

# Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster

Procedures for Electing YFCU Officials  
and the Recruitment and Registration  
of Volunteers and Trainers

Last Revised January 2010



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## Introduction

This document outlines the procedures for electing YFCU Officials at all levels and recruiting Volunteers and Trainers. The procedures below only formalise the good practice carried out by the Association since its inception and reflects its compliance with the accreditation process in meeting recognised standards of child protection, current and forthcoming legislation.

Staff members, club and county officials and senior members should not be concerned about this and the perceived added administration involved. In reality we have been doing this as best practice for some time, for example, the databases referred to later in this document have been in existence and use since 1990.

## Election/Selection of Club Officials

To nominate, be nominated or vote at any level of the Association a person must have full membership of a club as per item 20 section (d) of the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

- Club Officials are elected at the Club's Annual General meeting which according to the YFCU Articles of Association must be held between January 1<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February inclusive.
- The election of Officials should be chaired by a member of the Executive Committee who is also responsible for returning the names of newly elected club officials and associated documentation to Headquarters within 7 days of the meeting.
- The Club Secretary should advise Headquarters of the date and the AGM and ask to be forwarded an AGM pack which includes.
  1. Example AGM Agenda and minutes taker forms
  2. Guidance notes
  3. Self-Declaration forms for Senior Club Officials and individual confidential envelopes
  4. SAE for returning AGM forms and Self-declaration forms to Headquarters
  5. Access NI forms which are to be given to Club officials taking up office for the first time or newly appointed after a period out of office. **These must be completed and returned to Headquarters with the appropriate ID within 7 days of the AGM. Failure to do so may result in a delay to taking up their position as Club Official.**
- Tellers should be appointed who will count and verify any voting.
- All officials are elected until the next properly constituted AGM unless action is taken under the Association's Sanctions Policy.
- Officials are proposed and seconded. If only one person is proposed and seconded they are elected and approved by a show of hands.
- If more than one person is proposed and seconded then the successful candidate is elected by popular vote as follows;
  1. All fully paid up members have an equal vote.

2. Ideally voting should be by secret ballot however the meeting may take the decision to elect by a show of hands. If this is the case, proposed members should leave the room until the vote has taken place.
  3. The person with the majority vote is deemed elected.
- The senior club officials listed below should be asked to complete self declaration forms which the Executive member chairing the election should collect and (using the SAE provided) return to Headquarters along with the completed AGM form
    1. Club Leader
    2. Club Secretary
    3. Club Treasurer
    4. Club PRO
    5. Club Council Representative
    6. Any Junior Co-ordinator/leader of a junior club leader elected at the meeting
  - Wherever possible Members completing self-declaration forms should do so on the evening of the AGM. Once completed the self-declaration forms must placed in the confidential envelope provided, which is sealed and handed to the Executive member chairing the election. Nobody should see what is on any of the forms until they are opened at Headquarters by the Chief Executive Officer or any deputised member of staff.
  - It should be explained that:
    1. The forms will be kept securely at Headquarters for the member's period of office and then destroyed.
    2. No reference will be made to the contents other than for the Association's responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
    3. The Self-Declaration process in no way reflects on a person's credibility or character but it is regarded as best practice for an organisation such as the YFCU.
  - The Executive member chairing the election will confirm when newly elected officials will take up office.
  - The Executive member chairing the election should:
    1. Reassure newly elected officials and give them a copy of their role description and guidelines
    2. Make sure they have access to the Association's Policies and Procedures.
    3. Make sure they are aware of where to get help and advice.
  - The club secretary should complete the AGM form and give a copy of it to the Executive member who chaired the election.
  - The Executive member who chaired the election must collect the AGM form and the self-declaration forms (in sealed envelopes) and return them to Headquarters within 7 days.

