

ESU Conference of the student bodies of the European alliances of higher education institutions

Structures and Proceedings

Based on the Article 13 of ESU Standing Orders

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1. Definitions

MEMBER	For the purposes of the Structures and Proceedings, 'members of the Conference' or 'members' are the student bodies of the European alliances of higher education institutions, fulfilling the criteria indicated in point 3.1.d of this document. The usage of 'member' is without prejudice of what is prescribed in art. 4 of the Statutes (Definition of membership), does not create a new category of membership of ESU and creates no rights prescribed for or associated with ESU members.
SIMPLE MAJORITY	A simple majority is achieved if there are more votes in favor than against.
ABSOLUTE MAJORITY	An absolute majority is reached if a majority of the votes cast is in favour, (the number of votes in favour is higher than the sum of the votes against and of the abstentions).
2/3 MAJORITY	A 2/3 majority is reached if 2/3 of the votes cast are in favour. If the fraction is not a full number, the next full number after the fraction is the majority.
ESU PRESIDENCY	Refers to President and 2 Vice-Presidents of ESU
ESU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE or EC	Refers to 10 elected Executive Committee members of ESU: President, 2 Vice-Presidents and 7 EC members.
HACKS (TEAM)	Refers to the Executive Committee + the Coordinators

2. Scope of the Structures and Proceedings

- a. The document defines the procedures for decision-making, meetings and every day work of the ESU Conference of the student bodies of the European alliances of higher education institutions (hereafter, 'the Conference').
- b. No part of this document can go against ESU's Statutes or Standing Orders. In case of conflict, the rules and regulations of the Statutes and Standing orders are prevailing.

3. The structures and proceedings of the Conference

3.1 Composition of the Conference

- a. The Conference is composed of representatives of student bodies from the European alliances of Higher Education Institutions, including the European Universities.
- b. The members of the Conference are the student bodies, represented by student representatives from these bodies.
- c. A new student body can make a request to join the Conference anytime.
- d. To become a member of the Conference, the student body must submit to ESU a letter of request to be part of the Conference, provide proof of establishment within the governance of the alliance and communicate the appointed student representative(s) to the Conference, providing proof that their appointment followed the criteria described in points i, j, k, l.
- e. The ESU Executive Committee has to accept the request of membership of any new student body from a new alliance wishing to join the Conference. The acceptance of a new member to the Conference is subordinate to the validation of the proof requested at point d.
- f. After a student body is approved as a member of the Conference, it will be added to the list of the Conference members publicly available on ESU's website.
- g. Once a student body from an Alliance has been accepted to be a member of the Conference, it remains a member of the Conference for an unlimited period.
- h. A member can withdraw from the Conference by submitting a withdrawal notification by mail to ESU.
- i. Every member can have up to two (2) student representatives from two different Higher Education Institutions at the Conference.
- j. The student representatives participating at the Conference must be democratically appointed by the student body of the alliance.

- k. Student representatives appointed to the Conference must provide proof of their democratic election to the alliance student body, or of democratic appointment by their local student body to such a position, at the level of their Higher Education Institution (HEI).
- l. Within a member of the Conference, if the number of eligible and willing student representatives, as defined in point k, is lower than two (2) coming from different Higher Education Institutions, the remaining spot(s) can be filled by representatives appointed as per point j, provided that the local student body of their Higher Education Institution supports their nomination to the Conference.
- m. The turnover of new student representatives is automatic, with an obligation to supply proof of the respect of the aforementioned processes as laid out in points j, k and l. The Steering Committee of the Conference checks the validity of the proof provided.
- n. The mandate of the student representatives within the Conference ends with their mandate in the alliance student body, or when that member recalls their mandate to represent the alliance student body at the Conference.
- o. In case the Conference member acts contrary to the article 13 of the Standing Orders of ESU, or against these Structures and Proceedings, or does not fulfill their obligations, the Steering Committee can decide upon the suspension or removal of the member, or of their representative(s) with a 2/3 majority. The accused party has to be heard and the Conference be consulted about it.

