

Charter Revision

Proposal 3

SFS



Covering letter

Proposal 3: Charter Revision

The Board proposes amendments to the Charter. The amendments are of various kinds and are generally based on previous years' discussions and previous Board assignments. The Board has chosen not to proceed with proposals earlier out of respect for the length of the General Assembly meeting. This year, however, the Board considers that the time has come to review the Charter.

The Board has taken note of previous years' discussions, proposals for amendments and proposals in auditor's reports, etc. Support for the proposals for the current financial year was expressed at a digital members' meeting in December and at the physical meeting in February. The Board has taken into account the member unions' comments as well as contributions from other parts of the organisation such as auditors, the Election Committee and committees.

The various proposals are commented on below.

Headquarters of the organisation

The Board proposes that the headquarters of the organisation be established in the Charter. There are currently no legal requirements for this, but the Board considers that it may be appropriate to establish the headquarters. The Board proposes that the headquarters of the organisation continue to be in Stockholm. The SFS office is located in Stockholm and the lion's share of the advocacy work requires a presence in Stockholm. The proposal does not exclude the possibility of carrying out activities elsewhere. Employees and elected representatives can work and carry out their tasks remotely and SFS's activities affect several parts of the country. The proposal has no consequences for SFS's activities and organisation.

Name of the organisation

According to established practice, the name of the organisation in English is **Swedish National Union of Students**. After discussion and analysis of the external environment among other organisations in civil society, the Board proposes that the English name be established in the Charter as "Swedish National Union of Students". The Board also considers that there are advantages to keeping the name because it avoids the need to purchase new merchandising such as roll-ups and graphic profiles. At the time of the proposal, it was noted that the name of the organisation in Swedish and its abbreviation had not been defined and it is therefore also proposed that they be specified in the Charter. The proposal has no consequences for SFS's activities and organisation.

Participants in foundation year programmes

Following a decision at SFSFUM 2022, the Board has proposed a change regarding who SFS represents. The decision was “to instruct the SFS Board for the 2022/23 financial year to investigate how SFS should represent foundation year students and come back with proposals for a decision at the next SFSFUM”. In accordance with the decision, the Board proposes that SFS represent students in foundation year programmes. The term ‘student’ is particularly noteworthy because, in accordance with [Högskoleförordning \(1993:100\)](#) [the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100)], students in foundation year programmes should not be defined as students. The proposal differs from the decision as far as the terms ‘foundation year student’ and ‘students in foundation year programmes’ are concerned. The Board considered whether all programmes regulated by [Förordning \(2018:1519\) om behörighetsgivande och högskoleintroducerande utbildning](#) [the Ordinance (2018:1519) on qualifying and higher education entry programmes] should be included in the proposal, but has concluded that it would become too broad and would not reflect the aim of the decision. If the proposal is approved, there will be consequences for the member unions in that the student unions representing students in foundation year programmes will pay a higher membership fee and the allocation of mandates for the next SFSFUM will change as a result.

Number of Board members

The Board proposes to reduce the number of SFS Board members. The proposal is for the Board to consist of 9 members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair. There were previously 13 members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair. The Board has found that a group numbering 13 is not the optimum size for Board work. Despite the fact that the Board divides its duties into working groups and portions out tasks, the large number of Board members means that input varies. The Board has also taken organisational research into account in its assessment that shows that smaller groups are more effective in terms of efficiency, productivity and creativity.¹ The Board considers that a smaller group will continue to meet requirements for expertise and also sees an advantage in that members will be more visible to member unions.

The Board has carried out an impact assessment and has taken aspects such as the impact on participation in SFS into consideration. When the organisation decided to recruit a member coordinator, the aim was to reduce the Board’s work and achieve more equal management and treatment of member unions. The SFS office has taken over the administrative work and has facilitated the work of the Board, enabling it to work more strategically. Furthermore, stable finances help bring about a situation whereby the SFS office is able to relieve the pressure on the Board.

¹ Lars Svedberg, *Gruppsykologi – Om grupper, organisationer och ledarskap*. (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2016).

The Board considers that the reduction in the number of Board members does not in itself imply that the Board will become less representative. After analysing the size over time, the Board has observed that, on the occasions when the Board has had a larger number of members, it did not lead to greater representativeness in terms of union affiliation or geographical location. The Board therefore does not see any connection between a larger number of Board members and representativeness in terms of union affiliation, geographical location or other aspects that are taken into consideration in the size of the Board.

In matters relating to representation on the SFS Board, the Board wishes to underline the importance of an organisational culture based on trust. This includes aspects such as a well-supported, legitimate process in the Election Committee, the General Assembly taking the diversity of the organisation into account and the fact that efforts should also reasonably be made to achieve this when it comes to representation among SFS's elected representatives. The Board finds that the aim with regard to representative activity must permeate the entire organisation and also means that the General Assembly should take representation into consideration in the elections authorised by that body.

