

## Governance review proposal Anglia Ruskin SU

### Project Overview

Anglia Ruskin Students' Union are keen to review their articles and byelaws in order to ensure they are both in line with recent thinking in the movement and reflective of member needs. In order to undertake this project the union has requested support from the NUS Strategic Support Unit. This paper outlines how NUS and ARSU will approach this work.

It is possible to divide this project into three key sections; review of articles, democratic review process, writing byelaws. Section 1 should be run concurrently with sections 2 and 3 so that any article changes are reflective of democratic innovations.

### Section 1: Reviewing articles

NUS is currently in the process of developing a new set of model governing documents for students' union. It's recommended that in this initial phase NUS provide ARSU with this document, and that ARSU consider how this would be adapted to their setting. NUS has also produced a model code of conduct which ARSU may wish to adopt as part of this review.

NUS will be able to offer remote guidance on adapting model documents but ARSU should seek independent advice on any substantive changes. ARSU will not be able to finalise section 1 until section 2 has been completed by NUS.

**Output:** ARSU to consider adapting model documents to context, NUS to offer advice and guidance on this process.

### Section 2: Democratic review

NUS is happy to support a review of the union's current representative structures and consider possible alternatives and innovations to strengthen decision-making and democratic participation. This paper outlines the approach NUS has adopted to supporting unions with holistic democratic reviews.

The Strategic Support Unit would begin by running a workshop with key stakeholders to define the functions of democracy before running a survey to understand preferences of ARSU membership in relation to democracy and representation. It will then analyse the results, producing a report recommending the type of innovations which would suit the membership of ARSU.

There is often tension between what is ideal and what is acceptable to a range of stakeholders and, as such, a further workshop designed to translate the findings of the membership survey into coherent recommendations will be delivered by the Strategic Support Unit, along with a summary of these recommendations so that the union can begin writing byelaws.



Should NUS be appointed to undertake this work, ARSU would need to allocate a lead staff member and officer to oversee the project, organise relevant stakeholders to attend workshops, send out and promote the survey to the union's membership.

**Output:** NUS will produce a report with recommendations on the type of innovations which would suit the membership of the union and then a further summary outlining the types of structures

decided upon in the final workshop with officers. ARSU will then be signposted to unions with similar structures to assist with producing byelaws.

### Section 3: Byelaw rewrite

Based on the findings of NUS' workshops ARSU will adapt democratic byelaws with remote guidance across the rewriting phase from NUS. ARSU is encouraged to collect byelaws from other unions to consider changes and rewrites.

**Output:** ARSU to finalise recommendations by writing into formal byelaws. ARSU to finalise articles. ARSU to get agreement on these documents.

### Proposals, timeframe and responsibility

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
September 2015	NUS to provide written proposal of work	ARSU decide if proposal is appropriate and contact dan.francis@nus.org.uk
October 2015	NUS to provide model documents for ARSU to consider	ARSU to review and consider areas which would require adaption. NUS to offer remote guidance
October 2015	Democratic workshop	NUS to develop and run workshop. ARSU to arrange meeting with key democratic stakeholders
19 October 2015	Questionnaire launch	NUS supply questionnaire link. ARSU and promote survey to members
6-30 November 2015	Questionnaire closure and analysis	NUS to prepare report
December 2015	Byelaw and article writing	NUS to host workshop on democratic findings and possible innovations
January-March 2016	Byelaw and article writing	ARSU to undertake best practice research/visits and further consultation with members on possible innovations, translate findings into byelaws and adapt articles. ARSU to seek legal guidance if required
April-June 2016	Agreeing changes	ARSU to present changes to Student Council, Board of Trustees, OGM and Board of Governors
June 2016	Project completion	

**In order to confirm this proposal please contact Dan Francis (Development Consultant) on [dan.francis@nus.org.uk](mailto:dan.francis@nus.org.uk) or 07585969869 before the end of September 2015**