

Student /Staff Protocol

Introduction

KCLSU works in a democratic environment and the relationship between members of staff and Student Officers is a valuable and important one. KCLSU employs staff (referred to as salaried staff) to support Student Officers and provide professional advice, managerial expertise and continuity.

This document aims to provide general guidance and broad principles, and to provide avenues for the resolution of problems as and when they arise. The complex nature of KCLSU naturally leads to a number of 'grey areas' in terms of role of salaried Staff, Officers, Trustees, Directors and Managers that are, in most cases, managed informally. These relationships are expected to change periodically as new Officers are elected, new policies developed and new initiatives are begun. Staff and Student Officers are expected to take personal responsibility for the continuous development of an effective working environment, and to approach new or challenging situations in a professional, proactive and reasonable manner. Courtesy between Student Officers and members of staff is expected at all times.

Complaints or suggestions by Student Officers about individual members of staff will not be raised in a public forum, but will be directed to the President who will refer the matter to the Chief Executive for investigation. Conversely, any complaint by a member of staff about a Student Officer should be raised with the Chief Executive in the first instance.

Scope

This document applies to all KCLSU salaried staff, KCLSU Student Staff, KCLSU Student Officers and members of KCLSU.

Definitions

Member

A current student at King's (and therefore a member of KCLSU) or an Associate Member of KCLSU.

Political Policy

Policy that is developed and approved by the elected student officers through the democratic structures; e.g. affiliation to NUS or educational funding policy.

Policies

Are documents, largely developed by staff which provides frameworks and procedures for the day-to-day operations of the organisation e.g. Expenses Policy, Internet and Email Use Policy.

Salaried Staff

Are individuals or groups of individuals who are employed by KCLSU, and are not students studying at King's.

Student Officers

Are current students serving in elected positions within KCLSU, e.g. President, Vice President of Activities and Facilities.

Student Staff

Are individuals or groups of individuals who are employed by KCLSU on hourly paid contracts.

Policy

This document provides a set of guidelines which ensure that:

- There is clarity over the respective roles and responsibilities of Salaried Staff, Managers, Directors, Lay Trustees, Student Trustees, Student Officers and Student Staff.
- KCLSU complies with all relevant employment legislation.
- Staff are provided with an environment in which they are entitled to confidentiality and protection from unfair treatment.
- KCLSU is protected from undue interference from staff in the conduct of governance and political policy development.

Accountability Framework

- KCLSU Staff are employed to carry out work on behalf of the Trustee Board. In the first instance staff are accountable to a designated manager who in turn is accountable to the Chief Executive, who is in turn accountable to Trustee Board, through the President.
- Staff duties and responsibilities are governed by job descriptions and the line of accountability is an agreed term of employment and should be respected at all times and in settings when staff are engaged in work on behalf of KCLSU.
- This protocol does not affect staff conditions of employment nor does it diminish any rights which staff have by virtue of relevant employment legislation.
- It is recognised in a democratic environment that Student Officers and or Staff feel able to critically appraise KCLSU staff and or Student Officers.

Protection from Harassment for Staff

- Staff are entitled to protection from verbal or physical harassment. A criticism of staff falling under the definitions within this policy not raised through the procedures as outlined, will be considered as harassment.
- KCLSU is prepared to offer protection as appropriate, should such circumstances arise in the course of a staff member(s) undertaking their normal duties in line with the established line management system.
- Any harassment, physical or verbal abuse of KCLSU staff may result in the withdrawal of all staff servicing the situation or event where the harassment/ abuse has taken place. In this event the relevant manager, the President of Student Officer will meet as soon as practically possible.
- Wherever staff are subject to harassment, physical or verbal abuse, regardless of the events the matter shall be recorded and reported to the President, Chief Executive and Human Resources Manager, for monitoring at the HR Sub Committee.

