

SOCIETIES HANDBOOK 2020/2020

CSU STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES TEAM

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CONTENTS

The Basics

Your Role	3
The Team and How to Get in Touch	4
Committees and Roles	5
Annual Guide	6
Room Bookings	7
Memberships	8
Marketing Your Society	9 - 10

Finance and Funding

Managing Money	11
Spending Money	12
Making Money (Sponsorships and Contracts)	13
Fundraising	14

Events

Type of Events	15
Making Your Events More Accessible	16
Food Safety Guidelines for Events	17
External Speaker Policy for Events	18

Trips 19 - 20

Elections and Handovers 21

Rewards and Recognitions 22

Managing Committees 23



Your Role

Congratulations on being elected as a committee member by your student group! You have been voted in by your student members to run your society through the year, meaning you're responsible for representing your members and developing and improving the group.

As your Students' Union, we're here to give you our full support in this role. This handbook provides some key information for you to be aware of as a committee member, so give it a read and keep it handy throughout the year.

Our team is also here to give you any support you might need. We'll keep you up to date with everything you'll need to know, from upcoming training events to great opportunities, and always feel free to ask us absolutely anything.



The Team and How to Get in Touch

The Student Opportunities Team

Your elected Vice President Activities:

Daniel Forrester – SUActivities@chester.ac.uk

Head of Student Opportunities:

Beverley Crawford – beverley.crawford@chester.ac.uk

Chester Activities Email – this is a shared inbox for all of the team. If you're unsure of who your enquiry is for, or if someone is away you can email this, and someone will pick it up and refer it to the correct member of the team:

Csuactivities@chester.ac.uk

Aside from email, you can come and visit us in the Student Union Building – set up a meeting beforehand or visit one of our drop-in sessions. We also keep you informed via social media of upcoming events and opportunities.

*We are temporarily working remotely due to Covid-19 restrictions so all communication is via email or social media.

We'll do this via the Vice President Activities, Daniel's, social media – give him a like/follow here:

<https://www.facebook.com/daniel.forrester.71619>

And to keep up to date with all things SU, here are our main social media channels:

<https://www.facebook.com/ChesterStudentsUnion>

<https://www.instagram.com/chesterstudentsunion/>

<https://twitter.com/ChesterSU>



The Roles

President

- To be the main ChesterSU contact
- Ensure the Code of Conduct is followed by all members
- Ensure that all members have paid their membership fee
- Organisation of the Freshers' Fair stall for promotion of the society
- Arrange regular meetings with members
- Attend all ChesterSU meetings and promote ChesterSU events to members

Vice President

- To support the President in the work they do
- To act as a deputy for the President at all ChesterSU meetings
- To help support in the promotion of all ChesterSU events

Communications/Media Officer

- To promote your society in a positive way at all times
- To support the President in the promotion of the society at Fresher's Fair
- To publicise all meeting at the request of the President
- To publicise all ChesterSU information to all members
- To help increase society funds through sourcing sponsorships
- To take control of social media accounts
- To interact with ChesterSU on social media platforms

Social Secretary

- To organise society events and help publicise them to all members
- To ensure all society events are inclusive and non-discriminatory

Treasurer

- To liaise with ChesterSU to manage the societies' financial account
- To create a budget for the society and keep track of incoming and outgoing funds

*All Committee member volunteer roles are for current University of Chester students only.



Annual Guide

This a breakdown of the activities you might do throughout the year

Summer Break (July - September)

- Review your ChesterSU webpage and send any changes through to csuactivities@chester.ac.uk
**See new Website template*
- Virtual and in person sessions – We have not yet been informed by the University of finalised plans to return to campus; start to think of how you will gain members and hold your sessions remotely if necessary for semester one. **Further guidance will be provided.*
- Review committee finances – how much money do you need to exist, how do you plan on funding activities?
- Decide a membership price & tell ChesterSU about any regular room bookings. ** See room booking request for information on page 7.*

September/October

- Hold taster session / welcome event (online and or in person)* dependent on University guidance closer to the time

December

- Holiday events / socials

January

- Review Semester 1 activity
- Refreshers' Fair
- Taster sessions

March

- ChesterSU Societies awards event
- Committee elections & handover

Monthly

Committee meeting / catchups

Society of the Month

Financial statements from ChesterSU



Room Bookings

There is due to be a new room booking process for 2020/21 all will be revealed at committee training in September.

For now... Please complete the room request information we are required to send the University to give them an understanding of how many societies wish to meet in person on campus in semester one.

