**Student Group Membership Instalments Plan and Policy**

1. **Opening Statement:**

*Leicester Students Union Activities Team is committed to ensuring all students have the best possible opportunities to participate in our societies and sports clubs (student groups). This policy outlines the process and procedures that student groups can go through to create instalment plans for their membership fees in order to make them more inclusive to those in financial hardship.*

*Student groups must adhere to the guidelines outlined in this policy in order to create their instalment plans, with the approval of the Activities Team.*

*Societies or Sports clubs will be referred as Student Groups (SGs), which are groups that affiliated to the University of Leicester Students’ Union, will be referred as ULSU.*

1. **Policy Scope**
	1. This procedure and policy apply to all student groups that wish to create instalment plans for their membership fees.
	2. This policy does not form any part of the ULSU constitution and may be amended at any time. Prior notice will be given where possible but is not necessary.
	3. This policy is in addition to the ULSU Student Group Constitution and any other policies and documents held by the ULSU in regarding to student group finances process.
2. **Aims of the Policy**
	1. To promote financial inclusion for students regarding Student Group membership fees and to support students affected by the cost-of-living crisis or financial hardship
3. **Eligibility and Requirements**
	1. *Minimum Membership Fee* - For a SG to be eligible for the instalment plan, their membership costs must be £30 or more; this ensures that the plan is used only for fees considered higher than the average price.
	2. *Payment Processing* - All payments to the society must go through the official student group fundraising account
	3. *GDPR Compliance* - Following the introduction of GDPR all memberships must be processed through the Activities Team
	4. *Agreement on Terms* - All instalment dates and prices must be agreed upon by both the student involved and the SG committee. In the case of disagreement, please contact the Activities Team for advice.
	5. *Capacity Limits* - All instalment plans must have a capacity for the number of students it is offered to. This capacity can be decided upon by the SG depending on their membership size and financial balance but cannot total more than 25% of your current funds. This is to ensure the SG can maintain financial sustainability and manageable administration.
	6. *Selection Process* - Deciding who can and cannot take part in the instalment plan must work on honesty and trust and on a first come first serve basis. At no point should the SG be requesting or requiring personal information from the students without **written consent** to do so given by the student.
	7. *Initial Payment* - It is recommended that the first instalment is at minimum 25-50% of the total fee. This can be lower for Team Leicester clubs at a recommended 10% of the total fee, provided their Team Leicester Sports Membership is purchased from the university beforehand.
	8. *Payment Deadlines* - **All instalments must be paid by the end of the term**: Term 1 for September intake or anybody requesting it between September and November, Term 2 for January intake or anybody requesting it between December and February.
	9. *Tracking Payments* - The **SG treasurer is responsible for monitoring payments and following up on any delays.**
	10. *Refunds* - Students who are on the instalment plans will not be eligible for a refund on their purchase unless all instalments have been paid, at which point it will then follow the existing refund policy.
	11. *Approval* – The Activities Team hold the right to refuse any instalment plans based upon these requirements.
	12. **All requests must go through** [**the request form**](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=as2-rtQxAUuVzoJ0r-hT2Q4t3tBz6hZJrw4pwzFMJzhUMzFYQUNIRDk1WkxVTE5PNDIyT1dSN0MwMi4u) **once approved.**
4. **The Instalment Plan Process**
	1. The initial stage will be for the SG to get in touch with the Activities Team to express interest in offering an instalment plan for their membership. This can be done over email via unionactivities@le.ac.uk.
	2. The Activities Team will then review the request, approve or reject the request depending on the eligibility against the regulations.
	3. If accepted, the SG should then go back to their members to work out who needs the instalment plan, to agree upon instalment dates and prices. The following should be agreed upon:
		1. First instalment date, first instalment amount, second instalment date, second instalment amount.
		2. Additional instalments can be added if needed and with approval via the request form.
		3. The instalment prices will need to be the same for everybody but the dates can differ - provided they are within the same term.
	4. The SG must specify with the Activities Team regarding the timeframe, the capacity limits about their instalment plan to or if they would like to make it an option for. Please refer to 4.5 for more information on this.
	5. The SG is responsible to communicate these dates and amounts back to the Activities Team as well as who in their membership is doing the plan, [via the request form](https://forms.office.com/e/gZD6Agm5J9).
	6. The Activities Team will then set up the instalment payments as a product on the SG’s webpage with a sales limit matching the number of students allocated for the plan and expiry dates matching the agreed upon deadlines.
	7. The students who are participating in the instalment plan, will then need to purchase their first instalment on the webpage.
	8. The Activities Team will then allocate the student a temporary membership after purchase **within 2-5 working days**, with the expiry date of the final instalment deadline. At this point the Activities Team will also check the list of people who have purchased the instalment with the SG, for confirmation. Committee can also check this via their purchaser reports.
	9. The student should then pay the final instalment by the deadline, for their membership to be extended to the end of the academic year, aligning with the standard deadline for memberships as stated in the SG’s constitution.
	10. Failure to pay the final payment by the deadline that was agreed upon, will lead to the membership being removed without refund.
5. **Example Instalment Plan**

For example, if the SG membership is £50 and they have 5 students requesting support, with enough budget to support 2 more students if needed, they can set up 7 instalment plans.

* 1. The SG would then determine based off how much people can pay at the time, a split between instalments. An example would be £25 for the first instalment, then £25 for the second. The first instalment would need to then be paid by the end of October, with the second payment needing to be paid by the end of November.
	2. This is communicated to the Activities Team [via the request form](https://forms.office.com/e/gZD6Agm5J9), who then set up the instalments as products on the society’s website.
	3. Once all 7 payments are made for the first instalment, this is communicated back to the SG by the activities team, for their record.
	4. This repeats again once all of the second payments are made.
	5. Once both payments are made by a student, their membership is extended to the end of the academic year.
	6. In a case that 2 of those people haven’t paid the second instalment by the end of November, their memberships are revoked and this communicated back to the SG.

Document drafted and confirmed by Activities & Volunteering Department (also known as Activities Team/ Activities Department); unionactivities@leicester.ac.uk