



Welfare, Representation & Campaigns Policy

1. Purpose and preamble

- 1.1 The aim of this document is to clarify and ratify the Union's Welfare, Representation & Campaigns Policy.
- 1.2 From time to time there will be a requirement to update these procedures; this will be done at least every two years.
- 1.3 The Welfare, Representation & Campaigns Policy forms an appendix to the Constitution and in the event of any conflict the Constitution is the overriding document of authority.

2. Campaigns

- 2.1 All Trustees have responsibility for organising campaigns related to their area of Trustee responsibility.
- 2.2 There shall be a VP Communications & Campaigns elected as a member of the Union's Board of Trustees, who shall have responsibility for campaigns.
- 2.3 The VP Communications & Campaigns shall be responsible for liaising Trustees to ensure that the Union fulfils its commitments under Union policies to running campaigns.
- 2.4 The VP Communications & Campaigns shall liaise with the membership and Trustees to ensure that additional campaigns are organised that directly affect the membership.
- 2.5 The VP Communications & Campaigns will be responsible for overseeing all Union campaigns to ensure that they are in keeping with Union policy and the Union's legal obligations under the Education Act and Charity Law.
- 2.6 The Union has a commitment under its policies to organise the following campaigns:
 - Environmental Awareness
 - Recycling
 - Ethical Issues & Fairtrade
 - Equality & Diversity
 - Alcohol Awareness
 - Drink Spiking
 - SSHH
 - Drugs Awareness
 - Smoking Awareness
 - Sports & Activities for All
 - Membership Involvement
 - Safe Sex
 - Stress
 - Study skills
 - Accommodation
 - Personal Safety
- 2.7 When appropriate, VP Communications & Campaigns should have a presence at Union events.

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- 2.8 The Union shall also run the following campaigns as a commitment to major fundraisers and awareness raising activities in memory of past students:
Epilepsy- Jon Ball Memorial 7's
Anaphylaxis – Dave Gamble Memorial Flux
 - 2.9 All campaigns run must be well presented, awareness raising and informative, and deal with issues that directly affect the Union membership.
 - 2.10 The Union will also run a number of other campaigns depending on the issues affecting the membership at the time, or the issues members of the Board of Trustees or Campaigns Group want to campaign on.
 - 2.11 Campaigns should be run at all University sites in some form. However, the main focus of a campaign may be kept to one of the main sites.
 - 2.12 Materials should be clear and error free, and should use a variety of media that is most appropriate to the campaign, in keeping with the Union's Media, Marketing & Communications Policy.
 - 2.13 Information materials should be made available whenever possible in alternative formats, for those that request it e.g. large print, electronic.
 - 2.14 The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for agreeing a budget for use for campaigns on an annual basis.
 - 2.15 The VP Communications & Campaigns shall be responsible for allocating funds to individual campaigns after consultation with the Campaigns Group and other interested Trustees.
 - 2.16 The Board of Trustees may, at its discretion allocate a budget directly for use for an individual campaign, and define a set amount to be used on a set campaign from the main campaigns budget.
 - 2.17 If a Trustee or Union member feels that a budget allocation for a specific campaign is insufficient, they can ask the Board of Trustees to review the decision of the VP Communications & Campaigns.
 - 2.18 Established organisations should be contacted for assistance in running campaigns and resources whenever possible.
 - 2.19 The VP Communications & Campaigns should liaise with the Membership Services Manager to ensure that outside funding or sponsorship is sought whenever possible for Union campaigns.

3. Campaigns Group

- 3.1 The VP Communications & Campaigns shall ensure a Campaigns Group is established to assist with the running of Union campaigns.

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- 3.2 The Campaigns Group will be a group of volunteers interested in assisting in the running of the Union's general awareness campaigns or assisting in the running of a specific campaign.
 - 3.3 The Campaigns Group will be an Trustee Advisory Committee and as such shall have no direct decision making powers other than to advise the VP Communications & Campaigns.

