Theatrical Representative and the show liaison of the production (if applicable) hereafter referred to as 'the panel'.
- 2.3 These members should work together to collect the following information:
  - a) A statement from the complainant, including full details of the incident(s).
  - b) Take statements from any witnesses/other complainants who have come forward who may have witnessed the alleged behaviour.

- c) Inform the alleged harasser of the complaints against them, advise the alleged harasser to seek representation in the form of a Welfare officer and invite them to a meeting with the TG panel in order that they can comment on the allegations against them.
  - d) Keep all parties informed of the expected timescale of events at the discretion of the panel considering the feelings of parties involved.
  - e) Inform all parties in writing of the outcome and any action that may be required.
- 2.4 After this information is collected, a disciplinary hearing will take place with the TG panel, the complainant and alleged harasser. All evidence submitted will be assessed and the viewpoints of all involved will be heard.
- 2.5 If the complaint is upheld at the disciplinary stage, there are a number of possible outcomes for the harasser, depending on the evidence presented and the circumstances. These could include but are not limited to:
- A formal warning
  - A statement of apology to the complainant
  - Making arrangements for both parties to work as separately as possible within the society.
  - Dismissal from the role on the production team/cast/committee (if applicable).
  - Dismissal from the society itself and redaction of membership.
  - The case being passed onto the Human Resources department of the Student's Union.
- 2.6 If the case is deemed too severe to be dealt with by or directly involves members of the panel, the case should be passed onto the Human Resources department of the Student's Union and a complaint should be made through the necessary routes.
- 2.7 With any allegation, the need for a thorough and objective investigation is paramount. Consequently, if through the course of the investigation evidence demonstrates that the allegation has been made frivolously, maliciously, or for personal gain, then the individual making the complaint will be subject to disciplinary proceedings as outlined above (2.5).

### **3. Appeals:**

- 3.1 Appeals against a disciplinary sanction taken under the Dignity at Work and Study policy should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and reviewed by the panel.
- 3.2 A Welfare officer may advise and represent the person wishing to make the appeal and a resolution may be sought.

### **4. Records**

- 4.1 As outlined in article 4 of the application of this policy, there is a need to minimise publicity of investigations for the benefit of all involved. The secretary on the panel will take minutes of any meetings and hearings as well as a record of any actions taken, and the outcome reached. These can be released to the rest of committee after the investigation has been closed and resolved to the best of the panel's ability. These minutes should never be made public to the rest of the society.


In the case of this policy applying to non-members, more stringent disciplinary measures, including immediate dismissal, is permitted according to the discretion of committee

**Signatures from the Theatre Group Committee**

**22/04/2024**



Kat Fevyer  
President



Cicely Donnett  
Vice-President



Charlotte Pearce  
Secretary



Emily Norman  
Treasurer



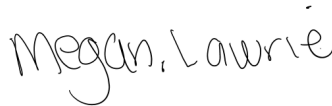
Morgan Allen  
Webmaster



Lily Akers  
Publicity Officer



Charlotte Klafkowska  
Social Secretary



Megan Lawrie  
Social Secretary



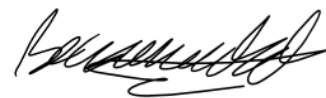
Vivek Kanani  
Workshops Officer



Alex Tsherit  
Workshops Officer



Louis Cleave  
Welfare Officer



Ben Mansell  
Welfare Officer



Lily Akers  
Tours Officer



Eden Jack  
Original Writing Officer