

Student Council 11.12.25

Papers Pack

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Agenda

Item	Owner	Timing
Welcome	Chair - LA	5 min (17:05)
Intro to Student Council	Chair	10 min (17:15)
Approval of previous minutes	Chair	5 min (17:20)
FTO Updates	Full-Time Officers	25 min (17:45)
Motions		
Mission Mandir – Bristol Hindu Prayer Room	Motion Proposer, Chair	20 min (18:05)
BREAK – 5 mins		
Motions (cont'd)		
Move Democratic Standards Committee elections into Teaching Block 2	Motion Proposer, Chair	20 min (18:30)
AOB		
Expression of dissatisfaction: Bristol SU Trustee Board override Student Council decision	Proposer, Chair	20 min (18:50)
Any Other Business	Chair	10 min (19:00)
END / PIZZA		
GUILLOTINE – hard stop in case the meeting overruns. Nothing further will be discussed after this point. We will still aim to finish the meeting by 19:00.		19:30

Approval of previous minutes:

- [Student Council Forum 27 March 2025](#)
- [Student Council 06 November 2025](#)

Full-Time Officer Updates

Katie Poyner – Union Affairs Officer

- 🦷 Unfortunately, I cannot be at Student Council because I am getting surgery to have my wisdom teeth removed (after being on the NHS waiting list for 3 years!). If you have any questions about my updates – please do email me and I will get back to you when I can.
- I've created **an external spaces list** – to make finding an activity space for groups easier. From pubs to theatres, the Student Activity Space Finder is now live on the website, see it here: <https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/student-groups/student-activity-space-finder>
You can browse venues, see how to book them and update info if something changes. And if your group finds a new spot that works well, add it to the list - so other groups can benefit.
**And no businesses pay to be included, and the SU doesn't earn anything from it.
- **Signage for the Bristol SU Basement** has been installed to make finding the new space I secured easier. You can see it opposite Senate on Woodland Road.
- **Society Forums** at the start of TB2 (end of Jan), look out for an email from me for dates! In this, I will ask for feedback/edits on the draft society representation structure I'm currently working on, to have societies be able to escalate issues, work together to solve problems and be represented in our byelaws. If you are wanting to know or get involved beyond attending Society Forums, please reach out to me :)
- You can use **empty teaching spaces as study spaces** – I worked with university to keep these rooms open, so you can use them for silent or group study. See the list and what is available here: [Find a ... | Bristol University](#)
- I'm also working with the university to **increase bookable society spaces**, and you can keep up to date with any progress here: [Bristol SU | UEB Agreement](#)

Sharan Khemlani – PG Education Officer

- After meeting with the Sustainability Team at the University, I have confirmed support to put on a **Climate Fresk Workshop** targeted to postgraduates next TB. This is an event to engage students into thinking about sustainability in their own lives and in their work, timely for the upcoming dissertation period. Overmore, this is meant to be an opportunity to build the PG community, connecting people from different cohorts that may not have otherwise met!
- I've got confirmation that I'll be able to run some focus groups to produce research on how the **Careers Service can support PGs** so when our R&I manager is back from A/L, we'll be able to execute.
- The **Financial Assistance Fund** is an emergency pot of money that is given to students in financial hardship and are at risk of withdrawing from the university. I've successfully gotten the university to increase the amounts for the 3 tiers from TB2.
- A lot of foundational work on **disability** is being done and I'm supporting these initiatives in different ways. EGs PGR Disability Forum, PGR Stream in Uni's Disability Work, NUS Conference.
- **Events:** Monthly PG Pints seeing over 200 students in TB1 and planning underway with SU's Events Team for TB2.

- Raised **PGR Study Space** concerns with Campus Division, along with the rest of the officer team recently.

Linlu Ye – Equality, Liberation and Access Officer

- One of my priorities for this year is to **foster the consent culture**. To better understand what worked well and what didn't, a focus group was held to delve into what do you think of the 'Consent Matters' online session on Blackboard. We will use this feedback to improve the current resources to make them more engaging, fun and accessible.
- The **16 days of activism** is an international campaign to end gender-based violence starting from 25th November to 10th December. This year, I have been collaborating with officers from other Russell Group Students' Unions on a piece of **survey about gender-based violence** in higher education. You can scan this code to take part in!



- On campus accessibility, I am working with Campus Division team on improving the build-in **map on the UoB App**. It can help with navigating through university buildings and generate routes that **avoid stairs and obstacles**. My mailbox is open if you have any feedback about the map!
- Lastly, I'd like to share the information that the university signed up to **Disabled Student Commitment**. It's a voluntary scheme aimed at enhancing the experience of disabled students through consultation with disabled students. The university is mapping out areas for improvement through internal review and planning to **co-create with disabled students and pay for their contribution**.

Mia Stevens – UG Education Officer

- Thank you for all those who participated in our **letter-writing campaign** lobbying the government against raising tuition fees aligned with Teaching Quality. Unfortunately, this has now gone to budget. The government has proposed a policy which would allow different universities to charge different tuition fees based on Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) ratings. This would mean that universities with a Gold TEF rating will be able to charge more than those with a Bronze TEF rating, for example. This will open the gates for increased marketisation of our higher education system, as well as increased class barriers to education. It will incentivise poor students to choose Bronze institutions due to the lower cost, and starve Bronze institutions of funding. **The government is currently running a consultation on the future of quality regulation** at universities, and this is our opportunity to break the link between TEF ratings


and fees, and strengthen student voice in the process. You can get directly involved in this consultation should you wish: [Consultation on the future approach to quality regulation](#)

- The **Assessment Feedback Engagement Fellows** have now had their induction and are starting work to with academics to improve assessment feedback practices in their schools! This project has now been formally embedded on an institutional level, meaning that students will now be at the heart of co-designing activities that best makes feedback work for them.
- I'm currently starting work on the actions of the passed **Joint Honours motion**. I've been in conversation with one of the academic directors to discuss how she has implemented too some of these actions in ASSL, to try and find ways to implement them across the Uni into Sci&Eng and Health and Life.
- We have nearly finalised the university-wide video explaining the **behind-the-scenes of marking and moderation processes**. I'll be sharing the final draft with Academic Reps very soon to make sure that it is as clear and as useful to students as possible.

