

**Motion Name:** Championing a Culture of Consent at Bristol SU

**Proposer:** Saranya Thambirajah, Equality, Liberation and Access Officer

**Seconded:** Isobel Russell, Student Living Officer

**Background:**

1. In 2021 Bristol SU commissioned the [‘No Means No Report’](#), a large-scale internal research piece, written by the ELA officer at the time, on sexual violence and misconduct at the university. The report found that almost 50% of respondents had experienced sexual harassment since starting university, and 29% had experienced sexual assault. Only 11% of those experiencing sexual assault went on to report it.
2. This research has hugely informed the university’s approach to sexual violence and has resulted in positive change.
3. The University and the SU now aims to take a victim-centred, trauma-informed, response to sexual violence.

**Purpose:**

1. To continue championing and enhancing the culture of consent at Bristol SU. Ensuring this remains a core priority for the organisation.
1. To ensure Presidents and other relevant committee roles of University of Bristol societies feel prepared if their members come to them with experiences of sexual violence.
2. For relevant committee members to have a comprehensive understanding of consent which will enable them to maintain a culture of consent and a zero tolerance policy to sexual harassment in their societies.
3. To continue exploring new ways to promote and embed the importance of wellbeing in student groups, for instance by creating wellbeing champions.
4. To always establish to all students, particularly directly to student groups, that the university has adopted a zero tolerance policy to sexual harassment and assault. As well as reinforcing the importance of consent culture in student groups.

**Actions:**

1. Work towards the SU introducing mandatory consent training for all society President/Club Captain or designated relevant committee members when they begin their role. This training

should include clear definitions of consent, guidance on how to engage or initiate conversations with students about healthy attitudes consent and be inclusive of consensual relationships involving people of all gender and identity markers. This training will be provided asynchronously, with compulsory document markers to ensure that the President/Club Captain or designated committee member has completed the training.

2. As part of the student group code of conduct review (that is currently ongoing at SU), ensure that the code provides clear directions & guidance for committee members responding to any cases of sexual violence impacting any member of a student group.
3. Ensure that there is a document of SU policy which society reps [could be comprised by the ELA officer with support from Women's Network] Presidents, sports club captains and other designated members of societies can consult when students bring issues of wellbeing regarding consent. This will allow all society Presidents and reps to have a formalised procedure to follow in these situations and make sure they can refer to the correct wellbeing services when necessary.
4. Complete establishing wellbeing champions in all student groups who as part of their role would support the internal culture of consent & support presidents when issues relating to this arise. Ensure these reps are fully trained and equipped for their role.
5. The SU to make clear to Presidents and committee members that it is not their role and could be potentially harmful, to directly support or advise students on issues relating to consent or sexual violence. Presidents and committee members should rather be able to direct students to the correct channels if sexual violence issues are disclosed to them. They should have a level of awareness that allows them to speak about and respond to such issues with sensitivity.