

Steering document for Sections

This steering document explains how sections at the Malmö Student Union work. So what are sections, and why does the Student Union Malmö have them? Sections provide you and your fellow students with a social life. Students have a need to know one another, to have the opportunity to share experiences. Sections are also a place to help your fellow students in their studies, and for them to help you. That's what the Student Union's sections contribute - In sections we build a society.

1. Purpose and Task

1.1 Purpose

Within the section's area of activity, a section shall work to monitor and participate in the development of education as well as arrange study social activities and activities that promote students' studies and career opportunities.

Sections differentiate themselves from the Union's associations by focusing on students that study at a certain part of the university, instead of focusing on a topic or type of event.

1.2 Task

1.2.1 Advancing of students' study social situation

Sections will work so that students within their area of activity have a good study social environment and experience a community during their studies. They will do this by:

- Organizing social gatherings or get-togethers of other forms, such as graduation ceremonies, trips, sittings, and more, where students can meet socially,
- Unique for sections is that they have a responsibility to organise (part of) the introduction at the start of the semester during the Student Union Malmö's Insparken and to guide the students of their own section under Insparken that the Student Union Malmö organises, so that new students get a nice introduction. This must be done in collaboration with the Insparken Generals and the Insparken responsible in the Student Union Malmö board.

1.2.2 Participation in education monitoring

Sections will help, within their area of activity:

- Support students within their area of activity in questions relating to education by forwarding them to student representatives within their education or to their studentombud at the Student Union Malmö.
- Support the Student Union Malmö by updating the studentombud on on-going questions, and by making problems visible through, for example, local student councils.
- In cooperation with the studentombud function as support in questions regarding:
 - That all educations have course and/or program student representatives,
 - That councils of influence exist, in the form of e.g. program councils, course councils, and more,
 - That course evaluations take place.
- Help the Student Union Malmö find student representatives if needed in various committees, boards, and groups.

1.2.3 Program activities - advance the students' studies and career opportunities

Organize events for students that spread knowledge related to studies in their area of activity, and help their students' career opportunities, such as guest lectures, seminars, career fairs, theme days, and more.

2. Section division and areas of activity

A section will have a demarcated area of activity within its faculty. There cannot be two sections/program committees for the same education. If a section or program committee for a certain education does not exist, a student can join in the one closest to their education or a new section can be created. A section can suggest its area of activity, which must be approved by the Student Union Council.

If the division of educations at Malmö University changes, then the section also has to change their area of activity in accordance with that, so that a section continues to operate within its appointed area of activity, and not another section's area of activity.

3. Members

- A member of a section can be all of the Student Union Malmö's members who at the current semester study at the section's designated area of activity. If a member of the Student Union studies within the area of activities of two or more sections, the student can belong to all sections that operate towards the area of activities the student studies in.
- The members of the section board and the sections' volunteers must be members of the Student Union Malmö.
- The section must work towards all those who study within their areas of activity when it comes to education monitoring and Insparken, whether or not they are members.
- The section board determines whether only section members or all members of the Student Union Malmö can participate in events, on an event to event basis.

4. Sections' internal operations

4.1 Sections' values

- A section will work within the Student Union Malmö's policies, values, statutes, governing documents, and decisions made by either the Student Union Malmö's board or the Student Union Council.
- It is a mutual responsibility of the Malmö Student Union and sections to ensure that none of their activities harms the reputation of the other party. The responsibility also applies mutually between the Student Union Malmö's sections, associations, and groups.

4.2 The section's board

- The section board is the governing body of the section, and is responsible for the section's operations.
- The members of the section board shall be responsible for the section's tasks, and finances.
- The section board must at least have a president and a treasurer.
- The working language of the section must be Swedish and/or English.

4.3 Section board meetings

- Sections can always meet for discussion and must invite all of its section board members in good time.
- The section board's meetings have decision making power when at least half of the board members, but at least two, are present.
- Section board meetings are open for all of their members. If there are special reasons, the section board may decide to hold a meeting behind closed doors.
- Every member of a section has the right to submit proposals at the section board meetings.
- The section board meeting's protocols must be made publically accessible.
- If a section board makes decisions that conflict with the steering document for sections or the Student Union Malmö's statutes, policies, values, and governing documents, the decision can be annulled by the Student Union Malmö's council, and other consequences may occur.

4.4 Eligibility to be elected

Every student in the section's area of activity, who is a member of the Student Union Malmö, is eligible to be elected for the section board.

4.5 Democracy and transparency

- The section's election process will be transparent and democratic.
- The section shall inform the Student Union Malmö's board who is part of the section's board. A section board will be elected for a maximum of one operational year. The section's operational year goes from the first of July (1/7) till the last of June (30/6).
- The section will make its work accessible to the Student Union Malmö members through good documentation.
 - Sections shall make their constitution, operational plan, and minutes of annual meetings, board meetings and other official meetings available on the section or the Student Union Malmö's website.
 - When a section revises its constitution, it is obliged to send the updated version to the Malmö Student Union board for approval.