Ella Lovibond – Sport and Student Development Officer

- **Movember!** A huge thank you and congratulations to every student and student group who took part in the Movember campaign this past month. As a University, we have raised over £42,000, smashing last year's total by over £8000. This puts Bristol 12th across all UK Universities. A special shoutout must go to Men's Hockey for raising £18,000 themselves! It's been great to see all the crazy challenges that everyone has been doing throughout the month. Even though Movember is now over, it's really important that conversations around Men's Mental health don't stop. Keep spreading the love!
- I've hosted two **Club Captains Forums** this term, bringing the leaders of our sports clubs together to discuss and feed into important changes within the University and SU. The captains have also been a key part in shaping the next **Derby Day** (18th March 2026). Keep your eyes peeled next term for more info!
- The **Injury Support Group** has been running sessions every week this term, with attendees from a wide range of sporting backgrounds. Feedback has been very positive, and I'm excited that the mental skills workshops and coffee mornings will be continuing throughout TB2 as well. The group is always open to new members if you would like to join!
- I've been working with Sport, Exercise and Health (SEH) to bring in student rep consultation for their current **Facility Access Review**, making sure that the most affected students have their say to make things better.
- I attended the **BUCS Student Officers Network** in Derby, connecting with Sports Officers from across the country to share best practice and come together for bigger campaigns.

Lucy Pears – Student Living Officer

-  **Capping Laundry Prices.** Giving away £15K for laundry is great, but it doesn't change the fact that students are still having to pay up to £8 for a wash and a dry. That's an extortionate price to pay just for being clean. This year I've got that message through to the university, they have agreed to cap the laundry prices in any new accommodation leases

that they take on. This brings the price down from £8 to £3.80, I'll keep on pushing for this to be a free service, but I think any decrease is a huge positive and it equalises the experience that students have across different halls.

- 🏠 **Changing Rent Prices!** I'm sure that everyone will not only know that Bristol has the 2nd most expensive rent prices in the country, but also, you'll be *feeling* it – so something must change! I'm having weekly meetings with the student accommodation team to change the rent model that the University uses. This is big news for the accommodation portfolio and for students because it should make the situation fairer. This might look like making more halls 'affordable' or changing the huge price band differences between the halls – either way it will be better than what it is now.
- 🚌 **Exam buses!** I'm pleased to say that after 99.1% of students surveyed said they would 'be keen to use the exam bus again' - now you can! Exam buses will be leaving from Tyndalls Avenue and Metalworks accommodation every morning during your TB1 exams to take you all the way up to coombe dingle – for just £1!
- 🎧 **Sensory rooms!** Thank you to everyone who came to the Accessibility house meeting, it was really appreciated to hear your experiences on campus. Off the back of this, I've made changes to the sensory room and created labels for all the dimmable light switches in SU spaces. I'll also be working with Centaur reps to create a sensory room down in Langford! Additionally, I'm making sure that sensory friendly spaces are included in the Campus Division masterplan, meaning that this work can be carried on beyond my time as the living officer!
-

Jessie Yeung – International Students Officer

- 🌐 Hosted **International students week!** A week of celebrating international students through 7 free events, including the International Students Karaoke and Global Food Fair. Gave out **150 free breakfast, 200 free lunch and 250 free dinner!**
- 📅 Save the date - Your next International Student Karaoke will be on 21st January during the refresher week!)
- 🗣️ I went to **Parliament** (again!) to celebrate and campaign for international students. I met stakeholders from governmental advisory groups, high commissioners and folks from embassies all around the world, as well as other UK-based student organisation, SU officers and students. We talked about the anti-migrants narrative, international student levy, how international students boost the UK economy (**Every UK resident person is £355 a year better off on average as a result of international students** - Did you know that? Source: June 2025 analysis by Public First <https://www.publicfirst.co.uk/calculating-the-positive-impact-of-international-students.html>). We also shed lights to the international

students from sanctuary backgrounds (such as our Gaza and Ukraine students) and the challenges they face.

- [TBC] 📄 The Budget and White Paper on post-16 education is ridiculously unfair to international students – this clearly showed how our Labour government is influenced by the anti-migrants narrative. In Bristol, racism and xenophobia incidents happened again and again. We have launched a letter-writing campaign to MP in Bristol, asking them to release statement and taking a stance against racism.
- [TBC] 🙌 Outcome of Sanctuary Scholars Working Group meeting – 4th dec

Motion 1: Mission Mandir – Bristol Hindu Prayer Room

Background:

- Bristol SU is a part of NUS, who passed the following motion in 2019 - “Equal access to faith and wellbeing resources for students from non-Abrahamic traditions”
- Currently **no prayer space available dedicated to Hindu, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh faith**
- According to the Annual Diversity Monitoring Report for 2023-24 (January 2025), there has been a yearly increase in the percentage of students who identify as Hindu. Hindus are also the third largest faith group on campus after Christians and Muslims. The statistics clearly dictate that Hindu students form a growing part of the university community, with the proportion rising from 2.1% in 2020/21 to 3.4% in 2023/24 (a 62% relative increase in just three years).
- Multifaith spaces and activity spaces do not allow us to maintain the proper disciplines required for our practices (i.e. no shoes to be worn in the space, permanent residence of the ‘murtis’ (idols))
- Anti-Hindu hate crimes have gone up nearly 400% in the period 2017-18 to 2022-23 according to statistics published by the Home Office on Hate crimes in England and Wales – creating a safety concern for practicing members of the faith

Purpose:

- Be a significant step towards the University’s commitment to building a culture where students and staff feel connected, empowered and respected. It supports the vision of fostering inclusivity in the University through accommodating the spiritual needs of students and staff from the Hindu tradition
(<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/inclusion/governance-policy-and-guidance/edi-policy-statement/>)
- Provide a dedicated space for prayer and worship for members of the Hindu, Sikh, Jain and Buddhist community in the University
- Create a safe space within the University for the community to freely express and explore their faith
- Additionally, this will be the second ever university to have a Hindu Prayer Room in the South West

Actions:

1. The SU, in collaboration with Hindu Society, to lobby the University to designate a permanent and dedicated Hindu Prayer Room that will be open throughout the entire day

2. For the space provided to be tailored to the basic needs of the practices that Hindus and similar faiths perform by providing the following facilities:
 - idols of deities
 - shoe racks for storage of shoes
 - wash basin facilities
 - carpeted floors or mats provided for worshippers to sit upon
 - a bookshelf for holding scriptures

Motion 2: Move Democratic Standards Committee Elections to Teaching Block 2

Background:

1. The SU turns the campus yellow with election branding in March every year, it's a huge push across campus to get students involved in Democracy. It's such a big affair that in 2024 and 2025 the Bristol SU elections were the top 1% of voter turnout in the country
2. Democratic Standards Committee (DSC) hold an important role in the SU and should be elected alongside the Full Time Officers and the Chair of Student Council to reflect the way these roles work together and their importance.
3. Moving DSC elections to March would allow voters to be better informed around the role they hold at the SU as it complements the Chair of Council and Union Affairs Officer roles – both of which are elected in March. It also means they will be able to be trained over summer, and the SU will be able to start DSC meetings earlier in the academic year.
4. For Postgraduate Taught and First Year students, the changes might feel a bit different as they won't be able to nominate themselves for the role. However, this is the same as how our society committees work – and there are lots of roles still available for PGTs and first years, including PGT Faculty Rep, course rep and JCR roles, as well as any by-elections or first-year rep roles in student group committees.

