

# Student Council Minutes – May 2026



**Facilitator (s):** Ahmar Razzaq (Democratic Procedures Officer)

**Secretary:** Em Harvey (she/her, Representation Manager)

**Minute Secretary:** Becca Mosley (she/her, Representation Coordinator)

**Location:** [Online only](#)

**Date:** 26 May 2026

**Time:** 16:00-18:00

## 1) Welcome, Apologies & Housekeeping (5 mins)

*The Facilitator will welcome members to the meeting, take apologies from any members who are not present, and go through any necessary housekeeping for the meeting.*

### **Present:**

Ahmar Razzaq (Student Council Chair)

Amin Alhawary (ASI Rep)

Anya Brentnall (VP Sports and Health)

Arisa Syahwira (Student Rep)

Asad Zarif Awan (SU President)

Athan Kelly (NFI Rep)

Dylan Wallek (Sport Rep)

Evan Marshall (Sport Rep)

Helena Kelynack (Student Rep)

Henry Thorner (Student Rep)

Ismail Shaffi (NFI Rep)

Jessica Jaszek (Sport Rep)

Maheen Shehzad (NFI Rep)

Nic Buckley (Sport Rep)

Nicola Lena (Sport Rep)

Oumaima Moussabbir (Student Rep)

Umar Abbasi (VP Societies & Communication)

Umar Shehu (NFI Rep)

### **Apologies:**

Khadiza Hossain (VP Education)

Lara-Jean Strawson (ASI Rep)

Jenna Kerrigan (ASI Rep)

## 2) Introductions and Quoracy Check (5 mins)

*Members of Student Council introduce themselves with their name, pronouns, and role.*

*Quoracy check performed, ascertained whether the meeting is quorate and able to vote on policy matters. Quorum is set to 75% of elected members.*

## 3) Accountability Session (45 mins approximately)

*Sabbatical Officers will be invited to give a report to the meeting (5 minutes per Sabbatical Officer), followed by questions from members and attendees (no more than 10 minutes per Sabbatical Officer).*

### **Asad (SU President)**

- Spoke with a lot of people to encourage them to run in the Student Elections
- Approached by PGT students re issues with supervisors – spoke to CBL Dean to raise these concerns. Asked if they wanted to make a complaint but they were satisfied
- Spoke to alumni who were unable to get reference letters from their teachers, spoke to Dean for Students to resolve
- 70 international students who were told to go back to their countries to reapply for visas to resit exams, Asad worked with the Advice team to advise them to speak to their respective schools – now given opportunity to resit in June instead of September
- Discounts from 3 companies, tech glitch with their website so spoke to IT – now 10% instore only discount
- Went to Iceland for WonkHE trip, very helpful as saw how other countries carry out their

representation

- Q: "What insights did you get?" - Student leaders have more power, no confidence vote put forward by SU

### **Anya (VP Sports & Health)**

- Sports executive committee, really successful with social media and campus promo – bridge between members, committee and staff
- Feedback form shared with clubs to investigate barriers – workload, injury etc. the themes that have come out from these
- Recruited 8 new student leaders for the committee for 25/26 academic year, waiting for handovers
- March Varsity – greater sports media presence for UWE, livestreaming sports in the SU, volunteers captured content
- Girls night in – invited PeBe (sports bra company), blending sport with activism, Sports exec delivered their first quiz, collab with UWE Illustration students, then invited to Sports Awards which is bridging gap between sports and art
- Art student/women's hockey captain created varsity logo
- Sports Awards – great testament to community, 350 attendees, positive feedback from Vice-Chancellors Exec who were in attendance
- Q: "How do you plan to encourage the media coverage given to BUCs sports on Wednesdays during match fixtures to tie in and be used for individual sports clubs especially those who do national scale competitions but are not BUCs affiliated" - Social media takeovers e.g. kickboxing doing this around fight night, want to advertise Veo cam as loanable equipment, Sports Media Assistant will be there from the start of new academic year
- Q: "We have had a few queries raised regarding the cost of ticket pricing for Sports awards which was raised quite steeply from previous years - is this going to be a trend in the future as this was a barring factor for a couple of our members" - Got sponsorships this year so should be able to lower the price for next year, wasn't feasible to decrease the price this year due to a lack of time and inflation

