

# RULES OF THE STUDENT UNION OF DIACONIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES O'DIAKO

## 1 § Student Union

The student union at Diaconia University of Applied Sciences is known as O'Diako. It is headquartered in Helsinki and operates autonomously. The language used in the student union corresponds to the language of instruction and examination specified in the university's operating licence. Its activities are governed by 41 of the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014). In English, the student union may be referred to as The Student Union of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences O'Diako.

## 2 § Purpose and Activities

The aim of the student union is to unite its members and advance their societal, social, and personal well-being, as well as support their educational and societal engagement.

Specifically, the student union's tasks include:

1. Electing student representatives to university bodies outlined in Chapter 4 of the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (such as the university board and examination board).
2. Contributing, as needed, to the implementation of student basic health care tasks as outlined in 17 of the Health Care Act (1326/2010) and Sections 11–14 of Chapter 13 of the Health Insurance Act (1224/2004).

The student union is empowered to secure rights, make commitments, own property and shares, receive legacies and donations, raise funds with appropriate permits, engage in economic activities to sustain its operations, and act as both plaintiff and defendant.

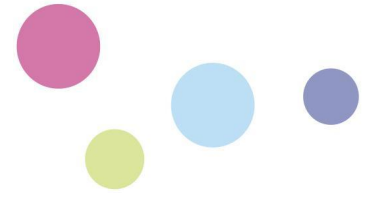
## 3 § Members

Students of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences can become regular members of the student union.

The student union keeps a record of its members in compliance with current Finnish legislation, following good data processing practices required by data protection laws.

Individuals and organisations with legal capacity who wish to support the student union's activities may become supporting members upon approval by the board. The





board can decide to end supporting membership with a simple majority vote.

With a three-quarters ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) majority vote, the council can appoint individuals who have significantly contributed to the student union's goals as honorary members.

A member can leave the student union by providing written notice to the board or its chairperson, with membership ending immediately.

Membership for regular members automatically ends when their student status expires or if membership fees remain unpaid.

The board has the authority to remove a member who hasn't met their obligations. The council may expel a member with a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote if their actions significantly harm the student union, either internally or externally.

#### 4 § Membership Fee

The student union's representative council has the authority to set the membership fee for its members. The duration of membership periods and the amount of fees are decided annually at the council's spring meeting for the upcoming academic year. Membership fees may differ for regular members, individual supporters, and organisational supporters. Honorary members are exempt from paying any fees.

The student union's board determines how and when the membership fee is collected. The council establishes principles for refunding paid fees and decides on the process and amount of any refunds.

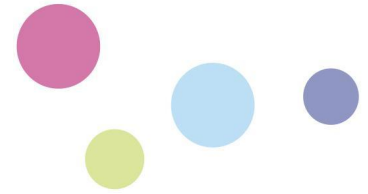
#### 5 § The Council

The Council wields the student union's decision-making power. Its term lasts one calendar year. If the Executive Director of the student union is unavailable, the Council may appoint a secretary for the meeting.

The Council's duties include:

- Electing and removing the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Council.
- Electing and removing the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Board members. The Council can authorise the Board to adjust its composition as needed but cannot increase the number of Board members without Council approval.
- Dismissing the Board or a member for significant reasons with a three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) majority vote. Board members must have the chance to speak during proceedings and receive notice of the matter at least 10 days before the Council meeting.
- Choosing the Executive Director of the student union and establishing roles.
- Electing student representatives to the university's board and other multi-member bodies as outlined in Chapter 4 of the Universities of





Applied Sciences Act.

- Appointing and relieving auditors and deputy auditors for financial review, as well as auditors and deputy auditors for operational review.
- Approving the budget and operational plan, setting financial and operational guidelines for the student union.
- Determining the membership fee.
- Reviewing the Board's activity report.
- Approving financial statements and granting discharge from liability to the Board and other responsible parties.
- Endorsing necessary regulations and other required provisions.
- Deciding on property transfers or encumbrances and significant asset acquisitions or disposals for the student union's operations.
- Determining the official communication channels of the student union.

