

SOCIETIES CONFERENCE AGENDA

Date of meeting: Monday 13th October 2025

Location: 4Q56

Registration: 17:00

Start of Meeting: 17:10

True End of Meeting: 18:50

Students Union Staff in Attendance: Umar Abbasi (**UA**), Magdalena Mohorkova (**MM**), Rebecca Mosley (**RM**), Will Whitaker (**WW**)

1) Registration

- a. Registration was taken via a QR code.

2) Welcome and introductions

- a. UA asked committees to consider “Why are you here today?”, proposed answers, and took feedback.
 - i. Proposed answers included that it was mandatory, and that because there was free pizza, to which several attendees agreed.
 - ii. UA poses that committee members should be attending the conference to discuss ideas and share feedback, to discuss common interests, to discuss UA’s manifesto (to work with him on this, but also to challenge this), and to build connections to other committees.
 - iii. UA impresses that everyone in the room is a leader.

3) Icebreaking Workshop

- a. Three questions were posed “Introduce yourself to someone not in your society”, “discuss an upcoming event”, and “discuss a collaboration you would like to do”.
 - i. Attendees fed back who they spoke with, and proposed ideas for potential collaborations

4) SU President Team

a. UA introduced the Presidents Team. The role of the Presidents Team is to represent students and student interests, and to support the student members of the Students' Union.

5) PTO's

- a. Part Time Officers (PTOs) introduced by UA.
- b. UA highlights that there are vacant PTO roles, and that by-elections for these vacancies are happening now.

6) Neutral Clothing

- a. Tracy Richards (**TR**) introduced Neutral, a sustainable clothes manufacturer that is working with the Students' Union.
- b. TR describes Neutral as producers of sustainable and ethical clothing, who have produced over twenty million ethical and environmental products. A selection of awards and audits presented to the company were shown and discussed to demonstrate sustainability and ethics.
- c. Neutral supplies over one-hundred styles in thirty colours and fabrics. Provisions include "Tiger Cotton", a limited catalogue with strong sustainability and ethical benefits. Tiger cotton is a project in collaboration with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).
- d. The process of ordering with Neutral is for committees to choose style, colour, sizes, quantities, and designs of their garments, examples were shown in the conference. TR reminded attendees that there is a document on the committee hub and mentions that a lead time of fourteen days applies to orders.
 - i. Q&As were held which clarified that Neutral can provide embroidered garments.

7) Greener Futures: SU Achievements and Plans

- a. MM introduced Greener Futures on behalf of Green Team, highlighting the prize money available (£200), and the awards that can be won.
- b. Attendees were encouraged to take part in the initiative, and can access the campaign via the sustainability section of the SU website where a form is filled out and an invitation is sent to join a private Facebook group.
- c. Committees were reminded that they don't require a sustainability officer to take part.
- d. Moustache Social Society were used as an example of excellence from last year.
- e. A QR code was shown allowing attendees to sign up. A contact email for The Green Team was shared.

8) Update from SU Representation Team

- a. UA introduces RM.
- b. Democracy and Governance (D&G) Survey: The D&G review being conducted by the SU was described to attendees (briefly: a full review of the democratic and governance policies and processes under which the SU operates) and committee members were encouraged to complete a survey to have their voice heard. Can win £200 cash. Deadline is 19th October.
- c. RM reiterates that by-elections for PTOs are running.
- d. Student ideas: This initiative is for students to suggest anything that the SU should be doing (e.g. new food in bar, new bus route in city) Ideas are then voted on by the student body, and depending on the amount of traction the suggestion will be directed to the appropriate committee for review.
- e. Student Council: RM describes the Student Council as the highest decision making body in the SU. The role of the council is to represent the interests of club and society members, and the role involves attending meeting with presidents and PTOs.

- f. Dates for the 25/26 academic year student council meetings were shared, and RM asked for five representatives from Academic and Special Interest (ASI) societies, and five from National, Faith, and Identity (NFI) societies:
 - i. There was a lot of interest by individuals in the room, therefore the decision was made by candidates presenting 30 second pitches before attendees voted to decide the council.
 - ii. Five council members from NFI societies were elected: Dahlya Abdullah, Athan Kelly, Ismail Shaffi, Maheen Shehzad, and Umar Shehu.
 - iii. Five council members from ASI societies were elected: Izzy Hattan, Amin Alhawary, Lex Kirk, Jenna Kerrigan, and Sezen Birsu Kahya.