3.2 Competences and responsibilities of Conference

- a. The Conference is a consultative body to ESU. It is consulted in the drafting of ESU policy documents related to the European Universities Initiative and other possible transnational initiatives related to higher education.
- b. The Conference enables exchanges between its student bodies, organises capacity building activities for them and liaise with ESU when the student bodies need ESU's support.
- c. The Members of the Conference have the duty to:

- i. engage in discussions about topics related to the European universities and other possible transnational initiatives related to higher education;
 - ii. promote ESU and the Conference in their respective HEIs and countries, in the whole student body structure and towards the respective student populations;
 - iii. give feedback to ESU on what they expect from the organisation and on how they would like to be involved in ESU's work;
 - iv. promote the self-identification of their alliance student body as members of the Conference;
 - v. disseminate articles and other documents related to European Universities among all student representatives of their alliance;
 - vi. respond to any requests formulated by the Board Members of ESU;
 - vii. inform the Conference about any European University-related events at all levels;
 - viii. provide feedback about reviews, trainings and conferences to the Steering Committee;
 - ix. enhance student participation in European Universities and promote the democratic student representation in the governance of the alliances;
 - x. contribute towards the planning and the implementation of different activities to benefit the Conference;
 - xi. offer contact information about the student bodies, in order to make sure the Steering Committee is always in contact with them.
- d. ESU will make available dedicated online spaces to organise and enable the dialogue and exchanges between the members of the Conference.
- e. The participation within the Conference is completely voluntary. ESU will not take charge of any fees.

3.3 Meetings of the Conference

- a. The Conference should meet at least 2 times each ESU mandate, before each Board Meeting (BM). These ordinary meetings should be online.
- b. The Steering Committee can call for an extraordinary meeting when deemed relevant.
- c. The Conference members can call for a meeting when they estimate the

situation requires one. In this case:

- i. To be called, at least 1/3 of the conference members need to sign the call.
 - ii. The conference members in position within the Steering Committee cannot sign the call.
 - iii. To be approved, the call needs to be sent to the Steering Committee and the Conference members.
 - iv. The members who have signed the call are responsible to set the agenda and find a date.
 - v. The Steering Committee will be in charge to moderate the meeting.
 - vi. The Steering Committee will let the members who called for the meeting explain their motivations at the beginning of the meeting. Then, the points planned in the agenda will be discussed.
- d. Once per year, the Conference should meet in person. This meeting should be hosted by an alliance student body, with the possible support of a National Union of Students (NUS).
- e. ESU Executive Committee can also invite the selected members of the Steering Committee to the ESCs and BMs when relevant, in the numbers agreed between the EC and the NUS hosting the event.

3.4 Proceedings of the consultations within the Conference

- a. The parts of any policy documents dealing with the European Universities initiatives and other possible transnational initiatives related to higher education have to be consulted with the Conference members, before the Board Meeting where such documents will be presented.
- b. The result of the consultation will be shared with the Board.
- c. The consultation should take place during a meeting of the Conference. Each consultation will produce a report of the discussion, drafted and approved by the Steering Committee by simple majority, which will be shared to the Board of ESU.
- d. In any case, the results of the consultations taken by the Conference remain consultative towards the Board.

4. The Structures and proceedings of the Steering Committee of the Conference

4.1 Composition of the Steering Committee

- a. The Steering Committee of the Conference consists of 3 members from the Hacks team (1 Presidency + 2 Executive Committee members and/or Coordinator) and 3 student representatives from the Conference selected through a Call. The selection is performed as defined in the Rules of Procedures of the Steering Committee. In the selection process, special attention will be given to have a gender balance within the Steering Committee.
- b. The Executive Committee member and/or the Coordinator is/are responsible for overseeing and coordinating the Conference, supported by the Presidency member. The Presidency member has the duty to assist the Steering Committee when necessary and does not have the duty to attend its meetings. The Presidency member acts as the legal representative of ESU in relation to external partners that might be of interest for the Conference.
- c. The mandate for the selected members of the Steering Committee lasts for 1 year.