### **Umar (VP Societies & Communication)**

- Centralised platform of events on SU website– since October 2025, one platform for all socs so students can see what's on, encourages collab between socs
- Societies conference – conflict resolution external speaker, this was an issue members had faced due to cultural differences etc. so this was well received.
- Top of the socs – Since February 2026, our first nomination was Sri Lankan society, utilizing the SU Instagram to highlight societies
- Diversity week – invited UWE teams e.g. global office, no more silence team. We had over 400 attendees, we also did it across the other campuses.
- Careers Fair – Lead by VP Ed, worked with global team
- WonkHE Iceland trip – credits given to students who engage in non-academic activities, spoke to VC about this in regard to societies.
- Expansion of societies – over 60 new soc applications, accepted over 50. A lot of academic societies created for Glenside
- Q: "Currently the events calendar is still on April on the SU website. Who maintains the main calendar and how often does it get updated?" - Part-time staff member hired to do this but due to exams and being busy it hasn't been updated, should be first week of each month they update all these details

## **4) Affiliation with NUS (30 mins)**

*Discussion about the SU's affiliation with NUS.*

*If quorate: voting on NUS motion*

### **"Trigger a referendum on UWE's disaffiliation from NUS UK"**

- Clarified that the vote is not for Council to decide whether to disaffiliate or not, it is for a referendum to see what UWE students want and for them to decide.

- NUS Claims to represent UWE students - does it do this for anti-racism, international student fees etc.
- Our duty as delegates for the students we represent to vote
- Costs around £30k to be part of NUS UK, not part of the charity
- Lack of support from NUS, some students faced expulsion after advocating on topics such as Palestine
- Jewish activists complained about NUS lack of support for student advocacy
- Can find better ways to represent ourselves
- NUS abolished their old representation system, new system doesn't seem to work
- Why are so many other unis disaffiliating? Lack of student support
- Q on whether the referendum will cost money, if it doesn't go through would have wasted money
  - How much is a referendum? Council unsure, DPO mentions that these costs aren't discussed in the bye laws
- Q on what other financial gains do we get from being part of NUS UK? Significant amount of savings, gets spent on student experience - If you disaffiliate from NUS UK, affects lobbying power for discounts but they are separate organisations
- All newly elected NUS Officers have mentioned positive things regarding Palestine and trans students – a referendum wouldn't give these new officers time to implement change - Always possible to reaffiliate with NUS - shows them that we're holding them accountable, pushing new officers harder.
- Renters right campaign done through NUS? Yes, this was led by NUS UK. We're involved in other campaigns such as student loans, Officers joining a call tomorrow to find out more about lobbying regarding trans and non-binary policy as part of a collective voice as part of NUS UK
- We want to see improvement from the NUS, this is why Unis are disaffiliating
- VP Societies & Communication mentions that we get our Returning Officer free of charge for the elections, NUS have done lots of campaigns e.g. renters right
- Q on whether the NUS campaigned for free higher education in the UK? Not quite, currently campaigning to change the interest on student loans with the view to ultimately stop loans.
- How easy is it to rejoin NUS? Rep Manager unsure, will provide this info before vote  
*Clarity from the Reps Manager on timeline for disaffiliation: if the referendum carries a disaffiliation from the NUS, it is likely that the Students' Union will remain a member of the NUS for the remainder of the 2026/27 academic year as it will have a budget impact for the remainder of the year due to the fee already being paid. The opposite would also be true, to reaffiliate the SU would remain unaffiliated for the rest of the academic year as will need to factor in the budget for affiliation into the block grant received from the university*

## 5) Democracy and Governance review

*Update from Representation team on the Democracy and Governance review, including relevant proposed changes to Student Council. Please note, this item is for information only, and there won't be a discussion.*

- Every 5 years, SU reviews Bye Laws and Democratic systems
- Over 600 students filled in D&G survey, over 100 students attended focus groups
- New set of Bye Laws, change in sabbatical officer roles, change to Student Council
- Potential increase in student council members – Full time officers, Part time officers, student reps, lead school reps, chair/vice chair
- Removing Student Ideas – positions and priorities instead

## 6) Any Other Business (5 mins)

*Members invited to raise Any Other Business (AOB) for the meeting to consider.*

- Changes to UWE Bristol trans and non-binary policy before the guidance from EHRC was released (21<sup>st</sup> May), students and staff seemingly not consulted on this
- 14 blocks at UWE have no gender inclusive toilets so wouldn't be compliant under the new guidance
- SU created trans and non-binary policy for staff - more equitable although will need to be reviewed to ensure that meets the guidance

- Petition from LGBTQ+ Society to encourage Bristol Pride to drop UWE as a sponsor, this has now happened and now the VC is willing to meet with the LGBT+ Society
- Meeting between UWE and LGBTQ+ society planned but didn't happen as VC wanted to meet with students only despite the students having a right to have someone there to support (issue was that these were staff members at the SU and UWE)
- Considering submitting a Student Idea but not sure if will now
- Q about the logistics of the university creating more toilets before proposing changes – clarified that there may just need to be some adjustments to the toilets already in place rather than creating new toilet blocks, don't have the plumbing plans for the university but as this is the guidance it should be implemented