4.6 Program committees

- A section can have committees that represent specific programs or educations within their area of activity, called program committees (programutskott). It is the section that decides which program committees they should have and which students program committees should include. If a section's area of activity is a department or faculty, the section must work towards representing students from all programs within their area of activity who do not yet have a program committee, or help them to create a program committee within their section.

4.7 Guiding documents and annual meetings

4.7.1 Constitution

The section shall adopt its own constitution that must not conflict with the Student Union Malmö's constitution, policies, valuation, and steering documents. The constitution must be approved by the Malmö Student Union council. The constitution must exist in Swedish. The constitution is created by the section board and shall at least regulate the following parts of the democratic process within the section:

- How the section elects a new section board in a democratic manner before the end of the operational year
- How a member of the section can submit proposals to the section board
- How the section makes changes to the constitution

4.7.2 Annual meeting

The protocol of the annual meeting of the section, as well as protocols of possible extra annual meetings must be sent to the Student Union Malmö's section responsible.

4.8 Graphical profile

The section can suggest its name and logo which must be approved by the Student Union Malmö's council.

4.9 The proper functioning of the section

4.9.1 Continuity

The new board that was chosen at the end of the previous operational year, must receive a proper handover. If the section does not manage to elect a new board before the end of the operational year, they must inform the Student Union Malmö's board. The board of a section must help with the restart of program committees that die due to a lack of remaining volunteers, and must take into consideration in their events students within their area of activity who do not have a program committee within their section.

4.9.2 Fulfilling its mission and resolving deficiencies

If a conflict arises in a section or if a section does not fulfill its purpose, tasks, or obligations towards the students and according to this steering document, a conversation will take place between the section board and the Malmö Student Union to see what the problem is. The first step is always communication and conversation in the effort to solve the situation together. The Student Union Malmö's responsible for sections is primarily responsible for conducting these talks and reporting the case back to the Student Union board. This may lead to the Student Union Malmö temporarily helping the section to fulfill its purpose, or may lead to other consequences.

If the conversations show that the section has violated the Student Union Malmö's values or documents, the Student Union Malmö must decide whether it is relevant to introduce a consequence against the section. It is the Student Union board that decides on any consequences at a Union board meeting. The Union board must always consider the follow-up work when trying to resolve the situation. It is important that a section should never hesitate to turn to the Malmö Student Union for fear of a consequence, but the talks should be about jointly solving difficult situations in the best possible way.

Creating a list of possible consequences for sections is difficult because the Malmö Student Union primarily wants to advocate cooperation with the sections. If a situation has arisen, the

follow-up work will largely be about mapping the situation and how all parties can counteract that a similar situation arises in the future.

Possible consequences are, but not limited to:

- Remove all/some of the benefits that exist for sections, such as the right to apply for the äskning grant, to book premises free of charge, to be able to market its activities through the Student Union Malmö's channels, etc.
- Temporary takeover of (parts of) the section's operations
- Expulsion of certain members of the section board and the sections' volunteers, or dissolving the section board

5. Section means

Section means may only be used to progress operations in accordance with the purpose and task of the section specified in 1.1 and 1.2.

5.1 Financial means

5.1.1 Student Union grant 'äskning'

- Sections have the possibility to request financial means via the Student Union Malmö's 'äskning' grant. The Student Union Malmö will give the sections clear guidelines about the format and limitations of the äskning.
- The board of the Student Union Malmö will assess and decide on the application on each separate section.
- The request for the äskning grant will be sent to the responsible board member of the Student Union and its organisational administrator.
- At the start-up of a section, it can ask for money if the start-up happened too late to ask for money at the normal äskning deadline.

5.1.3 Other financial means

- Sections may request a fee to attend their events.
- Sections can receive financial sponsorship from companies and other organizations that follow the values of the Student Union Malmö.
- Sections can receive financial funds from Malmö University to support their activities.

5.2 Other section means

- The sections receive their official e-mail address from the Student Union Malmö, which they must use and check regularly.
- The sections are entitled to help with marketing and promotional materials from the Student Union Malmö.
- The sections are entitled to represent their activities in certain events of the Student Union Malmö, e.g. the Union Days, Coffee with the Union.
- The Student Union Malmö will help sections to find space to put their belongings. Sections can use the Student Union Malmö's faculty offices after agreement.
- The sections are entitled to help from the Student Union Malmö in booking rooms at Malmö University and in the Union House.

- The sections are obliged to keep the premises they have used at Malmö University and in the Union House clean and tidy, by cleaning, restoring all furniture, objects, and washing dishes.
- Sections may receive sponsorship other than financial sponsorship from companies and other organizations that follow the values of the Student Union Malmö.
- Sections may receive funds other than financial resources from Malmö University to support their activities.

Adopted by the council 041120