**HOW TO…. BE A SOCIETY TREASURER!**

Congratulations! Being a Society Executive is one of the most rewarding things you can do whilst at University. You have to be dedicated, organised and most importantly of all - really believe in what your society does. The role of Treasurer exemplifies all this and more. You are about to undertake very exciting, but demanding role!

The purpose of this guide is to help you get clear about exactly what being a Society Treasurer involves. It includes:

* Overview of Exec roles
* Key areas of responsibility
* The skills needed to do a good job
* Trouble-shooting common challenges
* What makes a strong society
* Where to find further support

By undertaking this role you are enabling your fellow students get the most out of their membership. Simultaneously, you also have the chance to really boost your skills and make a big difference to the Union community.

**Society Exec roles**

Warwick Students’ Union has over 230 student Societies. Each one is run by a student Executive Committee. At the head of this Committee is the Society President who is responsible for the overall running of the Society.

By taking on this leadership role, you’ll be responsible for providing great opportunities for your members. Thankfully, you do not have to do this alone!

There are **three essential ‘Executive’ roles** on every Committee:

**1. President**

The President is the figurehead and leader the society. Responsible for setting goals and objectives, managing the Exec team and overseeing all corresponding activity.

**2. Secretary**

The Secretary is ‘organiser’ of your Society and ensures that things run smoothly. They organise meetings, book rooms, write minutes and communicate what’s going on to your members, so they stay interested and involved.

**3. Treasurer**

It is the Treasurer’s responsibility to handle the money. However, they must also have their eye on the bigger picture. They need to know exactly where your finances stand and be able to plan accordingly.

A Society can operate successfully with only a President, Secretary and Treasurer. If your aim is to make your Society even stronger you may want to expand your Committee.

Popular **optional roles** include:

**Social Secretary**

The key function of a ‘Social Sec’ is to organise well run, fun social events. Their role is important because socials allow your members to get to know each other better, enjoy themselves more…and ultimately build greater commitment to your Society.

**Publicity Officer**

Every Society needs publicity – from ball tickets to hoodies. Having someone focus on doing this effectively is a great way to recruit more members, network with other Societies and create a real buzz around your activities.

**Fundraising Officer**

If your Society is serious about raising money for charity or to further your own activities, then this role is highly recommended! The Fundraising Officer is dedicated to managing and developing new and existing fundraising opportunities.

**Treasurer - Key areas of responsibility**

The trustees of Warwick Students’ Union are responsible for ensuring that the Union’s money and resources are used legally to benefit student members. The financial regulations put in place not only ensure money is spent well, but also ensure that Sabbatical Officers, as elected trustees of the Union, can prove it is spent appropriately.

Societies are an essential part of the student experience at Warwick and are part of the Students’ Union. As a result, Society finances are subject to the same regulations and procedures to make sure that:

* Money is spent correctly
* Transactions are recorded accurately
* Society money is spent to benefit their members

This ensures transparency and accountability to the membership of both your Society and the Students’ Union as a whole. As Treasurer on the Exec, you have the same responsibility to the members of your society. You are responsible for running your Society’s accounts including:

* Signing all forms for payments, money requests and orders
* Keeping your Executive Committee informed of your club or Society's financial position
* Budgeting for this year and next
* Hanging onto the finance card
* Ensuring your club or Society does not get into debt

Here is a breakdown of what your main responsibilities will involve:

**Understanding broader picture**

Helping the President to plan the year is another key aspect of the role. This involves being aware of your Society’s key objectives, organising activities accordingly and working within Union policy and procedures. This includesunderstanding the Students’ Union financial system.

*Specific tasks:*

Reviewing activities & events

* An effective Treasurer is always mindful of what works and what needs improving, especially in terms of generating income. **You should never keep doing something just because you have always done it.**

Completing SocsPlan

* A successful Society is very clear about its aims and objectives. It is really important to identify what your Society is good at and where it needs to improve. You are responsible for helping the President review the effectiveness of existing activity and to define new goals via SocsPlan <http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/socsplan/>

Undertaking relevant training

* As Treasurer you are responsible for ensuring that your society manages its money legally
* This means you have to be aware of and abide by Warwick Students’ Union financial procedures
* Managing Your Money is a compulsory online training course for Society Treasurers. You can access the course using this link: Managing Your Money *(insert hyperlink)* (<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/training/managingyourmoney/>)

Scheduling

* The Treasurer must know when major events e.g. balls, large socials and conferences will be held; working with President and Secretary to seek fundraising, sponsorship, equipment, transport and **speakers on time and on budget**.

