

TYPE: Administrative
TITLE: Recognition of Student Organizations
NO.: ADMIN-205
RESPONSIBILITY: Vice-President, Student Affairs Durham
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1. Introduction

Voluntary student organizations are an important part of the Durham College community and contribute significantly to the diversity of the College's intellectual, social, educational, and cultural co-curricular opportunities. While bona fide student groups have significant autonomy, their actions do reflect on the College. Their right to pursue social, cultural and other interests and to organize and hold various activities for the benefit of their members is balanced by understanding that recognition of a campus organization is a privilege. The College expects that activities of student organizations will be carried out in a responsible, democratic, and co-operative manner that is based on the observance of College policies and procedures and on the acceptance of certain obligations.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to establish the relationship between the College and Recognized Student Organizations (RSO), including reporting and accountability requirements of RSOs. This policy refers to, but is independent of, the Student Association (SA) clubs and societies approval process.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. Durham College reserves the right to determine which organizations will be recognized.
- 4.2. Student organizations that adhere to this policy and procedure will be considered by the College to be an RSO in good standing. The College has the ultimate authority in administering the privileges associated with being an RSO.

- 4.4. Under the terms of this policy and procedure the College will not attempt to censor, control or interfere with any RSO on the basis of its philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions expressed unless and until these activities violate this policy and procedure.
- 4.5. Recognition of student organizations by the SA or by the College implies neither endorsement of a particular group's beliefs or philosophy, nor the assumption of legal liability for the RSO activities.
- 4.6. Durham College recognizes the SA as a RSO that is the official representative of students. All full time students are members of the SA and share in the duties and responsibilities of student government.
- 4.6.1. Recognition of a RSO requires an active "agreement" between the College and the RSO. The agreement must include at minimum:
- a) Annual submission to the College of a list of officers of the organization with associated titles, and e-mail addresses.
 - b) Annual submission to the College of an up to date constitution, by-laws and policies of the RSO.
 - c) Annual submission to the College of a copy of an audited financial statement for the preceding fiscal year for the RSO.
 - d) In the case of the Student Association at DC and UOIT, the agreement must establish minimum requirements for Durham College student representation amongst the officers of the organization.
 - e) Evidence of payment of insurance submitted to the Durham College Insurance and Risk Management Office annually.
- 4.7. The College acknowledges SA recognized clubs and societies as legitimately constituted representative organizations of students. No organization has the right to exist or to continue to exist as a Durham College RSO without the express recognition granted by the SA.
- 4.8. The College does not recognize any organization that:
- a) Operates under a non-public constitution or;
 - b) Fails to comply with:
 - The Recognition of Student Organizations policy
 - The Ontario Human Rights Code
 - The Charter of Rights and Freedoms of Canada
 - Federal and provincial statutes

- College policies and procedures.
- 4.9. The College does not recognize fraternities and Sororities unless they meet the criteria of this policy and the criteria established by the Ontario Human Rights Code. Under the Human Rights Code, an exception exists to the rule that services must be offered without discrimination. The exception only applies to organizations, social clubs or fraternities that want to limit their right of membership and involvement. They are allowed to do this on the condition that they serve only or mostly a particular group of people identified by a [Code ground.](#)”
- 4.10. The constitution of all RSOs must be made available to the public for viewing. All rules governing membership in the RSO, and rules concerning members’ activities, programs, relationships to other bodies, whether incorporated into a written constitution or not, are subject to policies and procedures governing student behaviour at the College.
- 4.11. RSOs are required to adhere to all College by-laws, policies, procedures and protocols, including, but not limited to the following:
- a) Acceptable Use of Information Technology policy
 - b) Alcohol policy
 - c) External Communications policy
 - d) Harassment and Discrimination policy and procedure
 - e) Poster procedure
 - f) Residence Community Living Standards
 - g) Risk Management policy and procedures
 - h) The Sexual Violence policy and procedure
 - i) Student Conduct policy
- 4.12. Risk Management
- RSOs are required to manage the risk associated with their events and activities regardless of the location both on and off campus and in accordance with the procedures stipulated by the SA.
- RSOs must be registered with the SA to ensure that they have insurance coverage for their events.
- 4.13. Benefits of Recognized Student Organization Status
- a) Ability to book campus space subject to approval by the SA event approval process and the Central Scheduling Office.
 - b) Right to hold events in accordance with College policies.

4.14. Non Compliance

- 4.14.1. Organizations that attempt to organize and operate on campus without official recognition of the SA will be responsible for adhering to all College policies and procedures. Such groups will be treated as community groups for the purposes of room bookings and review of activities by the Office of Campus Safety or the Office of Insurance and Risk Management.
- 4.14.2. Organizations that are not RSOs and that misrepresent themselves as being an official Durham College or SA recognized organization will face sanctions under the Durham College Student Conduct policy and procedure.
- 4.14.3. RSO's that do not comply with the terms of this policy may be deemed by the College to be not in good standing or non-compliant.

There are two levels of non-compliance:

- 1. Level 1: Violation of College policies, violation of agreements between the College and organization, violations of organizational constitutions and/or approved policies
- 2. Level 2: Unresolved or persistent Level 1 violations[s] and/or activities that constitute a risk to student health or safety that are likely to harm College reputation; or that result as a failure to cooperate with the College to resolve Level 1 violations.

4.15. Penalties for Non-Compliance

Penalties for non-compliance by an RSO include but are not limited to:

- a) In the case of a RSO, notice of breach of the Agreement in place and stipulations for resolving the breach; and/or
- b) Loss of room booking privileges; and/or
- c) Loss of status as an RSO; and/or
- d) Re-direction of student fees to a purpose consistent with the original purpose as approved.
- e) Review of conduct of individual members or of the entire membership of the organization under procedures associated with relevant College policies. [Note: The determination regarding whether an alleged policy violation was committed by a student organization or by an individual[s] will be made on a case-by-case basis].

5. Procedure

This section is not applicable.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1. The SA is responsible for maintaining and implementing policies and procedures for the recognition of student organizations. The SA facilitates the creation and support of Campus Clubs and Student Societies to fulfill its mission of student service, advocacy and support.
- 6.2. Durham College is responsible for oversight of risk management practices put into place for the implementation of programs by RSO's.

7. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Accessibility Plan (ADMIN-203).

8. Non-compliance implications

- 8.1. Non-compliance with this policy may put students at risk and/or have a negative impact on the learning environment.
- 8.2. Non-compliance may put the institution at risk of complaints under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

9. Communications plan

- The SA will post the Campus Clubs policy and the Student Societies policy to their website and will alert student clubs and societies to the policies through their on-line training module.

10. Related forms, legislation or external resources

- Durham College Residence Community Living Standards
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- UOIT Policy on Recognition of Student Organizations 6.8