

STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE POLICY

ALMA MATER SOCIETY OF QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

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| Responsibility | Vice President (Operations) |
| Approved by | Board of Directors |
| Date initially approved | <i>March 29, 2018</i> |
| Date last revised | <i>April 24, 2018</i> |

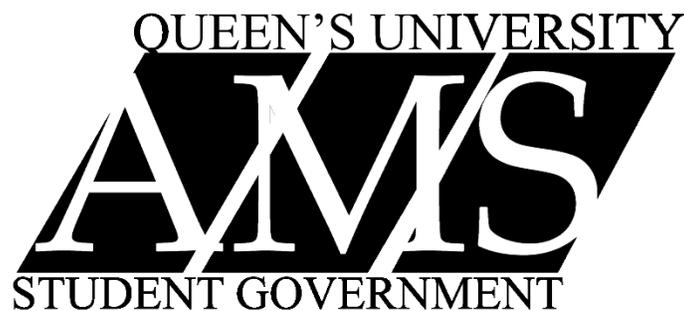


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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear set of directions for establishment, collection, administration, maintenance and distribution of student activity fees within the purview of the AMS. This policy will provide guidance to elected and hired officers of the AMS with regards to continuing funding of services and programming that are of benefit to all AMS members.

Terminology and definitions

“Assembly” means the AMS Assembly.

“AMS” means the Alma Mater Society of Queen’s University Incorporated.

“University” means Queen’s University.

“Secretary” means the AMS Secretary.

“Capital project” means the process of constructing a Campus Facility.

“Faculty Society” means the member societies that are affiliated with the AMS, as outlined in the AMS Constitution.

“Validation Package” means a document that any group seeking to establish or modify a student activity fee must submit.

“Non-Reviewable” means a Student Activity Fee that shall not expire and shall not be subject to renewal by referendum.

“Opt-out” means a situation where a member can elect not to pay an optional fee.

“Opt-out Period” means the dates when a member may elect not to pay an optional fee as found in the Alma Mater Society’s website.

“Student Activity Fee” means payments made by a student for non-academic or non-tuition related items that are designed to enhance student life.

“Essential Student Service” means a program or service administered by the AMS or the University that is designed to provide benefits to AMS members and requires a designated financial commitment from the student body to fulfill its mandate.

Statement

Transparent management of all aspects of student activity fees is vital for the AMS to maintain the trust of student members who are making a commitment to the betterment of student life at Queen's.

The aim of this policy is to clearly document the criteria for establishing a fee and the approval process regarding the maintenance or discontinuation of a fee. Contributions to future iterations of this policy by student groups is welcomed and strongly encouraged. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Compliance will be monitored and enforced by the Board of Directors.

This policy derives its authority from Queen's Protocol for Introducing or Changing Student Activity Fees and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' student activity fee protocols and policies along with the AMS Constitution. This policy is superseded by said protocols and policies, along with any contractual obligations of either the Society or the Corporation.

Scope

This policy applies to all groups seeking to levy a student activity fee or currently receiving a student activity fee from AMS members. The eligibility provisions of this policy specify the groups that are covered under this policy and criteria that are required to qualify for student activity fee funding.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Vice-President Operations is responsible for the oversight of and ensuring organizational compliance with this policy. They shall chair the Student Activity Fee Review Committee and enforce its decisions relating to eligibility for, continuance of, and suspension of Fees. The Vice-President Operations shall submit annual reports to the AMS Assembly and AMS Board of Directors relating to their administration of this policy.

The Secretary shall be the primary point of contact for all groups or organizations receiving Fees. They are responsible for ensuring that an annual timeline is set for the review of Fee Proposal Packages and annual reporting requirements, in accordance with this policy and in consultation with the Vice-President Operations and Elections Team. They are also responsible for informing groups of their triennial review obligations and preparing and distributing Fee Proposal Package templates.

Board of Directors shall retain ultimate authority for overseeing risk management as it pertains to Fees. The Board shall be represented on the Student Activity Fee Review Committee.

Assembly shall place referendum questions on the ballot at the recommendation of the Board of Directors. The Assembly shall be represented on the Student Activity Fee Review Committee.