Record keeping

* Be sure to keep financial records and spreadsheets for future society use. You may be asked to present financial reports at your AGM. Don’t forget to also pass on good contacts like sponsors and money management tips!

**TOP TIP: Don’t be afraid to ask for advice!** The Student Activities team are always more than happy to provide guidance with society management, event and activity planning, committee issues or membership queries. If we don’t know the answer we will happily put you in contact with the right person!

**Writing budgets** *(needs checking for accuracy!)*

Budgeting aids planning and ensures transparency regarding how your money is being spent. All organisations have to budget for the year and we ask Societies to do the same. It is also professional good practice and a way to increase your employability skills. As Treasurer you will be responsible for writing your Society’s annual and events budgets.

*Specific tasks:*

Completing Society and Event budgets

* Your annual budget is completed online (<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/finance/budgets/>) and is used to apply to Socs Fed for your annual financial allocation.
* For events, you need to complete the financial section within an Event Planning Pack (<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/events/>)

**Managing Society accounts**

Keeping track of all income/expenditure is key to the Treasurers role.

*Specific tasks:*

* **You need to make sure you keep an accurate, UP-TO-DATE record of all transactions going in and out of your account.**
* Treasurer should therefore be involved with setting and approving all Society budgets events and expenditure
* You can get access to your Society accounts and get an instant balance by xxxxx

**Society accounts – The basics**

NEED CONFIRMATION ON INFO BELOW

Each Society has xxx accounts – a xxx and a xxx account.

(create visual chart/graphic)

ACCOUNT X: This account holds any money you are given in funding from the Students’ Union. This money can **only** be used for the purpose for which it was rewarded and, normally, within the term it was allocated for. This account is cleared at the end of each term. (IS THIS ACCURATE?)

GSA 1

• ACCOUNT X: This is your “current” account. It holds all of the money that your Society takes in through membership money, sponsorship, ticket sales, stash income etc. and all of your payments are made from this account.

GSA2

•NO EXTERNAL BANK ACCOUNTS: Every Society is part of the Students’ Union and as such is not permitted to have any bank accounts outside of the Students’ Union for any reason.

NO OTHER ACCOUNTS

• NO DEBTS ALLOWED: You must never go into deficit on either of your accounts without **prior consent** from Pam and Indy in the Student Activities team. Unauthorised deficit will result in the Society account being frozen. (IS THIS ACCURATE?)

NEVER IN DEBT

**Spending society money** (NEEDS CHECKING FOR ACCURACY!)

Only Presidents and Treasurers have the authority to can approve how Society money is spent.

*Specific tasks:*

Authorising Expenditure

* Presidents and Treasurers cannot authorise their own expenditure! If the President needs reimbursing the Treasurer must sign it off and vice versa
* If your Exec pays for goods or services upfront to cover society activities, they must claim it back by completing a Money Request Form. *(hyperlink)*
* All expenditure must have a receipt or invoice presented as evidence attached to the Money Request Form prior to payment
* **As you are accountable to your membership,** **any Society money spent needs to benefit all your members**
* You may not spend Society money on Exec only items/events/activities. For example, an Exec only trip or dinner, unless members have given permission through a vote

**TOP TIP!**

You must **get all budgets signed off** by Pam and Indy in the Student Activities team **BEFORE you spend any money!** As an Exec you are **personally responsible** **for your accounts.** If you spend money you do not have, the committee could be asked to pay it back to the Society.

**Society payment guide** (create visual chart/graphic):

Reimbursement for expenditure

1) Download & print a Money Request Form (<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/forms/>)

2) Fill in the form with the amount you require, who the payment should be made to, bank account details and what the money is for

3) Attach receipts or an invoice to the request – this is essential. NOTHING will be authorised without valid evidence

4) Put the completed form in the tray in the Finance Office 2nd Floor, SUHQ.