The Council consists of ten (10) members and up to ten (10) deputy members, elected through personal proportional representation from eligible candidates according to the Association Act § 29. Any eligible voter can become a Council member.

Council elections are held annually by November 15th. The right to vote in student union elections is granted to members who have fulfilled their membership obligation by the date set by the Central Election Committee.

The organisation and conduct of student union and Council elections are overseen by the Central Election Committee elected by the Council, with further details specified in the election regulations approved by the Council.

Each Council member has one (1) vote, which must be exercised in person.

A Board member or employee of the student union cannot simultaneously serve as a Council member. If a Council member joins the Board or is employed by the student union, a deputy member takes their place for the duration of their service or employment.

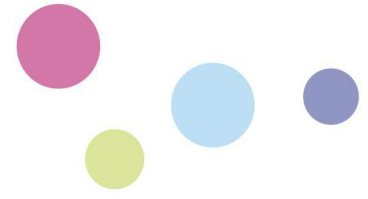
If a Council member becomes ineligible, resigns, is disqualified, or is unable to attend a meeting, a deputy member takes their place as specified in the election regulations.

The Council may operate with a reduced quorum if it does not jeopardise the quorum for meetings. If the number of Council members falls below eight (8), by-elections must be held. Members serving on the Board or employed by the student union are not included in this count. By-elections may be held in other circumstances if the Council determines that understaffing threatens the quorum for meetings. If less than half of the Council's term remains, by-elections are not required.

The Council may dissolve itself and call for new elections, with approval requiring over two-thirds (2/3) of all Council votes. New elections must be held within two (2) months, and the new Council serves the remaining term.

The dissolved Council continues its duties until the new Council is formed.





## 6 § Council Meetings

Invitations to Council meetings must be sent via email to Council members at least seven (7) days before the meeting. These invitations should reach all Council members, and the meeting must also be publicly announced according to the method chosen by the student union's Council. The invitation must include all agenda items for discussion. The Council may also address additional matters not listed in the invitation if two-thirds (2/3) of the Council members agree. However, decisions on matters outlined in 23 of the Association Act or on the dissolution of the Council cannot be made unless they are listed in the meeting invitation.

The Council convenes at least three (3) times:

Before its term commences, for an organisational meeting where:

- The Council confirms its composition.
- The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and any other necessary officials are elected from among the Council members.
- The Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons of the student union's Board are elected.
- The student union's Board is appointed.

Before the end of April, for a spring meeting where:

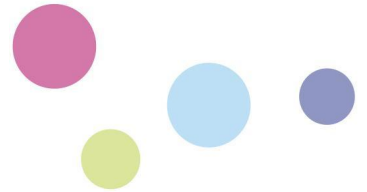
- The student union's Board presents the activity report.
- The financial statements prepared by the Board are presented.
- Reports from auditors and operational reviewers are presented.

Before the end of November, for a fall meeting where:

- The operational plan for the following year is discussed.
- The budget for the following year is discussed.
- The financial auditor, financial deputy auditor, operational auditor, and deputy operational auditor for the following year are appointed.
- The potential meeting fees for the following year and the remuneration for officials are decided.

A Council meeting is considered legal and quorate when properly convened,





with the Council's Chairperson or Vice Chairperson present, along with at least five (5) eligible voters. Once quorum is established, the Council retains decision-making authority for individual agenda items, even if some Council members cannot attend.

The Council convenes at the request of the Board, if deemed necessary by the Board or the Council Chairperson, or when three (3) Council members request it in writing for a specific matter.

An extraordinary meeting must be held within a month of the Board receiving written notice of the request.

Regular members, honorary members, and employees of the student union have the right to speak and attend Council meetings, and supporting members have the right to attend unless the Council, by an absolute majority vote, decides to restrict these rights for the consideration of a particular matter.

Detailed guidelines for Council operations are provided as needed in the student union's regulations.

