



Student Council Handbook 2021-22

What is the Students' Union

London Met Students' Union (LMSU) is separate to London Met University. It is led by students for students. We exist to represent students' needs and interests whilst they are studying and also provide lots of opportunities, activities and events to improve students' time at university. We are a democratic organisation led by elected officers, overseen by a Board of Trustees and supported by a team of professional staff. All London Met students are members of the Students' Union, unless they choose not to be.

What is the Student Council

The Student Council is the main representative body of the Students' Union. The Student Council is part of the governance of the Students' Union. This means it is part of the governing and decision-making process within the Students' Union. It is made up of students who represent different groups from across the University such as student reps, student group leader (e.g. sports teams and societies) and current Students Union officers.

Purpose and function

The Student Council discusses and debates issues which are of interest to students. They can be directly related to London Met or wider issues which affect students more generally. It can discuss areas of concern which may exist. It can discuss and make recommendations in terms of Students' Union priorities, policy and campaign positions to the Trustees of the Students' Union. The Student Council offers support, assistance and provides direction to the Students' Union Executive (Full and Part-time Officers). It also scrutinises and holds to account the Executive.

What is the membership

Constituency	Number of seats	When are the elected
Student Reps members	24	Early November 2021 and early February 2022
Student Group member	24	3rd November 2021 and 9th February 2022
Directly elected Student Council members	10	1st-5th March 2021
Executive members (full and part-time officers)	8	1st-5th March 2021
	Total: 66	

Vacant seats may be filled at the discretion of the Student Council Chair throughout the year via a system of co option.

When are the Student Council Elections?

All seats on the Student Council are elected. This means they have a mandate to represent a specific portion of London Met students. Elections for the various constituencies take place as stated in the above table.

What happens at meetings?

At the start of the Student Council meeting a number of administrative tasks have to be completed by the Secretary and their assistant. These people are staff within the Students' Union whose job it is to facilitate the meeting and help its smooth running. A register will be taken and voting cards distributed. These are cards which all student council members receive.

Once these tasks have been completed, the Chair will introduce each item on the agenda in turn. They will invite speakers at their discretion during each item on the agenda. They may invite the Secretary of their assistants to the meeting for example arranging a vote. When all items on the agenda have been discussed, the chair will close the meeting. Meetings are set for two hours in length with a short break in the middle. It is the role of their chair to ensure the meeting does not overrun.

What are agenda and papers?

An agenda is simply *'a list of items to be discussed at a formal meeting.'* Many items of the agenda are what is called a 'standing item.' This means something which will be on the agenda at every meeting. It is important to remember that only items on the agenda can be expected to be discussed at a Student Council (or any other formal meeting). Therefore it is very important that any Student Council members who is to put something on the agenda

emails the Secretary and Chair and request it by the stated deadline (see below). There is an item called 'any other business' which does what it says on the tin, however if time is short there may be little or no time for these items to be discussed. So if you want to talk about something, you should submit the matter before the meeting.

Agenda papers contain various pieces of writing which are related to the agenda. They should be read in conjunction with the agenda and will provide important background information, further details in a similar way to how an appendix may accompany the main part of a book.

What is a policy?

A policy is a course of action which the Student Council has democratically decided it wishes the Students' Union to adopt. When the Student Council decides on a policy, it is then referred to the Students' Union Trustee Board who then have the final call as to if it becomes official Students union policy. For example, a policy could be that the Students 'Union lobbies the University to increase library opening hours during exam times.

What is a motion?

A motion is simply a vehicle used for a policy to be proposed and voted on. Once a motion has been voted through it becomes a policy. Motions are widely used, not just in Student council but in any members organisation such as a trade union, political party, fan-owned football club etc.

How is a motion structured?

Motions are written in a specific way which summarises the author's (the proposer and seconders) position and view on the matter. It should have three sections - 'notes' are facts around the issue which no one should object to, 'Opinions' are the opinions of the authors and 'actions' are what the authors want to happen if the motion becomes policy. If the Student Council passes the motion. A majority of at least one vote is required:

A motion is split into 3 parts:

1. This council notes... (this is facts)
 2. This council believes... (this is opinion)
 3. This council resolves... (this is action for the exec)
- Motions should be student centred and on issues facing students
 - Motions should have a proposer and a seconder
 - Keep them brief and to the point
 - Setting them out in bullet points is advisable
 - Motions and policies do not need to lay out in great detail what your plan or actions are. Your actions and steps to take can be seen as 'within the spirit' of the policy.

