

**Motion Name:** Representation Review

**Proposer:** Katie Poyner

**Seconders:** Linlu Ye

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**Background:**

1. Bristol SU aims to review its representation systems and processes around every 5 years. This is so that we can ensure we are making change in the most effective way possible and keeping up with the realities of what students are facing.
2. A review was conducted last year by an independent external organisation, gathering together qualitative and quantitative data from students, student representatives and staff, as well as best practise from across the sector. A motion was passed at February AMM 2024 as the first part of actioning this review [See "[Liberating the Structure](#)"] Based on the findings of the external review, the motion passed at AMM by students and ideas from across the sector we are bringing the final changes to our roles to student council for your approval.

**Purpose:**

Section 1: Liberation and Campaigns

1. Through Bristol SU's representation review, students gave us some non-negotiable views and values; these have remained at the heart of these proposals. Paying students in elected, part-time officer roles for their labour, creating spaces and structures for discussion and organising, especially for students who would prefer not to be in elected roles and ensuring clear campaigning structures for liberation, and ensuring intersectionality.
2. To change our structures and support the recommendations of the review, we have considered different ways empowering our student body to make change. A concept that we believe will enable us to do this is Community Organising, a technique popularised by Citizens UK (who run lots of national campaigns, such as the Living Wage Employer Campaign). Citizens UK was formed based on learning from the change makers of history like the Chartists, Suffragettes, the US Civil Rights Movement and Bristol Bus Boycott.
3. Bristol SU will hold elections for six Student Community Organisers who will be paid through a stipend (a payment paid in instalments across the year) to work on building power through existing student communities and campaigns. They will follow the principals of Community Organising to find commonalities in students' self-interest to build strong and robust campaigns that create change across the intersections of the university. They will work together, with our Full Time Officers and with student communities.
4. They will be trained by the SU in how to organise and when advertising these roles, we will identify key skills of organisers.
5. We also wanted to ensure that a focus on liberation isn't lost and that the team of organisers reflects the student communities at the University of Bristol. For the Student

Organiser roles students will be able to apply for 2 roles out of the 6, rather than 1 so that we are championing intersectionality.

6. Networks as we know them have also created rich communities and connections for many students – we don't want to lose this. Across the last decade, some networks have also been integral to amazing pieces of campaign work, like the Gender Expression Fund. However, the Networks as a whole aren't fulfilling the campaigning purpose that they were set up for and are currently restricted by not having society status. With society status, they will be able to fundraise for themselves, find sponsorships and control their own budget, have social media accounts, conduct their own elections and have their own committees. They will still be able to campaign and we anticipate that they will be a vital community for the Student Community Organisers to work with. The SU will therefore support currently existing networks to transition into being constituted as student groups.

## Section 2: Academic Representation

1. We will incorporate School Representatives into the structure, as whilst they exist within our partnership with the University the roles have grown and evolved and now need to be recognised in our byelaws.
2. At Bristol SU, we elect Faculty Academic Representatives, as well as course reps, at all levels. Each course is a community thus we intend for the Student Community Organisers to work with Faculty Academic Representatives to understand the issues students are facing and help them work together to build power and get the best outcomes for all.
3. The University is also moving to create 3 faculties out of the current 6, and we need some flexibility to ensure our Academic Representative structures, reflects the needs of students and the university.
4. We also intend to pay Faculty Academic Representatives in line with the Student Community Organisers, recognising that their work goes beyond what a voluntary role should entail and taking into account the feedback in the external review.

### ***Actions:***

1. For Bristol Students' Union to support the current Networks to gain society status
2. To amend the byelaws to enact the vision described above
3. To empower the Union Affairs Officer and ELA Officer to amend the names of newly created roles until the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025, to ensure that the names accurately reflect the groups they seek to represent.
4. To enact the byelaw changes outlined below:

Below will be contained, line-by-line changes, the changes to be made - Including a total re-write of Byelaw 7, required amendments to Byelaw 8 – Faculty Representatives, Networks and FTO's and any other tidying up.

Below is an enumeration of the changes required. Should there be any dispute or confusion over the numbering of the byelaws mentioned, it will be at the discretion of the Union Affairs Officer, DSC and Trustee Board to ensure the appropriate edits are made.

