

SCHEDULE 7

DEMOCRACY AND STUDENT VOICE FRAMEWORK

Operational Procedures

Made under Article 9 of the MISU Constitution

Approved by Union Council: 24 March 2026

Effective from: 15 June 2026

This Schedule operationalises the Democracy and Student Voice Framework established under Article 9 of the MISU Constitution, setting out structures, procedures, and mechanisms for genuine democratic participation, effective representation, and meaningful accountability.

PART A: LEARNING REPRESENTATIVES

1. Purpose and Role

- 1.1 Learning Representatives provide authentic student voice in academic quality, governance, and strategic institutional committees.
- 1.2 Learning Representatives gather evidence on student learning experience and feed intelligence to Advocacy Officers for institutional advocacy.

2. Number and Appointment

- 2.1 MISU shall appoint 6-7 Learning Representatives covering all faculties, campuses, and programme levels.
- 2.2 Learning Representatives are appointed (not elected) based on programme knowledge, academic standing, communication skills, and commitment.
- 2.3 Appointments take place in August/September through open recruitment managed by MISU staff.
- 2.4 Selection panel comprises: President, General Manager, and at least one other Advocacy Officer. It may include additional members as deemed appropriate.

3. Term and Remuneration

- 3.1 Term: One academic year (September-May).
- 3.2 Payment: Faculty Board Representatives: €1,000 per academic year honorarium (60-80 hours per academic year commitment). Specialist/Strategic Representatives: €650 per academic year honorarium (40-60 hours per year commitment). Payment made in three termly instalments, conditional on 75% meeting attendance and submission of termly reports.
- 3.3 Total term: Approximately 30 weeks per academic year (teaching weeks across both semesters). Hours: Faculty Board Reps work approximately 60-80 hours per academic year Specialist/Strategic Reps work approximately 40-60 hours per academic year. Weekly hours will be determined by individual academic timetables, meeting schedules and representation needs.

4. Core Responsibilities

- 4.1 Attend Faculty Boards and relevant academic committees.
- 4.2 Ensure student representation at Course Boards (attending personally or arranging programme-specific representatives). Learning Representatives shall follow up with programme-specific representatives to ensure updates and feedback is provided.
- 4.3 Gather structured feedback from student cohorts through consultation.

4.4 Submit termly reports to Advocacy Officers identifying themes, concerns, and opportunities.

4.5 Escalate issues requiring institutional advocacy.

5. Training and Support

5.1 Induction training covers governance structures, committee processes, feedback collection methods, and representation skills.

5.2 Regular check-ins with General Manager for coordination and support.

5.3 Regular coordination meetings with all Learning Representatives.

6. *Campus Coverage and Thurles Representation*

6.1 The Advocacy Officer Team shall provide visible and effective representation for students on both the Limerick and Thurles campuses, ensuring that the needs and priorities of each campus are actively understood and addressed.

6.2 Where all three Advocacy Officers are based primarily on the Limerick campus, the Team shall agree clear arrangements to safeguard Thurles representation, which may include the President taking lead responsibility for regular physical presence on the Thurles campus and attendance at key Thurles-based meetings and forums.

6.3 Specific patterns of campus coverage, including visit frequency and key contacts on each campus, shall be agreed collectively at the start of each academic year and reviewed mid-year, in consultation with the General Manager.

PART B: STUDENT COMMUNITY ORGANISERS

7. Purpose and Role

- 7.1 Student Community Organisers build relationships with students, surface priorities, support student-led campaigns, and ensure those who face barriers to participation are heard.
- 7.2 Student Community Organisers are the primary interface between students and the democratic structures, conducting continual listening and helping catalyse action.

8. Number and Appointment

- 8.1 MISU shall employ 4 Student Community Organisers. MISU could, in the future, decide to employ more than 4 Student Community Organisers, depending on the success and capacity of the organising team.
- 8.2 At least 1 Student Community Organiser shall be appointed to Thurles campus.
- 8.3 Student Community Organisers are appointed (not elected) based on interpersonal skills, organizing capability, and commitment.
- 8.4 Appointments take place in August/September through open recruitment.
- 8.5 Selection panel comprises: President, General Manager, and may include external organizing expertise.

