

FEDERAL APPEALS PANEL

REQUEST FOR A RULING BY MR JAMES BLISS

PERMISSION RULING

Decision

1. This application is refused permission to proceed for lack of jurisdiction.
2. Any objection to publication of this decision shall be lodged with the Registrar within 14 days of its transmission to the Applicant.

The decision is final and binding (per rule 4.8 of the FAP Published Procedures), and shall be published on the Party website, unless there is a good reason not to do so.

Reasons

1. The Applicant complains that the Young Liberals ('YL') Executive imposed a sanction on him to suspend his membership, upheld by YL appeal hearing on 29 September 2024. The YL Events Committee also decided to exclude him from the Young Liberals' Conference. He alleges that this was in breach of natural justice, following an unfair procedure.
2. The Federal Appeals Panel is the appeals panel of the Federal Party. The FAP only has such jurisdiction as is conferred upon it by article 22.3 of the Federal Party Constitution ('FPC'). This is relevantly limited to claims as to infringement of rights under the FPC itself (art.22.3B of the FPC). It is not constituted to arbitrate any or all disputes between people who happen to be members of the Liberal Democrats.
3. The Young Liberals are a separate Affiliated Organisation recognised under article 21.1 of the FPC. Article 21.8 FPC states, 'The recognition by the Party of Affiliated Organisations shall not prejudice the independence of such organisations'. Young Liberals are afforded certain rights by the Federal Party, such as a right to send 3 members of the YL, 'elected according to their own procedures' as delegates to sit on Federal Council (art.9.12d of the FPC), and for their Chair to sit on the Federal Board (art.9.2h FPC). Those rights, or recognition as an Affiliated Organisation, may be suspended under article 21, and such suspension or revocation may be appealed or reviewed by the FAP under art.22.3B of the FPC.
4. Eligibility for membership of the YL, and disciplinary sanctions within the YL, are a matter for the YL themselves, and separate from membership of the Liberal Democrats party itself. The FPC does not confer any right to membership of the YL or other AOs,

nor does the Federal Party prescribe any internal disciplinary process that AOs must follow. Whatever the merits of this complaint, it is not a matter over which the FAP has jurisdiction.

5. I should like to apologise for the length of time it has taken to produce this decision.

DAVID GRAHAM

Chair of the FAP

31 July 2025