


Student Council

Bristol SU's Guide to
Student Council



Student Council is your chance to make a difference and set the agenda to improve student lives! If you're interested in learning more about democracy at Bristol (and eating free pizza) then why not come along?

Student Council is the main representative forum of the Students' Union.

During the event, members discuss and vote on items (called motions) submitted by you (students)! Any motions that pass become active SU policy for three years. These policies then direct the focus for our team of seven SU officers.

So, don't miss out on the opportunity to have YOUR say and exercise your Democratic Rights!



Meeting Agenda

- A Welcome from the Chair (16:15-16:20)
- Explanation of Student Council and Slido (16:20-16:30)
- Updates from the Full-Time Officers and Questions (16:30-16:45)

MOTIONS

Timings on each Motion will vary depending on how many rounds of debate are called for by the Chair.

Motions 1-3 (16:45 – 17:15)

- Motion 1: Improve the Music Practice Rooms at the University
- Motion 2: Transition to a 100% Just and Sustainable Plant-based Student Union
- Motion 3: An Update to SU Byelaws to Align with Current Practice

BREAK (17:15 – 17:25)

Meeting Agenda

Motions 4 and 5 (17:25 – 17:45)

- Motion 4: Clarifying the role of the Democratic Standards Committee during Elections
- Motion 5: Reinstate the 4-year Graduate-entry Medicine Course at the University of Bristol

BREAK (17:45 – 18:05)

Motions 6, 7 and 8 (18:05 – 18:45)

- Motion 6: Supporting Trans and Non-binary Students and Campaigning for Gender Justice.
- Motion 7: Allow the Mandatory Committee Role of Equalities Officer to be Held by up to Two People
- Motion 8: Ensure Academic Support is in place for all Full-Time Officer Candidates during Elections
- Close / Any other business (18:45 – 19:00)

Digital Voting

As part of our efforts to make our democratic events more accessible, and easier to take part in, we're trying **Digital voting!**

This means that if you're a **current-year student rep** you'll be able to cast your vote on motions online. This will be done using **Slido** – an interactive Q&A and polling platform for live and virtual meetings and events.

If you can't join the Student Council in person, we will be running the audio and video feed for the meeting through Teams. You will then be able to vote using Slido.

Those wishing to speak for or against a motion and any amendments **must join the event in person.**

However, **voting will be done via Slido for everyone** – whether you're joining online or in person.

Joining Student Council Online

So, how do you go about attending Student Council online?

- Well, we'll be running an audio and video feed from the Student Council meeting through Teams. You can join through this [Online Student Council link](#).
- You can then head over to Slido on your computer, or phone, by going to slido.com The meeting code is #7881296.
- Enter your University of Bristol email address (the one that looks like ab12345) and then check your email for a secure pin.
- Input the pin into Slido and you're in! You can use the Q&A function to ask questions during the meeting or vote to support, oppose and abstain on motions once voting opens for each one.

Joining Student Council in Person

If you'd like to speak for or against a motion, or just enjoy in-person democracy and free pizza (we know we do!), then come along to **Lecture Theatre 1 of the Chemistry Building**. **You'll still vote using Slido**, but you don't need to join the Teams call.

- Please note that you'll need to bring a device (a phone, laptop, or tablet) with an internet connection, and have access to your University email inbox.
- Head over to Slido on your computer or phone by going to slido.com and using the meeting code #7881296.
- Enter your University of Bristol email address (the one that looks like ab12345) and then check your email for a secure pin.
- Input the pin into Slido and you're in! You can use the Q&A function to ask questions during the meeting or vote to support, oppose and abstain on motions once voting opens for each one.
- Has Slido told you you're not able to join the event? Go and chat with our tech team at the helpdesk and they'll get you in.

What if I can't make it to Student Council?

If you're a student council voting member and can't make it to the student council in person or online, don't worry! You can still have your say.

You can give your vote away to someone else on behalf of you if you can't attend. This is a proxy vote!

Because voters are approved in advance with digital voting, the **deadline for letting us know about proxy voting is 12:00 on 14 November**. Please email bristolsu-democracy@bristol.ac.uk and include your name and University email address, as well as the proxy voter's name and email address.

"What if I am a student council voting member for more than one role?"

Even if you are a student council voting member for more than one role, therefore sitting in more than one position of influence, you still only get one vote.

So, if you can't make it to the Student Council and hold multiple positions, you can only give one proxy vote to someone.

Ask the Officers



Student Council is your chance to find out if officers have implemented their manifestos and plans for change. You're also able to question their responses to reactive challenges this year.

Have their intentions created results? Are there other changes you would like to see? If so, let them know!



Izzy Russell: Student Living Officer

Izzy represents you in all areas related to living in Bristol, including your accommodation, health and wellbeing, finance, and interaction with the local community. As part of this, they will work to make sure that you have access to good advice in these areas and are represented to student support services.

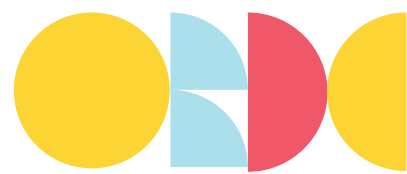
[Check out what Izzy has been up to here: bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/student-living](https://bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/student-living)

Responsibilities include:

- Working for the SU and university buildings (including housing) to be sustainable and accessible.
- Fighting for student rights.
- Making sure that students' interests in health and well-being are represented within the University support services.
- Supporting and developing the Sustainability Network, Fundraising and Volunteering Network, Wellbeing Network, and other Networks as appropriate.

Example of a question someone may ask them at Student Council:

“Do you have an example of when you have fought for student rights, especially in terms of accommodation?”





Adam Michael: Union Affairs Officer

Adam represents you and your interaction with the SU. This involves making sure that our communication and services are effective, accessible, and relevant for everyone. As Union Affairs Officer, Adam also works to represent the interests of all students to university executive management.

[Check out what Adam has been up to here: bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/union-affairs](https://bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/union-affairs)

Responsibilities include:

- Looking after democracy and representation in Bristol SU.
- Making sure that students are at the heart of Union decision-making.
- Responsible for how students interact with the Union, including effective communication channels and oversight for Union services such as those provided for societies, and volunteering and fundraising (RAG).
- Working to explore the development of student societies.

Example of what you could ask them at Student Council:

“What have you done this year to increase the informal way SU officers receive feedback?”





Saranya Thambirajah: Equality, Liberation, and Access Officer

So that everyone is represented at our SU and Uni, Saranya works to make sure that all students, particularly underrepresented or marginalised groups, are represented on issues related to their experience at the University. This is so that these interests can then be addressed in the development of Union and University policies.