## Election/Selection of County Officials

- County Officials are elected at the County AGM which must be held between 1<sup>st</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> March each year.
- The election of the County Chairman should be chaired by a member of Headquarters Staff who is also responsible for returning the names of newly elected county officials and associated documentation to Headquarters on the next working day.
- The County Secretary should advise Headquarters of the date and the AGM and ask to be forwarded an AGM pack which includes.
  1. A copy of the AGM Agenda and a minutes taker form
  2. Guidance notes
  3. Self-Declaration forms for Senior Officials and individual confidential envelopes
  4. Large envelope for returning AGM form and Self-declaration forms to Headquarters
  5. Access NI forms which are to be given to County officials taking up office for the first time or are newly appointed after a period out of office. **These must be completed and returned to Headquarters with the appropriate ID within 7 days of the AGM. Failure to do so may result in a delay to taking their position as County Official.**
- The meeting should follow a predetermined Agenda which will have been circulated in advance by Headquarters.
- Tellers should be appointed to count and verify any voting procedures.
- Once the Chairman is elected he/she should conduct the election of the remaining county officials
- Officials are proposed and seconded. If only one person is proposed and seconded they are elected and approved by a show of hands.
- If more than one person is proposed and seconded then the successful candidate is elected by popular vote as follows;
  1. All members of the County Committee have an equal vote.
  2. Voting should be by secret ballot however the meeting may take the decision to elect by a show of hands. If this is the case, proposed members should leave the room until the vote has taken place.
  3. The person with the majority vote is deemed elected.
- All officials are elected until the next properly constituted AGM unless action is taken under the Association's Sanctions Policy.
- The senior county officials listed below should be asked to complete self declaration forms which the Staff member chairing the election should collect and (using the envelope provided) return to Headquarters along with the completed AGM form.
  1. County Chairman
  2. County Secretary
  3. County Treasurer

4. County PRO
  5. Any Junior Co-ordinator/leader elected at the meeting
- Wherever possible Members completing self-declaration forms should do so on the evening of the AGM. Once completed the self-declaration forms must be placed in the confidential envelope provided, which is sealed and handed to the member of staff chairing the election of Officials. Nobody should see what is on any of the forms until they are opened at Headquarters by the Chief Executive Officer or deputised member of staff.
  - It should be explained that:
    1. The forms will be kept securely at Headquarters for the member's period of office and then destroyed.
    2. No reference will be made to the contents other than for the Association's responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
    3. The Self-Declaration process in no way reflects on a person's credibility or character but it is regarded as best practice for an organisation such as the YFCU.
  - The Staff member attending the election will confirm when newly elected officials will take up office.
  - The Staff member attending the election should
    1. Reassure newly elected officials and give them a copy of their role description and guidelines
    2. Make sure they have access to the Association's Policies and Procedures.
    3. Make sure they are aware of where to get help and advice.
  - The county secretary should complete the AGM form and give it to the Staff member who attended the election.

## **Nomination, Election and Selection of Central Officials**

- Central Officials are elected at the Association's Annual General Meeting of Council as set out in the Articles of Association and nominated for election according to the following procedure:
  1. Nomination forms should be circulated and subsequently returned to Headquarters by the specified date.
  2. If sufficient nomination forms are not received by the specified date an appropriate decision will be taken by the Executive Committee.
  3. Each county committee will propose a person for each of the following positions; President, Deputy President and Honorary Treasurer, and up to people for the position of Vice President, from nomination forms received.
  4. To be eligible for election to any of the above positions at the Association's Annual General Meeting a person must have received at least one county nomination.
- The meeting should follow a predetermined Agenda which has been circulated in advance by Headquarters and members eligible for election restricted to those nominated by the membership and subsequently approved at County Committee AGM's
- Once all offices are declared vacant the election of the President should be chaired by the Chief Executive Officer who is also responsible for returning the names of newly elected officials and associated documentation to Headquarters within 1 working day of the meeting.
- Tellers should be appointed to count and verify any voting procedures.
- Once elected, the President will conduct the rest of the election.
- If more than one person is nominated for a position then the successful candidate is elected by popular vote as follows;
  1. All members of Council have an equal vote.
  2. Voting should be by secret ballot.
  3. The person with the majority vote is deemed elected.
- All officials are elected until the next properly constituted AGM unless action is taken under the Association's Sanctions Policy.
- The Central Officials listed below should be asked to complete self declaration forms which the Chief Executive Officer should collect and (using the confidential envelopes provided) return to Headquarters.
  1. YFCU President
  2. YFCU Deputy President
  3. YFCU Vice Presidents
  4. YFCU Honorary Treasurer
- Wherever possible self-declaration forms should be completing on the day of the AGM. Once completed the self-declaration forms must placed it in the confidential envelope provided, which is sealed and handed to Chief Executive Officer. Nobody should see what is on any of the forms until they are opened at Headquarters by the Chief Executive Officer or designated member of staff.