## **Section 1a: Liberation and Campaigns – Byelaw 7**

1. To Delete Byelaw 7 in its entirety, and to replace with a new Byelaw 7 outlined below:

#### Byelaw 7 – Student Community Organisers

1. The Union will maintain Student Organisers to bring together leaders from interconnected communities to build power and make change together.
2. They will follow the principles of Community Organising, and will act in line with the following principles, elsewhere to be referred to as the organiser commitment:

#### **Organiser commitment**

Organising and campaigns should:

- a. Seek out the personal interest of a range of groups to find a campaign that can build power across different groups
- b. Facilitate discussion and work together to share a collective goal
- c. Be well researched and evidenced
- d. Be accessible to a broad range of people (or have a well evidenced case for targeting a particular group)
- e. Have a significant positive impact on students, in their lives as students
- f. Be a campaign that could grow and/or have an ongoing benefit to students
- g. Fit within or alongside, the priorities of the Full-Time Officer Team, Student Representative Assembly and the Students' Union.

3. Student Community Organisers will be expected to engage with a wide range of student communities to stay abreast of student priorities and ensure they are bringing together different groups to find shared aims. This will include but not be limited to – student societies and clubs, volunteering project groups, Networks and Faculty, School and Course Academic Representatives.

4. Each Student Community Organiser will be expected to work on a variety of issues and cover the breadth of the student experience. There will be four roles which have a specific Liberation Focus, these roles will hereafter be collectively referred to as the Liberation Community Organisers. The following Student Community Organisers will be elected in the second teaching block of each academic year:

- a. Student Community Organiser (Global Majority Student Communities)
- b. Student Community Organiser (LGBTQ+ Student Communities)
- c. Student Community Organiser (Women's Student Communities)
- d. Student Community Organiser (Disabled Student Communities)
- e. Student Community Organiser (Open-Place)
- f. Student Community Organiser (Open-Place)

5. The Student Community Organisers (Open-Place) roles will be open to all students and will be elected in a single election utilising Single-Transfer Voting.

6. Liberation Community Organiser elections will be open to those who self-identify into the focus areas of each role.

7. Student Community Organisers will be members of Student Representative Assembly and they will give written and verbal reports to Student Representative Assembly about their work and campaigns. Student Representative Assembly must approve projects, campaign focuses and attached financial costs and ensure Organisers are adhering to the Organiser Commitment (2a-g).

### **Section 1b: Liberation and Campaigns**

1. To Delete Byelaw 8.16 and 8.17 in their entirety, and to replace with the below:

#### **Student Community Organisers – Part Time Roles**

16. General responsibilities of Student Community Organisers include:

- a. Bringing together leaders from interconnected communities to build power and make change together.
- b. Adhering to the Organiser Commitment and ensuring their work and campaigns also adhere.
- c. Joint responsibility with the relevant Full-Time Officers for gaining and disseminating knowledge about relevant policy development locally and nationally and gaining student opinion and feedback on issues.
- d. Scrutinising the work of Full-Time Officers alongside other members of Student Rep Assembly.
- e. Through Student Rep Assembly, scrutinising the work of all Organisers, ensuring they are acting in the best interests of all students and adhering to the Organiser Commitment.
- f. Attending Student Council and Student Rep Assembly and reporting on their activity.

17. The Student Community Organisers will include:

- a. Student Community Organiser (Global Majority Student Communities)
- b. Student Community Organiser (LGBTQ+ Student Communities)
- c. Student Community Organiser (Women's Student Communities)
- d. Student Community Organiser (Disabled Student Communities)
- e. Student Community Organiser (Open-Place)
- f. Student Community Organiser (Open-Place)

## **Section 1c: Liberation and Campaigns – all other byelaws**

### *Byelaw 0*

1. Edit the definitions section of Byelaw 0 as appropriate – namely deleting or appropriately editing the definitions of “networks”, “liberation” and “standing mandate

### *Byelaw 2*

2. Amend 2.5 - to replace “Network” with “Student Community Organiser.”

### *Byelaw 3*

3. Amend 3.1.b to read “Student Community Organiser- as defined in Byelaw 7 are elected annually by an all student ballot, unless the organiser role requires a level of self-identification which will restrict the ballot to those who self-identify under that category”

### *Byelaw 5*

4. Amend 5.11- to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”

### *Byelaw 6*

5. Delete 6.1.c.ii - and re-number as appropriate
6. Amend 6.3.b - to read “Student Community Organisers, as defined in byelaw 8”
7. Amend 6.11 - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”
8. Amend 6.12.e - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”
9. Amend 6.16.a.ii - to read “Scrutinising the actions of the Union Officers and Student Community Organisers on a regular basis, ensuring the Student Community Organisers are adhering to the Organiser Commitment as defined in byelaw 7”
10. Amend 6.16.a.iii - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”
11. Delete 6.16.a.iv
12. Amend 6.16.a.v - to replace “Network” with “Student Community Organiser.”
13. Amend 6.16.b - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”