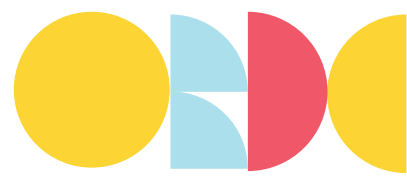
Check out what Saranya has been up to here: bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/equality-liberation-and-access

Responsibilities include:

- Working to ensure that Bristol is an inclusive, safe, and accessible university for all students.
- Giving a platform to the voices of students from marginalized backgrounds and identities.
- Working with networks and societies to centre student experiences in the SU and the university. For example, supporting and developing Women's, Black Students, BAME, LGBT+, Trans, Disabled Students, Multifaith, and Widening Participation Networks.
- Working with the Sport and Student Development and Union Affairs Officers to support campaigns, activities, and research into diverse student experiences to ensure any barriers to participation are removed.

Example of a question someone may ask them at Student Council:

“What work have you done to champion the voice of students from marginalized backgrounds? Have they felt heard as a result?”





Pat Gibbs: Sport and Student Development Officer

It is important to develop the opportunities that you and your peers have, to make sure that you can engage in a variety of sports. For this reason, Pat liaises with the University Centre for Sport, Exercise, and Health and oversees the organisation and promotion of sports clubs, the varsity series, and sports participation activities.

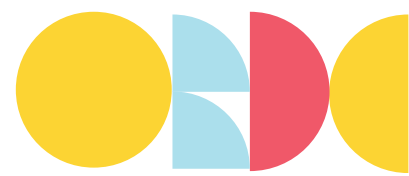
[Check out what Pat has been up to here: bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/sport-and-student-development](https://bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/sport-and-student-development)

Responsibilities include:

- Representing sports societies and student groups and their members who are represented throughout the university community, in the SU, and beyond.
- Ensuring that students have access to recreational sporting opportunities.
- Representing the interests of students on matters of personal development.
- Promoting the importance of co-curricular participation and skills development.
- Working with the Equality, Liberation, and Access Officer and relevant Chairs of Networks to ensure that the Union's Equality Policy is upheld in all Member-led sporting activities and to ensure any barriers to participation are alleviated.

Example of a question someone may ask them at Student Council:

"Have you created any sporting opportunities for individuals who normally face participation barriers?"





Nicole Antoine: Undergraduate Education Officer

Nicole represents your learning and teaching experiences if you are an undergraduate student, as well as making sure that you receive sufficient academic and welfare-related support. She also leads and empowers undergraduate Course and Faculty Reps so that their own interests are represented within the University Student Services.

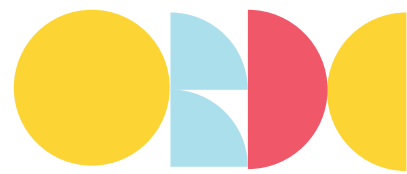
Check out what Nicole has been up to here: bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/undergraduate-education

Responsibilities include:

- Representing undergraduate students on academic and welfare matters
- Ensuring that undergraduate students are represented at every level of Bristol SU and the University.
- Leading and empowering undergraduate academic elected representatives (Course and Faculty Reps).
- Working with the Postgraduate Education Officer to represent, empower and champion academic societies.
- Supporting and developing the Education Network and other Networks as appropriate.

Example of a question someone may ask them at Student Council:

“How have you increased student awareness of important academic advice that is available to them?”





Bakhtawar Javed: International Students' Officer

Bakhtawar represents all aspects of the international student experience. They champion the inclusion of international Members (EU and non-EU) and campaign against discrimination and barriers within both the University and the Union that impact international students.

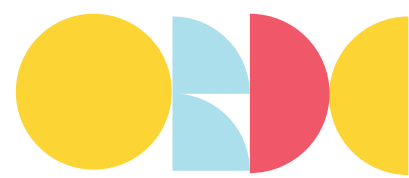
[Check out what Bakhtawar has been up to here:](https://bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/undergraduate-education)
bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/undergraduate-education

Responsibilities include:

- Helping to represent the academic interests and beyond of all International Students
- Working to create better facilities and support provisions for international students
- Increasing the representation of international students across the SU/university
- Works with the Full-time Officers and the relevant Chairs of Networks to ensure that the interests of international Members are addressed in the development of Union and University policies.
- Works with the Sport and Student Development and Union Affairs Officers to ensure that Union and University activities, democracy, and facilities are accessible and engaging to international Members.

Example of a question someone may ask them at Student Council:

“What have you done to make sure that international students have access to good advice and information on matters relating to their University experience?”





Timber Hill: Postgraduate Education Officer

Timber works to represent you, if you are a postgraduate student, to the Uni and SU - especially in terms of research academic and welfare matters. They will make sure that all postgraduate students are represented at every level of the SU and university.

[Check out what Timber has been up to here:](https://bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/postgraduate-education)

bristolsu.org.uk/voice/officers/postgraduate-education

Key responsibilities:

- Representing postgraduate taught and research students on academic and welfare matters
- Ensuring postgraduate students are represented at every level of the SU and university.
- Supporting the postgraduate student network to offer a variety of social environments to postgraduate students
- Helping to shape and inform regulations for Postgraduates within the university
- Shaping a more inclusive across the SU for postgraduate students

Example of a question someone may ask them at Student Council:

“Have you conducted research into how the cost-of-living crisis affects Post Graduate Research? If so, what did you find and what will you be doing to help?”



How does Student Council actually work?



Student Council is a chance for you to get your voice heard directly and help set the agenda of your Students Union!

It happens twice a year, once in TB1 and again in TB2. Ahead of both of these meetings, you can submit your ideas/suggestions (which are called motions). These then get debated in council.

Although all students can submit motions and attend the meeting, **only course reps, faculty reps, network chairs, society presidents, volunteering project coordinators, or club captains can vote on motions.**

All Bristol students can attend Student Council to watch the debates and see which motions have been voted in (passed). These motions are designed to improve students' lives.

This is your chance to make a long-lasting and far-reaching change at Bristol.



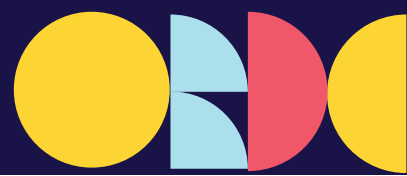
What happened in the run-up to Student Council?



In weeks preceding the meeting, a window opens for idea submissions, or '**motions**', and these will get debated between you and other Course Reps, Faculty Reps, Network Chairs, Society Presidents, Volunteering Project Coordinators, or Club Captains during the meeting.

