



SSAGO
*Student Scout and
Guide Organisation*

**The essential guide to everything you need
to know (and most things you will never
want to know) about**

SSAGO

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Based on the SSAGO Book of Stuff
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and the SSAGO Information Manual (in its many forms...)

How do they do that?



Important

This guide supersedes all previous editions of the SSAGO Information Manual. Please remember it is only a guide, and your own interpretation of what is here is very important. Things will change from time to time, so it is important that you keep up to date by reading any emails sent out by the SSAGO Exec and amending as needed. Enjoy...

1. What is SSAGO?

SSAGO is the acronym for the national body called the “Student Scout and Guide Organisation”. Membership is open to any student willing to give us directly, or one of the clubs some money and they complete a CRB/SCRO form (See boring legal stuff section). Of course we aren’t just a bunch of money grabbers, but that is the shortest and most concise way of describing it!

Most members join one of the member clubs during their studies at a particular university or higher education institution. There are currently around thirty clubs around the United Kingdom, and an up to date list of clubs is available from the SSAGO Members’ Officer (members@ssago.org.uk). Clubs are all unique but generally offer a programme similar to that of a Senior Section or Scout Network. They are only constrained by their own imagination (and the law occasionally).

Don’t despair if you have set your heart on joining a club, and there is not one at your university or college, you can join the organisation directly. Indie membership is available to all students aged 18+ (Under 18s can only join if they are in Scotland or following a degree programme elsewhere). It may even be possible to join a local club for some activities, as all our clubs are full of really friendly people.

SSAGO does not even stop at graduation, we offer direct membership for non students (associates) and many unions offer life membership allowing you to remain involved with a certain club (assuming they want you to). We also offer links to other organisations such as SAGGA, and/or encouraging members to resume contact with main streams Scouting and Guiding.

SSAGO does not stop at your club and your local area; we offer at least three national events per year, which are called rallies. Rallies are national camps usually lasting one weekend, organised by one of the member clubs. They offer an excellent opportunity to get to know other clubs, see different parts of the country and to get away from the university where you are studying.

All the membership is supported by a national team of five elected student members, which is called the Executive Committee. These members are elected annually at the Spring Rally, and ensure that the views of the organisation are raised at regular intervals with the Scout Network Team and Senior Section Co-ordinator amongst others. They can also help with problems that you are having with unions or commissioners for example, as they are all experience individuals from within the organisation who are well aware of the issues that effect Student Scout and Guide Clubs.

2. Starting a new club

Every year the Executive Committee are approached by individuals wishing to be given words of wisdom about setting up a club. The simple answer is that there is no quick fix or guaranteed means of success, but the following article gives some pointers.

Where is your focus?

This should be a simple question for most, basically which institution are looking to base your club at.

What next?

1. Speak to the clubs/societies officer at your union/s if one exists. They will be able to give you advice about things like publicity, whether anybody else has asked them about setting up a club and things like that. In smaller unions (and some of the bigger ones) it is rare that a dedicated societies officer exists, so you may need to ask around and if all else fails ask your union president.
 - a. If you the union say yes, they'll help or will let you put publicity go to step 2 otherwise read 1b.
 - b. If they refuse to help, and don't let you put up any publicity ask them why (they may refuse to tell you). This is the time to contact the SSAGO Chairperson as they are slightly detached from the union, and may be able to persuade them. It may be that they have some bad memory from having to jump over a toadstool, or freezing to death on a camp. If this fails
 - i. Join SSAGO as an indie member, you'll get your money back if you set up a club (its only £2 anyway).
 - ii. Approach the local District/ County and see if any students are already active, they may be willing to help you. A group of 5 or 10 students is likely to have a much bigger impact than just one, when speaking to the union.
 - iii. Alternatively get involved in the Senior Section or Scout Network locally.
2. Speak to SSAGO as they can offer assistance and help. The Members Officer may have records of other queries from your institution or area. Depending on where they live, there is a possibility of them coming to visit and have a face-to-face meeting, but these are usually not possible. The Members Officer will guide you through the registration process, so that you can become an official SSAGO club.
3. If there are a few of you get together and put some publicity together. Posters can be made relatively cheaply and photocopied for a couple of pence a time. SSAGO also has a stock of posters that are available on request, which can be altered to suit local circumstances. Obviously then distribute the publicity around your union, and possibly get a rudimentary website together. Make sure you follow any guidelines that your union, university or halls have, because you don't want to be fined before you start. As soon as you get a website going, tell the SSAGO Publicity Officer who will update the links page on the national site so people can find where you are.