Ordering goods or services

1) Download & print a [Purchase Order Requisition](http://www.warwicksu.com/pageassets/execresources/forms/Purchase-Order-Requisition-2012-new.doc) form (<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/forms/>)

2) Fill in the form with your Society account details, supplier name and product description

3) Ensure it is signed by the Society or club exec member making the request, yourself and/or the President.

4) Put the completed form in the tray in the Finance Office 2nd Floor, SUHQ.

**Pursuing funding opportunities**

There is only a limited amount of SocsFed money available to fund Society activity. The Treasurer must therefore, also think strategically and legally about how to generate income. This will involve working closely with your Exec to identify the most suitable way of raising money to benefit your members.

*Specific tasks:*

Applying for extra funding

* Another important part of the Treasurers role is to source additional funding and sponsorship to help your society run its activities and events
* The SocsFund  *(insert hyperlink)* (<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/funding/>) is managed by the Societies Federation Committee and is available to societies to cover the costs for projects not budgeted for in the online budget application process and which your society is unable to fund itself. It can also cover costs incurred as a result of unforeseen circumstances
* The fund receives a grant from Societies Federation each year and is supplemented by any fines due from Societies. As Treasurer you can take the lead in applying to this fund
* You can also apply for grants from the University *(insert hyperlink)* (<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/giving/priority/scholarship/oppfund/opportunityfund>)

Finding sponsorship

* Getting sponsorship can be the gateway to helping you develop your Society. It can be an excellent way to provide creative opportunities for your members and for companies to reach the student market
* More information on sponsorship can be found online in Exec Resources (<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/funding/sponsorship/>)

Planning fundraising events

* **Being a treasurer isn’t just about handling the money; it means knowing how your finances stand at any one time and communicating this to your members.**  A big part of your role will be to **keep your Exec informed of the society’s financial situation**
* Although the Treasurer may not be in charge of organising events, it’s important you communicate the need to fundraise so it can be built into your yearly activity
* You also need to ensure any fundraising activity proposed is in line with the Unions regulations and procedures
* Don’t forget to keep on top of your membership fees and make sure Society members pay up on time! Increasing your members will also generate more income, so think about this when planning activities

**Treasurer – Key skills**

The diagram below shows the key skills a Society Treasurer requires. Don’t worry if you feel you don’t possess them all! They can be learnt and developed as you go along.

**Skills required** *(use a visual representation e.g. spidergram/mind map)*

* Numerical competence
* Organisation
* Communication
* Decision making
* Team work
* Motivation
* Strategic thinking
* Time management
* Problem solving

It should now be clear that being a society Treasurer is a brilliant learning curve and a fun role too. Warwick Students’ Union is working very closely with Careers & Skills to ensure you get the support you need during your time in this role. Why not sign up for free workshops like public speaking and time management being offered throughout the year? See here for more information: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/scs/>

We can also help you learn how to effectively show off the skills you have acquired to future employers! See ‘Being a Treasurer and your CV’ on page 9.

**Challenges & how to solve them…**

Your society is in debt

* Work out your budget as soon as possible
* Prioritise fundraising and sponsorship activity
* Keep a careful eye on every penny spent and try to limit expenditure to essential activity
* Keep moral up by communicating with your Exec and organising social events
* Speak to other Societies who have successfully pulled themselves out of debt
* Regularly share good news on financial improvements – no matter how small!
* Be sure to thank your team for their hard work and continued commitment

You’re struggling to generate funds

* Make sure you plan ahead to meet sponsorship deadlines
* Could you collaborate on fundraising activity with other Societies? Or sell them your services?
* Do your research and think creatively! What do other charitable organisations do to generate income?

Time management

* Plan meetings, activities and events well in advance
* Write a timeline, delegate and don’t leaving things to the last minute

Balancing degree workload with being Treasurer

* Your team may also be experiencing this so try to support each other
* Propose sharing tasks when someone has a quieter spell and vice versa
* Speak to us if you’re struggling! Ultimately, as a student your degree comes first
* Diarise your time so you can be better organised
* It *is* possible to manage your academic work with extra-curricular activities. See below for a real-life successful example of a busy student’s timetable!