Purpose:

1. To amend the byelaws as required to move DSC elections to the TB2 Elections
2. To increase engagement with, and understanding of the role of DSC
3. To allow DSC training and meetings to begin earlier in the year

4. Bringing DSC members into line with Full-Time Officers, Student Community Organisers and Faculty Representatives by formalising that they must attend all Student Council meetings and AMM's or provide prior notice that they will not be able to attend.

Actions:

1. To amend the byelaws as appropriate to enact the change described above. The required amendments will be enumerated below. 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 and DSC to ensure the appropriate edits are made and renumbered as appropriate.
 1.
 - i. Amend 3.1.e to replace “elected annually by a cross- campus ballot of Student Members in the first term of the Academic Year” with “elected annually by a cross-campus ballot of Student Members in the second term of the preceding Academic Year.”
 - ii. Amend 6.14 to read “Student Council must ensure the election of a Democratic Standards Committee and must convene a Student Representatives Assembly as described in Byelaws 6.16-17.”
 - iii. Amend 6.15 to replace “elected annually by a cross- campus ballot of Student Members in the first term of the Academic Year” with “elected annually by a cross-campus ballot of Student Members in the second term of the preceding Academic Year.”
 - iv. Amend 6.15.b to read “Members include the Chair of Student Council and the Union Affairs Officer and up to five Student Members - elected annually by a cross-campus ballot of Student Members in the second term of the preceding Academic Year - who cannot hold any other Elected Office as defined by Byelaw 8”
 - v. Insert 6.15.c “In line with byelaw 6.5 members will be deemed to have resigned from their position on the committee if they fail to attend student council meetings or AMM without prior notice, with discretion granted jointly to the Chair of Student Council and the Union Affairs Officer”

AOB: “Expression of Dissatisfaction: Bristol SU Trustee Board override SU Council Decision”

An expression of dissatisfaction with the actions of the trustee board in relation to associate membership changes.

Appendix A: Minutes from Student Council Forum 27.03.2025

Student Council Forum 27.03.2025

Minutes

Welcome

Introduction and an explanation about how the meeting will run

FTO Updates

Student Poverty

Residential strategy:

- Campus Division have been having conversations about housing and buildings on campus
- The strategy is what they use to decide for 5 years about how many students should be in Bristol
- It also encapsulates the First Bus contract
- Felt like a positive meeting for Lucy

Q: is there anything about the U2 bus being discussed?

A: Email me with this and I can follow it up for you

£15,000 secured for laundry costs for students

More free food conversations on going

Recent Period Poverty talk

- Good conversations
- Aim is to get the university to continue free period products

We've opened a Community Cabinet on the fifth floor of Senate House

Academic Satisfaction

Russell Group Students' Union International Students' Survey – got over 4,000 responses across the RG, collating the asks to take to the government

Culture Changes around part-time work

- We know students are usually working over the required hours part time because of the cost of living, and that that can be detrimental to your studies
- Student facing: offering more support & guidance for students who are working
- Staff facing: a better culture of empathy for academic staff for students working part time, students are working so that they can be a student here, so more respect for that
- Part time work fair in October: for good employers in the local areas

Secured lockers for mature students & parents and carers network, or any student who feels like they need a locker

12 lockers on the 4th floor of Senate House – if you're interested get in touch with Dave Ingerslev (chair of the network)

Clearer access to marking criteria

- Lobbied for more opportunities for students to be involved with co-creating the criteria for assessment

Feedback Fellows

- 9 students who are paid to work with staff and students to improve assessment feedback
- Tangible skills for the Skills Profile that can be used in development opportunities and CV building

Uniformity in SSLCs

- Making sure they're more transparent and get better outcomes

Academic Advice service & improving access for PGRs

PRES – like the NSS for postgrad researchers, and the outputs of that

Collective Wellbeing

Conducted a survey on wellbeing culture in the University; designed to find out what the culture is like in the uni

Uni have launched a new portal for students to have a quicker triage appointment

More funding for the gender expression fund – able to help trans and non-binary students with the financial challenges they may face

SHAG week is coming up! Please get involved

New sensory spaces on campus

- Feedback on better lighting etc
- Sensory rooms are oversubscribed

- We've secured space in the Richmond Building

Injury Support Group happening on Friday mornings for any injured students, able to do rehab together and have a tea & cake

There will officially be a bus that takes students to their morning exams at Coombe Dingle ! with breakfast

Bak is working on cutting through the international student support webpages & cultural support for staff

Parasport take over at B:Active last week – campaign raised awareness about inclusivity and access to sport for disabled students

Society Forums – for groups to have more opportunities for feedback & Rate My Group is open for feedback

Democracy Updates

Ella

Wellbeing Champions now enacted for next year at the point of reaffiliation

Bak

More financial support for international students, working with uni staff to work on more financial aid for international students, wanting to extend this to schools too

Lucy

Inhouse guarantor scheme – still in conversation with the university, SU is dealing with how we make this situation the best it can be for students who are unable to get a guarantor

- More info: A lot of the time, landlords will ask for a guarantor. There are a lot of restrictions on who can be a guarantor and this disadvantages already marginalised students. The idea is that students are somewhat under the uni's care, and they should take responsibility for that legal relationship

Circuit Laundry - £15,000 secured for financial aid for laundry fund

- Is this just for first years in halls, looking at if we can put this money straight into a Washnet account

Divest borders – Lucy & Katie taking meetings with the campaigners

Motion on recycling soft and flexible plastics, getting the university to have these facilities on campus

The uni staff have said that they already have some recycling points for these. There are some issues with the use of these and are not keen to expand this, but they are committing to doing some research into the use of them.

Q: Could we enact point 2 to create some posters with information?

A: It's in the works

Katie

Motion got taken off the agenda at AMM, so would you be happy to have a chat about that?

