



Cardiff Students' Union
Undeb Myfyrwyr Caerdydd

Questions to Trustees

Answer

Please report on when the Trustees met to amend quoracy under S17 of the Bye Laws, how many Trustees voted to reduce the quoracy and how many voted against?

As stated in article 46, 'The Trustees may take a unanimous decision without a Trustees' meeting by indicating to each other in writing, including without limitation by Electronic Means, that they share a common view on a matter.' The Trustees therefore voted unanimously to reduce the required quorum of a rearranged AGM. Changes to the Bye Laws also require approval by Student Senate, and this was obtained during their first meeting of this academic year.

Can the student union do more to support students who's courses don't run to the academic calendar? Particularly in terms of accommodation, isolation and society memberships.

We are aware that some courses such as Healthcare related courses like medicine, nursing, midwifery and many more tend to be longer than the average course as well as PG courses and those students who might have to resit. While we pause some of our activity due to the reduce footfall and to ensure that our staff get a break, we are still here. Most of our services like student advice and jobshop continue as normal during the summer. There is always more that we can do however this can be difficult due to the change in sabbatical team and other cycles of business. We have been working with Cardiff Council to prioritise accommodation for students, which includes the necessity to accommodate our students enrolled in non traditional courses.



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Undeb Myfyrwyr Prifysgol Caerdydd, wedi'i gofrestru yng Nghymru. Nid oes dim yn gynnwysedig yma yn gorchymyn am nwyddau neu wasanaeth oni bai bod archeb swyddogol yn cyd-fynd ag ef.

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There are still tens of thousands of pounds to pay people to vote but prices in SU operated businesses have risen significantly and there seems to be no money to hire a full time welsh language officer. Why?

As a result of last years AGM and subsequent referendum, we will be electing our first VP Welsh Language, Community and Culutre in the Spring elections 2023. When it comes to thanking our students for participating in activities such as voting, we have made the active decision to switch from paying outside organisations for items like vouchers to instead a model which encourages money coming back into the SU and in turn, gets put straight back into improving your student experience.

Why is voting in this AGM not in a secret ballot format / why is it a public vote

There is not currently provision within our Byelaws for a secret ballot to take place in a AGM. However this is something we are interested in exploring and have already included as a matter for consideration as part of our review of our democratic functions.

How can the correct representation of PGRs be guaranteed? The current voting system allows those who are not PGRs - and tacitly encourages this behaviour through the voucher incentive - to vote for this officer. While I accept some UGs will subsequently become PGRs, this is not guaranteed and yet current PGRs are required to abide by this choice. The current implementation of the democratic process debars PGRs from securing a candidate not preferred by UG voters, as we will consistently be out voted by Undergraduate students' choice. We then must be represented by someone that we may not necessarily have voted for. Even if all PGRs voted a different way, this would not equate with a successful result. We have heard in this AGM that there is a significant difference in lifestyle and concerns between PGRs and UGs in key regards, so how can the Students' Union guarantee our fair and equal representation when PGRs - whom are the intended beneficiaries - would not be able to secure a preferred candidate?

It is a requirement of the Education Act that student officers in Students' Unions are elected in a ballot which is open for all registered students to vote. As a result, all posts that have a portfolio that relates to a particular body of students (Vice Presidents for PG, Heath Park, Athletic Union and Societies currently and the new Undergrad and Welsh roles) are all affected in the same way.

However, it is worth noting that whilst there is a particular champion for some student groups or types, the whole officer team will be seeking to push for improvements that are of benefit to students across campus.



During the committee training sessions at the end of the last year, mention was made of the First Aid At Work accredited course being offered to students through the Student's Union at a discounted rate - this has not happened yet, can you confirm if this will happen or not?

These sessions are available through SDS and the certification lasts for 3 years. Clubs and Societies can pay for their committee members attending such training from their Society Funds. These are run as a cost price for students to access.