4.2 Competences and responsibilities of the Steering Committee

- a. Main responsibilities of the Steering Committee are:
 - i. Transparent management of the Conference;
 - ii. Checking the validity of the proof requested at point 3.1.m for the turnover of the student representatives of the members of the Conferencer;
 - iii. Promoting the Conference externally;
 - iv. Coordinating the work of the Conference and preparing the agenda for the meetings.
- b. Other responsibilities of Steering Committee are:
 - i. facilitating the internal communication and expertise;
 - ii. establishing and coordinating capacity building opportunities;
 - iii. reacting to feedback and providing advice and consultation

- opportunities to the members;
 - iv. continuously improving the processes and procedures of the Conference and of the Steering Committee;
 - v. collecting and processing feedback from the members of the Conference and their student representatives;
 - vi. presenting the activities of the Conference to ESU EC and ESU Board by preparing a report twice a year;
 - vii. organising different activities to benefit the Conference;
 - viii. contributing to ESU documents related to the European Universities Initiative or other possible transnational initiatives related to higher education, if requested by the Board Members, ESU Executive Committee and/or Presidency member;
 - ix. participating at the meetings of the Conference, including the ones in the physical format.
- c. The Steering Committee may also work with the Conference's alumni in order to gather their feedback, use their specific expertise for trainings or other events, and foster transfer of experiences between former and current student representatives.
- d. If a serving Steering Committee member is also representing a National Union of Students during ESU mandated events, this person must choose one function in which they will appear during that particular event.
- e. Outgoing Steering Committee members provide a handover for incoming members in order to prepare them for all the tasks of the Steering Committee. The handover consists at least of introducing them to the working structures and documents, explaining the task division, development of the Conference and current status of cooperation with external partners.
- f. Steering Committee members shall hold all internal communication and information confidential. Any disclosure of confidential information will lead to legal actions or disciplinary sanctions.
- g. The decision to nominate one of the Steering Committee members to represent ESU is taken by the Executive Committee.

4.3 Steering Committee meetings and decision-making

- a. The work of the Steering Committee is regulated by the Rules of Procedures,

proposed by the Steering Committee and approved by ESU Executive Committee.

- b. The Steering Committee meets at least once every two months, holidays excluded.
- c. Steering Committee meetings can be either face-to-face or online using communication that enables discussion in real time. The Steering Committee can make decisions if there are at least 3 members present, with at least 1 member from the Hacks team.
- d. When a decision is being taken during a meeting, a Steering Committee member can only vote on a decision if present during the full discussion on the matter (either online, or face-to-face).
- e. A Steering Committee member cannot vote on matters pertaining to that member individually (i.e. matters regarding the conflict of interest, etc.).
- f. When voting, every member of the Steering Committee has one vote. Unless stated otherwise, decisions are taken by a simple majority vote.
- g. The voting can also take place over e-mail or other means of online communication.

5. Partnerships

The Conference cooperates with all interested institutions or organizations working on any topic related to European Universities initiative by:

- a. Providing expertise at trainings, conferences or other events,
- b. Organizing projects with partners,
- c. Assisting partners in other ways.

6. Accountability procedures

- a. At least once a year, the Steering Committee conducts a survey for all members of the Conference on the topic of the Conference's functioning. The results of this survey are also presented to the Executive Committee of ESU and

in the Board Meeting report.

- b. In case that a member of the Steering Committee acts contrary to these Structures and Proceedings, against the values of ESU or does not fulfill their obligations, the Executive Committee of ESU has the right to remove that member from their position, in accordance with their internal procedures.

7. Conflict of interest

- a. A Conflict of interest within the scope of the work of the Steering Committee members is defined on a case-to-case basis by the other Steering Committee members and ESU Executive Committee.
- b. A Conflict of interest within the scope of the work of the Conference members is defined on a case-to-case basis by the Steering Committee members.

8. Adopting and amending the Structures and Procedures

The Structures and Proceedings of the Conference are approved by the Board with absolute majority, as per article 5.1.3 of the Statutes and 13.3.b of the Standing Orders.