Katie: happy to have a chat at a later point

Removing dolphin from the crest

Katie has entered conversations with the university marketing team

After the updates, the meeting moved onto discussing topics that had been previously chosen by DSC from a plethora of issues highlighted by the Big Bristol SU Survey. Each issue corresponded to a table, and each table was chaired by a Full-Time Officer. Students could choose to sit at the table with the topic most relevant to them.

Cost Of Living – Chaired by Lucy Pears

The group's discussion mainly focused on rent and housing, talking about how high the rents in Bristol are. International students also contributed their experiences with having to pay higher prices because of difficulties with guarantors and generally finding housing. They talked about the Activity Hardship Fund and considered whether it could be transformed into a more general fund. Suggested actions for the new year were: 1. Keeping 1st years informed about renting, what to expect, and what a standard rent price is; 2. Letting 1st years know not to immediately jump into looking for housing in TB1; Getting students to find out more information about first year halls.

Accessibility and Mental Health and Wellbeing – Chaired by Linlu Ye

The group discussed a variety of topics in the remit of Accessibility and Wellbeing.

They discussed the possibility of hiring a sign-language interpreter for events so as to not have to rely on volunteers from the Sign-Language Society.

They talked about accessing wellbeing services, and how to publicise them so they reach more students. They talked about the different ways they could be advertised, and the benefit of emails vs posters for this purpose. They also discussed looking into bi-lingual wellbeing services for international students. This discussion encapsulated both the services already existing at the university and how to advertise those, and ideas for new services, peer-to-peer or online, that students thought would be a good idea to explore.

They discussed room accessibility in the university, and the lack thereof. Many labs and classrooms in university buildings either only have stair access, or the lift is off-limit for students, or the lifts regularly don't work.

They discussed neurodivergence and getting support for it, and how it's really hard to get that at the university without a formal diagnosis.

Teaching on My Course – Chaired by Mia Stevens

The group discussed a variety of topics in the remit of Teaching

They talked about the new Personal Tutoring system that is being piloted in some schools, and discussed how PT is an important part of feeling supported on your course. They talked about how Joint Honours students are often left behind by this because their tutor is only from one of their Honours.

They talked about the delay in feedback and how even though it's now policy that feedback comes back within 15 days, this is not at all consistent. There's an action for Mia to follow up on the policy being implemented.

They discussed how marking is often inconsistent and its criteria confusing. They talked about how having a video on Blackboard that shows clearly how work is marked would be helpful. They would also like example essays which have very clear feedback explaining why the essay has been marked the way it has.

They discussed how deadline bunching is difficult.

Collaborative actions from the discussion are:

- co-write an email to Mark Alinson (Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)- Education and Student Success Management asking for later return of feedback to be a grounds for students to ask for an extension on assessments impacted by late feedback
- create a motion for student council asking for better support for joint honours students - e.g. shared ownership between schools, better identification of unit convenors and other key staff

Support for Societies – Chaired by Katie Poyner

This group discussed issues with storage space, with accessing space and its cost, with getting SU support – in general and specifically in challenging unacceptable behaviour, and with fundraising. The following have emerged as actions or areas to work on:

- Transparency about storage space (and increased accessibility to this)
- Speaker and room booking timelines need to be lined up better (currently 2 weeks for room bookings but 3 weeks for a speaker, when it is awkward to have one booked without the other)
- More specific SU mailboxes so committees can better access support e.g. a room bookings one where they could resolve queries and check about speaker events in advance,

students also suggested a 'mediations' one where they can send queries, as perhaps 'dev team' isn't as intuitive as a 'society support' mailbox title. Students expressed that it can take days to get through via the general SU one but aren't sure which other one to use.

- 'Please do not disturb' option on Skedda to try and prevent people walking into booked activity space, or signage for societies to use when hosting events that would be disruptive for students to walk in on
- Students suggested it could help for the SU to have a database of external rooms and list of pricing that groups can use, a 'one stop resource' / 'find a room' portal, embedded airtable on the website or maybe an interactive map (could be a collaborative resource with student groups) including off campus options.
- Students shared examples of spaces they use and could share with other groups, e.g. spaces used by dance society outside of the uni/SU
- Students also wanted room booking guidance for Langford campus
- President shared that room booking guidance seemed to be missing from both president and treasurer training, and that this would also be useful to put on the committee portal
- Students suggested a flow chart about handling difficult behaviour; i.e. when to have a meeting / how to respond to an incident in the society
- Mediation service desired by students to support with handling incidents between members, often try to have meetings on their own but sometimes things escalate so the SU only hears once things have gotten worse
- Space for knowledge sharing between societies e.g. lunch n learns on 'how to fundraise' between cause groups and networking events for societies, basing these events around common feedback across groups from Rate my Group
- Encouraging more collaborations between different groups, students felt it was 'limiting' to just encourage society collabs in the same area, for example platforming events like the collab between pole dance and history societies
- SU Re evaluating the speed of room booking process or holding the space in advance based on the 'stakes' (if they need a projector or certain capacity)
- Increase society and SU presence at Langford and access to space + storage (particularly for societies not affiliated with centaur)
- Some rooms on skedda, Richmond ones on airtable which is confusing -> would help to have these all in one place

Appendix B: Minutes from Student Council 06.11.2025

Student Council Minutes - Thursday 6th November 2025

Agenda	Owner	Timing
Welcome	Chair - LA	5 min (17:05)
Intro to how student council works	Chair	10 min (17:15)
Approval of last Council's Minutes	Chair	5 min (17:20)
Full Time Officer Updates and Q&A	FTOs	10 min (17:30)
Motions		
Banning of AI, Stolen and Unethical Art at SU Poster Sales	Motion Proposer, Chair	25 min (17:55)
BREAK - 10 mins (18:05)		
Motions (cont'd)		
Updating our byelaws to align with current practice in relation to Associate Membership and provisions to support student groups through the transition	Motion Proposer, Chair	25 min (18:30)
Empowering Joint Honour Students at the University of Bristol	Motion Proposer, Chair	25 min (18:55)
Any other business	Chair	5 min (19:00)
END / PIZZA		

Welcome

- Intro from Louis Anscombe, the chair: Great to see such good attendance, and a great chance for everyone to express their opinions. FTOs will give updates and attendees can ask them questions
- Housekeeping/safety info.

- The Chair gave an overview of the student code of conduct for Council, to ensure mutual respect throughout the meeting.
- Quiet space available – AR2. Also talk to staff if you need anything.
- Microphone etiquette
- DSC – available for questions about procedures or format of the meeting. You can ask them at any time, by coming up to speak to them at the far end of the table.