4. Try and attend the freshers fayre, or refresher fayre. This is the event where all the sports clubs and societies get the opportunity to promote themselves. Some unions are really busy, and get loads of requests so you may find that you need to book it months in advance. SSAGO can sometimes help by booking a stall as an external group, but beware this usually costs upwards of £50 and you'll be responsible for paying for this.
 - a. If the answer is no and SSAGO can't help, you've got to think of other forms of publicity.
 - b. If the answer is yes, the following article written by Colin Fitch offers some helpful pointers as how to get the best out of a fayre and setting up a club in general.
5. A good stall is essential for the event to have any possibility of success. Don't try to hide that you are a Scout and Guide Club, because people will soon find out BUT don't overplay it. Try not to have people standing around in full dress uniform, a necker will be enough for you to stand out to those looking for you and not so Scouty/Guidey to put people off. Try to use some imagination and work to the union's constraints. In recent years some clubs have set up marquees outside the union, and served hot drinks in exchange for membership.
6. After the fayre you'll have a good idea about interest, so unless you are still on your own follow it up quickly with a few good events. Assuming you are not based in the middle of a national park, an exploration of the local area is a good start, or failing that a meeting in the pub. Try to avoid doing stuff which is expensive for the first meeting like bowling it sounds like a good idea, but might put people off. For the first couple of weeks try and avoid having a formal meeting, unless your union obliges you to. Once a few weeks have gone by, you'll have a good idea about who is going to stay around. This is the time to sit down and twist some arms into running the club. As a general rule a minimum of three is needed (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and anymore than 6 to 8 starts getting complicated.
7. Sort out a bank account, and make sure you're up to date with the SSAGO paperwork. Your union will be able to help more with the account, but you may need to complete section 8 first.
8. Getting recognised by your union is the next step and it can be problematic. There is sometime a problem because a previous Scout and Guide club has ended with someone relieving the bank account of its contents, or similar things, but fortunately after two or three years staff have usually changed and these things are forgotten. You are likely to need to have 20-40 signatures, who need to agree to the formation of the club, but don't always need to join the club. Speak to the Clubs and Society Co-ordinator as they will be able to guide you through the process, failing that speak to the SSAGO Chairperson.
9. If you are successful you may be able to apply for a grant, do so at the earliest opportunity. Depending where you are, it may be possible to offset transport or meeting costs with this or buy new equipment. The amounts vary, but it's always worth trying.
10. Finally come on a SSAGO Rally, where you will meet up with (and be able to steal ideas from) all other clubs nationwide. Allegedly...



Starting a new club

(Taken from the Spring 2001 SSAGO News)

Okay. Starting a club.... Although we had a (sort of) existence here at Heriot-Watt already, that was only useful in that we already had a bank account and were affiliated to the union, so essentially we started over. The following is a combination of what we did and what we would have done, in no particular order... it's a bit long, methinks, but never mind.

- find out how many of your existing uni friends/folk in your hall of residence are Scoutey/Guidey people, and whether they would be interested in a club. You may be worried that the society will turn into a "me-and-my-friends" clique, but don't be!! This is just the beginning... If you can't find anyone else interested, don't give up, there's BOUND to be some others in your uni hiding in the woodwork somewhere - having several folk to start with just makes it easier.

- Send for the bump!! The SSAGO Information Manual has some quite useful stuff in it, just wade through and use what you want.

- get in touch with local Scout and Guide highhedians; some (like ours, an ex-St Andrews member) have SSAGO experience you can use, or a database of volunteers/leaders/ventures/rangers which you can skip through looking for @youruni.ac.uk email addresses or halls of residence addresses. They SHOULD be willing to help, as you will be getting outsiders into the organisation too - some might even offer you money from a development fund.

- call a meeting, inviting everyone you know about who might be interested, and publicising it round the campus and in your local Scout and Guide newsletters. If your union won't pay for photocopying, ask the Scouts/Guides.

- Remember that most folk will want excitement, adventure and really wild things, so push those aspects - OK, you may not have a programme yet, or even a committee, but you will still have an idea of the sort of things you want to do.

- At the meeting, ask for volunteers to be on the committee. If you don't get any, pick some. Ask for suggestions for the programme. Drink some alcohol.

- Get the forms for SSAGO, Scouts, Guides, the bank and the union filled in and out of the way quickly.

- Make up a basic programme for the society's first term - simple stuff to start with, perhaps a regular pub meeting with bowling or something thrown in, and a camp - either your own or someone else's (e.g. Rally).

- Whatever you do, make sure you apply for money from the union to do it.

- Your committee will groan and moan at all the paperwork and boringness of being on a committee (especially if they're all new to the whole committee thing, or (like us) are all 2nd years who have had no involvement with the union...), but remember that you won't have that many meetings, and most forms are a one-off.

