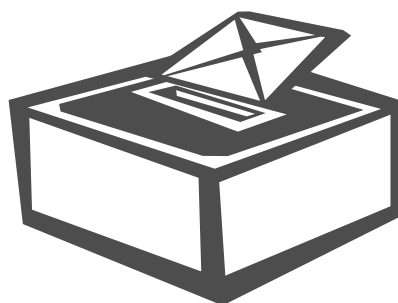


# RUNNING AN AGM & HANDING OVER TO A NEW COMMITTEE

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) is where a new committee members are elected by members of the student group. As it is an election, there are certain procedures that need to be followed or the validity of the outcome could be called into disrepute.



It is very important that you undertake a thorough handover meeting with the old committee, and with a staff member from Student Development. This will ensure that there is a consistency between the two committees and relevant knowledge and information is not lost.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### Student Development

Tel. 0121 251 2424

[www.guildofstudents.com/studentgroupsandvolunteering](http://www.guildofstudents.com/studentgroupsandvolunteering)

[studentgroups@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:studentgroups@guild.bham.ac.uk)

Counter opening times

Monday — Thursday 11—5.30

Friday 11—4.30

## What is an Annual General Meeting?

An Annual General Meeting, commonly referred to as an AGM, is a formal meeting which is held once a year. It is a compulsory requirement for all our student groups (except Residents Associations) and within this meeting, new committee members are elected. Each group has a section within its constitution which deals with AGMs, and this gives guidance as to how the AGM should be run and what matters should be dealt with. If you don't know what your constitution says, ask at the Student Development counter.

## Timing

You must hold your election between January and March, except if you have had authorisation from the Student Group Committee (SGC) to hold it at a different time. This will only be given if the SGC believe there is a special reason for your group to do so.

You must give at least 14 days notice to your members that the AGM is happening. You must also contact the VPAD (email [vpad@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:vpad@guild.bham.ac.uk)) to let them know about it. Allow time for a full handover to the new committee before the current ones disappear.

## Committee Nominations

It is advisable to ask for nominations before the AGM so you know if you need to spend more time encouraging people to stand for positions. All candidates need to be current students at the time of the election. If they stop being a student before the end of their term of office, they'll need to stand down at that point; they should let the group know if they expect that to happen. External members can not be on a committee.

## Publicity and invitations

Groups have to give advance notice of the AGM. It's a good idea to make your notice as public as possible by writing & emailing all your members at least 14 days prior to the event. A copy of the agenda see below should be sent along with the invitation, as well as descriptions of the roles and what is involved.

The venue needs to be as accessible as possible, so make sure that your members know where it is and will be able to get there—that's why most groups have their elections on campus. Try to find out beforehand if attendees have particular requirements, e.g. wheelchair access, translation services.

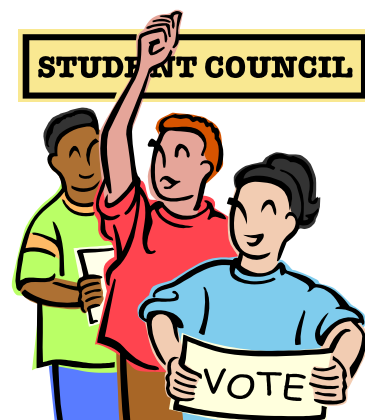
## **Running the AGM**

For each position:

- Get all the candidates to do a short speech of equal length (2/3 minutes) about why they are the best person for the job.
- Allow people to ask questions – each question must be addressed to every candidate standing for a position – candidates opposing one another cannot ask each other questions.
- Hold a vote by secret ballot where people write their decision on paper. If there is only one physical candidate, other than RON, you may choose to vote by show of hands if no-one objects, but all contested elections must be by secret ballot.

The AGM is normally conducted by the Chair of the student group. Detailed minutes of the meeting should be taken by the Secretary. A typical AGM agenda will cover the following items:

- Opening remarks/Welcome
- Apologies
- Minutes of previous AGM
- Matters arising from the Minutes
- Reports by current committee
- Summary of Accounts (Treasurer)
- Election of Committee/Office Bearers
- Amendments to the constitution (if needed)
- Any Other Business
- Closing remarks



- **Apologies**

Apologies from individuals who have been unable to attend are read out and recorded.

- **Minutes / Matters Arising**

It is usual to make copies of the previous minutes, the group's constitution and any other papers available for anyone attending. If possible they should have been sent out beforehand. Matters arising from the minutes should be taken in the order they appear. In some cases, the Chair may ask that matters arising be dealt with during the course of the meeting.

- **Reports by outgoing committee**

The Chair of the group will normally give a review of the year, and all committee members will summarise what they have done in their roles.

- **Presentation of Accounts**

The accounts are presented by the Treasurer. It is usual for copies of the accounts to be given to those attending. The Treasurer will highlight some of the figures in the accounts, explaining any that need explanation, and give a general overview of the financial position of the group.

- **Election of Committee/Office Bearers**

The constitution will provide guidance on the election of committee members, usually starting with the chair and other signatory positions, and working through the rest of the committee. If anyone loses an election, they can re-stand for other positions

- **Amendments to the constitution**

Any proposed amendments to the constitution are also discussed at the AGM. These have usually been discussed by the present committee and emailed to members in advance; the Chair would explain why the Committee believe that the change is needed. Amendments are often made to update the constitution in the light of new circumstances, or change the membership fee.