- It should be explained that:
  1. The forms will be kept securely at Headquarters for the member's period of office and then destroyed.
  2. No reference will be made to the contents other than for the Association's responsibilities under Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
  3. The Self-Declaration process in no way reflects on a person's credibility or character but it is regarded as best practice for an organisation such as the YFCU.
- Newly elected officials will take up office immediately
- The Chief Executive Officer should:
  1. Reassure newly elected officials.
  2. Give them a copy of their role description and guidelines
  3. Make sure they are given the Association's Policies and Procedures.
  4. Make sure they are aware of where to get help and advice.
- The Chief Executive Officer should complete the AGM Documentation collect the AGM form and the self-declaration forms (in sealed envelopes) and return them to Headquarters on the next working day.
- To comply with legislation both the President and the Deputy President are deemed to be in regulated positions and must be vetted/checked.



## **Selection and Recruitment of Volunteers**

Volunteers are usually nominated by Clubs. They are drawn from trainers, sponsors, parents or past members known to the club and are selected for their expertise in a subject which is relevant to the activity being organised. No open or advertised recruitment is undertaken or encouraged.

YFCU Headquarters holds contact details and areas of expertise of Volunteers which are forwarded by Club and County Officials on a database. This list is also supplemented/added to by Headquarters Staff.

In terms of protecting children and young people it is envisaged that YFC Volunteers (as defined in appendix 2) will be used on a number of isolated occasions during the year and will NOT spend any time alone with young people or be placed in a position where they require to be checked/vetted or regarded to be in a “regulated position”. That is, they will not have contact with members more than 4 times in any 30 day period or overnight.

If a club engages senior members or any other person on a regular basis then they must have completed an Access NI check before taking up their role. It is the Clubs responsibility to ensure this is done.

The following steps should be taken when approaching a volunteer to assist with a club, county or province wide event or activity:

- The prospective volunteer should be approached and asked if they would be prepared to act in the capacity reflecting their expertise (for example a public speaking judge).
- The member of staff, Club, County official or senior member should ascertain during the discussion if the person would be suitable for the position they have in mind in terms of :
  1. Their possible manner and temperament with young people
  2. Level of skill they possess for the task in mind
  3. Whether they are interested and committed
  4. Overall Trustworthiness and suitability
- If the impression is positive the person should be asked to help. It might be that they will not wish to be come involved with the YFCU. In this case thank them and move on. Don't try and coerce or cajole a person who does not want to become involved it can only be counter productive and give a negative impression of you and of the YFCU.
- It might be that they are unavailable on this occasion but may suggest that you contact them again. If so, thank them, take their details and record them for future use. There will be plenty of occasions for you to do this.
- The Volunteers contact details and area of expertise should be passed on to Headquarters for inclusion on the Volunteers & Trainers database as a volunteer
- When asking volunteers on the YFCU Volunteers database to help they will be:

1. Contacted in writing and be provided with a self addressed reply slip (unless contacted by telephone due to lack of time – for example another volunteer may have cancelled).
2. Given an outline of the task they are being asked to do and a means of asking for clarification or advice.
3. Told how to make a complaint or make a comment regarding the event they are assisting with.
4. Advised regarding the Association's Policies including the Association's child protection procedures.
5. Thanked in advance for their participation

Owing to their irregular use no probationary period is envisaged for volunteers. However if they fail to reach the standard they should simply not be invited to help again.

### **Selection and Recruitment of Trainers**

In all cases trainers as defined in appendix 2 are recruited by:

- An external body to provide a training course for YFCU members (for example DARD)
- Headquarters Staff to deliver training or support for members
- County or club officials to help members train/prepare for YFC events and activities or managing their clubs.

Trainers are drawn from sponsors, parents, past members or local experts known to Headquarters Staff, club members or county committees. Trainers are selected for their expertise in a subject which is relevant to the activity being organised. As a rule no open or advertised recruitment is undertaken. If this is to be done it will only be undertaken by Headquarters staff, on behalf of the membership, under the 'YFCU Employment & Equal Opportunities Policy and Guidelines'.

In terms of protecting children and young people it is envisaged that YFCU Trainers (as defined in appendix 2) will have regular contact with young people under-18 years of age and therefore may be required to be checked/vetted through Access NI. **In terms of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 there is no doubt trainers are named as being in a “regulated position” requiring that newly registered trainers are checked. This has consequences on how trainers are recruited and used in the YFCU.**

**Please note trainers already on the YFCU volunteer and trainers' database cannot be checked in retrospect. However, it is good practice that they complete a self-declaration form.**

Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 it is illegal to use a person in a regulated position without an Access NI checks having been completed. This will impact on the YFCU, its clubs and county committees. To assist Clubs and County Committees the YFCU holds and will continue to hold a database containing the contact details, areas of expertise and “vetting status” of registered and approved trainers for use by members.