Student Activity Fee Review Committee shall consist of the Vice-President Operations (Chair), the Secretary, the General Manager, the Director of Clubs, one member of the Board of Directors and one voting member of Assembly. The committee shall review all applications for groups seeking to establish, increase, or renew fees. They shall determine the eligibility of said groups in accordance with this policy. The Committee shall also review annual reporting requirement submissions. The Committee is empowered to make decisions regarding the eligibility and continuity of fees within the bounds of this policy.

Policy

a. General

- i. In accordance with Section 3.03 of the AMS Constitution, student activity fees, insofar as they constitute dues or fees payable by Society members, shall be established or altered only via a campus-wide referendum.
- ii. Student activity fees may be either mandatory or optional. Fees may be collected for a designated period or until a specified monetary target is reached and may be subject to automatic annual increases in accordance with some fixed percentage or index. Whether any of these conditions shall apply to a given fee shall be subject to a decision by the Student Activity Fee Review Committee. In all cases, any such conditions shall appear explicitly in the referendum question.
- iii. Student activity fees shall fall under one of the following three categories:
 1. reviewable optional fees – subject to both individual opt-out and triennial review
 2. reviewable mandatory fees - not subject to individual opt-out but subject to triennial review
 3. non-reviewable mandatory fees – not subject to either individual opt-out or triennial review
- iv. All mandatory fees shall only be established to sustain primary facilities/services that are provided for the benefit of all AMS members.
- v. Certain mandatory fees may be designated as non-reviewable, either for a period of time or indefinitely. A non- reviewable designation indicates that

the fee shall not subject to triennial review. This designation must be approved by the Student Activity Fee Review Committee and assigned either through a campus-wide referendum or a two-thirds (2/3) vote of Assembly. This designation should only be made on the determination that the fee satisfies both of the following criteria:

- vi. The fee has extensive oversight from elected AMS student representatives. AMS service fees shall not be subject to a review insofar as elected and appointed student representatives have already provided extensive oversight.
- vii. A contribution to an essential student service or capital project managed by the University that requires a specific designated financial commitment from the student body to fulfil its mandate.
- viii. Fees designated as non-reviewable shall be listed and described as such on the Annual Student Activity Fee Slate as published by the AMS.

b. Eligibility

- i. Eligibility for a group to receive a student activity fee shall be determined during the validation process for the establishment of the fee by the Student Activity Fee Review Committee. The Vice-President Operations retains ultimate authority to reject a student activity fee proposal.
- ii. Where a fee is designated as non-reviewable, eligibility of the fee shall be reassessed at such a time where there is a significant change to the affiliation of the group that receives the fee or a significant change to the mandate or usage of the fee. If such a situation arises, the Student Activity Fee Review Committee shall make a recommendation on the status of the fee to the Board of Directors.
- iii. Eligibility shall be subject to conditions which fall under one of the following three categories:
 - 1. **Internal** – internal groups are defined as those groups which are formally ratified, approved or otherwise administered by the University, the AMS or its member societies, or the Society of Graduate and Professional Students. Such groups shall provide a letter of ratification from the ratifying body or organization during the validation period.
 - 2. **External** – external groups are defined as those groups which are not formally affiliated to any of the above bodies (University, AMS, or its member societies) irrespective of whether they have an on- campus presence. External groups shall demonstrate that they meet the following criteria through the validation process:

- a. That they are providing a service or opportunity that is available to all AMS members and are not replicating services provided by existing groups of the university or the AMS.
 - b. That they are inclusive of all AMS members and all AMS members shall be eligible to be involved in the group or receive benefit from the group's activities.
 - c. That they have a presence within the Queen's community defined as using funds collected from student activity fees for projects, or awareness campaigns run on campus.
- iv. In addition, eligibility is subject to the following provisions:
 - 1. AMS committees shall not be eligible for student activity fees.
 - 2. No athletic group or team shall be eligible to receive a mandatory or optional student activity fee insofar as they are funded separately by Queen's University Athletics and Recreation.
 - 3. No group or its mandated activities shall be funded by more than one student activity fee unless granted a specific exemption by the Vice-President Operations who shall notify the Board of Directors.
 - 4. Student activity fees must overwhelmingly be used within the year they are collected and for the purpose of which they were collected.
 - 5. No commercial or otherwise for profit group or organization may be eligible for a student activity fee.
 - 6. No group shall be eligible for a student activity fee if they contribute ten percent (10%) or more of the fee to a registered charitable organization.
 - 7. Groups directly associated with a Registered Political Party shall not be eligible to receive a Student Activity Fee.
- v. Where a group has not clearly demonstrated through the validation period that they meet the eligibility requirements, they shall be deemed ineligible.
- vi. Where a group does not meet eligibility requirements as determined by the Student Activity Fee Review Committee, the Board of Directors shall be notified.
- vii. The overriding priority of the Student Activity Fee Review Committee in the vetting or review of student activity fees through the validation process shall be to ensure that student activity fees requested fall within the eligibility requirements and to ensure that the funding will be expended in