9) Opportunity Team Update

- a. MM reminded attendees that the payment voucher form has been updated and is now an online form (MM/WW are no longer processing emails with receipts attached) and reminded attendees to please use the online event booking form for events rather than directly emailing MM/WW.
- b. Alcohol awareness and Wellbeing Skills for Student Leaders workshops are now being delivered and are available to book onto online.
- c. The membership deadline for committee members is the 31st of October. All committee members must buy membership, and anyone who does not by the deadline will be removed from their role. MM Reminded NFI societies that if their membership is £0, the SU will subsidise £2 per member until the end of October, however they must still purchase the £0 membership.
- d. Attendees were encouraged to participate in liberation campaigns, and an example of Volleyball, ACS, and Afrodance collaborating to celebrate Black History Month was mentioned.

- e. MM reminded attendees to please use the committee HUB for general society queries
- f. Societies Instagram is now live. Societies were invited to do takeovers and follow for generic information.
- g. MM/WW will be working regularly on different campus sites. The dates were shared and are also available on the What's On page.
- h. MM reiterates the importance of the D&G survey in shaping the democratic process. Attendees were reminded that if they think a process needs to change, or alternative support from the SU is required that isn't currently being provided, then the D&G survey is important to complete.

10) VP Socs&Comms Objective for the Year

- a. UA introduces manifesto.
- b. Skill workshop for society committee leaders.
 - i. The purpose of this workshop is to resolve internal conflicts and support committees to work together effectively. UA announced that he is trying to invite external speakers to give workshops during the second societies conference.
- c. Top of Socs monthly recognition.
 - i. UA is working with marketing team to recognise and celebrate the efforts made by societies monthly on the SU Instagram or the website. UA asked societies to nominate themselves to be celebrated on SU Instagram platforms.
- d. You said, I did.
 - i. This was UAs campaign slogan.

- ii. UA implored committees to give him feedback, and UA is planning to be available for one to one meetings with society committees to support them in a bespoke way.
- e. Centralised societies event platform.
 - i. Platform for all societies to keep track of events on the societies page. UA mentioned that a new casual staff member has been employed to keep this up to date. There will be working links so people can select an event on the central platform and be taken to the relevant society page.

11) Diversity Day Details and Registration 2025

- a. UA announces that there will be a campus-wide diversity week in February 2026, following the successful diversity day in 2025 that saw approximately twenty stalls. UA aims to repeat this success.
- b. Diversity Day:
 - i. Taste of culture event – More than twenty societies sharing their attire and food.
 - ii. Planned for the 5th of February. QR code was shown for attendees to be able to participate.
 - iii. £50 will be allocated per society for that event.
- c. UA would like to launch a cultural podcast aimed at national societies where there is discussion about culture and transitioning into UK life. HUB radio were invited to support with this.
- d. UA has applied for a TedX licence and is planning to organise a TedX event. UA would like society committee members to get involved and deliver talks.

12) Top up fund and funding options discussed.

- a. UA asks students to please remember the eligibility criteria of the top up fund.

13) Committee Discounts

- a. UA announced that society committee members will receive a 15% discount from the Union 2 shop building.
- b. WW gave out stickers for discount which must be present on a committee members student card.

14) Society Award 2025

- a. UA discussed a decline in attendance at Societies Awards year on year. UA announced that SU are putting pressure on him to merge the awards with another event as committee members are not attending.
- b. Feedback was collected from students in a survey prior to the conference (presented below as “Question” – UA comments):
 - i. “Did you feel that the event was good value for money (£20)” – Answer was 50:50 positive to negative.
 - ii. “Did you feel the venue was appropriate” – 100% yes.
 - iii. How much would you be prepared to pay for future event – 75% said £10 – £20, 25 % said £20 - £30
 - iv. UA asks MM to discuss colours – Colours (half or full) need to be nominated for as individuals. It is to recognise an individual contribution to a society committee, and enhances on a CV.
 1. Question asked, “Where do you nominate yourself?”, answer given was Do something, awards on the SU webpage. UA will email committee members to announce the nominations are open.
 - v. UA announced that tickets and nominations will be opened early this year.
 - vi. UA states that 50% of people said that they didn’t know the event [Societies Awards] was happening. UA again implored attendees to keep up with SU

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communications, and that he was formally making committees aware of the awards during the conference.

15) AOB

- a. UA told students that they should be the next VP Societies and Communications.

Asked attendees to start thinking about it now as they are the best candidates!

16) PiZZaaaa after the Conference!!!!