

Guidance for New Club Committees

Introduction

The purpose of this factsheet is to give guidance to any new committee members at new or existing clubs, who are unsure on the running of a SSAGO club. There is no one set way to run a club, however this factsheet contains some guidance to help you best run your club.

It is key that the committee not only follows SSAGO's Policies and factsheets but also follows the rules of your Students Union(SU)/Guild if they are affiliated. Your committee should seek guidance from your SU if you are unsure about any rules or policies they have in place. Where a club cannot join a university SU, a club can still be affiliated with SSAGO if it meets the requirement set out in the 'Clubs not affiliated to a University' Policy.

The Structure and Rules of SSAGO

How SSAGO Works

SSAGO, runs very similarly to the structure found in most SUs/Guilds, with the National Executive Committee (National Exec) being the management team of the organisation and club committees overseeing their individual club members.

The National Exec are members of SSAGO, elected each year at the national AGM and are responsible for running SSAGO for the next year. Their roles are similar to a club committee, but they look after the interests of all clubs, members, and oversee the day to day running of SSAGO, while also working with The Scouts and Girlguiding.

The rules of SSAGO are set out in the form of a constitution document supported by policy documents and factsheets that help to provide more detail about the constitution.

Affiliation with The Scouts and Girlguiding

SSAGO clubs, as parts of National SSAGO, are affiliated to both The Scouts (TS) and Girlguiding. This means that a club must follow the rules from both associations, as well those of SSAGO. Clubs must not take part in any activities banned by TS and Girlguiding. They must also complete all Nights Away Notification forms, Adventurous Activities forms and risk assessments for trips always. Clubs must also submit incident forms if required.

Club Committee Roles

All SSAGO clubs must have a Chair/President, Secretary, and Treasurer, you will also need to have a member nominated as SSAGO rep, this member will attend rep's meetings and vote on SSAGO matters on behalf on the club.

For further guidance on the role of a SSAGO rep please see:
Factsheet 25 - The Role of a SSAGO Rep

Roles Descriptions

Most SU's have a document on their required roles and expectations of the individual that hold each positions, they will often provide training or additional information on this.

Chair/President- Seen as the leader/figure head of the club, they direct the rest of the committee in decision making and organises any committee meetings.

Secretary- Looks after the written parts running of the club, such as writing up minutes from committee meetings, filling out relevant forms and sending out emails.

Treasurer- Looks after the finance of the club, deals with reimbursements, membership payments/group subs, and paying SSAGO membership on time.

As clubs grow and develop, it may be worth considering additional roles. Some SU's have specific additional roles that they require clubs to have, but some common examples of additional roles you may wish to have include:

Vice-Chair/President- To help support the chair and share workload and deputise in the chair's absence.

Social Secretary- To plan and lead social events.

TSA/Girlguiding Liaison- A point of contact between club/its members and the local Scouting and Guiding community in the area.

Quartermaster- Looks after the club merchandise and equipment.

Publicity/Media/Webmaster- Looking after the social media side of the club, as well as creating club based publicity material for events.

Safety and Wellbeing- In charge of risk assessing events and ensuring that all members are physically safe and feel welcome at event.

Running an AGM

Once a year democratic elections should be held, usually in-line with your SU policy/timings, this is often in late spring but can vary. Club AGM's are important, they are a good chance for the whole club to reflect on the year, what worked well and what didn't.

They are also when the club committee tell the membership what they have been up to, it is also chance to give input into the running of the following year. This is also the event where members run to be elected onto committee for the following year.

There are a number of ways to run voting in an AGM, any policy laid out by your SU takes precedence. Some club use online voting provided by their SU. Other clubs vote by a show of hands during the AGM. It may be possible to use the SSAGO online voting system for any queries with this contact the Webmaster at least 4 weeks in advance of the AGM, to make sure that it can be set up in time.

After the new committee has been elected, the outgoing committee will need to make sure that the new committee is updated on the committee section of the clubs SSAGO website. It is strongly advise a handover meeting is held between the incoming/ outgoing committee member to explain in more detail about what is required and some of the jobs in the role. It is also wise to hold a whole committee meeting with incoming and outgoing committees to explain the rules of the SU and give them guidance on how SSAGO runs and key SSAGO matters that they will need to follow.

Prior to any hand-over period, it is the committee's responsibility to find what rules the SU have on hand-over meetings, as some may require to have a member of the SU team present, to make sure that all of their requirements are being met and all training is given.

Handling Disputes

It is best for you to try and resolve any disputes internally within the club, however when this is not possible first speak to the SU/Guild of your club. If required the SSAGO Exec can act as an impartial mediator, they will make sure policies have been/are followed and applied were necessary. The SSAGO Exec can also act as an impartial mediator in situations when there are disputes between different SSAGO clubs.

In the cases of a dispute between a club and their SU/Guild, please contact the National Exec who can give you guidance and if necessary speak to your SU/Guild to clarify their understanding of SSAGO.