After this, an amendments window was opened which allowed other students to change the actions (of a motion) if they didn't agree with them, or if they felt the wording was not quite right. **You will now get a chance to vote on these amendments.**

Student Council is your student democratic space. No matter who you are, if you are a Bristol student, you get to have your say about what the SU cares about!.



What is a motion?

Sadly, we're not talking about the nightclub.

A motion is the formatted way that a student's idea comes to us. It will include a background explaining why they are sending it, a purpose to describe its intent, and any actions that give clear guidance on how we can enact the idea. The motion is then sent to Democratic Standards to be approved by the Student Council.

At the meeting, these actions will be displayed on a PowerPoint for each motion that is discussed.

*While we are here, you may find it useful to check out the **following terms**:*

- **Policy** – when a motion is passed by students, it becomes policy. This is in place for 3 years at the Students Union and can be renewed at the Annual Members Meeting.
- **Amendment** – a suggestion from another student to a student's motion, which can “amend” what exactly the motion may enact. You'll vote on this before you vote on the motion because it'll change what it says!
- **Chair** – the person at the front leading the meeting.
- **Democracy Desk** – a group of elected students, Democratic Standards Committee, who you can ask procedural questions to any time.



More useful terms!

- **Abstain** – When you decide not to vote for or against a motion. Your abstention won't be counted as a vote.
- **Action** – What a motion is setting out to do if it passes.
- **Byelaw** – One of the important governing documents for the SU, advising how to go about doing things as a Students' Union.
- **Democratic Standards Committee** – A student committee elected by you, that makes decisions on the procedures for our Democratic Events.
- **Proposer & Seconder** – At Student Council, it is vital that all motions have two students. A proposer is the person who “proposes” a motion, and the seconder is the second student who supports it.
- **Quoracy** – The minimum amount of students/voting members we need to conduct a Student Council or make a vote on something.
- **Referendum** – Should a student wish, they can take a motion's actions to an all-student referendum. This has to be requested by Democratic Standards Committee during Council.
- **Speech For** – When someone speaks “for” the motion in support.
- **Speech Against** – When someone speaks against a motion.



How is the meeting structured?



Firstly, those who introduced the motion ideas get to speak to Student Council attendees to propose and convince others to pass the motion.

Then, the Chair will allow someone to speak against the motion if they don't agree with it.

If you didn't propose it, you will be able to ask any questions you have about the motion to its proposer, but mainly just to further clarify the idea – not to deliver an opposition speech against it! This is then rinsed and repeated until we need to hold a vote!

There might be a chance that the Chair thinks there needs to be another round of arguments. This is because sometimes an idea might be quite complex, so they want to make sure it's heard fairly.



Breaking a motion into parts

When you're looking at the Actions displayed on the PowerPoint, you might notice some things that you want to happen – but not every action that is listed. If so, you can speak to the **Democracy Desk** before the vote has started, and ask for a motion to be broken into parts. This means Council will vote on each action separately rather than all together.

Here's an example:

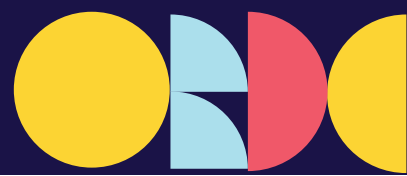
The Motion: *“A Warmer University”*

The Actions:

- **Action 1:** To give everyone a free hat so they're warm in the winter
- **Action 2:** Make sure heating is on in all student study spaces during the day
- **Action 3:** To ensure university halls remained heated

You might think that two of the actions make sense but think **Action 1** is *a bit silly*.

So, you can approach the Democracy Desk so that everyone votes on each Action, not all of them grouped.



Why it is important to debate?

Imagine if the SU suddenly decided it was against their practice to ever support the football or to never host events past the month of March. It would feel pretty unfair, right?

You can have your say and change this decision through debate – which is designed as a chance to hear from everyone. This way, we can carry on being a Union for all Students!

Even if a motion that is a ‘good thing’ is proposed in the meeting, it may take SU time away from other valuable things. So, the debate is a great opportunity to establish current SU priorities.



Our Representation Review

Recently, we have been running a 'Representation Review', so that we can review our democratic structures as an SU. We're legally obliged to do this every 4-5 year! This includes reviewing:

- Academic Representation structures
- Liberation function (Networks)
- Campaigns
- Full-time officer structure
- Democratic events (Student Council and AMM)

To find out about your student experience of our representative structures, so we can continue to improve democratically, we invited all students to complete a short survey on democracy, to capture a diverse range of voices and to make sure our structures are working for everyone.

We're now going to be conducting a series of in-depth focus groups, so we can gather new data and revisit a lot of existing data within the SU to provide insight into student opinion and behaviours.

We'll be using the information from all of this to shape a series of proposals which will be taken to you, the student body, to vote on ahead of our TB2 elections.

To find out more, and see how you can get involved, please see here: <https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/student-voice/representation-review>



Will there be a referendum?

If something is seriously contentious, and you think that it needs even more students to help make a change, then you might propose it goes to Referendum. This means you have to:

1. Have this voted on by Council/AMM attendees
2. Have a question agreed with Democratic Standards Committee
3. The question must be in a “Yes/No” binary

Hopefully, this handy guide has answered some of your questions about Student Council and what to expect.
But it's a confusing topic!

If you ever have any further questions or would like to find out some extra info that hasn't been included, then send an email over to

bristolsu-democracy@bristol.ac.uk

Also, feel free to check out our Democratic Events webpage, which provides even more detail about Student Council!