*(INSERT SCREEN GRAB – COSMO’S OUTLOOK CALENDAR FROM LAST YEAR?! - SILKIE)*

Sustaining commitment throughout the year

* Encourage ownership by involving your Exec in planning and decision making
* Hold regular bonding sessions
* Share successes
* Plan meetings focusing on reviewing achievements and flagging up concerns
* Handle any issues promptly

Keeping aims on track

* Focus on activities that are in line with your Society’s original aims and objectives

Ensure you input into your Societies SocsPlan as early as possible

<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/socsplan/>

* Review how you’re progressing with your goals at the end of each term

Committee members aren’t pulling their weight

* Stop and think: is this personal or professional? Always back observations up with evidence
* Look at their role description to assess what specific duties
* Be clear – are they not fulfilling *their role* or what *you expect* of them
* Put yourself in their shoes; think about why they are not fulfilling their role; Personal reasons? Duties too big to be practical for one person?
* Arrange to speak with your President who will follow the matter up

*(Create a visual representation e.g. colourful flow chart!)*

**Creating a strong Society**

There are two main elements to creating a strong Society:

* Your **overall aims** and reason for being (as outlined within your constitution)
* The **steps you take** to reach your aims

For example: A Society must have a solid membership base of students engaged in your unique offer. To achieve this aim, your Society mustprovide a range of well-run activities/events.

**Strength check-list**

The following are characteristics of a strong Society. This has been provided to inspire you to be the best you can be. Any gaps may be indicators of where you could improve and are a good basis for identifying your goals for the year in SocsPlan.

<http://www.warwicksu.com/execresources/socsplan/>

See how many apply to your Society right now! *(Create a shopping list/check list graphic)*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Open and inclusive:** | Is aware of equal opportunities and is open to anyone who wishes to join |
| **2.** | **Unique:** | Offers members something **distinctive** and **sustainable** to secure a strong foundation |
| **3.** | **Solid membership base:**  | Of at least 30 members – so that you’re giving your time to a cause or activity that people want to participate in! If your membership numbers drop, come and have a chat to us for some tips and guidance |
| **4.** | **Provides a range of well-run**  **activities/events:**  | Your Society should show variety to members so that you cater for different needs |
| **5.** | **Conducts safe and responsible activities:** | You have to ensure your Society abides by the Warwick Students’ Union Members Code of Conduct <http://www.warwicksu.com/pageassets/democracy/documents/By-Law-12-App-1-Members-Code-of-Conduct-Final-16-10-12.pdf> *(hyperlink)*. It is a legal requirement that all events and activities are safe and legally compliant - that includes no trading and other ultra vires activity! We can help you comply through training and other support.  |
| **6.** | **Provides value for money:**  | Are you in a good financial position? Are you able to put on activities that benefit all your members?  |
| **7.** | **Works in cooperation:**  | A strong Society is based on working together to meet common goals |
| **8.** | **Is goal orientated:**  | The team works throughout the year to achieve clear aims and objectives |
| **9.** | **Encourages involvement:**  | Do you actively reach out to members and support them in having a say in how the Society is run and what activities it provides |
| **10.** | **Is friendly, approachable** **and professional**: | Whatever activities you undertake you are ambassadors for your Society, the Union and the University!  |

**Being a Treasurer and your CV**

As a Treasurer of a Society, you are already fulfilling elements of awards like Warwick Skills Leadership Scheme <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/scs/skills/leadership/> and Warwick Advantage <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/scs/skills/awards/advantage/>) offered by the University of Warwick Careers and Skills.

This means that by taking on this role you are automatically improving your chances of finding employment after you leave Warwick! All these programmes are designed to help boost your employability, by helping you reflect on and articulate your experiences of being a Society Exec. For more information visit: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/scs/skills/>

**Further support**

If you want more information about any aspect of the Treasurer’s role, require support with

conflict resolution, training or advice about any element of running your Society, please do come into the Student Resources room anytime Monday-Friday 8.30am-4.30pm or email

societies@warwicksu.com