4. Welfare

- 4.1 There shall be a President (Welfare & Representation) elected as a member of the Union's Board of Trustees, who shall have executive responsibility for the Union's advice service.
- 4.2 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall be responsible for liaising with the President and Membership Services Manager to ensure the development of the Union's academic and general advice service.
- 4.3 The Union shall provide a general advice service for its members and shall be a point of contact that will direct members towards the most appropriate organisation or University department to help them with their issues.
- 4.4 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall be the main point of contact for members for academic and general welfare advice.
- 4.5 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall be responsible for ensuring all information and advice given by the Union and its staff other officers is correct.
- 4.6 The VP Communications & Campaigns shall be responsible for ensuring the Union has a range of information leaflets available to the membership at the main University Sites.
- 4.7 Advice leaflets from established organisations should be used whenever possible; alternatively the VP Communications & Campaigns is responsible for producing a Union leaflet as part of the 'Guide To' range.
- 4.8 The VP Communications & Campaigns shall be responsible for producing the range of Union advice leaflets known as 'Guides To'. The VP Communications & Campaigns should ensure these leaflets are undated regularly making sure all information is correct and up to date.
- 4.9 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall be responsible for establishing and updating a database of useful contacts for forwarding members seeking advice, as well as details of organisations associated with the different campaign issues.
- 4.10 The VP Communications & Campaigns shall be responsible for promoting and raising awareness of the Union's Advice Service and raising awareness of issues that it can help with.
- 4.11 The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for allocating a yearly budget for the Advice Service.

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- 4.12 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall be responsible for managing the budget set by the Board of Trustees, liaising with the Membership Services Manager.
 - 4.13 The President (Welfare & Representation) or any other officer or staff member shall accompany a member to an appointment or meeting within the University or an outside organisation if the members request.
 - 4.14 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall liaise with the University over issues of student discipline.
 - 4.15 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall be responsible for ensuring that the Union's Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Statements is applied at all times and that all case records are kept secure, in line with the Union's Data Protection Policy.
 - 4.16 The VP Communications & Campaigns will run the following campaigns, as well as those mentioned in other policies:
 - Safe Sex
 - Stress
 - Study skills
 - Accommodation
 - Personal Safety
 - 4.17 The VP Communications & Campaigns should liaise with the Membership Services Manager to ensure that outside funding or sponsorship is sought whenever possible for Union information guides.

5. Representation

- 5.1 The Union has a commitment to the representation of its members within the University, locally and nationally.
- 5.2 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall have overall responsibility for external relations, both within the University and to local and national bodies, including the police, local council, local residents, trade unions and NUS.
- 5.3 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall be responsible for liaising with University authorities over student discipline.
- 5.4 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall liaise directly with the University Directorate and senior University staff, exchanging information concerning relevant issues that affect students and the University. Fellow Executive Committee members should attend these meetings whenever appropriate.
- 5.5 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall ensure the Union sends representatives to National and Regional NUS conferences and shall attend as lead delegate.

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- 5.6 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall liaise with the Board of Trustees, student reps. and members to ensure the concerns of the entire student body are raised at University Committees.
- 5.7 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall attend the following University Committees and represent the views of the membership after consultation with the Board of Trustees:
- The Board of Governors
 - Health & Safety
 - Academic Board
 - Modular Scheme Committee
 - Learning & Teaching Committee
 - AQSC (Academic Quality & Standards Committee)
 - School Boards
 - Library User Group
 - Equal Opportunities Committee
 - Access To Learning Fund panel and other welfare committees
 - Appeals Committee
 - Any other University Committee that requires a student representative, unless a more suitable Student Representative can attend.
- 5.8 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall liaise with the Membership Services Manager to ensure the appropriate training of all Trustees and Union Reps. to enable them to carry out the duties and responsibilities of their post.
- 5.9 The VP Communications & Campaigns shall ensure that appropriate Executive members are informed of any relevant communications and when necessary the Union's membership.
- 5.10 The President (Welfare & Representation) and two additional members of the Board of Trustees shall be members of the Bath Student Liaison Committee and shall attend all meetings and actively participate. The Membership Services Manager shall also attend meetings as a staff representative.

Student Academic Representatives (STARS)

- 5.11 The President (Welfare & Representation) shall liaise with the Membership Services Manager to ensure the smooth running of the Student Academic Reps system.
- 5.12 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall ensure the Student Academic Reps system is well publicised at the start of the academic year to enable the effective recruitment of new Student Academic Reps.
- 5.13 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall liaise with the Heads Of School, Heads Of Department and Subject Leaders, and Membership Services Manager to ensure Student Academic Reps are appointed to the appropriate Student/Staff Liaison Committees within the first four weeks of the beginning of each academic year; this includes franchise courses.