Student Council Motions: November 2023



Improve the Music Practice Rooms at the University

Proposer: Matt Starcher

**Transition to a 100% Just and Sustainable Plant-based
Student Union**

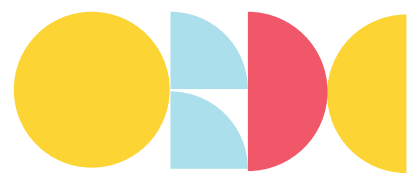
Proposer: Agnes Sales

An Update to SU Byelaws to Align with Current Practice

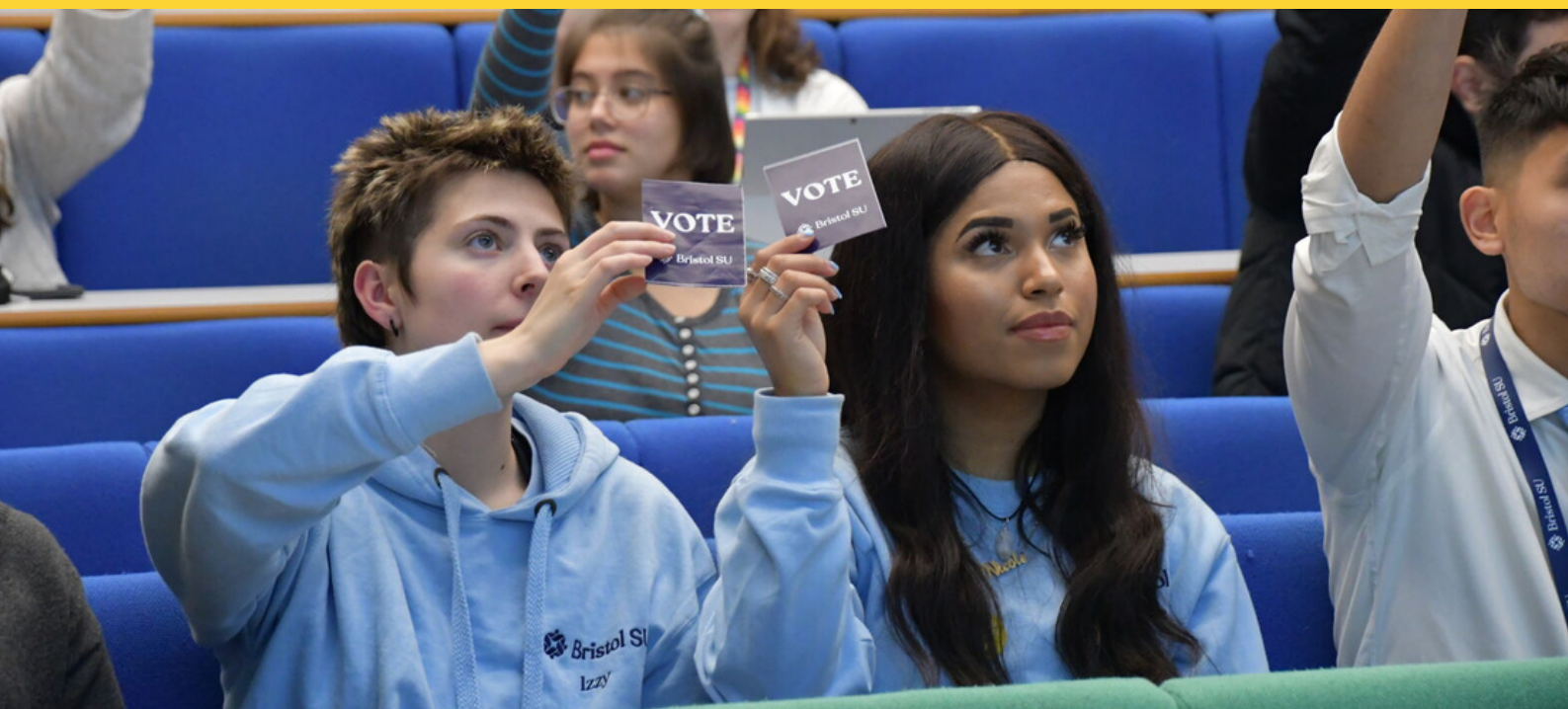
Proposer: Adam Michael

**Clarifying the role of the Democratic Standards
Committee during Elections.**

Proposer: Adam Michael



Student Council Motions: November 2023



**Reinstate the 4-year Graduate-entry Medicine Course at the
University of Bristol**

Proposer: Charlie Gazzard

**Supporting trans and non-binary students and campaigning
for Gender Justice.**

Proposer: Saranya Thambirajah

**Allow the Mandatory Committee Role of Equalities Officer to
be Held by up to Two People**

Proposer: Maisie MacDonald

**Ensure Academic Support in Place for All Full-Time Officer
Candidates**

Proposer: Adam Michael



Improve the Music Practice Rooms at the University

Proposer: Matt Starcher Second: Anna Harris

Background

This is the current situation. There are three SU music practice rooms in the Richmond building:

- Uncomfortably hot (under swimming pool)
- Windows don't open/ no windows
- Pianos out of tune
- Lack of useful chairs
- Not enough/ broken music stands
- Rooms are generally messy/ full of broken items
- Rooms are often booked for regular rehearsals, leaving very little time for personal practice.

Victoria Rooms music practice rooms are only for music students and there is no scope to change this.



Purpose

The number one question that the music society gets, particularly at the start of a new year is people asking us where they can practice, ~90% of the Music Society is made up of non-musicians, so they can't use the Victoria rooms. Many people feel uncomfortable practicing at home or in halls, plus may not have the facilities they need to practice.

- Pianos are the biggest issue, because other than in some accommodations, the current practice rooms are the only ones available. For the very serious players we often have to recommend they hire a practice space externally.
- For many people music is a hugely important for relaxation, especially playing piano.
- Improving the music practice rooms would show the university's commitment to welfare by providing a space for any student to be able to play.
- At open day we had multiple people asking about practice rooms, for many of whom it was a make-or-break in their decision, so the situation is literally discouraging prospective students.
- From a society perspective, we need an official space for small chamber groups to practice, we are having to hire church spaces for our chamber network.
- Overall, the university advertises itself as a music performance institution (6th for music in the Guardian Rankings) but doesn't have the facilities to back it up. We have some of the highest level ensembles and orchestras in the city, yet don't give the members spaces to practice in. Especially as opposed to other comparable universities- Durham has 40+ practice rooms, available for anyone to use, each with a Steinway Grand Piano.



Actions

The ideal outcome from this motion would be to allow the following actions:

- The Union Affairs Officer, with support from other Full-time Officers, to work with the University to provide a solution that meets our goals
- The Union Affairs Officer to work with relevant SU Staff to meet compromise/short-term changes as much as possible.

Below is listed a series of ideas and goals that could possibly be worked towards.

Ideal Situation

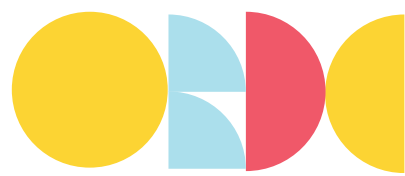
- Move the rooms: The music practice rooms will never be truly suitable under the swimming pools, the heat and humidity will always be there. Possible locations: Other parts of Richmond Building (ex-burst radio studio, small rooms up the back), Arts Complex, New Hawthorns redevelopment- more research needed.
- Create more rooms: three is simply not enough for the demand. Also soundproofing.
- Replace pianos: speak to the music department about using their old pianos or strike up a deal with piano dealers or manufacturers, like Durham did.

