

**RGU: NIGHTLINE CONSTITUTION**

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**N.B.** When reading this document electronically it is possible to go straight to a section by holding the “Ctrl” key on the keyboard and left clicking that heading on the contents page with the mouse.

# PREAMBLE

* 1. **Introduction**
		1. The name of the Incorporated Body of Robert Gordon University Student Associationshall be “RGU: Student Nightline”, hereafter termed “RGU: Nightline”
	2. **Aims**
		1. To provide an anonymous, confidential, non-judgemental, non-directive and non-advisory, listening and information telephone service for students in Robert Gordon University every night of University term
		2. To provide an anonymous, confidential, non-judgemental, non-directive and non-advisory, listening and information e-mail and instant messaging service to those who cannot, or do not wish to contact us by phone
		3. To provide a confidential, non-judgemental, non-directive and non-advisory face-to-face drop-in listening and information session on weekdays during University of Robert Gordon term-time
		4. To ensure that every student in Robert Gordon University knows that Nightline exists and what services we offer
		5. To provide support to and foster the personal development of student volunteers, through training and experience of taking calls
	3. **Objectives**
		1. To provide a comprehensive training course each semester, which is open to all students of Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen University and North East College, to ensure that they are fully trained telephone operators.
		2. To actively publicise all aspects of the service and to continually seek to expand and improve publicity
		3. To actively develop the personal transferable skills of Nightline volunteers through meetings, workshops, training, mentoring and support
		4. To Elect a Co-ordinating Team that is responsible for the overall running of Nightline
		5. To ensure that there are enough volunteers in order that the phone lines are staffed seven days a week, every night of term
		6. To ensure e-mails are answered within 48 hours during university term time
		7. To have a support team, facilitated by an elected Support Co-ordinator, which provides support and information for volunteers
		8. To have organisational socials at least once a term and to actively encourage regular owl group socials
		9. To foster relations with Aberdeen University and North East College to ensure that volunteers are recruited and that publicity is displayed
1. To maintain and improve links with other Nightlines and to work with the Nightline Association

# GENERAL REGULATIONS

* 1. **Regulations**
		1. At all meetings of Nightline, the chair shall have the casting vote
		2. At all meetings of Nightline each member shall have only one vote
		3. All motions to meetings shall require a simple majority except where otherwise stated in this constitution
		4. Standing Orders may be suspended by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a quorate meeting
	2. **Quorum**
		1. The quorum for all Nightline Co-ordinating Team meetings is at least half of the members elected to that body
		2. The quorum for an Annual General Meeting or Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM) is one-third or twenty of the members of Nightline, whichever is the lesser
		3. The quorum for the Disciplinary Appeals committee is two-thirds of the Co-ordinating Team
	3. **Interpretation of the Constitution**
		1. The RGU: Nightline Internal Co-ordinator shall interpret the constitution and policy documents where necessary
		2. In the event of a dispute arising over the interpretation, a final decision shall be taken by the Robert Gordon University Union appointed development co-ordinator for RGU: Nightline in conjunction with who best they see fit.
		3. Proposed amendments to RGU: Nightline Constitution must be approved by the Nightline Co-ordinating Team and by Nightline members at an AGM or EGM in addition to the Activities Exec. and the relevant development co-ordinator within Robert Gordon University Union

# MEMBERSHIP

* 1. **Members**
		1. All members shall be Student Ordinary Members of: Robert Gordon University Union
		2. Members of Student Unions other than Robert Gordon University may become associate members
		3. Associate members are permitted to volunteer with the Nightline but do not have the privileges of members
		4. Membership is only granted on completion of the Nightline training course, completion of a provisional duty under the supervision of an experienced member and after signing a volunteer agreement to uphold the Nightline constitution
		5. Any member may be suspended from Nightline membership, for any period, by a decision of the Nightline Disciplinary Committee
		6. If any volunteer misses three meetings within an academic year without submitting adequate apologies then they will be deemed in contempt of Nightline and may be requested to attend a disciplinary hearing
		7. Returning members may volunteer only for a period of up to one year after they have ceased to be a university student
	2. **Privileges of members**
		1. To attend and speak at all meetings of Nightline
		2. To speak at general meetings of Nightline
		3. To vote at all general meetings of Nightline and in all Nightline elections
		4. To stand for election and hold a position on the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		5. The only exception to 3.2.4. is that due to the nature and importance of the role, in order to stand for election for the position of Support Co-ordinator the standing volunteer must have completed at least three support duties.