Intro to how student council works

- Procedure: ideas board. Students submitted ideas to this, and DSC and SU staff advise on how best to make each change suggested. Sometimes this is to put forward a motion; DSC then check and edit the motion including risk assessment. The motion then comes to Student Council for debate and voting.
- Guillotine to the meeting: student feedback has been that previous meetings have been too long. We are suggesting: the meeting will end at 7:30 at the latest, at which point we automatically postpone all remaining motions to be discussed to the next meeting. We will vote on this idea now, any questions?
 - Q: are there any considerations for prioritisation of motions?
 - A: DSC decide the order of the motions based on the best running of the meeting.
 - Q: why ending 30 mins after the end? Why not at 7 as advertised?
 - A: this was a suggestion, but we can vote on ending at 7 if the room would like this.
- Vote: on whether to guillotine the meeting at 7pm.
 - Vote in favour of guillotine at 7pm.

Approval of minutes from previous Council

- Voting to approve the minutes from previous council. Pause for attendees to look at the minutes
 - There was initially an issue with the QR code to access the minutes of the previous meeting, so the vote to approve was postponed.
 - Q: Previous council was not a formal council meeting – how do we assess the minutes?
 - A: It was a Student Council Forum, so there were minutes from the ideas raised which are to be approved.
 - Another student raised that they were unable to access the QR code on their handout to view the agenda and motions. The chair offered to share a new code on the screen.

Full Time Officer Updates and Q&A

- Chair: questions for the officers will come after the officers have all updated.

Updates from Katie Poyner, Union Affairs Officer

- New student space in lower Hawthorns, SU Basement. Will be using data and demand for this space to push for further spaces. Also developing external space guide. Listing empty study spaces.
- Challenging the government's proposals to connect tuition to course quality, maintenance grants as well as International levy which will tax their fees.
- Raised these issues at All Party Parliamentary Group for Students yesterday. Raised issue of one-size-fits-all maintenance loans, and making sure Bristol students' voice is included in national work on this.
- Ideas board to improve engagement and transparency with democratic structures.
- Associate membership changes: aware and apologetic for the confusion and frustration this has caused, and want this motion to work towards cocreating a new structure for society representation, which allows student groups to be better represented.

Updates from Sharan Khemlani, Postgraduate Education Officer

- Representing postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students
- With Mia (Undergraduate Education Officer), has worked with Tansy (Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students) on 'Tea with the PVC' and 'You at the SU' events. Chance to engage with new and returning students, talking to candidates in the TB1 elections as well. Will do these again in TB2. Good space for feedback on the work of the SU and university.
- Building on the success of Welcome events for postgraduate students, and have run a second Postgraduate Pints event.
- Supported Trinbagonian Culture Day with the global lounge and Carib Society – raised money for Jamaican hurricane relief at this.
- Workshop on estate planning, bringing student voice into planning for spaces, making these attentive to student needs.
- Reimagining inclusive assessments in the time of AI, bringing student voice to these conversations.
- Working with careers on support for postgraduate students, to make sure their support is tailored to their needs.

Updates from Linlu Ye, Equality, Liberation and Access Officer

- Secured funding for Gender Expression Fund – applications are still open.

- Bringing awareness to consent, and planning for Sexual Health And Guidance (SHAG) week. Events and messaging on consent.
- Working with the university to review accessibility features on campus. Making accessibility info clearer and easier to find on SU website.
- Made agreement with the university to provide free period products at six locations on campus – this will be run long term. This is in addition to the SU community cabinet resources.

Updates from Mia Stevens, Undergraduate Education Officer

- Big priority is assessment feedback – next week launching feedback engagement fellows: 21 paid students who will work with their faculties around improving assessment feedback. Bringing student voice into this conversation.
- Improving transparency of marking and moderation processes. This will include video explaining how these processes work and how staff arrive at the marks they have given.
- Feeding student input into personal tutoring reform project. Ensuring it meets student needs.
- Participating in National Union of Students (NUS) lobbying campaign day, on separating Teaching Excellence Framework from tuition fees – as tying tuition fees to course quality creates a system of inequality.
- Writing to MPs to lobby against only giving maintenance grants to students doing specific courses – it narrows the options available to low-income students. Working with NUS and the university on this.

The chair put up the updated QR code for the motions under discussion today.

Updates from Ella Lovibond, Sport and Student Development Officer

- Derby day will be back for another year – biggest sporting event of the year, happening Wednesday 18th March 2026.
- Secured another 15k for injury support group. This involves running coffee mornings and sport psychology workshops for students with injuries.
- Men's mental health month – we have events for this.
- Ignite Inclusive Multi-Sport Festival
- Looking at options for replacing the crest on sports kits, as it still includes the Colston dolphin

Updates from Jessie Yeung, International Students Officer

- Inclusive teaching for international students, through workshops with Bristol Institute for Learning and Teaching (BILT) and through departments

- Working on opt-in voter registration system, to create awareness for international students regarding their voting rights
- International Student Week is next week – lots of events, global food fair, karaoke, volunteering.
- Working on English Additional Language support. Getting understanding of current services available.
- Working with the university on scholarships for current international students.
- Working on securing scholarships for Palestinian students in Gaza.

Updates from Lucy Pears, Student Living Officer (Lucy's updates were read by the chair as Lucy was unable to attend Student Council)

- The Climate Action Plan at the SU is outdated. Have appointed a new role to work on this and to make the SU more sustainable.
- After securing funding for students' Laundry costs last year, now working on how to distribute this – hoping to get this out in December. Also having meetings with University staff to talk about why laundry prices are different depending on the halls. Lobbying the University to bring down all laundry prices to the same cost.
- Working on improving access to cheaper food on campus

Questions for the officers

- Q: FTOs are trustees, will you commit to respecting the vote on the byelaw motion and not overturn it
- A: [Katie] we are 7 members of the 16 strong trustee board – so we can't speak for the whole board.
- Q: you say you don't know how the board will vote, but how will you personally persuade the board to vote on this?
- A: [Katie] this will be a good question for the debate on this motion. As an officer and trustee we have to maintain a careful balance between representing students versus safeguarding risks.
- Q: how to challenge MPs when we come from different cities with different MPs
- A: [Mia] the officers are working on a letter to challenge MPs which can be shared – get in touch!
- Q: Hawthorns cafe cheap meals have disappeared – will this come back or has this moved?
- A: [Katie] Officers are also outraged by this change. Usually the SU subsidises this, but we felt that this cheap food should be available in Senate House. Source has removed this to the Merchant Ventures building and stopped accepting money from the SU to subsidise this. We are looking at the SU creating our own catering, as lobbying efforts with Source

have not been as successful as we'd like. The cheap soup option has moved to Merchant Ventures building, but it is unfortunately more limited in scope