### *Byelaw 8*

14. Amend 8.3 - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”
15. Amend 8.4.b - to replace “Chairs of Networks” with “Student Community Organisers”
16. Amend 8.7.c - to replace “Union Networks” with “Student Community Organisers”
17. Amend 8.8.h - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”
18. Amend 8.9.k - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”
19. Amend 8.9.o - to replace “Chairs of Networks” with “Student Community Organisers”
20. Amend 8.10.f - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”
21. Amend 8.10.h - to replace “Chairs of Networks” with “Student Community Organisers”
22. Amend 8.10.i - to replace “Chairs of Networks” with “Student Community Organisers”
23. Delete 8.11.h
24. Amend 8.11.k - to replace “Networks” with “Student Community Organisers.”

25. Delete 8.12.e
26. Amend 8.12.f - to replace "Networks" with "Student Community Organisers."
27. Amend 8.12.g - to replace "Chairs of Networks" with "Student Community Organisers"
28. Amend 8.13.h - to replace "Networks" with "Student Community Organisers."
29. Amend 8.13.k - to replace "Chairs of Networks" with "Student Community Organisers"
30. Amend 8.14.d - to replace "Networks" with "Student Community Organisers."
31. Amend 8.14.i - to replace "Chairs of Networks" with "Student Community Organisers"
32. Amend 8.14.j - to replace "Chairs of Networks" with "Student Community Organisers"
33. Amend 8.15.f - to replace "Networks" with "Student Community Organisers."
34. Amend 8.15.i - to replace "Chairs of Networks" with "Student Community Organisers"
35. Amend 8.15.j - to replace "Chairs of Networks" with "Student Community Organisers"
36. Amend 8.15.k - to replace "Chairs of Networks" with "Student Community Organisers"

#### *Byelaw 9*

37. Amend 9.4 - to replace "Networks" with "Student Representative Assembly"
38. Amend 9.5 - to replace "Network Chairs" with "Student Representative Assembly"
39. 9.7.iv - to replace "Network Chairs" with "Student Representative Assembly"

### **Section 2: Academic Representation**

1. Amend byelaw 8.19 to read "There shall be at least one Faculty Academic Representative for each level of study (Undergraduate, Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research) and the roles elected will mirror the University faculty structure insofar as is practical. The representatives shall be elected by and from the students of that Faculty or School, and Level of Study that they seek to represent."
2. Amend byelaw 8.20 to read "Any current student within the relevant Faculty or School and Level of Study, including those who are not Student Members of the Union, shall be eligible to stand and vote in the election for that Faculty Representative role."
3. Amend byelaw 8.23 to read "Their primary responsibilities, in addition to any defined by the University, are:
  - a. To raise issues pertaining to the educational and wider university experience of students within their Faculty, School and Level of Study
  - b. To canvas opinion from students within their Faculty, School and Level of Study"
4. Amend byelaw 8.2 to read "Union Officers will be elected by cross-campus ballot, with the exception of School Representatives who may be co-opted into their role as appropriate - in partnership with the University, and any other Union Officer that is elected via self identification"

5. Insert the following after byelaw 8.25, and before 8.26 and re-number as appropriate

“School Academic Representatives

26. There shall be at least one School Academic Representative for each level of taught study (Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught) and the roles elected will mirror the University faculty structure insofar as is practical. The representatives shall be elected by and from the students of that Schools and Level of Study that they seek to represent.

27. Any current student within the relevant School and Level of Study, including those who are not Student Members of the Union, shall be eligible to stand and vote in the election for that School Academic Representative role, or be selected and co-opted separate to an elections process.

28. For the avoidance of doubt, should a challenge be made to a candidate’s eligibility to stand for election to a Faculty Representative role, the only competent authority is the University student records database

29. Their primary responsibilities, in addition to any defined by the University, are:

a. To raise issues pertaining to the educational and wider university experience of students within their School and Level of Study

b. To canvas opinion from students within their School and Level of Study

30. To attend Student Council, and the Annual Members’ Meeting. From time to time to attend Student Representatives Assembly as non-voting members at the discretion of the Student Representative Assembly.

31. In the instance that a School Academic Representative is not a Student Member of the Union, they will not have the right to sit on Union Councils and committees unless they become a Student Member but they are able to still attend meetings within their School”