# GENERAL MEETINGS

* 1. **Convocation for Annual General Meetings**
		1. The AGM shall be held each year between the start of March and start of May, subject to ratification by the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		2. Notice of the AGM shall be given at least 14 working days before the meeting
		3. All business must be submitted to the RGU: Nightline Secretary at least 7 working days before the meeting and must be published in the agenda
		4. The agenda must be published at least 5 working days before the meeting and must be made generally available
		5. Amendments to the published agenda must be submitted to the RGU: Nightline internal Co-ordinator no later than 3 working days before the meeting, and must be published at least 1 working day before the meeting
	2. **Convocation for Extra-ordinary General Meetings**
		1. An EGM can be requested by a two-thirds vote in favour by the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		2. The date of the meeting shall be decided by the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		3. The agenda for an EGM shall be restricted to the motion or business for which the meeting was called, and such a motion or business must be clearly defined in the request
	3. **Convocation for Regular Volunteer Meetings**
		1. A meeting of all volunteers must take place at least once per term
		2. All business must be submitted to the RGU: Nightline Secretary at least 3 working days before the meeting and must be published in the agenda
		3. Business may be submitted by any member of RGU: Nightline

# STANDING ORDERS FOR GENERAL MEETINGS

* 1. **General Standing Orders**
		1. No member can be excluded from the meeting, nor any part of it, unless they have been suspended
		2. Should a meeting be inquorate, any member can move that the meeting be adjourned and/or reconvened
		3. A reconvened meeting shall be held within 3 working days or when a venue becomes available
		4. All business must appear on the agenda
	2. **Standing Orders for Annual General Meetings**
		1. As in 5.1 except the following shall be the Order of Business at the Annual General Meeting
		2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting together with any minutes of any Extra-ordinary General Meetings that have occurred since the previous Annual General Meeting for ratification as a true and accurate record of those meetings
		3. Matters arising out of these minutes
		4. Nightline Co-ordinating team reports for the previous term
		5. Financial reports for the previous term
		6. Business submitted by the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		7. Business submitted by Nightline members
	3. **Standing Orders for Extra-ordinary General Meetings**
		1. As in 5.1 except the business shall be restricted to the motion of business for which the meeting was called
	4. **Standing Orders for Regular Volunteer Meetings**
		1. As in 5.1