<https://forms.gle/qMRvSSY9KqrqpFct9>

When thinking about your room booking:

- Day and time of the booking
- Duration of the booking (how long do you need the room for?)
- What campus / building? You can be specific about the room, but bear in mind it might not be available, in which case another similar room will be allocated.
- How many people will you be expecting to attend?
- Do you require AV/Projector Screen?

Please use the form link below and fill in the information.

<https://forms.gle/qMRvSSY9KqrqpFct9>



Memberships

ChesterSU society memberships run on a **yearly** basis. For every member, a new membership is set up in August/September and runs to the following August. This means that at the beginning of the new academic year you will need to encourage your continuing members to register as a member and renew their membership.

Students will only be an official member of your society once they join for a membership on the ChesterSU website. They will not be able to attend society events or trips or be covered under the insurance if they do not join. **Even if your membership is free, they will need to join on the website.**

Can non-CSU students join a group?

Non-CSU students that are allowed to join a club or society:

- CSU alumni
- CSU staff members

We are not able to allow people outside of these groups to join ChesterSU clubs and societies due to insurance, health and safety purposes.

Managing your memberships

Each society can nominate one committee member to be given access to the dashboard of the SU website. This access will ensure you can see who has signed up for a membership of your society. In order to gain access to the dashboard, the nominated committee member will need to attend training with ChesterSU, where we will talk you through how to use it and go through some data protection points.



Marketing your Society

The most important rule in marketing your society is: don't rely on just one medium of communication! Make sure you shout about your society, your activities and your successes in as many ways as possible.

Fresher's Fair

Fresher's fair is an extremely important event for all our student groups – this year it is looking likely to be a Virtual fair due to Covid- 19 restrictions on large events. *This however gives greater scope to commuter students, those at each campus and any students unable to attend the one day fair the same chance to learn about each society and join!

We will be in touch further will finalized plans for Fresher's and the welcome period. There also may be a Fresher's fair at the start of Semester two if restrictions are lifted and large scale events can go ahead then.

Social Media

We encourage all societies to use social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Here are some of our top tips on using these platforms effectively:

- Use a generic email address when you create the account, not your personal account information. We suggest you create a Gmail or other kind of email account for your society and use this, otherwise the social media account will not be able to be passed to future committee.
- Keep it up to date. It's better to have no page than an out of date one. Remember, one of the first things students might do is look up your group on Facebook or Twitter, and it wouldn't look like an appealing group to join if the last post was a year ago
- Keep it professional. Social media pages should be open, friendly and professional. Remember – they can be viewed by potential sponsors and it can be very damaging if one is seen to have any unprofessional or offensive material on it.
- You can have a group for just committee members to communicate on so that the public cannot see it, but make sure you set this group as 'secret' instead of 'private'. This would prevent prospective members of your society from feeling blocked out of a group they can see but cannot access – make sure you have a public page that prospective members can view to get a feel for your society.



Your Society Webpage

Every society has a webpage on the ChesterSU website. This is where students can read up on your society and sign up for their membership, so it's worth putting some effort in to making it informative and appealing.

Have a look at your society page and ensure its up to date and has a good content. To make changes, email csuactivities@chester.ac.uk and we can do this for you.

Society pages can be accessed through this link -

<https://www.chestersu.com/activities/societies/>

Our website is also where you can sell tickets for events, society merchandise and collect money from your members for things like trips.

You will receive website training to update and edit your own pages during committee training in September (dates TBC).

Posters and Leaflets

Due to the university's health and safety policy, posters can only be placed on designated poster boards around campus. In order to get a poster, put up on one of these boards, ask the nearest reception or CSU staff member how to access it (there is locked casing over many of them).

If you wish to hand out leaflets in a certain area around the university, let the student opportunities and activities team know so we can notify the relevant people. If you want to leave flyers anywhere, ask the nearest CSU reception desk whether this is possible.

Hoodies and Merchandise

You may want to organise hoodies or merchandise for your society members.

Top Tip: keep all of your branding consistent. Make sure you put the same logos/banners on all of your channels so students can easily identify who you are. Make yourself easily searchable, by using the same name on your webpage, as you do your Facebook/Twitter pages.



Managing Money

Every approved society at ChesterSU is given an internal bank account, where money from all new purchased memberships will go. You can spend money from this account with the assistance of the society's administrators.

All new societies must agree not to hold external bank accounts – this is to comply with Charity law, but also protect you from any personal liability to do with the accounts.

Be aware that this isn't a bank account in the sense that you will be given an account number, sort code or bank card – it is an account that we hold the money to, so if you would like to make any payments, this will need to happen through us.

How to get your Statement

Each month ChesterSU will get a breakdown of statements and send your individual statement to your Treasurer or President.