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- 5.14 The Union believes that as a minimum there should be one Student Academic Rep per year of a course, however the Union recognises the practicalities of this in some courses and shall work with Heads of School, Heads of Department and Subject Leaders to achieve the best system of representation within each course.
 - 5.15 Any unfilled Student Academic Reps positions after the end of the fourth week of the academic year shall be filled as soon as possible and the Student Academic Reps appointed to those posts shall receive training and access to resources as soon as possible thereafter.
 - 5.16 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall establish and manage a database of all appointed Student Academic Reps
 - 5.17 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall provide all Heads of Department and Heads of School with a summary of details of Student Academic Reps within their department/school.
 - 5.18 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall ensure that School Reps are appointed by the Student Academic Reps within each school at the first Union School Committees, this should be done by early November each year.
 - 5.19 School Reps shall be members of University School Boards and shall represent the views of all the Student Academic Reps within a particular school. Should there be a vacancy for a School Rep the President (Welfare & Representation) shall attend all School Board meetings until such time as the post is filled.
 - 5.20 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall ensure that appropriate training sessions are developed and delivered to new and existing STARS. This will also include a schedule of optional sessions aimed at developing STARS assertiveness, presentation and meeting skills.
 - 5.21 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall ensure that all appointed Student Academic Reps receive appropriate induction training as soon as possible after their appointment. This should ideally be done by the middle of November each year.
 - 5.22 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall be responsible for the development and production of the Student Academic Reps handbook prior to the start of a new academic year.
 - 5.23 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall be responsible for the continual development of the Student Academic Reps section of the Union website and online Student Academic Reps resources.
 - 5.24 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall ensure that all newly appointed Student Academic Reps are provided a copy of the STARS handbook and given access to the Student Academic Reps online resources as soon as possible after their appointment. This should be done by the

middle of November each year.

- 5.25 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall ensure the Student Academic Reps system is well publicised to the student body and that a list of Student Academic Reps in each school is displayed within the schools as well as on the Union website.
- 5.26 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall liaise with the President to ensure that a schedule of bimonthly Union School Committee meetings is published and that the schedule is adhered to. Meetings should be scheduled prior to the date of the University School Board meeting.
- 5.27 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall liaise with departments and schools to ensure that appropriate Student Academic Reps or School Reps are informed of the dates of Student/Staff Liaison Committees or School Boards and are provided with appropriate papers in advance of any meetings.
- 5.28 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall liaise with Student Academic Reps to ensure that they are attending appropriate meetings and are acting in the best interest of their fellow students, and that any concerns they have are forwarded to the most appropriate Union Officer or School Rep for action or to be raised at an appropriate University Committee.
- 5.29 School Reps must ensure Student Academic Reps within their school are consulted prior to School Boards on items on the agenda and must be informed of the outcomes of the meetings.
- 5.30 STARS must consult the students they represent prior to any Staff/Student Consultative Committee meetings and represent their views at these meetings. Student Academic Reps must also provide feedback to the students they represent on the outcomes of any Staff/Student Consultative Committee meetings.
- 5.31 Student Academic Reps must inform the Student Representation & Development Administrator of any issues that arise from Staff/Student Consultative Committee meetings that they wish to be raised at the next School Committee by the School Representative.
- 5.32 Student Academic Reps must maintain appropriate records of all casework and shall forward it to the Student Representation & Development Administrator at the end of the Academic year and filed or destroyed as appropriate.
- 5.33 At the end of the academic year Student Academic Reps shall produce a handover file containing notes on any ongoing issues and a brief report on the course, and shall forward it to the Student Representation & Development Administrator who shall ensure that the Student Academic Rep for the following academic year is briefed on these issues.

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- 5.34 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall at the end of each academic year conduct a yearly review of the effectiveness of the Student Academic Reps system. The review must include input from Student Academic Reps, University staff, and students. The outcomes of the review shall publish in the form of a report and shall including recommendations for the development of the Student Academic Reps system for the following academic year. This report shall be discussed with the President (Welfare & Representation) on behalf of the Union Trustees and Membership Services Manager, and appropriate amendments made to the system for the following academic year.
 - 5.35 The Union shall make available the following facilities to be used as required by Student Academic Reps, computer, website, printing, telephone, fax, photocopying and meeting room facilities.
 - 5.36 As well as the above resources the Union will provide each Student Academic Rep with a notebook for recording notes of cases etc, academic calendar and Student Academic Rep business cards.
 - 5.37 The Student Representation & Development Administrator shall be responsible for organising at the end of each academic year, a yearly certificate presentation for all STARS.
 - 5.38 The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for allocating a yearly budget for Student Academic Reps System.
 - 5.39 The Membership Services Manager shall be responsible for managing the budget set by the Board of Trustees, liaising with the Student Representation & Development Administrator.
 - 5.40 The Student Representation & Development Administrator should liaise with the Membership Services Manager to ensure that outside funding or sponsorship is sought for the Student Academic Reps system.