What is being done to prepare students for their end of year exams as third years would have had very limited exposure to university style examinations. Specific cases can be drawn on the business school and third years being expected to take exams without any assistance and with some students having not sat exams in 5 years (since GCSE). Moreover why do some schools have access to notes in their exams and some don't? Will the SU help students who haven't had any university exam preparation get notes in their finals exams?

Ever since the return to in person teaching after the pandemic, the Students' Union has been pushing for support. In 2021, we lobbied the university to retain alternative forms of assessment as this is not only more accessible for a lot of students, but it also does not through students in at the deep end. Where in person examination was deemed necessary, we demanded mock examinations and support for students. Each school has different examination/assessment requirements, sometimes regulated by external bodies which is why there is a difference regarding notes. We can lobby for notes in the schools that have no valid reason to not give notes.

Why do sports teams get priority access to YOLO? Their behaviour in the queue and inside does not justify this.

Sports teams do not get priority access to YOLO. A small number of sports teams have developed relationships with the Taf and secured sponsorship arrangements which means that, in exchange of them fulfilling the guidelines of that contract and by having their social in there, these specific clubs and societies can get entry into YOLO but that is it. Some clubs can get late entry into YOLO if they have a late starting game but this has to be a home game. This is only allowed because the scheduling of games is beyond their control and they wouldn't have the opportunity to queue like everyone else. In response to the behavioural issues, this is not the fault of sports clubs alone but if there are any issues they will be responded to by security on the night and the AU and venues team in the following days. Any further questions/ issues please don't hesitate to get in contact with either the venues team or the AU.



Cardiff University has the highest first year dropout rate in the Russell Group, what is the Students Union doing to change this?

Students can access support in a variety of different ways whilst at University. The University have their very own support services that you can access but here in the Students' Union, our very own Student Advice service is impartial and independent from the University. Open from 9-5 every weekday, any student can access their support through advice@cardiff.ac.uk // 029 2078 1410. We are also committed to running several wellbeing events throughout the year including on weekends. Events such as The Big Unwind and Paws and Relax are events that anyone can come along to to meet new people and socialise together. Events such as PHTea and Heath Park On Tour also offer support to specific groups such as Postgraduate students and students on placement away from Cardiff Uni. The Students' Union always aims to host more events of this nature but if you have any suggestions or want more of a specific event. Please contact any of the Sabbatical Officer team

Many sports societies have had increasingly poor relationships with Talybont sports center. The Jiu Jitsu society specifically has found itself moved from our original room and forced to purchase our own mats to compensate (of which we were promised compensation which we are still yet to receive as well as numerous issues. What will Cardiff students Union do to stand up for sports clubs acting out of Talybont that are consistently having their services downgraded.

We are sorry to hear your frustration with the Talybont Sports Centre, we work very closely to CU Sport who own and run the facilities so we would encourage any sports clubs who have had a negative experience to come into the AU to discuss this with us, we are always happy to help. On the second point, the Athletic Union engaged with the process and provide funding to cover the full cost of the trolleys and 50% of the mats. The Jiu Jitsu and Aikido Clubs then shared the remaining 50% cost of the mats between them. This is standard when we do a large capital purchase in partnership with any of our affiliated Sports Clubs.



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YOLO has been opening earlier and earlier to the detriment of all other SU building users. YOLO is not all the SU is there for. What is being done to combat this?

YOLO has been opening earlier this year due to people arriving earlier. We have trialed a number of responses to this e.g. more Full Building events, ticketed events and more. Unfortunately, we just do not have the space for every student who wants to come. There are areas in our building that stay open 24/7 completely unaffected by YOLO. Room bookings close at 9pm on a Wednesday in order to avoid contact with the clubnight as much as possible.

Why does Jobshop still pay twice weekly? In a cost of living crisis, wages are often needed as quickly as possible, could it be changed to weekly?

Jobshop currently runs fortnightly payments rather than monthly to help with cash flow. Unfortunately, we would not be able to do this any more frequently as logistically it would not be practical.