a manner that is transparent and accountable.

c. Establishing or Altering Student Activity Fees by Referendum

- i. For a new optional or mandatory student activity fee to appear on a referendum ballot, a group shall satisfy the following requirements:
 1. Submit a validation report as per Elections and Referenda Nomination and Validation Procedure.
 2. Determination by the Student Activity Fee Review Committee, as per Section two (2) of this policy, that the group is eligible to receive a student activity fee and has fully complied with the requirements set out in Section three (3). The committee may provide one (1) opportunity for groups to resubmit their validation package based on committee feedback. The final determination shall be presented to the Board of Directors.
 3. Reception of a two-thirds (2/3) majority Assembly vote in favour of the motion to place the question on the referendum ballot at the recommendation of the Board of Directors. Assembly shall only refuse to place a question on the ballot if they have clear and compelling evidence that the review process was sufficiently flawed and substantially affected the Student Activity Fee Review Committee's decision.
- ii. The AMS Secretary shall attempt to accommodate the preference of each group to be placed on either the fall or winter referendum ballot, but shall retain the final authority regarding on which ballot these fees shall appear.
- iii. The AMS Secretary shall make a budget for the fee available to the student body both before the referendum and on the ballot.
- iv. No group seeking a student activity fee whose question has been defeated during the referendum period may seek another student activity fee in the subsequent referendum period. Similarly, no group seeking a student activity fee that has been declared ineligible by the Student Activity Fee Review Committee shall be eligible for the subsequent referendum period.
- v. A group receiving a student activity fee shall have the authority to decrease its fee or alter its mandatory fee to be subject to individual opt out without requiring external approval. For a decrease to take effect, the group's president or officially designated representative shall notify the Vice-President Operations in writing. The Vice-President Operations shall notify the Board of Directors of any such fee decrease.
- vi. Where the Student Activity Fee Review Committee have determined that

an existing mandatory fee no longer satisfies the eligibility criteria for a mandatory classification, that fee shall automatically be converted to optional.

d. Triennial Review

- i. The intent of the triennial review is to provide an assessment of the continuing viability of the fee and/or group where there otherwise exists no such student oversight. All student activity fees, unless designated as non-reviewable mandatory fees by shall be subject to a review via referendum in the third year after each has been established.
- ii. The Secretary shall be responsible for identifying which fees are facing triennial review and shall be responsible for one (1) notification to each group in advance of the fall referenda period. However, each fee recipient ultimately bears responsibility for ascertaining the year of its triennial review. If a group's fee fails to appear on the ballot for reasons related to a lack of notification or awareness, it shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors as to whether the fee in question shall continue to be collected with the review deferred to the subsequent referendum period.
- iii. The AMS Secretary shall attempt to accommodate the preference of each group to be placed on either the fall or winter referendum ballot, but shall retain the final authority regarding on which ballot these triennial review fees shall appear.
- iv. Should a fee be discontinued as a result of its triennial review, it may not return to referendum in the subsequent referendum period.
- v. In the event a reviewable optional or mandatory fee successfully seeks an increase prior to its triennial review, it shall not be subject to review for an additional three years from the year of the approved increase.
- vi. A reviewable fee may seek an increase within the same academic year as its triennial review as long as it occurs during the first referendum period. Should the question to raise the student activity fee fail, it may return for triennial review in the winter referendum period.
- vii. Any fee that unsuccessfully seeks an increase outside of its triennial review year shall continue to be collected and shall be subject to its triennial review as determined by the original time period of its establishment/last review.
- viii. For a triennial review question to appear on a referendum ballot, a group shall satisfy the following requirements:

1. Submit a validation report as per Elections and Referenda Nomination and Validation Procedure.
 2. Determination by the Student Activity Fee Review Committee, as per Section two (2) of this policy, that the group is eligible to receive a student activity fee and has fully complied with the requirements set out in Section three (3).
- ix. Where a student activity fee under triennial review is found to be eligible by the Student Activity Fee Review Committee, the placement of that question on the ballot shall *not* be subject to approval by the Board of Directors and Assembly. The Board of Directors shall only vote (in accordance with policy on establishing or changing fees) to place a triennial review question on the ballot where the Student Activity Fee Review Committee has determined one of the following through the validation period:
1. The status of ratification or affiliation of the group has substantially changed.
 2. The mandate or operations of the group has substantially changed.
 3. The way the fee is expended by the group has substantially changed.
 4. There has been a significant change to AMS policy on eligibility requirements for student activity fees which would affect that fee.
- x. The AMS Secretary shall make a budget for the fee available to the student body both before the referendum and on the ballot.

e. Student Activity Fee Audit

- i. Annually, no later than mid October, the Vice-President Operations shall select to audit a sample number of groups on the student activity fee slate. The intention of the audit is to ensure that the use of student funding and activities being offered by the groups are congruent with the conditions established in the groups' submitted validation package and that the group still satisfies the student activity fee eligibility requirements.
- ii. Those entities selected for audit will be informed in writing by the Vice-President Operations and a request for information will be made in accordance with the Procedure for Student Activity Fee Audits. The audits will take approximately three (3) weeks to complete, commencing at the point of receipt of all requested information. The student activity fee under audit will be held back until the completion of the audit, at which point a decision will be made to disburse the fee or not.
- iii. Should the results of the audit determine that the recipient is using its

student activity fee funding in a manner inconsistent with the intent of the original fee question or that the recipient simply has spent less than 90% of its student activity fee funding in the year in which it was acquired, the recipient's fee money may be withheld and its' fee removed from the fee slate. The Vice-President Operations will make this decision based on section eleven (11) of this policy and it will be subject to approval by the Board of Directors.

f. Opt-Out Process

- i. The AMS shall schedule an opt-out period each fee period. This period shall be a minimum of two weeks and shall be completed prior to the end of the sixth week of classes. The process for fee opt-outs shall be conducted according to the Procedure for Student Activity Fee Opt-Outs.

g. Assessment

- i. Fees may only be assessed if they have been approved by the Queen's University Board of Trustees at their May meeting.
- ii. Undergraduate students registered in AMS member faculty societies are assessed by Queen's University Registrar in accordance with Queen's Protocol for Introducing or Changing Student Activity Fees, MAESD Compulsory Ancillary Fee Policy Guidelines or other relevant University policies
- iii. Mandatory and optional student activity and faculty society fees are assessed or not in the Fall term based on the number of academic units the member is registered in.
- iv. Members enrolled solely during the winter term, and who did not attend in the immediately preceding Fall term, are automatically assessed fifty percent (50%) of mandatory student activity fees based on a minimum number of academic units the member is registered in. Members are not assessed optional fees.
- v. MBA students are also assessed undergraduate student activity fees on a calendar basis in accordance with their program.
- vi. Undergraduate students registered in AMS member faculty societies, who would not normally be charged AMS student activity fees, may opt-in at registration or at a later point in a term if they wish to participate in, and have access to, undergraduate student government activities and services and/or the AMS Health and Dental Plans.
- vii. Exemptions from mandatory student activity fees shall be granted to the

following categories except in the circumstances where they wish to participate in, and have access to, undergraduate student government activities and services and/or the AMS Health and Dental Plans:

1. Students 65 years or old
2. Students registered exclusively in on-line courses
3. Students enrolled in programs taught exclusively off the Queen's Kingston campus

h. Student Activity Fee Refund Policy

- i. Students who formally withdraw from the University must submit their student card to the Office of the University Registrar to obtain a refund of student activity fees. Students who withdraw or otherwise alter their student activity fee assessment threshold may receive a 100% refund prior to the final add/drop date for courses in the Fall term, and a fifty percent (50%) refund between that date and the final add/drop date in the Winter term. No refunds shall be available for mandatory student activity fees after the final add/drop date in the Winter term.
- ii. The AMS Health and Dental Plan is non-refundable after the opt-out period. Optional fees are not prorated or reduced. The Vice-President Operations in consultation with the General Manager may grant a full refund on any student activity fee assessment where extreme circumstances are determined to so warrant.

i. Student Activity Fee Refunds for Deceased Students

- i. In the event a member of the AMS becomes deceased at any time during the academic year, all student activity fees paid by the student in that year, will automatically be refunded.
- ii. The sole exception will be the AMS Health and Dental Plan fee which shall not be refunded. Any student who paid this fee, and thus was enrolled on the plan, is entitled to having a death benefit paid out to their family. Insofar as the amount of that benefit would obviously exceed that of the levied fee, it is clear to preserve the family's entitlement.

j. Disbursement of Student Activity Fees

- i. Student Activity Fees will be distributed as per the Procedure on Disbursement of Student Activity Fees.
- ii. If it is determined by the Vice-President Operations that a student activity fee recipient has become defunct or otherwise inoperative, its funding will be withheld and its fee shall automatically be removed from the student activity fee slate.

k. Withheld or Uncollected Student Activity Fee Funds

- i. If a student activity fee funding has been withheld from a recipient, for any reason
 1. The Vice-President Operations shall reallocate the funding to the AMS Membership Bursary Fund. Where the Vice-President Operations determines this need has been satisfied the Vice-President Operations shall have the discretion to reallocate any remaining monies to an existing AMS granting committee(s) or to address another area of acute financial need.
- ii. If a student activity fee recipient has not picked up their fall student activity fee cheque by December 31 or the spring disbursement by September 30:
 1. The Vice-President Operations shall reallocate the funding to the AMS Membership Bursary Fund. Where the Vice-President Operations determines this need has been satisfied the Vice-President Operations shall have the discretion to reallocate any remaining monies to an existing AMS granting committee(s) or to address another area of acute financial need.
 2. The fee shall be removed automatically from the AMS Fee Slate.
- iii. If a student activity fee recipient has not cashed their cheque within six months of the date of the cheque:
 1. The Vice-President Operations shall reallocate the funding to the AMS Membership Bursary Fund. Where the Vice-President Operations determines this need has been satisfied the Vice-President Operations shall have the discretion to reallocate any remaining monies to an existing AMS granting committee(s) or to address another area of acute financial need.
 2. The fee shall be removed automatically from the AMS Fee Slate.

l. Exemptions

- i. All Fees listed under this section shall be considered exempt from the normal approval and review process for Student Activity Fees:
- ii. AMS Health and Dental Plan Fees
 1. Queen's University has mandated that all students have access to a health and dental plan.
 2. The AMS Health and Dental Plan, although appearing on the student activity fee slate as optional, are in fact mandatory unless specific conditions are met for opting-out. Therefore, for the purposes of this policy, this shall be considered mandatory and has been designated as non-reviewable.
 3. The plans and established financial reserves shall be reviewed annually by the AMS Executive and General Manager in

conjunction with professional Plan Administrators. Review will consist of financial information provided by the insurance company and analyzed and presented for consultation and approval by the AMS. Surveys of the undergraduate student body are conducted on a periodic basis to ensure the plan meets their needs and is financially accessible.

4. Changes to the AMS Health and Dental Plan Fees will be approved annually by the AMS Executive and Queen’s University Board of Trustees.

Monitoring

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Vice President Operations and the Student Activity Fee Review Committee before, during and after the fee process. During the fall and winter elections and referenda periods monitoring will intensify. Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy may result in the loss of a student activity fee as stated in the policy.

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| Contact person | Vice-President Operations |
| Date of next review | March 2019 |
| Related policies, procedures and guidelines | AMS Constitution Elections and Referenda Policy Elections and Referenda Nomination and Validation Procedures Procedure for Disbursement of Student Activity Fees Procedure for Student Activity Fee Opt-outs Procedure for Student Fee Audits |
| Policies superseded by this policy | |