6. Conflict Of Interest Statement

- 6.1 From time to time a Union officer or member of staff may find themselves contacted by both parties to a disagreement, e.g. tenants who are in dispute with each other.
- 6.2 Where an adviser becomes aware of such a conflict of interest, they will immediately advise the party that has made the secondary contact that they cannot act on their behalf.
- 6.3 This entails a breach of confidentiality in disclosing that the other party has contacted the Union, and it is imperative that no other information about the case is disclosed.
- 6.4 The adviser should offer alternative sources of help; currently the only officers or staff able to act on a student's behalf are the President (Welfare & Representation) and the Membership Services Manager. In such a situation, it is essential that the two advisers concerned do not discuss the case and that

case notes are kept in their respective desks rather than in the filing cabinet. The advisers should liaise over appointment times to avoid as far as possible both parties being present at the same time.

- 6.5 If the Union officer or staff member feels that they are unable to help the secondary contact, then they should be referred to the University Student Support Services.
- 6.6 If the dispute is with the Students' Union itself, we do not feel that the advisers can be sufficiently independent to act in the user's best interests. However, we will act for students where their dispute is with the University; in fact this is a major part of our role.

7. Confidentiality Statement

- 7.1 The Union is committed to providing a confidential service to its members. The Union believes that the principles of confidentiality must be integrated across all aspects of services and management. The Union believes our members deserve the right to confidentiality to protect their interests and safeguard our own services.
- 7.2 The following will be displayed in offices and reception: "Bath Spa University Students' Union offers a confidential service – nothing you tell us will be shared with any other organisation or individual without your express permission, unless they feel that you could be harmful to yourself or others."
- 7.3 This statement sets out the details of the Union's policy. Copies of this statement are available on request.

Case Records

- 7.4 The purposes of keeping case records are:
 - To enable another representative to deal with ongoing cases where the key worker is absent.
 - To keep a record of what advice and information has been given to users and what action has been taken on their behalf. This helps to protect the Union against complaints of wrongful advice.
- 7.5 It is the responsibility of the Union to ensure that all case records and information relating to individual users are kept in lockable storage. The President (Welfare & Representation) will oversee this process.
- 7.6 Staff and Officers should be aware that other people can access offices, therefore, in addition to case records, all notebooks, copies of correspondence, casework and other sources of information about service users should be locked away at the end of the working day.
- 7.7 In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, written consent from the user is required to keep records about them.
- 7.8 Records are kept for 7 years.

Authorisation to Act

- 7.9 It is the responsibility of all officers and staff dealing with confidential cases to ensure that where any action is agreed to be taken by the Union on behalf of the user, that user must firstly sign an authorisation form. This should be placed in the user's case file.

Breaches of confidentiality

- 7.10 The Union recognises that occasions may arise where individual staff or officers feel they need to breach confidentiality. The Union recognises however that any breach of confidentiality may have serious implications for the user/s concerned and may damage the reputation of the Union. Any decision regarding breaching of confidentiality will therefore be treated with the utmost seriousness.
- 7.11 Officers may discuss cases with the Membership Services Manager to ensure that the service users are receiving the best level of service possible.
- 7.12 Exceptional circumstances may arise which give the advisor good grounds for believing that the user will cause serious physical harm to others or themselves or have harm caused to him/her. In such circumstances the user's written consent to a change in the agreement about confidentiality should be sought wherever possible, unless there are also good grounds for believing the user is no longer able to take responsibility for their own actions.

Further Notes on confidentiality

- 7.13 The Union recognises that all users should be able to access the Union's services in confidence and that no other person should be informed that they have used those services.
- 7.14 All staff will ensure that no discussions relating to an individual user of the Union will take place outside of the Union office. They may discuss individual cases between themselves within the office to assist in ensuring that the service users receive the best level of service possible.
- 7.15 The Union will ensure that all users are afforded confidential interview space if it is requested.
- 7.16 The Union reception area (at Newton Park) is not confidential, as it is open access to students. For this reason, confidential work is carried out in the President (Welfare & Representation) Office or the meeting room.
- 7.17 The Union office at Sion Hill is not confidential, as it is open access to students. Therefore if a member wishes to talk confidentially to a member of staff or officer, the door should be closed and other staff members or officers present should leave.
- 7.18 While all attempts are made to keep emails confidential, users should be reminded that the operation of this service is run by the University's Computing Service and therefore outside of the Union's control.

7.19 When making calls about users, staff and officers should be aware of the possibility of being overheard by other service users. Ensure that the office doors are closed when making phone calls.

Approved by:	on:
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