Possibility of charging a practice room subscription fee (similar to other unis), which would cover maintenance costs.

Compromise/ Short Term Change

As this process is likely to take a long time, here are some changes that can be made very quickly.

- Clean the music practice rooms, and chuck out broken gear
- Buy new stands, and have more in each room
- Likewise, get more suitable chairs
- Pianos: the best current solution would be to replace the pianos with electric pianos (one room has an electric already). The pianos are very out of tune, but even if they were re-tuned it wouldn't be long before they went out of tune in the humidity (although in the long term, it is definitely better to have acoustic pianos, people much prefer playing on them)
- Put fans/ ac in each room to help cool it down.
- Big Band says a better quality drum kit is needed and perhaps new amps.
- Perhaps a locker system in the corridor so the rooms can be decluttered



Transition to a 100% Just and Sustainable Plant-based Student Union

Proposer: Agnes Sales Second: Izzy Russell

Background

1. In 2019, our university was the first in the UK to declare a climate emergency(3). In 2020, we cut all investments in fossil fuels. Divesting from animal agriculture is the next logical step. It's responsible for at least 18% of global emissions(4) and limiting global warming to 1.5°C will require drastic carbon dioxide removal (CDR) from the atmosphere. The most effective route for this in the UK is the restoration of our native forests(2).
2. Should we transition to plant-based farming, the UK could free up 51% of its land for rewilding and carbon drawdown(2). As such, 7 UK Universities have recently passed a motion to transition to plant-based catering in response to the climate crisis(1).
3. A similar transition at Bristol is something our student union could be really proud of. Demonstrating this is our multiple endorsements from both vegan and non-vegan groups conscious of the climate emergency and enthusiastic to act. Plant-Based Treaty, a national grassroots campaign working with councils to become more sustainable have stated their support for our motion: *'Plant Based Treaty is fully supportive of the student climate leaders who understand the alignment of climate science and ethics in their bold demands for a fully plant-based university'* (6)



Purpose

1. Undeniably, the subsidy schemes in the UK favour animal products, as does the private/fast food sector. This has made plant-based foods less accessible in the past.
2. However, universities educate the leaders of our future and are the sites where much of our research and understanding of the climate crisis emerges. Some of the most compelling research on agriculture and climate comes from universities, including Oxford (1) and Harvard (2). The literature is showing that, regardless of production method, plant-based agriculture is inherently less resource-intensive than animal agriculture. This highlights the importance of institutional divestment in mitigating climate disaster.



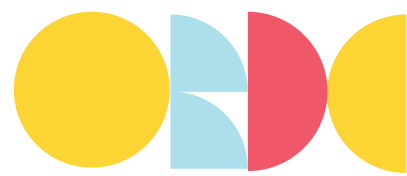
3. Plant-based catering is a necessary step in the development of a more sustainable food system. It can be achieved without detriment to any particular persons and can be nutritionally sound and inclusive of all faiths and religions.
4. The Student's Union is responsible for setting an example. Its principles and actions can inspire students to think critically and act more in alignment with their values on environmental justice. This motion is an opportunity to show students that, in an era of climate anxiety, young people *can* actively help to create a more sustainable and just world for all.

Actions

1. For the Students' Union to officially endorse the Plant Based Universities Campaign, and for SU Officers to lobby internally for university-wide affordable, fully plant-based food at UoB.
2. For the Students' Union to aim for 100% plant-based catering, inclusive of all students and staff on campus. Plant-based health professionals can provide advice and oversee any menu changes. This will first manifest through the improvement and expansion of plant-based options at union-run and union-catered events, with the target of 70% plant-based by the 2025-26 academic year and 100% plant based by the 2026-27 academic year.
3. For the Students' Union to explore creating a sustainability accreditation and grant by 2025 for student groups that commit to offering 100% plant-based food at their events.
4. For the Students' Union to lobby for the on-campus vending machines to go 70% plant-based by 2025 and 100% plant-based by 2027.

Sources

- 1 New estimates of the environmental cost of food | University of Oxford
- 2 Eating-Away-at-Climate-Change-with-Negative-Emissions--Harwatt-Hayek.pdf (harvard.edu)
- 3 Bristol becomes first UK university to declare climate emergency - Bristol Live (bristolpost.co.uk)
- 4 <https://www.fao.org/3/a0701e/a0701e.pdf>
- 5 <https://www.plantbaseduniversities.org/about-4> and University of Stirling To Go 100% Plant-Based In UK First (plantbasednews.org)
- 6 <https://plantbasedtreaty.org>



An Update to SU Byelaws to Align with Current Practice

Proposer: Adam Michael

Seconder: Pat Gibbs

Background

1. Bristol SU is governed by its Articles of Association and Byelaws, which are documents laying out many of our rules and procedures.
2. Over time these documents have been amended in minor ways and this has resulted in inconsistencies particularly with regards to the SU Byelaws' clauses.
3. There are also clauses which are too open ended or aren't coherent and this results in confusion for when the SU needs to make decisions on them.
4. Bristol SU's Staff, Officers and Trustees reviewed our Byelaws in 2021 to identify changes that need to be made. They did an extensive review.
5. There have also been minor changes to the representative structures such as the addition of Network Committee roles and change in the role of Junior Common Room Presidents being a part of the Students' Union representative structure.
6. The Union Affairs Officers has helped to explore what changes need to take place working with SU Staff.



Purpose

1. To correct any inconsistencies that are in Bristol SU's Byelaws that have arisen with updates
2. To ensure all cross-referencing between Byelaws are accurate and up to date.
3. To clarify any wording that has made the practice of the Union's governance unclear at any stage as identified by review.



Actions

1. To amend the Byelaw 2 in the following ways:

a. Original Text: Policy remains active for three Academic Years; thereafter it lapses unless renewed by the Annual Members' Meeting.

Byelaw 2, Clause 4 new wording: Policy remains active for three Academic Years; thereafter it lapses unless renewed.

(a) Renewal will take place the third year of the active policy when it was due to expire (b) Once expired it would be renewed at the next Annual Members Meeting that takes place.

2. To amend Byelaw 3 in the following ways:

a. Byelaw 3 Clause 1 to include a section G, and to amend the wording on sections B and F:

i. "g. Student Trustees: as defined by Byelaw 8, elected annually by cross-campus ballot"

ii. **Original text:** "b. Chairs of Networks: defined in Byelaw 8, elected annually by a ballot of the Student Members or, in the case of Liberation Networks, as defined by Byelaw 7, by a ballot of the Student Members self-identifying into the Liberation group."