- Fresher's Fair. There's no point in pretending you're not an S&G Club in case folk don't think it's cool - you'll just get a pile of folk joining who will never go to stuff.



- Get promo posters and leaflets from the local Scouts/Guides (ours had a whole load of "Join SSAGO" leaflets already - otherwise get some flyers copied with a contact on them).

If people ask "what do you do?" say "EVERYTHING - provided folk want to do it (and it's legal), like camping, hjfw, jajdkifi (insert your own ideas here) - we're the Scout and Guide Club".

- You might get some folk wanting to be leaders or something - write them down anyway and forward their details to your new friend at S/G HQ.

- The new blood will want something good as a first activity - remember how many societies you joined but didn't go to?? In first term you want to have a pile of high profile things happening, also last term (so folk remember to come back next year). Don't neglect the other term(s) though, just remember that you need to get things organised early (to avoid "oh it's the freshers fair - what are we doing this term?" and "oh no finals finals we can't organise anything")

-After a while, get some of the new faces on to the committee. The first lot served their purpose, but if you keep the original folk in for too long it will become that hated "we-were-friends-anyway-and-now-we've-made-a-society" group of which there are far too many.

OK, I know it's hard. We had it lucky - our Scout contact is great, as is the Union's Student Activities Co-ordinator, the Union like giving out cash (a couple of the sabbaticals are Ventures or Leaders), and several of the folk in my halls were Scouts or interested. We're still very much a Scout-based group, but the Guideys have infiltrated and hopefully we'll get more next year; we had 40-odd members after the freshers fair (though we've yet to see quite a few); and on Monday night eighteen of us got drunk together.

Colin Fitch, Heriot-Watt SSAGO

Although the above piece from Colin goes a long way to explaining how one group managed to start off, it is by no means the gospel according to SSAGO. Not all SSAGO groups are beer swilling and Scout orientated, as it is equally as likely to find a Guide orientated group having weekly coffee mornings. There is no tried and tested method here, except to say that you never know what will happen until you try!

As a further pointer, bear in mind that some people out there may not be as comfortable with the fact that people can see they are a Scout/Guide as you are, so having a big flashing sign at freshers fayre may not work that well. Don't deny who you are, but don't go over the top until you get established.



3. Clubs

3.1 Legal Stuff

(Scout Association Policy, Organisation and Rules 2002 Edition – Rule 14.5)

- A. A Student Scout and Guide Club may be formed in a higher education or further education institution.
- B. A Club is recognised through the local Scout and Guide County after its constitution has been approved by the local Scout and Guide Commissioners.
- C. The aim of a Student Scout and Guide Club is to promote a framework within which Scout and Guide and other social activities may take place, ideas may be exchanged, and students may maintain, renew or acquire an interest in the principles of Scouting and Guiding.
- D. The purpose of a Student Scout and Guide Club is:
 - a. to provide a programme of activities for its members whether or not they are Members of the Scout and Guide Movements;
 - b. to create a wider understanding and appreciation of the work of the Scout and Guide Movements, particularly among fellow students, by spreading information and by example;
 - c. to render service, as a Club, to Scouting and Guiding and the community;
 - d. to maintain relationships with the Scout and Guide Movements locally.
- E. Students who wish to establish a Student Scout and Guide Club in a higher education or further education institution must seek the approval of their Students' Union and draw up a constitution, embodying the aim and purpose of a Student Scout and Guide Club.
- F. They must then submit it with a Student Scout and Guide Club Registration Form for approval by the local Scout and Guide Commissioners, who must forward it to their respective Headquarters for registration.
- G. A registered and recognised Club receives Associate Organisation status of The Scout Association and is officially recognised by The Guide Association.
- H. All Student Scout and Guide Clubs must affiliate to the Student Scout and Guide Organisation.
- I. A Club elects its own Committee from among its members and is responsible for the organisation of meetings and planning activities.
- J. A Club is self-financing and is required to pay the annual affiliation fee to the Student Scout and Guide Organisation.
- K. All Student Scout and Guide Clubs must comply with the Camping, Activity and Safety Rules of The Scout and Guide Associations.
- L. A member of a Student Scout and Guide Club who is also a Member of the Scout or Guide Movement may wear the Student Scout and Guide Club Badge on uniform.

There is an equivalent section within the Guiding Manual (available on the Girlguiding UK website) but at the time of going to press it was being rewritten. Needless to say, it covers the same ground as the above bit from POR.



3.2 Programme

(Programme ideas are included in the themes section)

3.2.a Awards

If whilst you are a member of SSAGO, as well as obviously Scout Network or Explorers, you complete your Queen's Scout Award, Queen's Guide Award or Explorer Belt, write a quick email to chair@ssago.org.uk as its very useful for our publicity.