# NIGHTLINE CO-ORDINATING TEAM

* 1. **Nightline Co-ordinating Team**
		1. The Nightline Co-ordinating Team runs the affairs of RGU: Nightline and events
	2. **Composition**
		1. No member can hold more than one seat concurrently on the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		2. A session shall run from the Annual General Meeting in one year to the Annual General Meeting in the following year
	3. **Co-ordinating Team Members**
		1. Nightline Chair
		2. Treasurer & Fundraising Co-ordinator
		3. Secretary
		4. Training Co-ordinator (up to two)
		5. Support Co-ordinator
		6. Rota Secretary (up to two)
		7. Publicity Co-ordinator (up to two)
		8. Information officer
		9. Social Secretary
	4. **Convocation of Nightline Co-ordinating Team Meetings**
		1. Meetings shall take place weekly, during term time on a day decided by the Co-ordinating Team
		2. The agenda must be available from the Secretary, within 24 hours before the meeting
		3. Business for the co-ordinating team meeting should be submitted with more than 24 hours’ notice where practicable
	5. **Convocation of Extraordinary Nightline Co-ordinating Team Meetings**
		1. Meetings shall take place within three working days of being called by at least one third of the Nightline Co-ordinating Team members
		2. The motion or business for which the meeting is being called must be clearly specified to Co-ordinating Team members, and the agenda shall be limited to that motion or business
		3. The agenda for Extraordinary Meetings shall be made available at least two working days before the meeting takes place
	6. **Duties of the Nightline Co-ordinating Team**
		1. To oversee the running of Nightline
		2. To form and enforce policy on the activities of Nightline, subject to the rulings of a quorate Annual General Meeting
		3. To promote and develop the Nightline service and its volunteers
	7. **Powers of the Nightline Co-ordinating Team**
		1. To delegate any of its powers, retaining the right of ultimate decision making
		2. To nominate Nightline members to serve on various bodies which act to promote and maintain the Nightline service
		3. To have the final decision regarding the administration of its resources, subject to the rulings of Robert Gordon University Union
		4. To pass motions of no confidence in such officers as it is empowered to elect, and to refer such officers to the Nightline Disciplinary Committee
		5. To submit business to General Meetings
		6. To submit inclusions to the budget to the Treasurer/Fundraiser
		7. To approve the budget at the beginning of each academic year
		8. To examine Nightline’s finances once a month.
		9. At least two cash office inducted members must give their approval to any expenditure by another cash office inducted member where the expenditure is over £100. This must then be brought to the attention of the full team at the next meeting
		10. To co-opt ordinary Nightline members onto the Co-ordinating Team as acting officers, should a position become vacant during the term, until the AGM
	8. **Duties of all Nightline Co-ordinating Team Members**
		1. To keep details of meetings confidential, outside the organisation and within, if deemed necessary
		2. To attend all meetings of the organisation for the duration of the meeting, or sending apologies in advance.
		3. To carry out all duties detailed in their individual job descriptions
		4. To ensure that all spending is approved by a committee motion prior to purchasing where practicable. In cases where this is not possible then expenses must be discussed with committee before filed for claim
	9. **Discipline of Nightline Co-ordinating Team Members**
		1. If any member could not or cannot carry out their duties, they must present their apologies to the next meeting
		2. If a member presents no apology, then they will be deemed to be in contempt of the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		3. Members who are in contempt of the Nightline Co-ordinating Team three times in a session shall be deemed to have resigned from the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
	10. **Attendance at Nightline Co-ordinating Team Meetings**
		1. Nightline Coordinating Team meetings shall be open to all members of Nightline, and they shall have speaking rights
		2. Every Co-ordinating team position shall have equal voting rights
		3. Should a confidential item of business arise, Nightline members may be asked to leave the room for the duration of that item

# STANDING ORDERS FOR NIGHTLINE CO-ORDINATING TEAM MEETINGS

* 1. **General Standing Orders**
		1. The Nightline Internal Co-ordinator shall chair all Nightline meetings, unless otherwise stated in the constitution
		2. If the Chair is ceded, it shall be taken by the External Co-ordinator
		3. All business must appear on the agenda excepting Any Other Business
	2. **Standing Orders for Nightline Co-ordinating Team Meetings**
		1. As in 7.1 except the following shall be the order of business at meetings of the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		2. Minutes of the previous Co-ordinating Team meeting for ratification as a true and accurate record of that meeting
		3. Matters arising out of these minutes
		4. Apologies, Correspondence and Questions
		5. Business submitted to the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
		6. News Update
		7. Any Other Business
	3. **Standing Orders for Extraordinary Nightline Co-ordinating Team Meetings**
		1. As in 7.1 except the business shall be restricted to the motion or business for which the meeting was called

# DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

* 1. **Composition**
		1. At least three of the below, as determined by the Nightline Chair
			1. Nightline Chair
			2. Nightline Training Co-ordinator(s)
			3. Additional Co-ordinating team member(s) if necessary
	2. **Convocation**
		1. The Nightline Chair shall chair all meetings unless otherwise delegated
		2. Quorum is all the elected members of the Disciplinary Committee
		3. If one of the elected members of the Disciplinary Committee is absent for any reason, the Disciplinary Committee are able to delegate the position to a member of the Nightline Committee.
		4. If more than one person is absent from the Disciplinary Committee, the disciplinary procedure is to be delayed by one week.
		5. The Disciplinary Committee chair shall call a meeting within seven days of a complaint being submitted in written form
		6. If a member of the Disciplinary Committee is involved in the case, that member shall not sit on the committee but be replaced by another member of the Co-ordinating Team, chosen at random, and unconnected with the case
	3. **Duties**
		1. To have jurisdiction over Nightline members
		2. To report all decisions of the Disciplinary Committee to the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
	4. **Powers**
		1. To suspend any member from any or all privileges of Nightline membership, for any period of time
	5. **Procedures**
		1. Any member of Nightline may bring charges against any other member of Nightline, these should be submitted in written form
		2. If more than one charge is brought, all the charges shall be considered together
		3. The accused shall be informed of:

a) The section of the constitution under which they are being charged

b) The factual details of the charge

c) The action the Disciplinary Committee has decided to take

d) The appeals procedure

* + 1. At the meeting the Chair, or an individual appointed by the chair, will inform the Committee of the details of the complaint
		2. Disciplinary Committee shall reach its verdict by simple majority. In the event of a tied vote, the chair will have the casting vote
		3. During informal discussion, the accused will be allowed to respond to the complaint
		4. All discussion will be documented for further reference by a designated

 secretary

* 1. **Breaches of Good Order**
		1. To disclose any confidential information about the Nightline service, its volunteers or any of its callers
		2. To abuse the Nightline service in any way
		3. Disrespectful behaviour towards or harassment of other Nightline members

# DISCIPLINARY APPEALS COMMITTEE

* 1. **Composition**
		1. All members of the Nightline Co-ordinating Team
	2. **Convocation**
		1. The Disciplinary Appeals Committee shall be convened within five days of the receipt of an appeal against the verdict of a hearing of the Disciplinary Committee, by the member originally involved in the relevant hearing
	3. **Duties**
		1. To hear appeals by any Nightline member found guilty of a breach of good order
		2. To submit minutes to the next scheduled Nightline Co-ordinating Team meeting for ratification
	4. **Powers**
		1. To reverse, sustain or amend any decision of the Disciplinary Committee
	5. **Procedures**
		1. An appeal must be submitted in written form within seven days of the original hearing
		2. If more than one charge was brought against the member accused, the appeals shall be heard together
		3. Any new evidence, produced by the member accused, shall be considered
		4. It shall be the responsibility of the Nightline Chairensure that the Disciplinary Appeals Committee, the complainant and the member accused, are provided with minutes of the Disciplinary Committee meeting
		5. If a member of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee is involved in the charge, that member shall not sit on the Committee

# ELECTIONS

* 1. **General Rules for Nightline Elections**
		1. The chair of the elections shall be the Nightline Chair
		2. No member shall have more than one vote
		3. Re-open nominations will be a candidate and if elected, then another election shall be held
		4. The count for an election shall commence when polling is complete, conducted by the Returning officer
		5. The results of an election will be displayed in the Nightline Office by 2pm the following day
	2. **Rules for Committee Elections**
		1. Elections for the positions of the Nightline Co-ordinating Team shall be held at the Annual General Meeting
		2. Positions shall be won by a simple majority vote
		3. The Returning officer should be a member of the Co-ordinating Team who is not standing for re-election. This person is elected at the Co-ordinating Team meeting immediately prior to the AGM

# POLICIES

**11.1 Policy Documents to be held by Robert Gordon University Nightline**

11.1.1.Equal Opportunities Policy

11.1.2. Confidentiality Policy

11.1.3. Telephone Policies

 11.1.4. Training Manual(s)

 11.1.5. Volunteer Policy (including personal information storage procedures)

 11.1.6. Committee role descriptions

**11.2 Rules for the use of Policy documents**

 11.2.1. Policy documents must be used in all situations in which they are applicable

11.2.2. Failure of a volunteer to use the a policy where it is applicable may result in a disciplinary hearing

**11.3 Storage and viewing of Policy documents**

 11.3.1.All polices shall be stored in a secure location in the Nightline Telephone office where they can be easily found for viewing by volunteers

11.3.2.A volunteer has the right to request to view any of the aforementioned policy documents