New wording: "b. Chair of Networks: as defined in Byelaw 7 and 8 they are elected annually by all student members unless the Network requires a level of self-identification which will restrict the ballot to those who self-identify under that category."

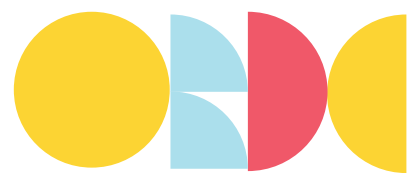
iii. **Original Text:** f. Democratic Standards Committee: as set out n Byelaw 6, elected annually by a ballot of the members of the Student Council in the first term of the Academic Year.

New wording: "f. Democratic Standards Committee: as set out in Byelaw 6, elected annually by a cross-campus ballot of Student Members in the first term of the Academic Year."

b. To amend **Byelaw 3, Clause 3:**

i. **Original Text:** 3. The Returning Officer is appointed by Student Council or the Democratic Standards Committee with the approval of the Board of Trustees or designated sub-committee for the purpose of administering elections.

New wording: The Returning Officer is appointed by Student Council or by the Democratic Standards Committee, with a notification to the Board of Trustees or relevant designated sub-committee for the purpose of administering elections.



3. To amend Byelaw 5 in the following ways:

a. **Original Text:** 1. The Annual Members' Meeting is responsible for creating Policy and holding Union officers to account.

Byelaw 5, Clause 1 new wording: The Annual Members' Meeting is responsible for creating Policy and holding Union Officers to account. (2) It is open to all Student Members

b. **Original Text:** 7. The Full-Time Officers should take all reasonable steps to ensure that University teaching is suspended at the time of the meeting.

Byelaw 5, Clause 7 new wording: The Full-Time Officers should take all reasonable steps to ensure that University teaching is suspended at the time of the meeting as far as possible with timetables restrictions

4. To amend Byelaw 6 in the following ways:

a. **Original Text:** 1. Student Council undertakes the following roles: a. Scrutinises the work of the Elected Officers, Chairs, Faculty Representatives and Networks.

Byelaw 6, Clause 1 section A new wording: Student Council undertakes the following roles (a) Scrutinises the work of the Elected Officers

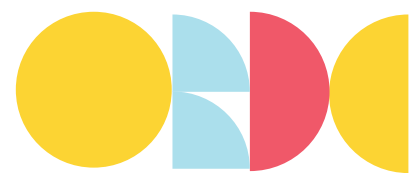
b. **Original Text:** b. Creates, amends, renews, and disposes of any policy or mandate of the Union, except where such policy has been set by a referendum or cross-campus ballot in accordance with Articles of Association.

Byelaw 6, Clause 1 section B new wording: b. Creates, amends, renews and disposes of any policy or mandate of the Union, except where such policy has been set by a referendum or cross-campus ballot in accordance with the Articles of Association.

c. **A removal of Byelaw 6, Clause 6 section D on the grounds that Networks are created via motions to Council rather than the process outlined.**

d. **To add Clause 3, section B:** The Chairs of Networks, as defined in Byelaw 8, or a nominee from their Committee as outlined in their Standing Mandates.

e. **To remove Clause 4, section C** as Junior Common Presidents are no longer representatives within the Students Union structure



5. To amend Byelaw 7 in the following ways:

a. **An addition to Byelaw 7, Clause 7 of a Section A to read as follows:**

Any Student Member may attend the meeting to observe and speak with the Chair's approval.

(a) Any non-voting member who has submitted a motion will be automatically invited to speak for the motion

b. **Original Text:** Liberation Networks may elect delegates to NUS liberation conferences.

(a) If an election cannot be held in the usual way, via an online ballot, because of problems identifying relevant electors, the vote will be held at a meeting of the relevant Network and publicised well in advance. (b) If an election is being held at a meeting of a Network, the candidates are subject to the same regulations as candidates for other elections.

Byelaw 7, Clause 8 new wording: Liberation Networks Chairs (as defined in Byelaw 8) will be approached as the first port of call for representation as delegates to the NUS Liberation Conference.

(a) If the Chair of Network is unavailable then the offer will be extended to committee

(b) If the committee is unavailable then Society Presidents of relevant self-identifying societies will be approached

(c) the Full-Time Officers will also be offered a space on the delegation

c. **Original Text: Networks must submit reports to Student Council and its Standing Committee as requested by the Student Members**

Byelaw 7, Clause 14 new wording: Networks must give a report to Standing Committee as a verbal and/or written update

6. To amend Byelaw 8 in the following ways (clauses 2, 7, 8, 9, 29-31 section C):

a. **Original Text:** All Union Officers will be elected by cross-campus ballot.

Byelaw 8 Clause 2 new wording: Union Officers will be elected by cross-campus ballot, with the exception of the Chair of the Education Network (who is elected by Faculty Representatives), and any other Union Officer that is elected via self-identification.

b. **Original Text:** All Union Officers are accountable to the following channels: a. Annual and Extraordinary Members' Meetings. b. Student Council. c. Relevant Union Networks

Byelaw 8 Clause 7 New Wording: All Union Officers are accountable to the following channels:

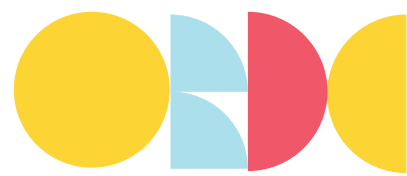
a. Annual and Extraordinary Members' Meetings.

b. Student Council.

c. Relevant Union Networks

d. Standing Committee (as a sub-committee of Student Council comprised of Student Leaders)

c. **Original Text:** In accordance with Byelaw 3, the delegates are elected by cross campus ballot in the first term.

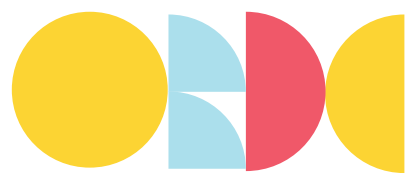


Byelaw 8 Clause 29 new wording: In accordance with Byelaw 3, the delegates are elected by cross-campus ballot in the first term. This also should be in accordance with any quota specifications from the NUS from time to time

d. **Original Text:** In addition, a Full-Time Officer is automatically elected as an ex-officio member and leader of the delegation, which comes from the annual delegation. The decision as to which Full-Time Officer attends rests with the Union Affairs Officer.