Guide Senior Section

SSAGO is part of the Senior Section, in the sense that if a member of a club can find a Guider willing to invest them they can complete the Senior Section Award programme (Including the Queen's Guide Award) through SSAGO. It may however require an external Guider to authenticate or verify certain sections. Further guidance should be sought from your local District Commissioner or Senior Section Advisor.

Scout Network

SSAGO falls within the age range for Scout Network (i.e. being 18-25 years old) and so members can join the Network as long as they pay the relevant membership subscriptions and complete a CRB/SCRO check. In some cases, Scout Network will put on "taster" events so to enable SSAGO members to see what is on offer – please contact your Scout Network Commissioner to find your nearest Network. However, to take parting the full Scout Network programme the SSAGO member must have paid subscriptions as a Scout Network member either at home or at Uni. Further details about Scout Network can be found from Scoutbase or from local sources.

There is still the possibility for a Scout within SSAGO to complete the Queen's Scout Award, but that again is conditional to being a member of the Network in some way or another.

Explorer Belt

The Explorer Belt is an award for completing an expedition in a group of 3-6 in a foreign country over a minimum of ten days. Its not intended that is in wide country, as interaction with the local population and culture is vital for the award to be completed. SSAGO advertises opportunity periodically for organised events that are designed to allow individuals to complete the award; these have included Poland, Russia, New Zealand and Uganda. To take part in this scheme, SSAGO members must be full members of either the Scout Association or Girlguiding UK, guidance can be gained locally or from Scout HQ. The award is also open to Guides too!

Duke of Edinburgh Scheme

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is an award scheme that is very similar to both the Queen's Scout and Queen's Guide Awards. It's a five-part award (four at Silver and Bronze level), which involves physical recreation, a skill, service, residential experience (Gold only) and expedition (four days and 80km in wild country at Gold). From December 31st 2003 all Scout Counties must have an appointed advisor. If not your local council attached to the Local Education Authority is likely to have a scheme. To take part in this scheme, SSAGO members must be full members of either the Scout Association or Girlguiding UK.



A little warning!!!!

Award programmes and requirement are subject to changes, and this is just intended as a little guide to the main points. If you are intending in undertaking any of the schemes speak to the people who will be administering the awards.

3.2.b Local Involvement

Scouts

SSAGO clubs are the informal responsibility of the County (Area) Scout Network Team. They are instructed to make contact with you and ensure that you are fully supported. Nationally they have all been instructed to be careful when considering working with students, to ensure that they are not upsetting an existing club. This can be avoided if you work with the Scout Network officials, develop a good working relationship (which does not necessarily mean that you become a Network Unit) and fulfil the very few requirements that you are obliged to do (really just CRB). If you are having really major problems with the local (area) Scout Network, or can't contact them send your details to the SSAGO Chair and they'll make enquiries on your behalf.

Guides

SSAGO clubs should liaise with the District/Division Commissioners depending on local circumstance. Some districts/divisions will also have a Senior Section Advisor, that is the person you need to speak to if you have any queries about the programme. At a county level you will be expected to make contact with the Camp Advisor when if you are going abroad, and for certain events within the UK. If you loose contact the regions are the people you need to contact (and HQ will merely put you onto them).

Scotland and Wales

The SSAGO Executive Committee liaise regularly with the Commissioners and professional support based at Gilwell Park, and rarely get the opportunity to work with the other National Scout Councils and Guide regions. For clubs based in Scotland it's worth making contact with the Senior Section Forum and Scout/Guide HQ with details of your club/programme reasonably regularly. This is important because the different legal and education system north of the boarder means that certain issues such as disclosure checks are organised differently. Although there is a separate Welsh Scout Council there is not a separate legal system, so issues will rarely have a separate focus in Wales compared with England, with the exception of the use of the Welsh language.

3.2.c Working with Young People

SSAGO clubs regularly work with young people, both within and without the two movements. The following is merely a few pointers, if you are going to run an event or help with a section, you may need to undertake training or speaking to the local commissioners is an imperative.

The starting point is that all SSAGO members must have a valid CRB (Criminal Records Bureau – England and Wales) / SCRO (Scottish Criminal Records Office)



check (explained in full later). Whilst awaiting disclosure no unsupervised access to young people is allowed.

If you want to help locally, speak to the District Commissioner of the association you wish to get involved with, bearing in mind opportunities for males within Girlguiding UK are limited. They'll be able to guide you towards an appropriate section and group. Speak to the individual in charge of the group, what will you be expected to do and try, make sure you explain that you are a student (holidays and busy times) and try it out for a couple of weeks. A number of members have taken over sections, but for more than a couple of weeks this is strongly discouraged as it creates problems if no additional support can be found, and is not beneficial to the young people involved. There may be opportunities to undertake training, or continue with training you have started back but obviously there is an expectation that you'll stay around longer if they are paying for something.