In urgent cases, where support/guidance is required straight away, the Exec can be contacted on the SSAGO hotline **(020 3808 8230)**. Otherwise, email exec@ssago.org

For more guidance on how to handle a dispute please see:
Factsheet 31 - Dealing with Disputes Factsheet
Policy - Clubs not affiliated to a University

The Membership System

Committee members will be able to see information on members of the club, for example the status of their membership (and whether it is up to date or not). Information on any members wanting to join the club and anyone who is interested in joining can also be found here. Groups of members can also be contacted via email, to invite them to events, or allows you to request information from the members who have not updated their profile. The intouch details for those attend events when the club goes away can also be accessed here.

Membership Types:

Full Student members- Members who go to university/ studying a minimum level 4 educational course.

Associate members- No longer students, members are allowed to be an associate but they must justify their continued membership to the National exec who will approve or reject the request. Valid reasons to extend include: being the club minibuss driver or being a carer for a full member.

SSAGO Membership Cost (April 2018):

Full Student Members- £4

Associate Members- £7

Club membership is submitted and paid once a year and must include:

- All members of the club that are present on the SU's membership list for the society. (This MUST include members who only attend weekly meeting)
- Updated information from all members (contact details etc).
- All associate members of the club are named and justification for their membership.
- No pending members in the club's system

Once membership is submitted it must be approved by the Members Officer, clubs will then be able to view their invoice on the membership dashboard, to see how much they need to pay and the account details. The first year a club joins SSAGO it will have its membership fees waived for that year, but it is important that their membership list is still submitted for insurance purposes.

For more guidance on the membership system see:
Factsheet 16 - How to use the Membership System

SSAGO Website

The SSAGO website has many functions; creating and registering attendance for events, access to the membership system, interest members contact section, the shop and resource sections.

Once logged in as a committee member you have access to the clubs dashboard, here you will have access to club membership lists and members intouch details (Emergency contact information and medical records), as well as any outstanding membership tasks (to access the membership dashboard click on the club necker that in the top right of the screen.)

The resource section contains the constitution, policy documents and factsheets as well as publicity material and minutes from Reps and Exec meetings.

The event system is used for setting up and registering onto national and regional events, as well as SSAGO support events for members. The system can also be used to create events for the club, it allows you to see who is going, collect important information such as members in touch details. If you require help or guidance on the events system, contact the webmaster via email.

All SSAGO members once signed up to the website will gain access to SSAGO perks, part of the website that can be found through your profile/membership dashboard, here members can find discounts and other perks available at the time. A club will need to submit and pay membership each year, to keep access to all members only website services.

National events

SSAGO hold four national events a year; three camps (Rallies) held in November, February and June along with a formal Ball usually around April, they are held by different clubs each year that have been voted for at the previous AGM, all national events are listed on the ssago website and an email is sent to all members before booking opens to make them aware of it.

National event webpages usually go live 2-3 months before the event, it is worth reminding the club that event booking will open as some activities often fill up quickly. It is also worth contacting nearby SSAGO clubs to see if it is possible to sort out travel together, or borrow

kit if required, such as tents. Contact information for clubs can be found via their SSAGO page, including their email and who is on their committee.

For rallies, food will be provided from the Friday evening through to Sunday lunchtime. So there is no need to bring cooking equipment.

Key items to bring are:

- Tent
- Sleeping bag/Roll Mat
- Lots of layers (especially for colder camps)
- Cash for the SSAGO shop

There is lots more information to help prepare for a rally;

Factsheet 23 - First Rally

Resources and Links

All resources can be found on the SSAGO website at ssago.org/resources that are available for your club to use throughout the year. If after reading a factsheet/policy you are still unsure on anything do not hesitate to email the exec or relevant assistants for guidance.

Making links with local Scouting and Guiding

As a committee, members will often seek help in contacting the local Scout/Guiding community, it is recommended that the club gets the contact details for the Districts/County that the University may fall into for both TS and Girlguiding. Conversely Scout and Guiding districts may make contact to ask for volunteers to help in sections or even at events that they are hosting.

For support in there case see resources:

- Factsheet 05 - SSAGO for members of Girlguiding
- Factsheet 06 - SSAGO for members of The Scouts
- Factsheet 32 - Working with local Scout and Guide Groups
- Factsheet 33 - Running events for local Scout and Guides

Banned Activities

All members of SSAGO are affiliated with both The Scouts and Girlguiding, this mean that as an individual and a club whilst acting as a member of SSAGO their lists of banned activities must be followed. The activities are banned because they do not fit with one of the affiliated organisations aims and goals or are deemed too high risk to take part in. If a

club is found to have undertaken a banned activity, it could result in the club being suspended or expelled from SSAGO.