Be aware that it can take time for money to be credited to your account or for money to be taken out, so always keep your own records.

You can also get a finance statement any time, by emailing csuactivities@chester.ac.uk



Spending Money

There are numerous ways to spend money in your account, depending on how big the expenditure is/ what you are purchasing. Our societies administrator will be able to advise you on the best option.

Claiming Money Back & Payment Request Forms

For smaller, less expensive purchases we advise that committee members buy things and claim the money back.

For expenditure **under £50** you can submit the form and scan of the receipt electronically.

For expenditure **over £50** all forms and receipts must be submitted in hardcopy to our reception desk.

Invoices

If you are dealing with an external business/ company, you can request that they send an invoice to ChesterSU and we can ensure that it is paid on your behalf. If you'd like to do this, please ask the company to send the invoice to csuactivities@chester.ac.uk, using your society name as a reference and we will do the rest.

Credit Card Purchases

For more expensive purchases, ChesterSU can buy items directly for you with the credit card.

What can't you spend money on?

Your society account is for expenditures that will benefit your society as a whole or the majority of your members.

The only prohibition to spending your society money is on Alcohol.



Making Money

Sponsorship

Many societies seek extra funding for their society members through sponsorships. This is where you approach a company or business and ask for benefits such as funding, discounted food/drinks or other preferential treatment.

Who to approach for sponsorships?

- ☐ National affiliation or organisations
- ☐ Local businesses
- ☐ Bars/clubs

Contracts

If you gain sponsorship from a company or business, they will often draw up a contract for you to sign. These contracts may set out terms that you have to follow in order to get the benefit for your society. For contracts and sponsorships, it's really important to consult ChesterSU to ensure that contract terms are fair.

Most Importantly, **the ChesterSU VP Activities must countersign any contract.** The VP must be the last signatory of any contract (after the President and the person on behalf of the company/ business) at which point the contract will become valid. If the VP does not sign the contract, you will become personally liable for all the contract terms. We will only countersign contracts that last for the academic year – **you cannot agree to anything longer than a year.**

Please contact our Head of Student Opportunities, Beverley Crawford, on beverley.crawford@chester.ac.uk for support with sponsorships.



Fundraising

You may wish to fundraise for a charity as part of your work. We've produced a full fundraising guide to help you through this process. Find out more about the rules surrounding fundraising, top tips and more on the Committee resources page on our new Website – this will be live at the end of August. Full fundraising information will be given at Committee training too.

As ChesterSU is a charity, there are specific rules around how the money is donated. Please consult our staff team before collecting any money, to make sure you are legally compliant.

ChesterSU can make donations to charities directly in your name, and all funds must go into the SU's fundraising account.



Events

What type of events can you run as a society?

- Discussion, panels, forums, external speaker events
- Virtual Quizzes, bingo, parties and game nights
- Workshops, study days, academic sessions
- Socials
- Film Screenings
- Large events such as end of year balls or parties

If you're looking to hold an event, its best to plan it as early as possible and let the Student Opportunities Team know what you're doing so we can help. Here's a few key things to think about:

If you wish to sell tickets for your event, you should do so through the ChesterSU website. Once you have received training you will be able to upload your event to the website, and all the money will go directly into your society account. (if you want to sell any other way you must discuss this with the staff team beforehand.)

Online Platforms during Social distanced return to campus

Use your club or society money to purchase a Zoom subscription to hold online sessions that are longer than 45 minutes long. Alternatively, try using other platforms such as MS Teams or Skype.

- For example, Harry Potter have been holding weekly sessions during lockdown for their members
- You can also use these online platforms to hold live try outs/ auditions where possible or ask members to record their auditions separately and send them to the committee.
- Run online quizzes using 'Kahoot'. It's simple and easy to set up and loads of people can join in at once.
- Ask your members to share their favourite moments from socials or activities to spread some positivity on your social media pages and to also show new members what you're all about!



Health and Wellbeing

- Check in with your members to see if you are all ok. You may not be meeting as regularly as before and some members may be really missing this contact! Keep your community that you've worked so hard to build up alive.
- As you can't hold face to face socials, it may be nice to hold socials where members can drop in and out for a chat with not defined activity or agenda.

Making Your Events More Accessible

It is important that when you plan an event, you think about how inclusive and accessible it is. Student may have needs that you have to meet to ensure they can take part in your activities. When planning, take some time to consider the needs that your members may have so you can ensure everyone can participate if they want to.

Committee training will include Liberation, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion this year, we will ensure you feel competent and confident in supporting all of your members, and potential members to join!