For service events, the first step is to seek help from experience members from within the organisation. Some SSAGO clubs run large events annually, and they will be more than happy to pass on tips should you ask (details from the SSAGO Chair). Also speak to the commissioners, and support teams you need to convince these people that you can be trusted with other people's children. They'll also be able to offer you support for the event itself, and may be willing to underwrite the cost of the event. Remember that there is legislation related to using minibuses with under 18s, and the consumption of alcohol.

3.2.d SSAGO stuff

SSAGO expects every club to register with us annually (assuming you are still active), get every member to complete CRB, to tell us of any major problems and respond to periodic requests.

Registration is really simple, SSAGO send a form to your permanent address at some point in September. If you have not told us an address, or you have not received a form by the end of September get in touch with the Executive and they'll send you them. We need the name, course, year of study, membership status of the Scout/Guide Association of every member that joins your club (not just active members). Assuming that SSAGO are not waiving the affiliation fee we also need £2 off every member listed on your form. If you want to make the Executive Committee very happy (particularly as they need to process 30+ of these) return the forms as soon as possible and a deadline is listed on the form.

In recent years a number of clubs have let the registration process drag on. HQ have now given guidance on the subject, and once a reasonable period of grace (1 month at most) has elapsed the Executive Committee will be contacting local official with the support of HQ. This is important as affiliation to SSAGO is not optional unless you are also registered as either a Scout Network, Senior Section Unit or Fellowship/Trefoil Guild and even then you can't call yourself a "Student Scout and Guide Club" unless you are affiliated to SSAGO.

CRB is the disclosure process that is now compulsory for all members of the Scout Association aged 18 and above, this will also become compulsory for members of Girlguiding UK as well in the near future. There is obviously a Child Protection issue, which is important where SSAGO is using sites that also have young people present. Also if an incident did occur it would limit the damage to SSAGO if there was a problem.



CRB forms are to be completed by members who are either students and/or normally resident in England or Wales, SCRO forms are to be completed by those who are student and/or normally resident in Scotland. It is important to complete the correct form to be completely covered.

CRB forms need to be completed at some point during the Autumn Term. We suggest that you give them out one week, and arrange for the County Scout Network Commissioner (or someone on his behalf) to come down the following week (or at the next meeting) to verify that details on the form are correct, and that ID presented are sufficient. The County or Area route should be used as these are the people who are dealing with all forms submitted by 18-25 in their patch, so please do not use the DC's, as they do not have the system in place to process these forms, or the Guide Association.

The forms will take a couple of weeks to come back, most will be fine and require no further action. Unfortunately there is likely that once every few years a problem will be flagged up. If such an incident occurs, the extent to which that individual can be involved will be determined by the County Scout Network Commissioner and the individual concerned. Only if there is a total ban should the SSAGO Chairperson be contacted.

N.B. This is a local process that the SSAGO Executive Committee are not involved in. If it becomes apparent that the checks are not being done it is highly likely that SSAGO will be asked to start keeping central records, so please make sure that they are being done.

Problems occasionally happen which involve clubs, such as a dispute with another union. SSAGO would like to know if there is a problem that is not purely internal, i.e. another union. If you would like us to help with any internal disputes, either with in the club or with your own union please ask the SSAGO Chairperson who will see what SSAGO can do.

Communication is really important, as clubs only tend to meet three times a year. Every club is given an email address such as bath@ssago.org.uk, which is redirected to an address of your choice. Please use it for just SSAGO purposes, as a few have been used to sign up for sites of dubious relevance to Scouting and Guiding (which has on occasions caused problems for the whole list). Quite often clubs have these redirected to a central account (which is fine), but ensure that it can be accessed at least once a week during the holidays as very often important information is sent through this route. SSAGO will regularly send emails to the central list, so often you'll be asked to respond with information and rarely just to acknowledge that you are getting emails. If you have not heard from us in a couple of weeks, email the Publicity Officer who'll look into it.

3.2.e Working with your union

Every SSAGO club is obliged to at least to attempt to affiliate to a Student Union or appropriate Student Association. Obviously if they point blank refuse to allow you to affiliate, even when SSAGO has given some assistance, SSAGO is not going to tell you to go away. You'll be asked to periodically make enquiries as to whether the circumstances have changed.

Every union is different. Most are affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS), which will mean that they are influenced to varying degrees by national policy. The



days of Scouting and Guiding being despised by the hard left unions are largely gone, (as have the hard left unions). They however make certain recommendations, such as the colour of your necker may have to be union/university colours and you will probably not be able to impose anything like a uniform or promise (hence the reason why SSAGO is a non-uniformed organisation with no promise to make).