Byelaw 8 Clause 30 new wording: In addition, a Full-Time Officer is automatically elected as an ex-officio member and leader of the delegation, which comes from the annual delegation. The decision as to which Full-Time Officer attends rests with the Union Affairs Officer

e. **Removal of the Byelaw 8 clause 31 section c**



Clarifying the Role of Democratic Standards Committee During Elections

Proposer: : Adam Michael Second: Pat Gibbs

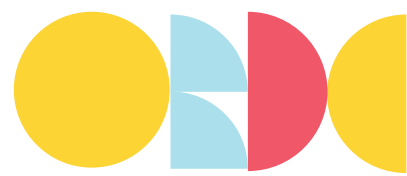
Background

1. Students' Union Elections are monitored by the Deputy Returning Officer, with an external Returning Officer to offer any final rulings (Byelaws 3.4, 3.5).
2. Election and Referenda Rules are set out by Democratic Standards Committee, who are democratically elected students (Byelaws 3.3, 3.8, 4.7, 10.8).
3. In reality the SU carries out rulings on elections via the Deputy Returning Officer, using the election rules, and the Returning Officer is consulted if there is a major rules breach which needs to be escalated.
4. Bristol SU allows self-nomination in our elections, but the byelaws make reference to requiring nominees to have nomination support from their peers. This is an outdated and an unnecessary barrier to students hoping to stand in our elections.
5. There is also confusion on the timeline of elections, the roles that students can stand for as well as what roles they can vote for



Purpose

1. To clarify the role of the Democratic Standards Committee on how they set and approve election rules.
2. To clarify the role of the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer to align with current practices.
3. To ensure a clear referral to the Appeals on Elections Complaints Procedure





Actions

1. To change the relevant Byelaw 3 and clauses under Elections to reflect current practices for the Deputy Returning Officer and Returning Officer.

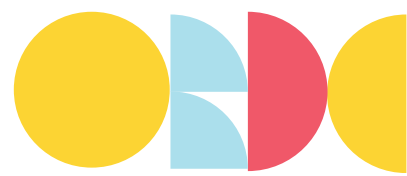
a. Byelaw 3, Clause 4 - new proposed wording: The Returning Officer is the ultimate competent official to adjudicate election decisions except for appeals to their decisions. Their appointed Deputy will help deliberate and operationally deliver election rulings.

b. Byelaw 3, Clause 6 - new proposed wording: The Returning Officer has the power to appoint deputies and other election officials from staff of the Union, Members and appropriate external people. Any external appointments must be notified to the Board of Trustees. All staff appointments must be authorised by the Chief Executive. The Deputy shall serve as executive decision maker for most of Elections with the Returning Officer approving major decisions such as the disqualification of a candidate.

c. Byelaw 3, Clause 8 - new wording: The Returning Officer is responsible for approving the election or referendum regulations which are set out by the Democratic Standards Committee (as defined in Byelaw 6).

d. Byelaw 3, Clause 11 - new wording: Notice of elections must be given a minimum of seven days before nominations open. Nominations must be open for at least fourteen days before the opening of polling. Polling must be open for at least one day and no more than ten days. This will be amenable for any relevant by-elections that needs to take place outside of usual election periods.

e. A removal of Byelaw 3, Clause 15 (“Members require at least two and not more than five other Student Members to nominate them for a position.”)



2. To amend Byelaw 10, Clause 8 to read:

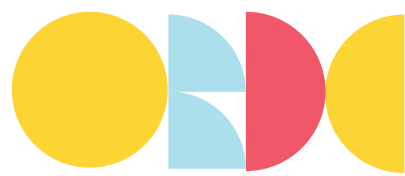
“In the event that a Student Member is found to have breached elections regulations, the Deputy Returning Officer may instigate sanctions. Should a student wish to appeal these sanctions they may appeal to the Returning Officer.

a. This specifically refer to appealing of any Election Rulings, rather than appeals of Code of Conduct breaches.

b. Should a student wish to appeal a decision regarding a Student Code of Conduct breach they must follow the process laid out in the Union’s Complaints Policy”

3. To clarify in Byelaw 10 regarding Student Appeals that the appeals process for Elections will be outlined in the Election Rules unless relevant to student member conduct (the purpose of the student appeal process)

4. To amend Byelaw 8, clause 4 sections A and B from 6 months to 9 months regarding setting up a by-election for a Full-Time Officer vacancy.



Reinstate the 4-year Graduate-entry Medicine Course at the University of Bristol

Proposer: Charlie Gazzard Second: Adam Michael

Background

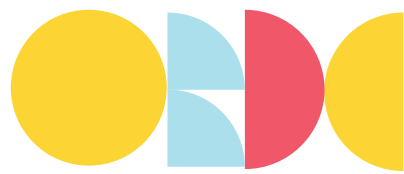
- Some time before the Covid-19 pandemic, the University ran a 4-year graduate entry Medicine course which was then stopped. Currently, 18 Universities across the UK offer a 4 year post-graduate medicine course. This includes many leading UK Medical Schools (including Warwick, Kings College London, Oxford and Cambridge).
- Graduate-entry medicine is very competitive. In some universities, eligibility requirements are a 2:1 in any discipline so competition levels nationally are very high.
- Graduate-entry medicine has far more funding options available than the undergraduate medicine course has for graduates. Therefore, it makes it a much cheaper and more financially viable option.
- The graduate-entry medicine has an accelerated duration of 4 years compared to the 5 year undergraduate course.
- The NHS is experiencing a national shortage of health care professionals, including Doctors. Therefore, the training of more doctors would be greatly beneficial to the people of our country.

Purpose

- The purpose of this motion is to reopen the 4-year graduate-entry medicine course here at the University of Bristol.
- This motion will give the cause traction, ultimately leading to more successful conversations with University management.

Actions

- Bristol SU take a stand to reinstate the 4-year graduate-entry Medicine course.
- Bristol SU Education Officers support faculty reps to lobby the University.

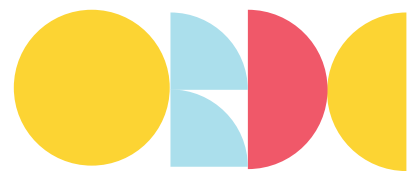


Supporting Trans and Non-binary Students & Campaigning for Gender Justice

Proposer: Saranya Thambirajah Second: Isobel Russell

Background

1. Transgender people in the UK face constant discrimination, marginalisation and material disadvantage, reinforced by the media and the government placing them at the centre of a vicious culture war.
2. According to Stonewall's LGBT in Britain Report (2018) 41% of trans people have experienced a hate crime or incident due to their identity, 48% don't feel comfortable using public toilets due to fear and 70% experienced transphobia when accessing healthcare.
3. 36% of trans students at university have faced discrimination from university staff due to their identity.
4. Only 47% of trans people feel able to be open about their gender identity to their family, with 51% hiding their identity at work for fear of discrimination.
5. The current government's blocking of the Gender Recognition Act in Scotland represents a further regression in the rights of trans people and signifies an uphill battle to stop their marginalisation.
6. Transgender people in the UK have very limited access to appropriate gender affirming healthcare, greatly impacting on their quality of life and ability to live openly according to their identities.
7. The SU does not currently have active policy to support trans students in the issues that are specific to their community.
8. Trans students at Bristol have been campaigning for better support, most notably in relation to healthcare, for many years with requests for SU support often coming through the Trans Network, LGBT+ Network and LGBTQ centred student groups.
9. The Student Health Service does not offer gender affirming care for trans students.