Here's some things to think about:

- Is the venue you have booked for an event able to be accessed by a wheelchair user? Is there a route into the venue that is step-free?
- If you have booked transport, have you checked with the transport company it is accessible? If you know a member uses a wheelchair, it may be worth asking for the specific dimensions of their wheelchair, as not all wheelchairs are the same.

If you are booking a room at ChesterSU, when booking you can ask for an accessible room.

Host a variety of events

It's important to make sure everyone in the society feels there are events they can attend. this might mean including non-alcoholic venues for example. Some



students may not feel comfortable in venues like bars or pubs for a number of reasons, for example if they have overcome substance abuse or they may not drink.

If you do hold events that involve drinking or are at bars/ clubs/ pubs, ensure that they are completely optional, and students do not feel pressure to attend to feel a part of the society.



Food Safety Guideline for Events

We know that you may want to provide food for your members at certain events, so we have put some rules and regulations in place to make sure our members are safe to consume food in these circumstances. (Better to be safe than sorry)

Please be aware that you have a duty of care to anyone that you provide food for, so you need to ensure you follow our food provision guidelines – if you give or sell food to anyone and it causes them to become ill, you could become personally liable if you are at fault.

Homemade food – yes or no?

You can provide homemade food, but you must have a food hygiene certificate, your society account could pay for a member to achieve this.

Food Safety guideline for preparing food at home:

- Always wash your hands before handling or preparing food
- Make sure all surfaces, bowls, plates, utensils etc. are clean
- Store any food in clean, sealable containers away from raw food.
- Store any food appropriately
- Do not use raw eggs in anything that won't be thoroughly cooked
- Avoid handling food: use suitable utensils to serve anything
- Ensure you have a full list of ingredients to hand and clearly label food with any notable allergens e.g. nuts



External Speaker Policy for Events

Who is an external speaker?

An external or guest speaker is anyone that is not an CSU staff member or student.

When do I need to fill out a form?

You need to fill out an external speaker form whenever an external speaker is coming to talk to your society members at an official society event – this can be on a UOC campus or an external venue. This is available on the committee hub on the CSU website.

Why is there an external speaker policy?

ChesterSU has worked to make an external speaker policy which is easy and accessible for you. We have an external speaker policy to mitigate risks associated with external speaks, but also in keeping our commitment to freedom of speech.

Please note you cannot advertise an event or sell tickets until your external speaker has been approved. Therefore, you should get in your external speaker request form as soon as you can.



Trips

Running a Trip

It is important to start costing your trip in advance – this means you can work out costs for tickets to see how much students will have to pay and how much can be contributed from the society account.

Only registered members can go on trips

You need to think about:

Transport and Accommodation:

- What type of transportation is required?
- Transport requests need to be made at least 2 weeks before travelling
- Is it an overnight trip?

Health and Safety:

- Work with ChesterSU to create a risk assessment
- Submitting a trip list before departure
- Briefing the trip leader on the accident procedure



Trip Checklist

- Confirm trip with ChesterSU
- Create a budget plan for trip, including transport costs, accommodation costs (if needed) and anything additional. Work out how much is needed to run the trip, and how much members will need to contribute
- Sell tickets on the ChesterSU website & get members to sign up
- Book transport
- If you want to hire a vehicle fill in this form
- If members want to drive their own vehicles, fill a private vehicle registration form, and a driver registration form (must be done at least 1 week before departure to ensure we can approve the driver!)
- Fill in a trip list before department



Elections and Handovers

Before the end of each academic year (March/April) each student group has to run an election to elect their next committee members who will lead and run their group for the following year.

Elections are an essential part of running student groups; each group must hold a democratic, free and fair election.

This is to ensure the democratic process runs correctly and that only fully registered members can vote in committee elections.

The committee hub on the ChesterSU website has a range of resources to assist in the proper running of AGM and Elections.

Handovers

When your time as a committee member come to an end, you'll need to think about how to make the next person in the role's life as easy as possible. Create a handover document so the next committee can successfully run your group once you leave and all your hard work doesn't go to waste.

Don't leave it all until your last week – its good practice to work on your handover document throughout the year, for example, when you have trips and events, write down the process of how you organised them, note down important contacts and key material they will need as you find out through the year.



Rewards and Recognitions

Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)

All ChesterSU volunteers (Society elected committee members and Course Reps) can have their volunteering hours appear on their HEAR record when they graduate. This means that your volunteering role can be recognised by employers and can differentiate you from other candidates – definitely worth doing.

Society of the Month

Each month ChesterSU celebrated the success of one society.

You can submit your society nomination to be recognised as the society of the month.

End of Year Awards

ChesterSU holds an annual awards ceremony to recognise our Societies and their volunteers.