The chances are your union may be able to offer you funding either for things like minibuses, photocopying and occasionally for equipment. If your union does not offer funding, or this is limited as your union have thousands of clubs don't feel aggrieved you are no different from most Scout Networks or Ranger Units. The use of rooms may also be possible at a very small cost.

3.2.f Themes

There are programme themes that consistently arise for clubs. These are *international, adventurous/residential activities, spiritual and programme ideas*.

International

Many clubs will have international members, and this is a challenge to ensure that feel fully part of the clubs. A lot of international students will be in the UK for a semester or a year. They may assistance such as the loan of kit for events, and are expected to complete a CRB/SCRO form. The advice is that members just put their student address, as the Criminal Records Bureau cannot trace international addresses. If it becomes necessary for any reason to actually have a statement that they have no criminal conviction they should contact there countries (or for smaller nation the country which looks after its diplomatic relations in the UK) embassy. A smaller number of members will be in the UK for full length of a degree and these should be encouraged to fully participate with your clubs programme (and teach your some of their songs).

SSAGO is not a member of any international organisation, but there are many similar groups abroad. Back in the midst of time there was a short-lived international organisation, called Co-Co but this folded in the mid 1970s. The organisation has periodic contact with groups from the USA, the Netherlands and the Republic of Ireland. Clubs are asked to drop the SSAGO Chair a quick line if they make contact with any similar groups abroad, even in the countries listed above.

Occasionally the organisation will be invited to send delegations to international events, and these will be publicised on the central list. Alternatively if you are organising your own event you must contact your ACC (International) or County Network Commissioner to get permission, and ensure that your insurance covers you abroad (Normal Scout or Guide Insurance does not).

Adventurous/ Residential Activities

All adventurous activities must be organised according to Joint Activity Rules. Moves have been made by the Scouts of late to change the rules with respect to adventurous activities, but for the time being it is advised to stay within the JAR system (as the new scheme has yet to be enforced totally nationwide). It's also really important that you also check that the activity is not one that is banned. These are riding on inflatables towed behind motorised marine craft (this is in Talking Points May 2003), Paintballing; Laser Quest or hitch hiking. These must NOT be done, as should anything go wrong, no cover would be offered by insurance. It is also no longer a valid defence to make out that "we went as a group of friends" in order to participate in the banned activities.



All residential activities more than four nights in length need to be known about by your Network Commissioner. The form of this notification is the S/ES/SN PC form. These should be submitted at the earliest opportunity to the Network Commissioner and Guide Camp Advisor. Rally venues, and any other building that will be used off the campsite (for 100 people) require approval from the two individuals listed above. The rally organisers at the earliest opportunity should seek this permission. SSAGO will provide a pro-forma for this purpose in the near future.

Spiritual

SSAGO clubs are expected to respect the religious beliefs of individual members. Certain religious beliefs have particular requirements, whether its diet or times of worship these must be respected. The following piece is a set of guidelines put together by SSAGO by which Scouts'/Guides' Owns should be run in order not to offend anyone in any way. They are taken from guidelines published by the Scout Association and Girlguiding UK:

- The Scout Association and Girlguiding UK are open associations. Whilst requiring all Members to make the Promise, which includes 'Duty to God' or 'to Love my God', they do not identify themselves with any one religion. There is no established Church within either Association.
- SSAGO members should be encouraged to take an active part in the religion or faith of their family and community, and for many this involves attendance at an act of worship. Many members have no faith background. In SSAGO they can continue their spiritual journey and it is important that through their membership they have the opportunity to explore their spiritual side without bias or influence.
- The official position of the Scout Association towards faith and beliefs can be found at: <http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/ps/fab/acts/index.htm>. The official position of Girlguiding UK towards religion can be found in The Guiding Manual (3rd Edition - section 13.11)
- The emphasis of a Scouts' and Guides' Own should be on spiritual development as opposed to religious participation.
- Scouts' and Guides' Owns should have a spiritual element, perhaps using material from a variety of different faiths, but without a single faith bias.
- Scouts' and Guides' Owns should provide members with the opportunity to meditate or reflect as well as developing a sense of wonder at 'mountain top moments'.
- SSAGO is a multi-faith organisation, so in a Scouts' and Guides' Own the words God and Lord may be used, but it is advisable not use the words heaven, Jesus, Christ and Church.
- If a group of members from a specific religion want to have a religion-specific gathering, that is acceptable, as long as there is an option that is open and accessible (in terms of language/content) to all.
- Girlguiding UK have the Sharing, Seeking and Searching publications that provide readings and reflections from a number of faith traditions.