## 7 § The Board

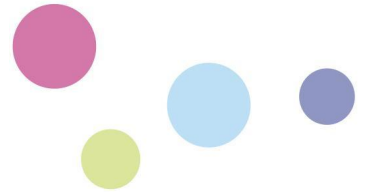
The Board is in charge of running the student union's affairs and putting its plans into action. Its role is to lead the union's activities, manage its operations, and ensure that all rules and regulations are followed. The Board's term lasts for one calendar year.

The Chairperson of the Board acts as the head of the student union, while the Vice Chairpersons serve as their deputies. Except for the Executive Director, the Board selects all other employees of the student union.

The Board consists of a Chairperson, two to three (2-3) Vice Chairpersons, and a minimum of four and a maximum of eight members. The Vice Chairpersons also serve as representatives for Diak's campus cities. There are two positions on the Board reserved for students from each campus city, primarily filled by candidates from those campuses. If there are no applicants from a particular campus city, the remaining positions may be allocated to other campuses. To be eligible for the Board, applicants must be members of the student union during the application period. Employees of the student union cannot serve on the Board. The Executive Director of the student union acts as the secretary for the Board's meetings, or a substitute may be appointed in their absence.

During the organisational meeting of the Council, the Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons of the student union's Board, along with other Board members, are elected. The Chairperson and Vice Chairpersons are elected using a majority vote method as specified in 29(1) of the Association Act. If there are no Vice Chairperson candidates from all campuses, the Vice Chairperson elected from another campus may act as the representative for that campus, as decided by the Board's organisational meeting. If one or more Vice Chairpersons resign, the remaining Vice Chairpersons move up in order of precedence, and





lower-ranking positions are filled as needed. Board members are elected at the organisational meeting of the Council using the proportional representation method as specified in 29(3)(3) of the Association Act.

The Chairperson of the Board, or in their absence, the 1st Vice Chairperson, convenes meetings of the Board. The Board may grant the right to call meetings to the Executive Director as needed. A meeting must be convened when at least three (3) Board members request it in writing. Invitations to the organisational meeting of the Board must be sent via email to all elected Board members at least five (5) days before the meeting. The Board decides on the method of convening its organisational meeting.

A meeting of the Board is considered legal and quorate when properly convened, with at least half (1/2) of the Board members present, including the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Council have the right to speak and attend Board meetings. The Board may, with at least three-fourths (3/4) majority vote, decide to address matters not listed in the meeting invitation. Each Board member has one (1) vote, which must be cast in person.

If the Council releases the Board or one of its members from office mid-term, a new Board or member is elected for the remaining term. If the Council releases the Chairperson of the Board from office mid-term, the entire Board is released from office, and a new Board is elected for the remaining term.

If the Board resigns or is otherwise relieved of its duties, it remains responsible for essential Board tasks until a new Board is organised. Detailed guidelines for the Board's operations are provided in the student union's regulations.

## 8 § Staff

The student union has an Executive Director and a team of other employees as needed. The Executive Director is chosen by the Council, while the Board selects the rest of the staff. The Board oversees the Executive Director's work, who in turn supervises the other employees.

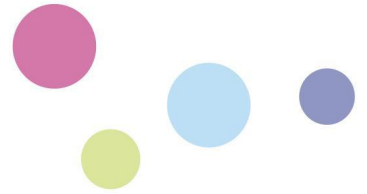
## 9 § Right to Propose

Every member of the Council or a group of ten (10) student union members jointly have the right to submit proposals to the Council. These proposals are directed to the Board, which will provide its opinion on them. The Council will then address the proposal at its next available meeting.

The primary signatory of the proposal has the right to present their case at both Council and Board meetings. Once a decision is reached, the outcome must be communicated to the primary signatory of the proposal.

Additionally, a collective of ten (10) student union members has the right to submit proposals directly to the Board. Again, the decision outcome must be communicated to the primary signatory of the proposal.





## 10 § Member Voting

Any issue within the Student Union Council's authority, except those specified in 23(1) of the Associations Act, must undergo a general member vote if requested by at least two-thirds (2/3) of all Council members during voting.