- Chair: last question, for time
- Q: for Mia on Teaching Excellence Framework link to tuition fees– how do we fight against this?
- A: 20 days until the budget is enshrined, to campaign. I'm not expecting us to be able to secure change on this in this time, but lobbying and making our voices heard is important. We are looking at lobbying local MPs, and writing to the Skills Minister Jaqui Smith. Getting support from university staff on this as well. Please email if you'd like to be involved in this work.
- QR code to approve minutes from previous council – people still getting access denied to this.
- DSC decide to postpone to the next meeting

Motions

- Chair explains the debate process:
- Rows of seats at the front that are labelled For and Against.
- Motion proposer gives 3 minute speech, someone can volunteer to come up and give a 3 minute prepared speech against the motion. During these speeches people can come and line up to give for/against speeches. Proposer and Speaker Against stay at the front for clarifying questions – these questions should be about clarifying details of the motion, they should not debate the motion. We then move to floor debate: people can give 1 minute speeches for or against the motion. Only the same number of people can speak for or against.
- For each motion: we will vote whether to have an anonymous vote, and then if this passes, vote using the voting slip in the corresponding colour for that motion. A member of DSC and a volunteer from the room will oversee the vote count.
- The vote for the anonymous voting is to allow the room to decide on this. If the room decides against anonymous voting, voting on the motion will be carried out by raising voting cards.

Banning of AI, Stolen and Unethical Art at SU Poster Sales

- Proposer speech:
 - SU runs poster sales during freshers and throughout the year. The sales are most popular amongst freshers. The company, Pyramid Posters Ltd, who sells at these, often uses AI art. This is bad as it takes art without consent from artists and puts it through an AI programme. This is stealing art, and is damaging to artists. This conflicts with the

charitable aims of the SU. The company does not supply information on how artists are paid for their work, and suggests that they are not paid fairly for their work. It exploits freshers for money. It is also unethical and unsustainable, due to the pollution and use of resources by AI. Want to protect artists, by preventing AI taking away artists jobs. Want to support creative student societies. Want the SU to stop working with this poster company and reevaluate partnerships with other organisations that use AI art.

- Chair asks for speech against – no speech against
- Chair asks for questions
 - Q: what is being classed as unethical art – is it just regarding crediting of artists?
 - A: not being credited, artists not being paid, art being stolen. Also a company that generally doesn't state its policies or where it sources its artwork.
 - Q: the company says it has appropriate licences – is it possible to investigate these?
 - A: I tried to see what the licensing was, and there was nothing to say that they have the rights to this artwork
 - Q: (follow up) some companies don't publish their licencing arrangements
 - A: I understand this, but if the policy is unclear we can't see how artists are being credited/paid
 - Q: the motion states it will make SU guidelines available – what do these say?
 - A: this motion would be to create these guidelines. Don't want to set unrealistic expectations until work begins on this.
 - Q: when voting on this, are the actions part and parcel – can we vote on actions 1 and 3 and further investigate on 2.
 - A: (chair) the motion can be split into parts, if a member wants to come and discuss with DSC.
 - [student declines to do so]
- Vote on anonymous voting : vote against
- Vote on the motion: Vote in favour, motion passes.

Updating our byelaws to align with current practice in relation to Associate Membership and provisions to support student groups through the transition

- Both speakers will have 5 mins
- Proposer speech:
 - Motion proposed by full-time officer team. This motion does not debate the trustee decision to end associate membership. The motion is to update the byelaws to reflect the changes that have already been made. In 2024 there were serious sexual misconduct

complaints against associate members. We launched an independent review of our code of conduct, particularly around sexual misconduct. We found that there was no process for bringing complaints against associate members. This meant that there was no safeguarding process for associate members. One of the recommendations from this independent review was to review the associate membership scheme. The decision was made by the trustees to remove the associate membership scheme to protect students from misconduct. Charitable purpose is regarding students only, not associate members. Insurance is only applicable to students. The decision was made to protect students, which is the purpose of the trustees. We recognise that not all associate members have engaged in misconduct, but the risk is too great in the system. The SU has met with the Open Letter writers, 30 different drop-ins for student groups and put in special measures to keep groups safe. We've launched a scheme to allow non-students to contribute to student groups in a secure and safeguarding compliant manner. We've created a scheme to train students to give coaching at groups. Looking at a reciprocal membership scheme with UWE.

- Speech against:
 - The SU purports to support democracy – the process of scrapping the scheme has proven this not true. Now they want to update the byelaws to reflect the change. Even if we vote against this motion, the board of trustees can overrule this. If they do so, this exposes how undemocratic the SU is. Some of the board is elected by students, but there was 30% turnout at the last elections. I urge you to vote against this motion to demonstrate that the student union is not as democratic as it claims to be.
- Chair calls for questions
 - Q: Can I make a speech for delaying the motion?
 - A: [chair]: you can come to speak to us at the front about this. [Student goes to discuss with DSC]
- Q: With regards to insurance, I was under the impression that the associate members had to buy membership – would there not be scope for including the additional cost of appropriate insurance in this cost?
- A: Katie: third party liability insurance – there's no option to add it. Insurance is just one part – yes there may be some mitigation regarding insurance, but this was only one part of the reasoning for ending associate membership.
- Q: could you repeat your name – speaker against? (Tim) I share the frustration on it being put in place without much input from student societies. However I also recognise the need for more safeguarding. If we don't pass this motion, what actions could we take to make sure safeguarding is protected?
- A: all students are bound by code of conduct, all associate members are bound by the same code of conduct. I don't see why they can't be bound by the same safeguarding

measures that students are, though I don't have the expertise to discuss safeguarding in particular, but can discuss this with the SU.