9. Term and Remuneration

- 9.1 Term: One academic year (September-May).
- 9.2 Payment: €14.85 per hour, approximately 8-10 hours per week. Payment is conditional on submission of monthly activity reports and adherence to role responsibilities. Any increase in hourly rate will be considered by the MISU Management Board in line with available funding.
- 9.3 Total employment: approximately 30 weeks per academic year.

10. Core Responsibilities

- 10.1 Conduct one-to-one conversations and relationship-building with students across campus.
- 10.2 Identify patterns in student concerns and emerging issues.
- 10.3 Monitor the online petition platform and respond to submissions within 48 hours.
- 10.4 Assess genuine student energy around issues using established criteria.
- 10.5 Convene and support Campaign Teams around high-energy issues.

- 10.6 Provide weekly written updates to Advocacy Officers on student priorities and campaign progress.

11. Training and Support

- 11.1 Intensive training covering community organizing methodology, one-to-one conversation skills, campaign strategy, and boundaries.
- 11.2 Weekly team meetings for coordination and peer learning.
- 11.3 Monthly supervision with General Manager.

PART C: UNION FACILITATOR

12. Purpose and Role

- 12.1 The Union Facilitator is a trained student staff member responsible for facilitating democratic meetings including the Student Confidence Conference and Democratic Procedures Committee.
- 12.2 The Union Facilitator ensures fair process, effective deliberation, and neutral chairing of democratic forums.

13. Appointment and Term

- 13.1 The Union Facilitator is appointed by the General Manager following open recruitment.
- 13.2 Selection criteria include: facilitation skills, impartiality, understanding of democratic processes, and availability.
- 13.3 Term: One academic year (September-May), renewable.
- 13.4 Payment: Hourly rate based on minimum wage (€14.15 per hour as of 2026, with typical session being 3-4 hours) plus training (as per section 14) and preparation time.

14. Responsibilities

- 14.1 Chair Student Confidence Conference sessions.
- 14.2 Chair Democratic Procedures Committee meetings.
- 14.3 Ensure fair participation and adherence to meeting procedures.
- 14.4 Manage time effectively during sessions.
- 14.5 Support synthesis of recommendations and conclusions.
- 14.6 Remain impartial and not influence outcomes.
- 14.7 Determine whether sufficient attendance exists for meaningful democratic accountability where no strict quorum applies.

15. Training and Support

- 15.1 Comprehensive training in facilitation techniques, deliberative democracy, and sortition processes.
- 15.2 Ongoing support from General Manager.
- 15.3 Access to external facilitation resources and development.

PART D: STUDENT CONFIDENCE CONFERENCE

16. Purpose

- 16.1 The Student Confidence Conference is the primary accountability mechanism holding the Advocacy Officer Team accountable for performance, delivery, and responsiveness to student concerns.
- 16.2 The Conference provides structured opportunity for ordinary students to scrutinise officer work, ask questions, and determine whether officers retain student confidence.

17. Composition and Frequency

- 17.1 The Conference comprises 20-30 students selected by sortition (random selection) from the general membership.
- 17.2 Students selected for the Student Confidence Conference are not eligible to serve on the Democratic Procedures Committee during the same academic year.
- 17.3 The Conference meets twice per academic year:
- First meeting: November or December (mid-year review)
 - Second meeting: April or May (end-of-year review)
- 17.4 Each Conference session lasts 3-4 hours.

18. Sortition Selection Process

- 18.1 All students shall be invited to opt into the sortition pool at the start of each academic year and before each Conference.
- 18.2 Invitation methods include:
- Email to all students
 - Campus promotion and information sessions
 - Online form for registration
- 18.3 Students opting in must confirm:
- (i) They are available on the proposed Conference date
 - (ii) They can commit approximately 8 hours (prep time plus session)
 - (iii) They understand the role and responsibilities
- 18.4 Random selection shall be conducted by the General Manager using verifiable randomisation methodology.
- 18.5 Selection shall be stratified to ensure proportional representation across:
- Campus (Limerick/Thurles)