What are the plans for international students during the cost of living crisis?

They benefit from all the initiatives that we offer and we find that we have had a higher uptake from international students at events such as feed your flat. If there are other initiatives you think would benefit international students more, please reach out to us.

What have you done to improve transparency and reporting on progress on its sustainability policy and carbon emissions reductions? It is currently difficult to find information on the website, and it wasn't included in the annual report.

We are not aware of any specific projects to improve transparency in this area but we are open to working on this in the future.

Could the SU remove or change the requirement for 2 members of each society to attend AGM?

The reason 2 members from each society are required to attend the AGM is because student voice matters the most to us. Taking in student feedback helps us steer the direction of the organisation in a way that our students feel involved in. As committee members are some of the most involved students in the union already, we feel it is apt for us to ask them to attend the AGM and help us make important decisions. It is a requirement under the Activities Laws and no student is forced to run for committee roles. It is just a responsibility that comes with the role.



Also, can it be made clear where exactly in the activities law it states that 2 members of each society are required to attend AGM?

In the activities law: " b. Student Committee:
The committee of each affiliated group shall be required to: ...
Attend forum, council and general meetings upon direction from the Students' Union "

What has Cardiff uni been doing with an increase in space used on a night out, which means there's a sacrifice of less space for societies to use?

The new balconi space has been created as a replacement of office soaces rather than society spaces. We have in fact worked on developing oour existing spaces os they suit our student groups better. for example, 3A is now a mirrored room with new flooring and curtains! Furthermore, the Balconi space is available for societies to use as well!

Why is it that most of the Muslim students feel their issues are not addressed in the same way as other religions?

If this sentiment is echoed within the Muslim community we are extremely worried by this. We always want to fully represent the wishes of all our students and our student communities. We would encourage those with generally more specific issues to come to the office on the third floor, or to email one of us. We work with the ISoc when possible to increase facilities and resources required, including widening the availability of prayer spaces and wash rooms on campus etc.

Why is it the fault of the students that the SU is struggling to meet its Pension Debt?
Statements like "due to decreased student spend" shift an effect of blame onto the students that shouldn't be applied to them.

It is not the fault of the students as there is no direct link between pension liabilities accrued many years ago and a decrease in student spend. The pension debt was accrued in the years 1981-2011 and we are currently paying the top up on the pensions for those years for those employees.

Wouldn't it be better to spend the £40k for paying people to vote on our budget deficit?

We do not pay students to vote. We gave thank you vouchers to those who voted, to be used in the SU. We actively made the decision to use SU vouchers as any money spent goes directly back into funding activity and wellbeing of students.



Why has the SU decided to ban the streaming of the Qatar World Cup based on Human right concerns but haven't banned previous streaming of events in other host countries that had similar human rights concerns. For example the 2019 Winter Olympics being hosted in Russia whilst they were actively bombing Syria as well as China hosting the 2022 Winter Olympics whilst they were and currently still are putting Uyghur Muslims into concentration camps and Eurovision being hosted in Israel whilst being continuing condemned by human rights organisations. Despite these major concerns, the SU never banned the streaming of their events, or even made a statement to condemn. So my question is why now with Qatar? It seems hypocritical to advocate for these rights for some countries whilst ignoring them for others.

Students submitted and voted on this motion. Our sabbatical team cannot answer for the actions of previous years, while we have decided to condemn the actions of Qatar's government in the construction of the World Cup stadium and their human rights record, that does not mean we ignore previous events, just that we now have the ability to make a statement due to our position. Going forward we plan to continue this proactive approach to the condemnation of human rights abuses as we feel that is our duty as a union.

It's more of an observation than a question; the agenda are very narrow in their outlook and represent strictly the concerns of those with a left-leaning ideology.

All students are able to submit motions, so if you wish to see a change in the agenda in the future, we would encourage you to submit motions through the SU website!



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