

Policy Name:

**STUDENTS' UNION FRAMEWORK
FOR POLITICAL EXPRESSION**

Date Created:

Nov 2014

Last Reviewed:

Nov 2016

Next Review Date:

Nov 2018

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Students' Union belongs to all of the students and is institutionally impartial. This framework has been designed alongside the Good Relations Policy to support political expression. It is the Students' Union's intention that every student knows, accepts and embodies good relations as a core value in all of their interactions at University. All Students' Union societies should operate on the principles of good relations and respect for others.

The Students' Union does not tolerate any form of violent or intimidatory behaviour. The focus of the framework is to encourage behaviour that promotes a diversity of views and robust, responsible political debate. This framework provides guidelines to ensure that such debate is conducted in a manner in which individuals recognise that others are entitled to have a view, whether or not they agree with that view.

EXPRESSING POLITICAL OPINION

Typical areas where political expression may be encountered include:

- Freshers' or Refreshers' Fayres;
- Students' Union Society events;
- Publications/materials;
- Visitors/speakers;
- Websites;
- General events;
- Advertising events;
- Classroom discussion;
- Organised debates;
- Students' Union elections;
- Events organised by political parties

This list is not exhaustive. In order to ensure that political expression occurs safely and freely at the University, the Students' Union expects students to be mindful of the following:

Diversity of opinion

You should expect that you will be in an environment where not everyone agrees with you and/or where you do not agree with everyone; others will not necessarily agree with your expression and their rights will also need to be protected;

Inclusion

Every member of a community should feel that they are at liberty to attend any event, if they so wish;

Developing political societies

In the spirit of the Good Relations Policy, members are requested to respect the views and feelings of fellow students and staff. It is important that every society committee members take responsibility for promoting good relations at the University at all times. It is recommended that society officers liaise regularly with the Students' Union President in this regard.

ORGANISING POLITICAL EVENTS OR VISITS

All events must align with the Students' Union Good Relations Policy. For Health and Safety and planning purposes it is important that the organiser discusses the intended event or visit with the student executive team, prior to the event. They should also refer to the guidance on organising political events. The Students' Union President (or their delegate) will be able to provide all relevant guidance in relation to event planning. The University Provosts have ultimate responsibility for endorsing events and visits on University premises

COMPLAINTS

If you believe there has been a breach of the Good Relations Policy by any individual, society or group, this should be referred to the Students' Union President, who will discuss this matter with the student executive team to come to a solution to the complaint and deal with it effectively. When you have exhausted all internal complaints or review procedures, you may appeal to the Visitor. The Visitor has powers to investigate cases of alleged procedural irregularities or contravention of the basic principles of natural justice. However the Visitor's powers do not extend to matters relating to academic judgement.

REVIEW

In line with the University's Equality Scheme this policy lapses every two years after implementation unless acknowledged and reviewed through Student Council. As the Students' Union President has lead responsibility of this policy, they will have responsibility to investigate if any change is necessary and then consult these changes with Student Officers and Student Council.