- Level of study (undergraduate/postgraduate)
- Faculty

18.6 Reserve participants (5-10) shall be selected in case of withdrawals.

18.7 Selected students shall be contacted at least 3 weeks before the Conference date.

18.8 Students may decline participation without penalty.

19. Pre-Conference Preparation

19.1 Advocacy Officers shall submit written reports 2 weeks before the Conference covering:

- (i) Objectives set at start of term/year
- (ii) Actions taken and progress made
- (iii) Outcomes achieved
- (iv) Challenges encountered
- (v) Plans for remainder of term/year

19.2 MISU staff shall prepare an evidence pack including:

- Summary of issues raised via online petition platform
- Campaign outcomes and student feedback
- Committee attendance records
- Student satisfaction data
- Learning Representative and Student Community Organiser reports

19.3 Conference participants receive all materials 1 week before the session.

19.4 A briefing session (1 hour, optional but encouraged) shall be held for participants to:

- Understand the Conference process
- Ask clarifying questions about materials
- Understand their role and powers

20. Conference Session Procedure

20.1 The session shall be chaired by the Union Facilitator.

20.2 The Union Facilitator shall determine whether sufficient attendance exists for meaningful accountability. There is no strict quorum requirement.

20.3 Session structure:

20.3.1 Part 1: Officer Presentations (45 minutes)

- Each Advocacy Officer presents verbally (15 minutes each)
- Summary of work, achievements, challenges, and plans

20.3.2 Part 2: Question and Answer (60-90 minutes)

- Participants ask questions of officers
- Officers respond directly and honestly
- Union Facilitator ensures fair opportunity for all participants

20.3.3 Part 3: Private Deliberation (45-60 minutes)

- Officers leave the room
- Participants discuss officer performance in facilitated small groups
- Key themes and concerns identified

20.3.4 Part 4: Recommendations Development (30-45 minutes)

- Participants develop concrete recommendations for improvement
- Union Facilitator helps synthesise and refine

20.3.5 Part 5: Confidence Vote (15 minutes)

- Secret ballot on whether Conference has confidence in each officer
- Question: "Do you have confidence that [Officer Name] is effectively representing students?"
- Options: Yes / No / Abstain

20.3.6 Part 6: Feedback to Officers (30 minutes)

- Officers return
- Union Facilitator presents recommendations
- Confidence vote results shared
- Officers have opportunity to respond

20.4 The entire session shall be recorded (audio) for transparency and record-keeping.

20.5 A written summary shall be published within 5 college days.

21. Confidence Vote Outcomes

21.1 An officer maintains confidence if they receive "Yes" votes from more than 50% of participants (excluding abstentions).

21.2 If an officer does not maintain confidence:

(i) At the first Conference of the year: Conference issues specific improvement recommendations; officer receives formal warning from MISU Management Board; progress reviewed at second Conference.

(ii) At the second Conference of the year (or if confidence lost at both Conferences): Motion of no confidence may be triggered under Schedule 8, Section 21.

21.3 Confidence vote results and recommendations shall be published publicly.

22. Officer Response Requirements

- 22.1 Advocacy Officers must respond formally in writing to all Conference recommendations within 2 weeks.
- 22.2 Responses must address:
- Which recommendations will be implemented
 - How and when they will be implemented
 - Which recommendations cannot be implemented and why
 - Any alternative approaches proposed
- 22.3 Responses shall be published alongside Conference report.
- 22.4 Implementation progress shall be monitored by MISU Management Board.

23. Participant Remuneration and Support

- 23.1 Conference participants shall be paid €40 per session via gift card
- 23.2 Participants serving for the full academic year (both November/December and April/May sessions) receive €40 per session (€80 total for the year).
- 23.3 Travel expenses for reasonable costs shall be reimbursed for students travelling from Thurles campus.
- 23.4 Refreshments shall be provided during the session.
- 23.5 Participants may request support from MISU staff before, during, or after the Conference.

PART E: DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES COMMITTEE

24. Purpose and Authority

- 24.1 The Democratic Procedures Committee (DPC) provides governance oversight and has authority to amend the Schedules of this Constitution.
- 24.2 The DPC reviews effectiveness of democratic and governance structures and makes recommendations for continuous improvement.
- 24.3 Under Article 9.5.3, the DPC has constitutional authority to amend Schedules without referendum.