- For example if the motion is about a campaign, you don't need to list all the ways you may campaign: letter writing, posters, facebook, petition, lobby, placards , protests etc. It is enough to say ' SU to actively campaign and take action on this issue'
- However if you wish a specific action to be carried out as a result of motion becoming a policy and you are concerned that it might be challenged at a later date, for the avoidance of doubt explicitly state the action within the 'resolves' for the avoidance of doubt.

Motion and other agenda items - deadlines for submission

Motions and other submissions into the agenda of a Student council meeting have to be completed by certain deadlines. They are stated in the [updated bye-law 3 available here](#) and summarised below:

1. Deadline for motions: 12 noon, 3 working days before the meeting (Friday midday if the meeting is on Wednesday)
2. Deadline for amendments to motions: 1 working day before the meeting (so by 4pm Tuesday if the meeting is on Wednesday afternoon)
3. Deadline for an Emergency motion: 24 hours before the meeting (so usually 4pm on Tuesday if the meeting is Wednesday 4pm). An emergency motion must be for an emergency only, i.e. due to something which has just happened and therefore it was not possible to meet the 3 working day deadline (see point one)

What skills can I gain from being on the Student Council?

Being a Student Council member is a great way to get more involved in the Students' Union, to shape the Students' Union's policy direction and to meet and make friends with other students outside of your course.

You will also have the opportunity to develop some great skills which will help you with future employability. These include meeting and committee skills, communication, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, attention to detail skills, public speaking skills, assertiveness and improved confidence and using data to support arguments.

Being a student council member is also a great way to get to know more about and get more involved in the Students' Union. Many student council members go on to become active in other areas of the Students' Union, such as becoming student reps and full and part-time Students Union officers.

Meeting Schedule 2021-22

2021

Wed 17th November 5.00-7.00pm: Student Council Meeting

Wed 8th December 5.00-7.00pm: Student Council Meeting (followed by Christmas Social)

2022

Wed 2nd February 5.00-7.00pm: Student Council Meeting

Wed 23rd March 5.00-7.00pm: Student Council Meeting

Wed 27th April 5.00-7.00pm: Student Council Meeting

Wed 1st June 5.00-7.00pm: Student Council meeting (followed by summer social)

All meetings will be remote unless stated otherwise on this site:

<https://www.londonmetsu.org.uk/studentvoice/council>

All meetings are subject to change so please double check on the above page

Student Council Website and Google Drive

Student council website:

<https://www.londonmetsu.org.uk/studentvoice/council>

Student Council members google drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1MtdxAGZ9SE2jvww3hi8Fer-Ma12Qv6IT>

Meeting Etiquette

1. Be on time
2. Come prepared, make sure you have read the agenda
3. Raise your hand to speak and wait to be called by the chair
4. Speak clearly and loud enough so others can hear
5. Actively listen and participate.
6. Follow the agenda.
7. Allow others who have not spoken yet to speak
8. If the meeting is remote keep your mic muted when you are not speaking but your camera on
9. Do not interrupt
10. Be respectful to all

Glossary of terms

motion	a formal proposal put to a legislature or committee.
policy	a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual.
agenda	a list of items to be discussed at a formal meeting
amendment	a minor change or addition designed to improve a text, piece of legislation, etc.
minutes	notes of a meeting including summary of discussion, decision and actions
secretary	person who provides administrative and practical support to the Student Council
mandate	the authority to speak and act as a result of being elected to a group of people for that purpose
lobby	to seek influence on an issue
campaign	an organized course of action to achieve a goal.
for	to support a motion
against	to not support a motion
abstain	formally decline to vote either for or against a motion.
Trustees Board	Key decision-making body within the Students Union
Co-option	appoint to membership of a committee or other body by invitation of the existing members
Constituency	A group of students whose voters elect a representative to a legislative body.