The member vote will be based on a proposal approved by the Council, which members can either accept or reject. More details about member voting are outlined in the election regulations endorsed by the Council.

## 11 § Decision Making

Decisions within the Council and the Board are reached through a simple majority vote. In case of a tie, the chairperson's vote serves as the deciding factor. Random selection is employed for personal selections, while closed ballot voting is utilised for such decisions. If requested by at least one eligible representative at the meeting, all voting must be conducted via closed ballot.

## 12 § Electronic Decision Making

The Council and the Board of the Student Union may make decisions using telecommunications or other technical means. The specifics of using electronic decision-making are detailed in the voting and election rules approved by the Council.

## 13 § Transparency and Corrective Measures

The Student Union operates with transparency according to the University of Applied Sciences Act's 41, adhering to the rules outlined in the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999), governing the transparency of public authority actions specified in 4 of the Act.

Unless stated otherwise by law or these rules, all documents within the Student Union are accessible to its members.

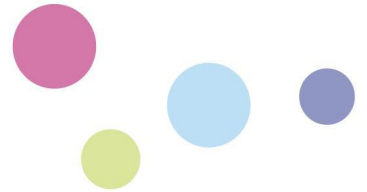
Documents concerning real estate and business operations of the Student Union, as well as those involving private individuals, are not publicly available. However, individuals have the right to access documents relevant to themselves.

Any proposals, drafts, reports, opinions, memoranda, or other documents originating within the Student Union's structure are considered public unless the governing body decides otherwise.

Documents still in the drafting stage are not considered public yet.

Members of the Student Union have the right to obtain extracts from the minutes of meetings of the Student Union's Council, Board, and other bodies, subject to a fee set by the Board based on established criteria.





Appeals for corrections to administrative decisions made by the Student Union may be filed with the relevant body. The procedure for correction follows administrative law. Decisions on such appeals may be further contested in the Administrative Court, as per the Administrative Judicial Procedure Act (586/1996). However, rulings from the Administrative Court cannot be appealed. Additionally, Sections 32 and 33 of the Associations Act shall apply in other aspects.

#### 14 § Authorised Signatories

Documents of the Student Union are signed by the Executive Director, the Chairperson of the Board, or the Vice Chairperson of the Board, either jointly by two of them or by one of them together with a Board member or the Chairperson of the Council. Additionally, the Board may authorise other individuals to sign for specific purposes.

#### 15 § Finance

The Student Union is required to maintain accurate financial records. These records should comply with relevant provisions outlined in the Accounting Act (1336/1997).

The Student Union must appoint either an auditor and a deputy auditor or engage an auditing firm. The auditor must hold appropriate certification. Additionally, an internal auditor and deputy internal auditor are required.

The financial year for the Student Union spans the calendar year. Within three (3) months of the end of the financial year, the Board must compile financial statements and provide necessary documents for auditing. These documents, along with audit reports and internal audit reports, must be submitted to the Council alongside the notice for the spring Council meeting.

#### 16 § Amending the Rules

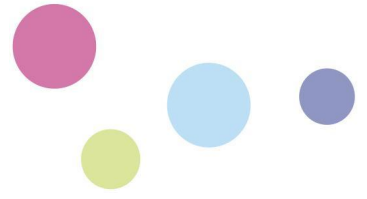
Changes to these rules are decided by the Council. To amend them, two (2) consecutive meetings, with at least two weeks between them, are required. In each meeting, the proposed amendment must receive at least two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast. The rules are confirmed by the rector of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences.

These rules were approved during the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences Student Union Council meetings on November 8, 2022, and November 23, 2022. They have been confirmed by the rector of Diaconia University of Applied Sciences.

Helsinki, December 8, 2022







Elina Juntunen  
Rector  
Diaconia University of Applied Sciences

Machine Translation:  
Helsinki, April 11, 2024  
Adel Rizvi  
Executive Director  
The Student Union O'Diako of  
Diaconia University of Applied Sciences