Scoutbase publishes songs, prayers, reflections, readings and stories on the internet at:
<http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/ps/fab/acts/index.htm>



Programme Ideas

SSAGO has a website, and a quite trawl through the clubs list will reveal a diverse set of programmes. Alternatively if you have access to the Look Wider File or Network Essentials there are loads of resources. Also you can post a message on the SSAGO Community if you are looking for ideas, or have an idea and are not sure how to do it.

3.2.g Rallies

SSAGO Rallies are the main event where you get to meet other clubs. These are events that are usually weekend camps around the country, and occasionally a long weekend in the summer. Traditionally there are three events, one in the spring, one in the summer and one in the autumn.

The weekend's programme is relatively similar event to event, with the Friday night a traditional opportunity to make new friends and re-engage acquaintances with old one. Sometimes food is provided, but try not to rely on it. Saturday usually starts early, with a treasure hunt or exploration of the local area. Saturday afternoon usually allows everyone to try something new such as water-sports, or something more accustomed to student life such as a pub-crawl. The evening allows everyone to get back together for a barn dance, which is a traditional SSAGO activity. After another campfire people drift to bed, before a slightly later start on Sunday. Depending on the events there is always an opportunity for club reps to meet, and in the spring Sunday morning is traditionally the AGM.

Any club (or group of clubs) can bid for a rally at the AGM – more details available in "How to run a Rally".

3.2.h Indies and Associates

Indies are members of SSAGO without a club, as there is either no club at their university or they don't wish to join an existing club. An Indie Rep and the Members Officer represent them on the national committees. A list of where indies are located is usually circulated once a term, and clubs are encouraged to get them involved where possible.

Associates are non-student members of SSAGO who are generally not attached to a specific club. In some cases, recently graduated members of SSAGO become life members of their union. These members stay on within their club (usually at the discretion of the club committee) as associate members of SSAGO too.

3.3 Accidents

Accidents do happen to the best of us, so it is well worth remembering that should something happens that requires medical attention in any way needs reporting. This should happen in accordance with both Scout and Guide HQs via the SSAGO Exec. Should you need any help on the matter, contact the SSAGO Exec who will point you in the right direction.

4. SSAGO

4.1 Formal bits

SSAGO is the national organisation that clubs, indies and associates belong to. Its organised into three bits; the Executive Committee, Conference and Full Committee.

Executive Committee

The Exec (as it's usually called) runs the organisation day to day, according to the wishes of the Full Committee and Conference, but is also constrained by the wishes of the Scout and Guide Association (and occasionally the law!!).

It consists of five members of the organisation, who were all students at the time of election. Each member has a specific title and responsibilities, so if you need to contact them the table below is a pointer as to who to contact.

| Title | Responsibilities |
|-------------------|--|
| Chairperson | <i>HQ, SAGGA, managing the Exec and acting as a figurehead for the organisation.</i> |
| Secretary | <i>Vice-Chair, produces minutes, keep confidential records and deals with correspondence.</i> |
| Treasurer | <i>Looks after everything in the finance/ insurance (inc Activity Rules) line.</i> |
| Members Officer | <i>Deal with membership enquiries, keeps lists of members & minibus drivers and is the principle contact between clubs and the Exec.</i> |
| Publicity Officer | <i>Looks after the website and sorts out articles for Scouting & Guiding magazines.</i> |

The Exec are also assisted by co-opted individuals who are appointed by the Chairperson to complete a specific task. There is usually one individual but there is nothing to stop there being a team. For example in 2003 SAGGA liaison was split between three individuals, one co-opted on their committee, one looking after publicity and the SSAGO Chair.

| Title | Responsibilities |
|----------------------|--|
| <i>Indie Rep</i> | <i>Represents Indy Members at the Full Committee.</i> |
| <i>Associate Rep</i> | <i>Represent Associate Members at the Full Committee</i> |
| <i>SAGGA Liaison</i> | <i>Liaise with SAGGA.</i> |

If you have a question, don't like what they are doing drop them a line; their phone numbers and email address are circulated periodically. You have an opportunity each term at the rallies to sit down and speech face to face with them, or give them a ring so please try to avoid using public mean of criticism unless they have an opportunity to reply immediately. Alternatively consider standing yourself as any student member



is eligible for standing as a member of the Executive Committee, or you can even propose a motion of no confidence if you can get enough people to agree with you.

Full Committee

The Full Committee is usually known as the reps committee. Each club has one rep who meets with the Exec at each rally. Unless there is something exceptional that comes up, this will meet just at each rally for about an hour (occasionally these will last 10 minutes or over two hours).

The purpose of the meeting is for clubs/indies to raise any issues that are affecting them, in the past these have included CRB or rally organisers asking to put up rally fees as a one-off. Information relevant to clubs and indies will also be raised.