For more guidance see resources:
Factsheet 04 - Banned Activities in SSAGO

Adventurous Activities Form (AA Form)

As stated in The Scouts policy organisation and rules document (POR), an **Adventurous Activity form must be filled out for certain activities, this must be submitted to the notifications officer a minimum of 7 days before the event for review.** Some SU's also require their own notification of activities this must be completed by the club. Failure to notify SSAGO of an Adventurous Activity may result in consequences for the club/member as activity will not be covered by SSAGO insurance. It is also worth taking note of any activities banned by the club's SU.

For more guidance see resources:
Factsheet 19 - Doing Adventurous Activities with your club
Form 'Adventurous Activities'

Nights Away Notifications (NAN Form)

The Scouts POR states, when running an event where the club is away on an overnight event a Nights Away Notification form must be submitted to the Notification Officer. When attending or National and Regional SSAGO events being run by another club it is the duty of the host club to submit a NAN form. Failure to submit the form before the event taking place is breaking SSAGO rules and will result in consequences for the club.

For more information see resources:
Factsheet 20 - Taking a SSAGO club away
Factsheet 43 - InTouch System
Form 'Nights Away Notifications'

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments should be completed for all SSAGO events, from weekly meetings to weekends away. Risk assessments for national events such as Rallies, will be completed by the event host.

For more information see resources:
Factsheet 18 - Risk Assessing an Event

Reporting an Accident/Incident

If an accident/incident occurs while on an event run by the club, from a weekly social or a trip the club has taken, it must be reported. Depending on the severity will depend on who must be notified first, but in all case the SSAGO Exec should be contacted as soon as possible using the SSAGO Hotline phone number. The club SU will also need to follow their procedure so make sure all the committee are aware of what this is. Failure to notify the correct people could lead repercussions/consequences for SSAGO's insurance at a national level not just a club level.

for more information see resources:
Factsheet 21 - Reporting Accidents and Incidents
Form 'Accident and Incident Form'

Development Fund

The SSAGO Development Fund is a pot of money that SSAGO has that is dedicated to helping clubs, and SSAGO as a whole, grow. It can be applied for by any club, individual member or the national exec to purchase resources that might normally not be available. Common applications have been for items such as publicity materials or equipment such as flags and banners. There is also provision for new clubs to help you apply for any equipment you might need to function fully as a club and participate in national events such as tents and other camping equipment that can be approved by the full committee.

For more details and how to apply see the following resources:
Factsheet 30 - SSAGO Development Fund
Form - Development Fund Application

Mascots and Their Policy

All SSAGO clubs have a soft toy mascot which when at SSAGO events can be stolen by other club. If you managed to steal another club's mascot, get it to an Nation Exec member will result in have the opportunity to give a forfeit to the club who mascot was stolen. This is meant to be a bit of light-hearted fun so, don't take it too seriously and avoid violence!

For more information see resources:

Policy - SSAGO Mascot Kidnaping

Club Mascots (www.ssago.org/clubs/mascots)

The SSAGO Shop

The SSAGO Shop can be found on the SSAGO website and at national events. It is where official SSAGO merchandise can be brought. Any questions or problems with the shop should be sent to email the National Merchandise Officer or the Exec who will be able to help depending on the issue that has accrued.

SSAGO Projects

There are many opportunities within SSAGO to get involved in different projects. This can be 'SSAGO support' events where SSAGO attend Scouting and Guiding events and run activities or the SSAGO media team who produce the newsletter at SSAGO events, the SSAGO Archive team and many more. Please visit ssago.org/projects for a full list of current Projects.

Publicity Resources

On the SSAGO website, publicity resources can be found, here you will be able to find free to use; Posters, leaflets, SSAGO logo (in various formats), official SSAGO font, as well as photos from previous events to put on publicity materials.

There are also ready made resources to help advertise SSAGO at university to help attract more members, during fresher's week and throughout the year. Some resources are designed to allow clubs to personalise them for their events.

For more information/help contact the National Publicity Officer.

This Factsheet is intended to signpost you to the relevant documents within SSAGO, if the information on specific factsheets is different to that on this document please contact the nation exec, so they can advise which to follow.

Contacting SSAGO

If unsure on who to contact, you can email the Exec as a whole at exec@ssago.org and the email will be picked up by the relevant person. There is also the Contact Us section on the website the form in that section once sent will be forwarded to the relevant person for a response.

Exec Emails:

Chair- chair@ssago.org

Secretary- secretary@ssago.org

Treasurer- treasurer@ssago.org

Members Officer- members@ssago.org

Publicity Officer- publicity@ssago.org

Assistant emails:

Webmaster- webmaster@ssago.org

Notifications Officer- notifications@ssago.org

Merchandise Officer- quartermaster@ssago.org

Archivist- archivist@ssago.org

SAGGA Rep- sagga@ssago.org

International Officer- international@ssago.org

In Emergencies, for example where someone is injured, the SSAGO exec must be contacted IMMEDIATELY on 020 3808 8230.

Key resources to help understand the structure of SSAGO can be found in:

Factsheet 10 - National Executive Committee and Assistant

Policy - Roles