25. Composition and Term

- 25.1 The DPC comprises 12-15 students selected by sortition from the general membership.
- 25.2 Students selected for the Democratic Procedures Committee are not eligible to serve on the Student Confidence Conference during the same academic year.
- 25.3 Members serve for one academic year (September-May).
- 25.4 The DPC meets 3-4 times per year as required.

26. Sortition Selection for DPC

- 26.1 Selection process follows similar methodology to Student Confidence Conference (Sections 18.1-8.8).
- 26.2 Students opt into sortition pool in August/September.
- 26.3 Selection is stratified for representativeness across campus, level, and faculty.
- 26.4 Selected students commit to attending 3-4 meetings during the year.
- 26.5 Reserve members selected to cover absences.

27. Powers and Functions

- 27.1 The DPC shall:
 - (i) Review effectiveness of democracy and governance structures
 - (ii) Receive and consider proposals for Schedule amendments
 - (iii) Oversee fairness of democratic processes
 - (iv) Make recommendations for continuous improvement
 - (v) Deliberate on constitutional or procedural questions
- 27.2 The DPC has authority to amend Schedules 1-10 of the Constitution.

- 27.3 The DPC does NOT have authority to amend the Articles of the Constitution (requires referendum).

28. Meeting Procedures

- 28.1 DPC meetings shall be chaired by the Union Facilitator.
- 28.2 Quorum: 8 members (2/3 of committee if 12 members, or simple majority if 15 members).
- 28.3 Meetings shall follow deliberative process:
- Issue presentation and briefing materials provided in advance
 - Structured discussion in small groups
 - Facilitated whole-group deliberation
 - Decision-making by vote where necessary
- 28.4 MISU staff provide administrative support and briefing materials.
- 28.5 Advocacy Officers may be invited to present or answer questions but are not voting members.

29. Schedule Amendment Procedure

- 29.1 Proposals for Schedule amendments may originate from:
- (i) The Democratic Procedures Committee itself
 - (ii) The Advocacy Officer Team
 - (iii) The MISU Management Board
 - (iv) A petition of members (threshold as specified in Schedule 2)
- 29.2 Proposal submission requirements:
- Written proposal clearly identifying which Schedule(s) and section(s) require amendment
 - Rationale explaining why amendment is necessary
 - Draft amended text
 - Assessment of impact on other provisions
- 29.3 Upon receipt of a proposal, the General Manager shall:
- (i) Circulate to all DPC members
 - (ii) Prepare briefing materials
 - (iii) Obtain legal review where necessary
 - (iv) Schedule DPC meeting within 4 weeks
- 29.4 DPC deliberation process:

- Proposer presents rationale (if present)
- Q&A and discussion
- Consideration of alternatives
- Assessment of implications
- Refinement of proposed text if needed
- Vote on whether to approve amendment

29.5 Voting requirements:

- A 2/3 majority of members present is required to approve a Schedule amendment
- Quorum must be met

29.6 If approved by DPC:

- (i) Amendment undergoes legal review (if not already completed)
- (ii) Public notice given to student membership (minimum 10 college days)
- (iii) Amendment takes effect on date specified (typically start of next academic term)

29.7 DPC decisions on Schedule amendments are final and not subject to veto.

29.8 A record of all Schedule amendments shall be maintained by the General Manager and published annually.

30. Remuneration and Support

30.1 DPC members shall be paid €30 via gift card per meeting attended (including preparation time).

30.2 Travel expenses for reasonable costs shall be reimbursed for Thurles students.

30.3 Training provided at start of term covering role, powers, constitutional framework, and deliberative methods.

PART F: PARTICIPATION CHANNELS

31. Online Petition Platform

31.1 Purpose

31.1.1 MISU shall maintain a digital platform enabling all students to raise issues, support others' initiatives, and engage in democratic participation.

31.1.2 The platform provides a low-barrier channel for students to surface concerns and mobilise around issues without procedural gatekeeping.

31.2 Core Functions

31.2.1 Students may submit issues at any time.

31.2.2 Students may show support for issues raised by others.

31.2.3 Students may volunteer to participate in Campaign Teams.

31.2.4 Issue status is tracked and publicly visible.

32. Campaign Teams

32.1 Purpose

32.1.1 Campaign Teams are student-led, issue-specific groups supported by Student Community Organisers to campaign for change on matters surfaced through the online petition platform or direct student engagement.