- Q: as a small number of committees were consulted, and many of them were not in favour, how does the SU defend this as being representative?
- A: looking at stats – only 177 members were associate members, which is less than 1% of total society membership.
- Q: you spoke about the coach instructor scheme – how would this help with safeguarding?
- A: this scheme is a much more rigorous way of collecting data – the associate membership scheme was much less formal and there was no collection of data. This means they're accountable, and have insurance.
- Chair: allows further questions
- Q: I was part of the consultation after the open letter. Attended 2 meetings, and associate membership wasn't brought up during these – when did this become the focal point?
- A: Katie asked for clarification on when these were – these were in March and June
 - Katie spoke to this student: the consultations they attended were on the code of conduct review from the year before. This was on how to handle complaints and misconduct. This was the review that produced the recommendations which suggested that the associate membership scheme needed to be reviewed.
- Q: for many students here, I'm a 1st year course rep, to clarify the background on this decision – why was this decision made without consulting student groups?
- A: Ella – the email was sent in January to specific groups due to the sensitive nature of the topics related. This came on the back of the code of conduct review that happened the year prior.
- Q: to clarify – as it's a byelaw change will we need 66% of attendees vote to approve?
- A: [Chair]: Yes
- Q: why is this motion being brought now – there's still a lot of discourse on this issue, why is it being finalised now?
- A: Katie – it's important to change the byelaws to align with current practice – we've already ceased associate memberships. It made sense for this to come to the next student council. The motion talks about how to support student groups through this change.
- Quick speech against [the speaker originally suggested this was a speech for, but this was overturned by DSC]
 - The change to associate membership is a travesty – but the current motion is not on this. This process has eroded trust. The SU doesn't propose enough funding towards supporting student groups – the motion could go further.

- DSC rules that this was a speech against the motion.
- Quick speech for:
 - What has already happened isn't ideal, but I appreciate that the SU has been trying to support societies. For example the introduction of the instructors scheme – although there have been issues with this such as covering costs, still the implementation of it has been beneficial. I found it useful for our society who had associate members who weren't instructors – would like to find a way to incorporate that in future.
- There has been a proposal to extend the meeting guillotine by 15 mins, which we will now vote on.
- Vote on extending the guillotine: vote in favour of extending the guillotine to 7:15.
- Speech for:
 - Removal of associate membership scheme will increase costs for societies – they need further support. Please vote to support this motion, but the support must go further.
- Speech against:
 - From the start this has been a charade – this decision was made without a mandate. In the review 85% of students wanted to keep associate membership. At every university that was looked at in the review, they all offered associate membership in line with the NUS. They're looking for retrospective democratic approval of a decision that has already been made. Vote against it.
- Chair: will allow for 3 more questions on this, as its an important topic
 - Q: as a queer person of colour, I have concerns to how the scheme will disproportionately impact identity societies – as members who have worked and grown in the society and are then cut off from accessing it. We feel that those societies will be policed more with regards to these changes.
 - A: the decision to remove associate memberships wasn't intended to cut friendships or networks. We are developing toolkits to create alumni membership schemes, alumni just won't be part of your regular activity.
- Q: about reciprocal membership – is this available? If they're pursuing this, how does safeguarding factor into this?
- A: reciprocal membership – we are working on policies in both organisations (University of Bristol and University of West England) about mitigating safeguarding concerns. With reciprocal membership, the organisation that the student comes from would be able to investigate complaints against that student. Reciprocal membership aims to benefit students from both universities, but puts onus on the institutions to investigate misconduct relating to students from their institution.

- Q: curious as I'm a new rep and master's student – people are upset that the decision for removing associate membership was taken by trustees, not student council. Why is the decision coming to student council now, after the decision went to trustees – was it because it was felt students wouldn't support it?
- A: this motion is debating the byelaw changes and the further support provided by the SU, not on debating whether to keep associate membership. Trustees made the decision to cease the associate membership scheme as their responsibility is to protect students with regards to safeguarding.
- Closing statement, for:
 - I've been working on this for many months, and have been consulting students on the outcomes going forward. I agree that students weren't consulted before this decision was made, and that's why we want to change that going forward. We are trying to put these changes in place to support students' safety going forward. The coach instructor scheme would not restrict groups from accessing support from people who would make your groups safer. The funding for groups wouldn't be applied across the whole student body as groups have different needs with regards to safety, so the funding for this can be used for the groups that need it. We apologise for the lack of consultation on the original changes, and hope that this motion will provide support to student groups going forward.
- Closing statement against:
 - Want to register discontent regarding the speech for being marked as against by DSC. We weren't able to split the motion into parts, so we need to be able to speak for some parts and some against. The way the associate membership scheme was scrapped was undemocratic, and this motion is to get retrospective support for the change, and is embarrassing.
- Vote on whether to vote anonymously: vote goes against voting anonymously.
- Vote on the motion: 28 in favour, 74 against, 26 abstain. Motion does not pass.

Empowering Joint Honour Students at the University of Bristol

Speech for: How many of you have tried to be in two places at once – this is what it's like for joint honours students. The system does not offer sufficient support for these students. They can end up with different exams on consecutive days. This motion calls for access to better communication (etc) from both schools.

This is about fairness, inclusion, and the value of multidisciplinary learning.

No speaker against.

Questions:

Q: paleontology course is not joint honours, but teaching is split between different schools. Would you be willing to expand the motion to include students on such courses?

A: the motion aims to support any student who shares modules between multiple schools.

Vote on this motion: motion unanimously passed.

Any Other Business

N/A

Appendix C: Democratic Terms & definitions

Motion: A formal proposal from a student that calls on the SU to take certain actions. This is typically:

- A statement or a belief for the SU to support
- Long-term work that needs to be enshrined in our policies
- If passed, will become enshrined in our policies

Policy: What happens to a motion after it passes. These are active for 3 years and direct the work of our Full-Time Officers.

Democratic Standards Committee (DSC): A group of five elected students plus the Chair of Student Council and the Union Affairs Officer. They ensure that our structures and democracy are accessible, fair and productive for all students. Their powers are:

- Discussing and allocating Ideas that come through the Ideas Board
- Setting the Agenda for democratic meetings
- Agreeing the wording of referenda
- Approving Election Rules
- Making procedural decisions during democratic meetings
- Advise and explain procedure to students during democratic meetings

If you have a question or want to raise a Procedural Action, you can go speak to them! They'll be set up from 4:30pm, so if you arrive early they'll have plenty of time to hear you out.

Student Representatives Assembly (SRA): a committee made up of Full-Time Officers, Student Community Organisers, Faculty Reps, Student Trustees and DSC members, chaired by the Chair of Student Council. During their meetings they:

- Scrutinise the actions of the Full-Time Officer team
- Develop and action student ideas sent to SRA
- Follow up on policy passed at democratic meetings
- Share Academic Experience among Faculty Reps and Education Officers
- Bid for funds to build collaborative campaigns

Speech For: 3 minute speech In Favour of the Motion

Speech Against: 3 minute speech Opposing a motion

Statement For: 1 minute speech In favour of a motion, delivered during the floor debate

Statement Against: 1 minute speech Opposing a motion, delivered during the floor debate

Amendment: A suggested edit of a motion, submitted in advance of the meeting during the amendment window.