- **Any Other Business**

AOB can be a useful opportunity for those who are involved with, or interested in your group to have their say on any issues. AOB can double the length of a meeting and throw up many unexpected questions and comments.

## ● Conclusion of Business

The meeting is formally brought to a close by the Chair.

### Voting procedure

Check in your group's constitution for any details about voting procedures. It is always preferable to vote by secret ballot for any contested election, in order to reduce the chances of voter intimidation or complaints later on. Where a position is uncontested, apart from the option to vote for RON (to Re-Open Nominations and in effect re-run the election at a later date, giving other students the opportunity to stand for election), a group may choose to allow a show of hands, as long as the candidate is out of the room and no-one else objects.

For secret ballots, the outgoing committee should provide voting slips for members and then collect them after voting, and count them discretely. If you would prefer, see if you can get an external neutral party to count your votes, such as a sabbatical officer or the Chair of Guild Council.

Many groups prefer to elect the chair first, then run down the other committee positions, so that any person who does not get a position can then re-stand in elections for subsequent posts.

It is usually good practice to combine your AGM with another activity, such as a social, to help encourage people to come along. The length of your AGM will vary according to how many committee positions you have, how many people run for election, and how many members you have. They can vary from half an hour for a small group to three hours.

### Minutes

The secretary, or another committee member, should keep detailed minutes of the meeting, so that all members are able to read what happened even if they could not attend. For the reference of the new committee, and because you will need to provide a copy of the AGM minutes for Guild records, make sure that these are written up and are detailed enough to give a reasonable picture of the elections.

This often helps if there are problems later on, and is a good record of ideas for the new committee to try out based on members' feedback. It does not need to be word-for-word, but should accurately paraphrase what happened without losing any significant details.

### Minutes (continued)

Minutes should include a note of anything in the meeting, but especially:

- : List of people that attended, and those that sent apologies.
- : Summary of the outgoing committee's reports.
- : Summary of the candidate speeches.
- : Record of the number of votes cast for each candidate.
- : Any other business or discussions, especially votes on constitutional changes.

If in doubt, it is always best to include more detail rather than only giving a vague impression of the proceedings. After the AGM, you should email out the minutes to all members of the group so that anyone can pick up on any discrepancies. It also gives your members an opportunity to complain about any potential irregularities. Any complaints about elections should be forwarded to the VPAD for investigation.

### What Exactly is a Handover?

A handover happens when a newly elected committee is prepared for their roles by the outgoing committee. Usually this combines meetings, written documents and shadowing. **You will also have to arrange a handover meeting with the Student Development staff so we can help you to identify any support you may need.**

When you encounter a problem during the year, make a note of it. It is likely your successor will encounter the same problems unless you tell them how to avoid it, or, if it is inevitable, how you dealt with it. Put yourself in the position of your successor, and try to involve all committee members, old and new, in the handover.

## Why is a good handover important?

- Continuity and long term planning and development for your group
- Making sure the work and achievements of your year on the committee are not lost
- Fully preparing the new committee to take on responsibility for the group
- Making sure new committees don't waste time trying to rebuild things or find out information

## Student Development handover Meeting

All new committee's have to attend a handover meeting with Student Development staff. A handover meeting is a chance to talk about your plans for the year and to get support from a member of staff. You need at least 3 people (up to a maximum of 8) to be financial signatories for your group. These people will have to sign any financial paperwork to authorise payments and must include the chair and the treasurer. You will not be able to authorise any financial paper work until you have attended a handover meeting.

## Top Tip!

Why not spend a bit of time creating a group handover file, wouldn't that make life easier? Things you could include:

- Details of individual committee roles
- A timeline of what committees need to do and when
- Review of events and activities you have run
- Minutes of committee meetings & AGMs
- Training notes
- Copies of flyers and posters used
- Passwords and codes

**Pick & Mix leaflets are available on a variety of topics, designed to assist you as thoroughly as possible with running your group or understanding the Guild of Students generally**

To find out more information, visit the Guild online:  
**[www.guildofstudents.com/studentgroupsandvolunteering](http://www.guildofstudents.com/studentgroupsandvolunteering)**

The Student Development department is located on the ground floor of the Guild of Students, and supports student groups, volunteering and training.

### **Student Development Counter:**

The first port of call for any queries and for any administration regarding your group, volunteering or training. During holidays, we're open 12-3pm Mon-Fri, and our general Term-time opening hours are:

**11am-5.30pm Monday - Thursday**  
**11am-4.30pm - Fridays.**

The general student group area for committees is open 9am-9pm on weekdays and 10am-8pm at weekends, which you can use for committee meetings, checking emails and organising your group. You have access to computers, a printer and photocopier, workspace and your pigeonholes.

Disclaimer: The information in this leaflet only provides general guidance. The leaflet should not be regarded or relied upon as a complete or authoritative statement. University of Birmingham Guild of Students will not accept any liability for any claims or inconvenience as a result of information in this leaflet.