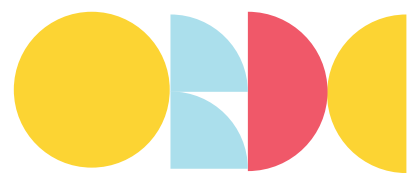
Purpose

1. To promote the welfare of students who identify as transgender or outside of the gender binary.
2. To ensure the SU is clear in its stance on gender justice and works as an active ally to the transgender community.
3. To further and support the SU's core value of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
4. To support the national fight for transgender rights and oppose the marginalisation of a minority group.



Action

1. The SU, lead by the ELA Officer, to create a vision or strategy that aims to further gender justice within the organisation and within UoB.
2. The SU to ensure that trans students and representatives are involved in this process of creating the above vision/strategy & in guiding the SU's campaigns in this area.
3. The SU to lobby the Student Health Service to provide improved gender affirming care for trans students, including lobbying for the provision of shared care agreements.
4. The SU to work with and build relationships with external groups that promote or provide welfare, support or community for trans students.
5. The SU to support harm reduction measures in regards to trans students that cannot access gender-affirming healthcare through the NHS.
6. The SU to lobby the university to provide funding and/or review how hardship funding is assessed for trans students who are self-funding parts of their transition when NHS waiting lists are unsustainable and significantly impacting an individual's wellbeing and ability to study.
7. The SU to lobby the university to maintain its commitment to working with Stonewall and other LGBTQ+ organisations.
8. The SU to lobby the university to provide more gender neutral toilets and facilities across campus.
9. For the Sport and Student Development Officer to continue to develop inclusivity in sport in regards to gender. Practically through campaigns by using sport as a way to open up conversations as well as to continue lobbying the University to provide gender neutral facilities at Coombe Dingle, the Indoor Sports Centre and the Swimming Pool.



Allow the mandatory committee role of Equalities Officer to be held by up to two people

Proposer: Maisie MacDonald Second: Freddie Mottershaw

Background

Through attending AGMs and standing for election for network and society committees last academic year, we became aware that many of the people best suited to the role of Equalities Officer, with the ability to utilise their own experiences to improve the EDI status of their student groups, were often dissuaded due to barriers imposed by the current rule requiring the role to be held by one person only. In particular, disabled students felt that managing the workload and time commitment wasn't possible, especially when experiencing disabilities with fluctuating impacts alongside their studies. Additionally, students from low economic backgrounds were disadvantaged due to the need to work alongside their studies and society activities, and the time constraints imposed as a result of this. We feel that the benefit of having these students on our committees will improve the accessibility and inclusive environment of our societies and therefore, with no substantial reason for it to be currently classed as a 1 person only role, we wish to propose an amendment to the SU byelaws.



Purpose

1. To allow for the inclusion of more marginalised voices on student group committees who would otherwise feel unable to take on the role due to time/energy restrictions as a result of their marginalised identity, e.g.
 - a. A disabled student with a commitment to improving accessibility within their student group, who is unable to take on a full mandatory position on their own, as a result of their disability.
 - b. A student on a low-income who needs to be in employment, so cannot commit to a committee role due to time constraints.

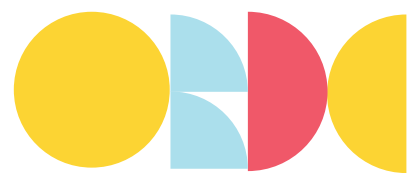


2. To allow for more oppressed people to represent themselves and advise on the actions of the society, especially regarding inclusion, directly rather than having to go through a proxy.
3. To allow a more diverse range of experiences to be present on committees therefore increasing the diversity of the society overall.
4. To represent more students, allowing for increased accessibility and welfare within society activities. This will lead to increased recruitment and retention of society members, therefore increasing the impacts of the society on the student body.
5. To enable increased support for marginalised identities or social statuses, as well as the welfare of all members, which improves society participation.
6. To share out the workload of the role, enabling greater time focused on matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, therefore increasing the EDI impact of the SU as a whole.



Action

Bristol SU byelaw 9.10 change from “10. Mandatory committee positions can only be held by full members of the Union. A single mandatory position can be occupied by one person only. A person cannot hold more than one mandatory position within a single affiliated student group” to “10. Mandatory committee positions can only be held by full members of the Union. A single mandatory position can be occupied by one person only, with the exception of the Equalities Officer role, which can be held by up to two at the discretion of the specific group and their members. Groups are still able to add secondary positions or vice-roles to their committees through their group’s constitution. A person cannot hold more than one mandatory position within a single affiliated student group”



Ensure Academic Support in Place for All Full-Time Officer Candidates

Proposer: Adam Michael Second: Pat Gibbs

Background

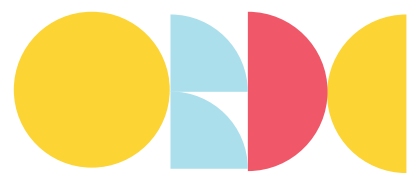
1. Election seasons requires full commitment however there are circumstances which students might feel limit their commitment to running in the elections. This could be assignments, lectures, or meeting scholarship requirements.
2. With Industrial Action affecting the student academic experience, students may be less inclined to miss teaching over elections week.
3. Full-Time Officers re-running in an election are not allowed to participate in working commitments giving them more flexibility throughout elections.

Purpose

1. To better support the personal development of Bristol Student by minimising barriers for running in elections.
2. To advance the education of Bristol Students by ensuring educational opportunities are not tainted because of elections.

Actions

1. The 7 Full-Time Officers to lobby the university for academic regulation changes over election week including extensions and extenuating circumstances.
2. The FTO team to present a paper on this to a relevant University Committee such as the Student Experience Committee.
3. The SU to continue to promote resources available to candidates throughout the election week including academic advice and well-being.





Bristol SU