Changes in the regulation of governing documents

The Board proposes an adjustment to the document hierarchy in order to facilitate activities. The Board finds it difficult to interpret how rules of procedure are to be applied. The proposal allows, for example, the Presidium to have rules of procedure that are able to regulate certain aspects of its work. Furthermore, the Board wishes to clarify that the Charter governs the organisation and not just the activities.

Proposals relating to SFSFUM

The Board also proposes that it be clarified that, in the event of dissolution of SFS, remaining resources shall be distributed according to the most recent allocation of mandates. The proposal has no consequences for SFS's day-to-day activities but could serve to eliminate any issues in such a situation.

The Board proposes that it be clarified that the Election Committee does not prepare the election of an authorised public accountant. The election of an authorised public accountant is instead prepared by the executive part of the business which has a natural connection with financial management and budget monitoring, etc. This is how SFS has worked and the proposal serves to clarify it.

Most of the changes relating to Chapter 2. The General Assembly are intended to serve as clarification based on established practice. These proposals therefore have no negative consequences for the activities, but serve to clarify what applies on the basis of how SFS works.

Proposals for decisions

The Board proposes to the General Assembly

that in the SFS Charter, chapter 1, section 1, Item 1, “The name of the organisation in Swedish as Sveriges förenade studentkårer (SFS) be added. The name of the organisation in English as “Swedish National Union of Students” be added.

that in the SFS Charter, chapter 1, section 1, Item 2, “The organisation’s headquarters are in Stockholm” be added.

that in the SFS Charter, chapter 1, section 7, Item 1, “Students in a foundation year programme” be added.

that in the SFS Charter, chapter 2, section 6, Item 1, “Presiding officers of the meeting” be added to the list of bullet points.

that in the SFS Charter, chapter 2, section 8, Item 2, “In elections, decisions are made by a relative majority, which means the largest proportion of the votes cast will be elected. In elections to the Presidium, the main rule of a simple majority applies” be added.

that the SFS Charter, chapter 2, section 10, Item 1 be changed from “Claims made” to “Motions discussed at the plenary meeting”.

that the SFS Charter, chapter 2, section 12, Item 7 be changed from “Audit report for the previous financial year, and” to “Audit report and annual financial statements for the previous financial year, and”

that the SFS Charter, chapter 3, section 1, Item 2 be changed from “For the members of the Board and the Election Committee, the General Assembly may establish a ranked list of deputies” to “For the members of the Board and the Election Committee, the General Assembly shall establish a ranked list of deputies”.

that the SFS Charter, chapter 3, section 4, Item 2 be changed from “Nominations received are public.” to “Confirmed candidates’ nominations are public.”

that the SFS Charter, chapter 4, section 2 Size of the Board, Item 1 be changed from “The Board shall consist of 13 members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair” to “The Board shall consist of 9 members, including the Chair and Deputy Chair”.

that in the SFS Charter, chapter 4, section 6, Item 3, “If the Presidium does not participate, decide by drawing lots instead” be added to the end of the list of bullet points.

that the SFS Charter, chapter 4, section 7, Item 3 be changed from “Checked minutes shall be sent out to the member unions.” to “Checked minutes shall be communicated to the member unions.”

that the SFS Charter, chapter 6, section 1, Item 1 be changed from “The Election Committee shall prepare all elections carried out by the General Assembly, apart from the elections of meeting officers and of the Election Committee.” to “The Election



Committee shall prepare all elections carried out by the General Assembly, apart from the elections of meeting officers, the Election Committee and the authorised public accountant.”

that the SFS Charter, chapter 8, section 1, Item 3 be changed from “Each group shall have a work schedule that regulates how the group structures its work internally.” to “Each group shall have a work schedule.”

that the SFS Charter, chapter 10, section 2, Item 1 be changed from “On dissolution, and after payment of all debts, SFS’s assets shall be allocated between the member unions in proportion to their numbers of students represented.” to “On dissolution, and after payment of all debts, SFS’s assets shall be allocated between the member unions in proportion to their numbers of students represented on the basis of the most recent allocation of mandates.”

that the SFS Charter, chapter 11, section 2, Item 1 be changed from “The Charter is SFS’s internal framework to govern activities.” to “The Charter is SFS’s internal framework to govern the organisation.”

that a new first paragraph be added to the SFS Charter: section 1 About the organisation.

that in the SFS Charter, “section 9, Financial Year, Item 1, The SFS financial year is 1 July – 30 June.” be moved to section 1, Item 3.

that the numbering be changed accordingly.