Guillotine: A hard stop to the meeting in the event it overruns. This does not mean that the meeting will automatically finish late; rather, it's to ensure *that in the event it does overrun*, we have a hard deadline after which any items left will be postponed to the next meeting.

Appendix D: Procedural Actions

These are actions available to you during a democratic meeting that are laid out in the byelaws; suggestions you can make to DSC if you're not happy with a motion being voted on in its current form or at this particular meeting. You can suggest the following options:

- **Call for a formal referendum**
 - You can suggest this if you think the motion:
 - should be enshrined in our policies for longer than 3 years

- covers an important issue that all students should be allowed to vote on
 - is a yes/no issue
- If DSC approves your suggestion, a vote will be held on whether to turn the motion into a referendum
- If the vote passes, the motion will not get voted on in the current meeting and will instead be turned into a referendum.
- If the vote fails, the motion will be voted on as normal.
- **Postpone the motion to the next democratic meeting**
 - You can suggest this if, for example, it would be more appropriate to discuss the motion at AMM rather than Student Council or vice versa.
 - If DSC approves your suggestion, a vote will be held on whether to postpone the motion
 - If the vote passes, the motion will not get voted on in the current meeting and will instead be added to the Agenda of the next democratic meeting.
 - If the vote fails, the motion will be voted on as normal.
- **Vote on a motion in parts**
 - You can suggest this if you agree with **only some** of the actions of the motion
 - You will need to decide **how** you want to divide the motion, i.e. Part 1: actions 1 & 2, Part 2: action 3
 - If DSC approves your suggestion, a vote will be held on whether to split the motion into parts
 - If the vote passes, each part of the motion will be voted on separately – they might still all pass, they might not.
 - If the vote fails, the motion will be voted on as normal.
- **Vote on an amendment in parts**
 - You can suggest this if there has been an amendment submitted, and you agree with **only some** of the amendment
 - You will need to decide **how** you want to divide the amendment, i.e. Part 1: actions 1 & 2, Part 2: action 3

- If DSC approves your suggestion, a vote will be held on whether to split the amendment into parts
- If the vote passes, each part of the amendment will be voted on separately – they might still all pass, they might not.
- If the vote fails, the amendment will be voted on as normal.

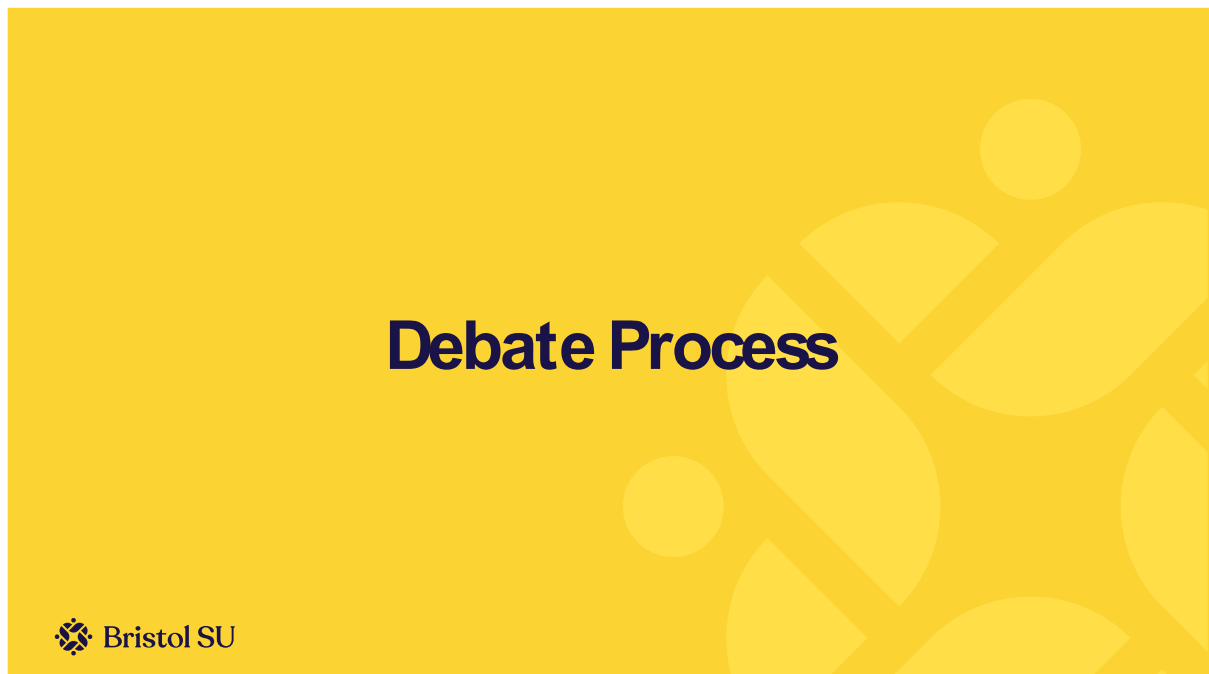
You can go speak to DSC at any point during the meeting, but if you already know ahead of time that you'll want to raise a Procedural Action, we suggest arriving a bit earlier and speaking to DSC while the sign-in process is ongoing. If you do choose to speak to DSC during the meeting, please try to speak quietly so as to not disrupt the meeting.

Appendix E: Debate Process

1. Motion proposer gives a 3 minute speech for their motion
2. The Chair will call for a Speech Against. They will have 3 minutes.
3. The audience has a chance to ask practical questions on the content of the motion. This is not a chance to debate the validity of the motion: it is strictly a space for you to clarify on the contents of the motion. After you raise your hand and the Chair calls on you, wait for a member of staff to bring you a microphone so you can ask your question.
4. If you want to make a statement For or Against a motion, please use this time to make your way to the front rows. Sit on the For side if you wish to make a statement in support of the motion, and on the Against side if you wish to make a statement opposing the motion.
5. If no one wishes to speak against the motion, we will move directly to voting after questions. If someone does, the Speech Against concludes the first round of debate and kicks off the floor debate.
 - i. The Chair will call on the first person in the queue in the For side to come give their 1 minute statement
 - ii. The Chair will call on the first person in the queue in the Against side to come give their 1 minute statement

- iii. Rinse and Repeat until everyone has spoken, or, if the debate seems to keep going, until the Chair calls for a second round of 3 minute speeches, which will conclude the debate.
- 6. The Chair will call for a vote on whether to vote anonymously for the motion or just by show of voting cards
- 7. The Chair will call for a vote.

Double click below  to open the Debate Process Animation





Student Council

11.12.2025

17:00 – 19:00

**Winston Theatre, The
Richmond Building**