The YFCU will continue to need clubs to identify potential trainers. The following steps should be taken when seeking a trainer to assist with a club, county or Northern Ireland wide event or activity:

- If a prospective Trainer **has not been used by the Association before** they should be approached and asked if they would be prepared to act in a capacity reflecting their expertise at least 10 weeks before you need to use them (for example a public speaking trainer should be approached in June to help in September). This will allow good time for the proper checks to be implemented before they start to train members.
- On approaching the prospective trainer the member of staff, club, county official or senior member should ascertain (during the discussion) if the person would be suitable for the position they have in mind in terms of :
  1. Their possible manner and temperament with young people
  2. level of skill they possess for the task in mind
  3. Whether they are interested and committed
  4. Overall Trustworthiness and suitability
- If the impression is positive the person should be asked to help subject to completing a registration form and (if they have not been used before, a successful check).
- If a person is unavailable on this occasion but suggests contacting them again, thank them, and get them to register with YFCU Headquarters now to save time in the future
- If they not wish to be come involved with the YFCU, thank them and move on. Don't try and coerce or cajole a person who does not want to become involved it can only be counter productive and give a negative impression of you and of the YFCU.
- The YFCU Volunteers and Trainers registration form which will record contact details, area of expertise and permission for vetting should be passed on to Headquarters for inclusion on the Volunteers & Trainers database and checking by the appropriate authorities.
- When asking trainers to help they must be:
  1. Registered on the YFCU Volunteers and Trainers database and approved under the **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**.
  2. Given an outline of the task they are being asked to do (including time frame) and a means of asking for clarification or advice.
  3. Told how to make a complaint or make a comment regarding the event they are assisting with.
  4. Advised regarding the Association's Policies and given a copy of the Association's child protection policy.
  5. Advised of the Association's sanctions and disciplinary policies.
  6. Informed that a (named) member of Headquarters staff is available for help or advice during the period that they will be involved with the members.

No probationary period is envisaged for most Trainers owing to the way the YFCU uses many trainers for competitions and associated activities (ie. they will be used for a short period of time once or twice a year). However, if a Trainer used in this way fails to reach the standard they will simply not be invited to help again.

In the case of Junior Leaders, the Executive Committee will ratify all new appointments. After a probation period of six months an appointed member of Headquarters Staff will meet with the Junior Leader and review the leader's contribution during the probationary period.

An appointed member of Headquarters Staff will also undertake an annual review with all Junior Leaders.

Governance of Young Farmers Club's in schools will be entrusted to the school authorities whose policies and procedures will take precedence.

In the case of Trainers being employed by YFCU Headquarters for long periods a probation period of six months will be set in the terms and conditions of employment.

Signed:

YFCU President \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

YFCU CEO \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 1 Questions**

### **Why do we ask some elected officials to complete self declaration forms?**

Self-declaration forms are still considered an effective element in the protection of children and young people. We also use the forms as we have a moral duty to ensure our leadership teams are sound.

### **Why check all YFCU trainers if only those who work with members under 18 are controlled by legislation?**

1. We cannot determine for sure that these people will not come into contact with members under-18
2. It is good practice to protect all members regardless of age!
3. To protect Trainers themselves and the YFCU by implementing best practice and meeting legal obligations.

### **What about Trainers outside our control who are appointed by external bodies?**

Trainers provided by external bodies must be approved under the term of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. If there are any participants under 18 years YFCU Staff, club, county or central officials are morally and legally bound, to ask for assurance of this before letting the training commence.

### **What should I do if people are annoyed or reticent about registration on the YFCU Volunteers and Trainers database?**

Refer them to the Chief Executive Officer who will attempt to allay their fears. If they decide they are not in a position to help thank them and move on. This might seem hard but it is best practice find someone else who understands that this is just part of the overall process which now needs to become part of YFCU culture.

### **Can my club use a trainer we have been using for years?**

Yes, especially if they are already on the YFCU Volunteers and Trainers database. If they are not, give Headquarters their details on a registration form explaining the situation. We are not allowed to check people who are already involved in this role only new people.

### **Can we use a new Trainer?**

Yes, but you have to approach them in good time, get them to register and agree to be checked. If the check is ok then you can use them from then on. The process can be slow but is essential.

