

Event Planning Guidance

Planning an event is a great way to engage new members, showcase your society, and bring people together. To make your event as successful as possible you should follow the guidance below. Please note we have dedicated guidance documents for [Society Balls](#) and events on university grounds on the committee portal.

Before you begin planning your event here are some things you should consider:

- Do you have enough time to plan the event?
- What is the purpose of your event?
- When and where would you like your event to be held?
- What equipment do you need?
- How many people are you expecting to attend?
- Is your event inclusive and accessible?
- Are you having catering at your event?
- How will you promote your event?
- How will you make your event safe?
- What is your venue capacity?
- Will your event have a guest speaker?
- What are the costs of your event?

Letting us know and Paperwork

Every society event begins with paperwork. You must submit the relevant paperwork **at least 4 weeks prior to your event** and wait for approval from the Student Groups team before advertising and selling tickets to your members. *Failure to do so will result in the event not being recognised and supported as an official society event and will leave the organiser personally liable for costs.*

If you are planning an event and would like to discuss your ideas with a member of the team you can attend one of our [Event Planning Surgeries](#), in which either a member of the societies or events team can assist you and answer event related questions.

Email activitiesadmin@shu.ac.uk with all your paperwork. We review paperwork on a weekly basis.

Event proposal

The Event Proposal form gives the SU an overview of what you have planned and enables us to support you further. An Event Proposal Form can be found on the Committee Portal on the [Events and Trips page](#).

Risk Assessment

At the start of the year, you will have completed a Risk Assessment for your regular activities. You will need to complete a separate Risk Assessment for any event that is additional or different to your regular activities.

The Risk Assessment template can be found on the Committee Portal on the [Events and Trips page](#), this also includes guidance and an example for you to get started.

Guest Speakers

If your event includes a guest speaker the event organiser of the event will need to complete a [Guest Speaker Form](#). The form must be completed and submitted for approval for any event involving an external speaker at least 3 weeks (15 clear working days) prior to the proposed scheduled date of event.

A guest speaker is used to describe any individual or organisation who is not a student or employee of Sheffield Hallam University or its Students' Union and is invited to provide an opinion, exhibit, perform or speak publicly, at the invitation of the Students' Union (i.e. Officer, Trustee, Representative, Committee, Society or employee) at an in-person or online event, meeting or organised activity.

You should not invite the external speaker, nor confirm the event/activity booking, until you have received full and final approval from the Students' Union.

You should also consider if your guest speaker form has a cost attached to them and you should factor this in when budgeting and planning your event.

Booking a space

The President and Secretary of your society can book classrooms and rooms within the Student Union Building by logging on to the [resource booker](#).

For Lecture Theatres within the University, a member of the societies team can book the space for you upon request and dependent on availability.

The booking of large University spaces such as the Atrium or Hallam Hall are dealt with via the University Events team process (which requires a much longer planning time) please find our guide on University Events.

The Students' Union opening hours can be found on our website. There are several costs attached to opening the building outside of usual opening hours these including staffing and security costs. See a breakdown of prices below:

Security £19.20 p/h

Staff £ £12.76 p/h

At least one member of staff and security must be present if your event has over 100 attendees' additional security will be required. Security is contracted for a minimum of four hours so your event must coincide with this minimum.

Opening the building outside our usual opening hours is subject to staff availability.

Prices correct as of January 2024, please check with a member of the societies team for a definite figure.

Don't forget, there are lots of external venues that you can work with across the city - there could be a great space to host your event. Just be sure to think about venue costs when planning your event.

Room setup

When booking a space within the Students' Union via the resource booker you can detail how you would like the space to be set up for you. Our buildings team will then set the room up ready for your event, please note we will not decorate the space for events, set up includes tables, chairs, mirrors and screens. All rooms should be left in the state in which they are when you arrive for your event. You should always factor in set up and pack down time into space bookings as spaces will be booked by other groups following your booking.

Inclusivity and Accessibility

You should all, as a committee, think about the inclusivity and accessibility of your event. For guidance on how to plan a more inclusive event check out the [Inclusivity and Accessibility page](#) on the Committee Portal.

Food and Drinks

There are multiple ways to provide food at your events including packaged snacks, homemade dishes, or external catering services.

When wishing to serve food on University property you should refer to the University Event Guide.

Depending on which method of catering you are using you must follow the requirements below.

Packaged snacks

- All packaging must be made available on request for attendees to identify ingredients.
- A Food Safety Disclaimer Form must be completed and displayed at the event.

Homemade dishes

- At least 1 member of the committee should have a completed food hygiene qualification. If you would like to provide homemade food and do not currently hold a food hygiene certificate please contact the Student Groups Team at activitiesadmin@shu.ac.uk.
- The process of preparing and cooking the food should be included on the Event Risk Assessment.

- [A Food Safety Disclaimer](#) form must be completed and displayed at the event.
- A list of ingredients must be displayed at the event with any allergens in bold. [See allergens list here.](#)

External catering

If you are using an external catering supplier, they must be approved by a supplier, to have a supplier added to the approved supplier list they must provide the following information:

- Public liability insurance certificate with a minimum of £10 million cover
- Copy of EHO rating with a minimum of 3-star rating
- Completed traceability form
- Bank details, contact details and business address

Ticketing

All events should be ticketed through Native. On Native you can monitor ticket sales, contact purchasers, and ask for any details needed such as dietary and access needs. This includes both free and paid for tickets. We have a video dedicated to adding events and tickets to Native which you can find on the [Committee Portal](#).

Finances and budget

Before committing to any spending as a committee you should ensure that you have enough funds in your society account. Once you are aware of your society's financial situation you should agree on a budget for the event. You should not only rely on ticket sales to cover your event costs as you cannot guarantee that you will make enough sales to cover your expenses.

Before making any purchases, you should request a Purchase Order (PO) from the Students' Union, once a purchase order has been approved you are then free to purchase the required items. The Students' Union can purchase the items for you directly from your society's account if requested. If an invoice needs to be paid, it **must** be with the finance team a minimum of a two weeks before it is due to be paid. **Additional payments cannot be made if the deadline is missed.** Please see the [Finance page](#) of the Committee Portal for more information.

Committee members can purchase items on behalf of the society and claim back their expenses by completing a claims form, the usual expenses procedures are applied.

Funding

Societies can apply for funding to support trips. Please refer to the [Committee Portal](#) for more information on the funding available to you.

If you have any questions, please contact the team at activitiesadmin@shu.ac.uk