32.2 Formation

32.2.1 When a Student Community Organiser identifies HIGH ENERGY around an issue:

- (i) Student Community Organiser contacts all students who volunteered to help
- (ii) Initial meeting convened (in-person or online) within 1 week
- (iii) Student Community Organiser facilitates meeting to map issue, identify goals, and plan action
- (iv) Students who attend become Campaign Team members

32.2.2 Campaign Teams may also form organically from student initiative, with Student Community Organiser support provided upon request.

32.3 Operation

32.3.1 Campaign Teams are student-led; Student Community Organisers facilitate and support but do not lead.

32.3.2 Typical Campaign Team activities include:

- Evidence gathering (surveys, testimonials, data collection)

- Research (precedents, policies, best practice)
- Demand formulation (what specifically needs to change)
- Campaign planning (tactics, timeline, responsibilities)
- Mobilization (engaging broader student body)
- Advocacy (presentations to decision-makers)

32.3.3 Student Community Organiser support includes:

- Meeting facilitation
- Campaign strategy advice
- Connection to resources (space, materials, communications)
- Skills training (organizing, advocacy, media)
- Liaison with Advocacy Officers and institutional partners

32.3.4 Campaign Teams have access to MISU resources including meeting spaces, printing, communications channels, and small campaign budgets (up to €150 per campaign, approved by General Manager and in line with MISU's constitution).

32.4 Escalation to Institutional Advocacy

32.4.1 When a Campaign Team has gathered evidence and formulated demands, Student Community Organiser connects them with relevant Advocacy Officer(s).

32.4.2 Campaign Team presents evidence and proposals to Advocacy Officers.

32.4.3 Advocacy Officers determine appropriate institutional forum (Faculty Board, Academic Council, Governing Authority, senior management) and commit to advocacy action.

32.4.4 Campaign Team may continue campaigning while institutional advocacy proceeds.

32.4.5 Advocacy Officers report back to Campaign Team on progress and outcomes.

32.5 Duration and Conclusion

32.5.1 Campaign Teams are time-limited, typically operating for 4-12 weeks.

32.5.2 Campaign Teams conclude when:

- (i) Issue is resolved or substantive progress achieved
- (ii) Student energy dissipates
- (iii) Issue escalated to institutional processes requiring extended timeline

32.5.3 Upon conclusion, Student Community Organiser updates online petition platform with outcome and lessons learned.

32.5.4 Campaign Team members may choose to remain involved in monitoring implementation or transition to new issues.

32.6 Documentation and Learning

32.6.1 Student Community Organisers maintain records of all Campaign Teams including membership, activities, outcomes.

32.6.2 Case studies of successful campaigns documented and shared to build organizing capacity.

32.6.3 Campaign Team effectiveness reviewed annually as part of Framework review.

PART G: REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

33. Annual Review

33.1 The Advocacy Officer Team shall conduct annual review of the Framework covering:

- Participation levels and demographics
- Issues raised and outcomes achieved
- Effectiveness of accountability mechanisms
- Student, Learning Representative, and Student Community Organiser feedback
- Recommendations for improvement

33.2 Review findings reported to:

- Student membership (public report)
- MISU Management Board
- College Governing Authority

33.3 Annual review informs Schedule amendments and operational refinements.

34. Amendment of this Schedule

34.1 This Schedule may be amended by the Democratic Procedures Committee in accordance with Section 29.

34.2 Proposed amendments shall be subject to consultation with affected parties and legal review where necessary.

34.3 Amendments shall not take effect during ongoing processes (e.g., mid-Conference cycle).

35. Cross-References

35.1 Loss of confidence procedures and vote of no confidence are addressed in Schedule 9 (Disciplinary and Accountability Procedures).

35.2 Elections to any positions established under this Framework are conducted in accordance with Schedule 10 (Electoral Procedures).

35.3 Referendum procedures are set out in Schedule 2.

Schedule 7: Democracy and Student Voice Framework - Operational Procedures

Adopted: 4 March 2026

Effective: 15 June 2026