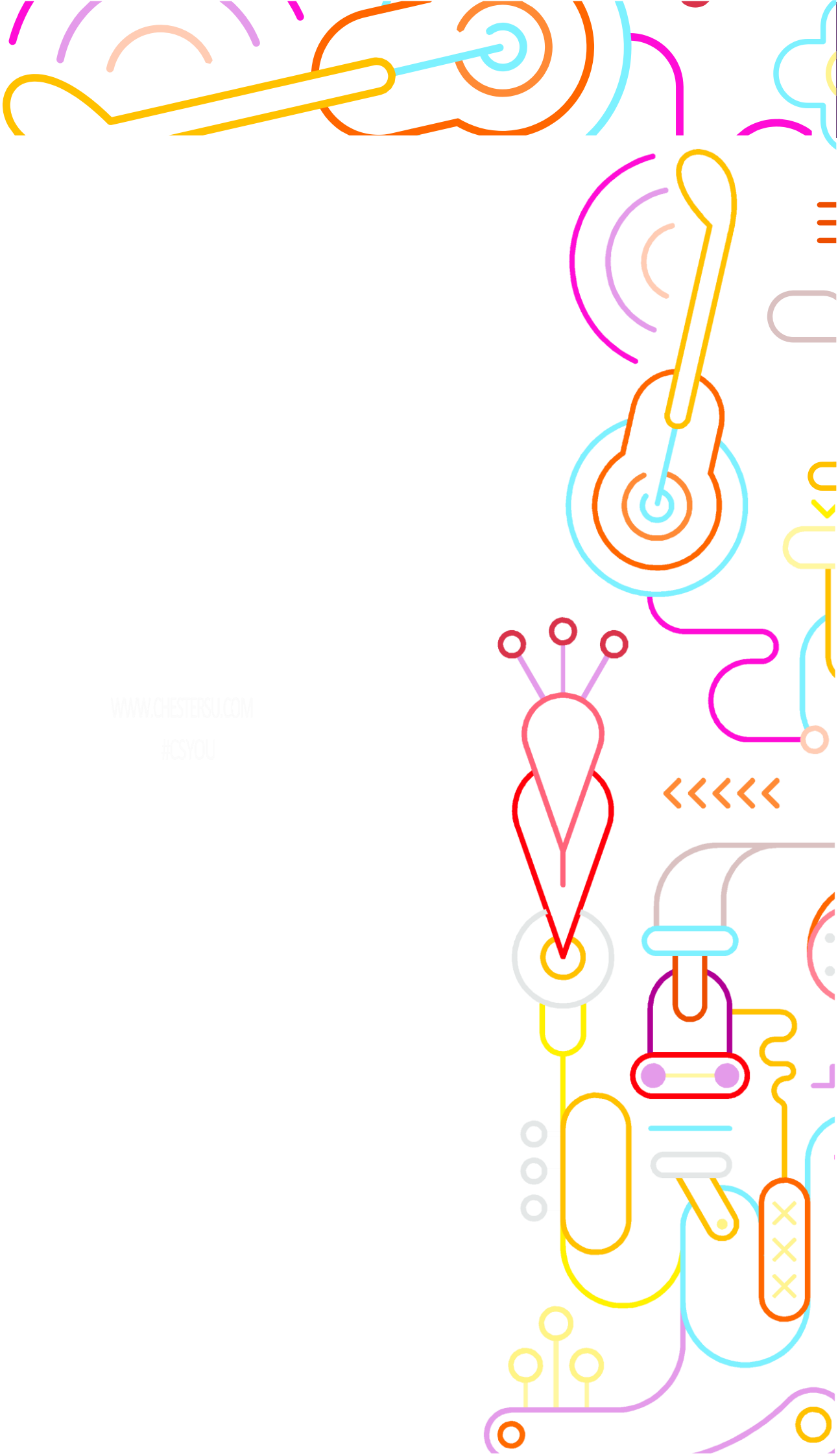


Managing Societies

To be a well-run society, you need a committee that is actively engaged, organised and enthusiastic about your society's activities.

Here are some top tips for ensuring this is true for your committee:

- Have a committee Facebook/ WhatsApp group to be able to discuss ideas, events and opportunities
- Have regular face-to-face meeting where you can encourage open discussion and listen to each other's ideas – (When it is able to do so).
- Make sure members feel comfortable to raise any issues or concerns in a safe environment. If members have any issues, you can direct them to contact csuactivities@chester.ac.uk
- Make sure everyone on the committee is contributing to the running of the society
- Use us! If as a committee you have any issues or need any advice, contact the student opportunities team.



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