### **Are members in normal competition age that help other members prepare for competitions and events classed as Trainers?**

No, they are currently members helping other members. However there will come a point when they will become regarded as a Trainer (for example when they fall outside normal competition age, cease membership or stop being a regular participant in club meetings, events and activities).

### **Why are members elected as Junior Leaders regarded as Trainers?**

We regard Junior Leaders as trainers because that's what they are! They manage and train members in junior and schools clubs who also elect their own Office Bearers to run their own club affairs.

## **Appendix 2 Definitions**

### **Elected Officials**

An elected official is any member who is elected into their position by fellow members at an ordinary meeting or in most cases an Annual General Meeting of a Club, County Committee, Central Committee or Council.

Members elected into any of the following posts (and if elected, their assistants) are regarded as an Elected Official.

#### **Club Level**

- Leader
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Public Relations Officer
- Council Rep
- Co-ordinator for the Duke Of Edinburgh's Award Scheme
- Committee Member
- Junior Leader/co-ordinator (if elected)
- President (has Honorary /Advisory role)

#### **County Level**

- Chairman
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Public Relations Officer
- Representatives to Programming Committee
- Representatives to Development Committee
- Representatives to Executive Committee
- Junior Co-ordinator

#### **Central Level**

- President (also Chairman of the Special Purposes Committee)
- Deputy President (also Chairman of the Executive Committee)
- Vice Presidents
- Honorary Treasurer
- Programming Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman
- Development Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman

## **Volunteer**

- Judges for Competitions (members or non-members)
- Assessors/Interviewers (members or non-members) for Competitions and/or Selection panels

## **Trainer**

- Trainers engaged to deliver YFCU Courses (members or non-members)
- Anyone (members or non-members) that a Club or County Committee asks to help members prepare/train for competitions
- Anyone who is asked to help train members in any way for example Drama or Arts Festival Producers
- Club Advisors
- Junior Leaders (those elected/appointed to manage, look after, members in Junior or Schools Clubs).



**Appendix 3 Self-Declaration Form**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Self Declaration Form for YFCU Officials

Please note this form will only be kept for the duration of your period of Office and then destroyed. It will be kept strictly confidential and the information given will only be used regarding child protection and “keeping members safe”

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence, been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order? Are there any such pending against you?

YES

NO

**If yes please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Any surname previously known by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:  
Inc. Postcode

DOB (dd/mm/yy) \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (NI) 1979 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order (NI) 1987 you should declare all convictions above including ‘spent’ convictions). You will also be required by the Association to inform the Chief Executive Officer or should the above circumstances change.**

**CONFIDENTIAL**





**Appendix 4 Trainer Registration Form**

Activity/Area of assistance

Club: \_\_\_\_\_

**Details given on this form will be kept CONFIDENTIAL**

Please note under our Child Protection procedures it is important that adults helping members of the Young Farmers' Clubs of Ulster are registered on the YFCU Database of Volunteers and Trainers. Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 the Association is also obliged to check the details of adults who, on a regular basis, assist or train members against the list of those barred from working with children. We really appreciate you agreeing to help Young Farmers and would ask for your patience in completing this form so we can carry out our Child Protection obligations. Being asked to complete this form **in no way reflects on you or your standing in the YFCU.** This form will only be kept to facilitate the check and then destroyed. It will be kept strictly confidential and the information given will only be used for the purposes of child protection and "keeping members safe".

Mr, Mrs, M/s	
Surname	
Full Forenames:	
Forename you are known by:	
Telephone No.	
Mobile Telephone No	
Email	

Any surname previously known by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:  
Inc. Postcode

Any previous address used in the past 5 years inc. postcodes

DOB (dd/mm/yy)

\_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth

\_\_\_\_\_

National Insurance No.

\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete reverse side.

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence, been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order? Are there any such pending against you?

YES

NO

**If yes please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s)**

**You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (NI) 1979 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order (NI) 1987 you should declare all convictions above including 'spent' convictions). You will also be required by the Association to inform the Chief Executive Officer should the above circumstances change.**

I agree to (1) my details being checked against the lists of persons disqualified from working with Vulnerable Adults or children.

(2) having my name and contact details on the YFCU Volunteers and Trainers database. I understand that I can request that my name be removed from the database at any time by contacting the YFCU Chief Executive Officer.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The above information will be kept CONFIDENTIAL

**Please add any other areas of expertise you feel would be helpful to members**