

What is a CU?

Christian Unions are student led mission teams operating at the very heart of the UK's universities and colleges. They exist for one reason – to share the good news of the gospel to a generation without Jesus and without hope.

Supported by Christian Union Staff Workers and working in partnership with the local church, we are a missionary force commissioned by God to partner with him in His rescue mission to students.

Christian Unions are mission teams

Any mission team needs time to prepare, train and pray together. This is normally done through the CU main meetings or the CU small/ cell group. This 'team time' is central to the evangelistic effectiveness of the group. It enables them to refocus on God, to grow in their understanding of the gospel and to apply scripture to student culture.



Diagram showing how CU "Team Time" resources mission.

The Christian Union weekly meeting is the Mission Team Meeting for prayer, for receiving training or teaching relevant to student witness, for supporting one another, for planning together, with a view to GOING...

Christian Unions are committed to the gospel

The gospel (as summarised by our declaration of belief) forms the core convictions of a CUs life and ministry. The gospel is the basis of our unity, the foundation of our ministry, the content of our message and the fuel for our evangelism. Christian Unions LOVE the gospel!

Christian Unions are student led

IFESi Christian Unions are committed to student leadership as a principle. Students really are best placed to reach other students for Christ.

Christian Unions are inter-denominational

CUs are made up of students 'sent' out from the local church. Believers drawn from many diverse church backgrounds, committed to working together in gospel unity be they charismatic, conservative, etc.

Role of committee

- The role of the committee is *NOT*:
 - To dictate to the rest of the CU
 - Work out personal 'agendas' eg. Which go against the interdenominational nature of CU.
 - To promote themselves
- The role of the committee *IS*:
 - To take a proactive role in the leadership of the CU
 - To represent the CU as a whole
 - To be accountable to the CU as a whole and the staff worker
 - To plan and organise CU main meetings/weekends away/ outreach etc
 - To mobilise and facilitate CU body to reach out to the campus around them

The Practicalities of Leading

CU Meetings

- Putting together the main CU meeting program
 - Make sure the structure you are using is flexible enough to be adapted to your needs and not overbearing. It should serve your purposes and not the other way around.
 - Try as much as possible to tie everything in eg. Praise with topic for the night
 - Be aware of making it accessible to someone 'new'.
 - Don't needlessly be repetitive, have variety.
 - Establish a punctual starting time from the very beginning.
 - Do not fall into the trap of modelling a CU meeting on a church service



- **Leading from the front**
 - Have people leading who are comfortable doing so and can lead with clarity, confidence and approachability.
 - As much as possible the committee shouldn't have to lead from the front every week: involve the rest of the CU body. (This includes Presidents!)
 - Use clear language and if reading from the Bible use a 'listener-friendly' translation, one that is both easily read, heard and understood.
 - KNOW what is happening and make sure those who are involved from the front also know eg. Order of the night, when they come up etc.
 - Always be aware of the 'impression' you are giving of the CU through your conduct and language from the front.
- **Communicating with speakers (also see attached sheet)**
 - Be clear on what you would like them to do
 - Communicate well in advance
 - Be respectful
 - Make sure they know where they are going and are met beforehand
 - Check in advance about transport/ food etc.
 - Do not abandon them as soon as you arrive to the room!
 - Be punctual in sending a Thank-you letter etc.

Miscellaneous

- **Handling money**
 - Be clear and keep the body of the CU informed about where the offering is going and what things you are saving for/ supporting.
 - Keep clear logs on all incomings and expenditure, be organised as you go along.
 - BE TRANSPARENT
 - Remember the money is the whole of the CU's and so involve them as much as possible in big decisions.

See also the Handling CU Money handout



POINTS TO REMEMBER!

- ❖ Leadership is not only about leading but learning: Be strong enough to lead and humble enough to learn.
 - ❖ Keep everything in perspective!
 - ❖ Keep a check on how you are impacting and reaching out on campus
 - ❖ Keep a check on pride!
 - ❖ Be transparent in your leadership, you are serving the CU, not the other way around.
 - ❖ Delegate!
 - ❖ Watch out against 'burning out'
 - ❖ Remember your staff worker is there for a reason!
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“Be shepherds of Gods flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”

I Peter 5v2-4

As we can see, the Bible has a lot to say about leadership and those who are entrusted with it. But don't set unrealistic ideals of yourself; you are not perfect, you will not always get it right and you will inevitably make mistakes. While this honest realisation is not to be used as an excuse for self-slander or denial of responsibility, it is a reminder to us that God is God, and of our constant need to seek His will, His understanding and His leading. Even the most experienced of us, still do not know *everything*.

“INSTRUCT A WISE MAN AND HE WILL BE WISER STILL, TEACH A RIGHTEOUS MAN AND HE WILL ADD TO HIS LEARNING.” Prov9v9

Always remember that help and support are available from your IFESi staff/relay worker. Similarly, it is great to develop one or two relationships with people, perhaps older and more 'mature in the faith' than you, with whom you can be accountable to, and seek advice from.