The meeting is usually at some point during the rally when there is a big activity such as silly games going on. Every club is allowed to send one representative to the meeting, indies have an elected representative as do associates. Guests are also invited such as SAGGA, and HQ tries to attend the meetings where possible. If for any reason more of you want to come, speak to the SSAGO Chairperson, and you may be able to come along.

Most clubs now have an individual on their committee responsible for liaising with SSAGO. It's a small job but needs doing well. You need to tell the Members Officer when your contacts changes. Reps are also expected to supply a report about you've been doing to SSAGO prior to each rally (prizes are usually give or humiliation if you can't be bothered).

If at any time you are not sure what is happening ask!!

Conference

This is the AGM, which is called Conference for historical reasons (some clubs used to be able to get money for attending Conference and more than got money for coming to AGMs).

The AGM is usually on the Sunday morning. Its tempting to stay in bed but its really important at least 50 student members get out of bed, otherwise the meeting is not quorate and is postponed. Usually the meeting starts with the outgoing Exec talking about the previous year, you'll be asked to approve the accounts and there may be some motions to approve (or reject).

All that is quite boring, so the interesting bits tend to come towards the end of the meeting with the elections. At every AGM each of the five posts (Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Members Officer and Publicity Officer) are up for election. Also the outgoing Exec also tries to fill the rally slots for four, five and six terms ahead. If you are interested in standing for election, or think your club might want to run a rally have a chat with the Chairperson before the meeting starts, and/or look out for emails from the Exec. Remember you are electing people to run your organisation for the forthcoming year.

Very rarely SSAGO may need to hold a special conference (SGM/EGM) and where possible these are at rallies. In the past these have occasionally been stand-alone meetings but its over ten years since a separate meeting occurred. The Executive admit that the Conferences are very disruptive so try and avoid if at all possible to not have more than one Conference in any year.

5. After SSAGO???

You've graduated; getting five into a three person tent is no longer attractive; you can no longer drink for 48 hours solid; more than two hours sleep becomes a necessity not an optional extra; you've forgotten the second verse to Yogi bear; the freshers were not even born when you started school; you've been to more rallies than you've got toes and fingers; you can remember why the Gaddaffy Plate is called the Gaddaffy Plate; you can remember who the real "Old Gits" actually are; you think "Tie my Kangaroo down sport" is a Rolf Harris song; you've seen snow on a rally; you remember Rannygazoo and what ULALA stood for, so perhaps its time to look at the alternatives.

SSAGO does not actively encourage members to stop coming rallies, but if your membership ceases you lose your automatic right to come to rallies. This is not SSAGO being authoritarian; its to ensure that all those attending are suitably insured, its your responsibility to speak to the SSAGO or Rally chair before the event to ensure that's its alright to come.

SSAGO actively encourages members to join SAGGA and/or Link.

- SAGGA is the Scout and Guide Graduate Association, but a BA (Hons) or PhD is not a requirement of membership merely a willingness to agree to the aims of SAGGA, which are to give skilled service to Scouting and Guiding. For this reason SAGGA rarely use their full title.

SAGGA run an annual alternative rally, which is a smaller rally run by younger members of the association. There is usually a theme and a flexible programme of activities. Other major events are things like GaSciT, which is the camp organised for Scouts and Guides who don't normally get the chance to camp.

Further information is available from sagga@ssago.org.uk or from the SAGGA website (www.sagga.org.uk).

Please note – SSAGO is not recognised by the Scout Association as a group.

- Link is the Link International Fellowship, which is the Trefoil Guild for 18-30s. Membership is open to males and females. The organisation is currently focussed on 4/5 clubs, and the national programme is currently been re-launched.

Further information can be obtained from the link@link-uk.org or the SSAGO Chairperson.

Obviously there are obviously opportunities to get involved with leadership, the Senior Section/ Scout Network or merely have a break from Scouting and Guiding.



6. And finally...

Hopefully by now you should have a pretty good idea about most things you need to know about the successful running of a SSAGO club. Of course that doesn't mean to say that this is a foolproof method to success, as it would have been patented by now and every club in the country would be the same (which is quite a scary thought believe me!). Thus this should be read as a guide, not as a methodology. Your own brand of mindless optimism and charm will no doubt go much further towards the success of your club rather than the contents of this guide...

One of the many charms of SSAGO is that there is no set way of doing things. You can try almost anything (within reason – see earlier) yet just because one activity has proved popular in one club doesn't automatically mean it will be a success elsewhere.

So, all that remains to be said is for you to go and get stuck in and see what happens. Don't be scared of giving things a go, for so long as people like what you are doing within your club you can't go too far wrong. If that is the only useful piece of advice that you gain from reading this guide then you are on the road to success. Not so bad after all was it?

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