Staffing Issues and Student Officers

- Student Officers provide political leadership to KCLSU, defining political policy through democratic means. They represent the members of the Union and work closely with staff to ensure that the operations of KCLSU, cater for, and are responsive to, the needs of the members.
- KCLSU's Chief Executive and the members of the Director Team have responsibility for ensuring the organisational direction is informed and influenced by the political agendas of Student Officers.
- In many instances Student Officers work particularly closely with staff members. Staff members and officers are expected to invest time and effort to ensure that productive working relationships are developed. Broadly, however, the work of staff is directed through the management structure, and Student Officers' impact on the day-to-day work of staff should in most cases be limited to the development of political policy, discussions within the Board of Trustees, and discussions with members of the Senior Management Team.
- The Trustee Board is the only body with Student Officers empowered to discuss individual staff members, and to discuss matters relating to recruitment, appointment, remuneration and terms and conditions of salaried staff.
- Student Officers should actively ensure that discussions about individual salaried staff, on conduct, performance, recruitment and/or terms and conditions do not take place in either informal or formal KCLSU meetings, or: in University or external media; on online fora, social networking sites or websites; in formal or informal KCLSU meetings.
- The Trustee Board delegate their responsibility for ensuring fair elections to the returning Officer and Deputy returning Officers nominated by KCLSU Council, and all associated administrative functions to appropriate salaried staff, so as not to undermine their right to take an active role in the political aspect of any election process.

- Salaried Staff and Student Officers are expected to nurture effective working relationships, but relationships of an intimate nature between salaried staff and Student Officers should be avoided. If a relationship of this nature arises, it should be disclosed to a Director or Trustee to protect all involved from accusations or perceptions of conflict of interest. Intimate relationships between staff or between Student Officers, which may lead to a conflict of interest or a perceived conflict of interest, should be disclosed.

The Role of Staff

- Salaried staff are expected to provide professional advice to the Student Officers in their areas of expertise, but should not seek to unduly influence political policy decisions or the political policy positions of Student Officers
- Salaried staff may not participate in, or seek to influence, the democratic processes of KCLSU.
- Salaried staff should not publicly comment on political policy or political direction, including: in University or external media; on online fora, social networking sites or websites; in formal and informal KCLSU meetings.
- Salaried staff should not enter into discussion with KCLSU members about the performance of Student Officers or be encouraged to enter into such discussions by a Student Officer.
- Unless defined as 'Student Staff' in accordance with the Definitions Section of this policy, the responsibilities and restrictions placed on Salaried staff members override the privileges of KCLSU membership. In practice this means: Salaried staff cannot participate in democratic meetings; Salaried staff cannot stand or vote in Union elections.
- Student Staff enjoy the full rights and privileges of membership, save for any restriction placed on that staff member whilst on duty. In particular Student Staff may not campaign on an issue or in an election whilst at work for KCLSU.

Complaints about Staff from Student Officers and KCLSU Members

A Student Officer or KCLSU member who wishes to complain about a member of staff (salaried and student) should raise it in the first instance with the President, who will refer it to the Director of Resources for investigation. The procedure laid out in the KCLSU Complaints Procedures should be followed. You can find our complaints procedure on our website kclsu.org/policyzone.

Complaints about staff (salaried and student) should take note of, and adhere to, the guidance contained within the Student-Staff protocol, in particular, it is important that the role of staff is considered and fully understood.

Complaints about Student Officers

Staff members are encouraged to resolve issues regarding conduct and behaviour of Student Officers in an informal manner. However, in extreme circumstances the following procedure should be followed:

1. The matter should be raised with the Chief Executive
2. The matter will then be discussed with the Trustee Board
3. The matter will be investigated and the staff member will be informed of the outcome of the discussions.

Complaint about a KCL Member

Should there be any occasion when a member of Staff, or group of staff, wishes to raise a complaint about a KCLSU Member, the following procedures should be followed:

1. The matter should be raised by the Staff member with their line manager or a member of the Director Team.
2. The manager will discuss the matter with the President.
3. The President will then raise the matter informally with the Member.
4. Any reply shall be conveyed by the President
5. The manager shall then convey this to the staff member.
6. If the Staff member is dissatisfied, s/he may invoke the KCLSU Member Disciplinary procedure. The procedure can be found on our website kclsu.org/policyzone.