



**University of Plymouth Students' Union
Advertising and Sponsorship Policy**

UPSU Approvals and Review Details

Approval route:	Finance, Audit and Risk
Last full review:	May 2026
Last administrative review:	May 2026
Date of next review:	May 2027
Director/ Manager responsible:	Deputy CEO/Communications and Engagement Manager

1 Introduction

The University of Plymouth Students' Union (UPSU) objectives are the advancement of education of the students of the University of Plymouth for the public benefit by:

- Promoting the interests and welfare of students at the University of Plymouth during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising students;
- Being the recognised representative channel between students and the University of Plymouth and any other external bodies;
- Providing social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its students.

The Students' Union provides numerous opportunities for organisations and businesses to work in partnership in order to profile their products and services to students. We seek to maximise revenue from these advertising and sponsorship opportunities, whilst promoting our ethics and values. In order to ensure we work only with companies who share our ethics, we have developed this policy to guide our partnerships.

The final decision on who we choose to work with for advertising purposes is at the discretion of the Students' Union.

1.1 Queries about this Policy

All queries of this policy are to be directed to the Communications and Engagement Manager (info@su.plymouth.ac.uk). It is their responsibility to review the document at least annually, consulting with the Sabbatical Officers, relevant staff and other interested groups.

2. Organisations, Products and Services

UPSU is keen to work with a wide range of organisations and businesses. There are, however, some who we choose not to work with, where we feel they are involved with or promoting products and practices which contradict our beliefs and policies.

2.1 Ethical Restrictions

The Students' Union will have no dealings with, or facilitate the promotion of, companies or organisations on the grounds of their:

- Use of animals for cosmetic or non-medical experimentation.
- Actions that are harmful to the environment.
- Actions which violate human rights.
- Unfair exploitation.
- Racist, homophobic, transphobic or sexist policies.

2.1.1 Clarification

- *Actions harmful to the environment are interpreted as:*
Both in terms of unreasonable destruction of local ecosystems and disproportionately contributing to devastating climate change.
- *Actions which violate human rights are interpreted as:*
Both providing false or misleading information and poor treatment and working conditions for employees.

2.2 Other Prohibited Categories

As a Students' Union there are activities and organisations that we feel are not suitable for our student population due to the nature of their business. These may not be permitted to advertise with the Students' Union and are:

- Vape companies and shops
- Tanning Salons
- Sexual Entertainment establishments
- Those that body shame
- Food businesses with a 3-star food hygiene or less

2.3 Style and Content of Advertising

- Overtly sexual, reinforcing negative body image or body-shaming images, or text must not be used such as beach body ready or other similar.
- Advertisements must contain no false or misleading offers.
- Adverts must not show alcoholic strength, relatively high alcohol content, or the intoxicating effect, as a dominant theme.
- Adverts must not condone, encourage or glamourise excessive drinking/drunkenness or encourage anti-social behaviour. Effects of intoxication should not be referred to in any favourable manner.
- Adverts must not refer to consuming alcohol to recover from previous over - indulgence.
- The main message for pubs and bars should be Entertainments, food or other offerings beside alcohol.
- The SU shall encourage external partners to reduce the number of printed materials they bring onto campus.
- Where any additional service (e.g. internet access, gym provision) is referred to within an advertisement and rental price is also included in the copy, it must be made clear whether these services are included in the price or at an additional cost.
- Adverts must not glamourise gambling or be seen to encourage excessive financial risk taking.

2.4 Amending prohibited lists

From time to time, other categories of organisations, products or practices may be added to these lists, where our Trustees, key staff mentioned in this document, or Elected Representatives feel they do not meet the beliefs and values of UPSU.

UPSU reserves the right to redefine terms should a business or organisation we have an ongoing relationship with use any of these practices.

2.5 Content approval

UPSU will endeavor to work with businesses and organisations to find a mutually agreeable solution where any copy or working practice is not in line with our values. All copy will need to be approved by UPSU in advance of publication.

3 Competitors

Companies or organisations that potentially constitute direct competition with UPSU Students' Union outlets and services will only be permitted to advertise on agreement by the Deputy Chief Executive.

4. Religious Groups

The Students' Union welcomes engagement with religious groups, provided that their interactions with students are conducted in an open and respectful manner. Whilst we support the right of these groups to share information about their beliefs and activities, any engagement must focus on discussion rather than active attempts to persuade or encourage students to adopt their faith. Religious groups are encouraged to provide educational and informative dialogue that fosters understanding, rather than actively seeking to convert or preach.

All interactions must align with the Union's commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that students of all backgrounds feel respected and comfortable during these engagements. The Union is also committed to upholding the principles of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, ensuring that lawful free speech is protected within our activities, whilst balancing the need to maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Religious groups will only be offered advertising space after consultation with the relevant University team(s), where appropriate, to aid understanding of the appropriateness of each organisation. For clarity, decisions regarding the acceptance or refusal of engagement will always remain with the Students' Union.

5. Charities

Only those charities approved by the relevant managers and/or senior leadership team are permitted to advertise in line with our ethics, values, charitable objectives and purpose. Any approved advertising activity must not include charitable fundraising activities. Any volunteering opportunities should be approved and supported via the UPSU Student Communities Team.

Approved charities will receive a discount of 25% reduction of our standard rate.

Small Charities (those with an income of less than £1m) that operate for the benefit of people living in our local areas, can be offered further discount at the discretion of the Senior Leadership Team.

6. Students' Union Student Groups

Student Group Committees are encouraged to work in partnership with the Student Communities Team to secure any agreements.

This is to:

- Avoid clashes with current partners
- Avoid repeat enquiries
- Ensure correct organisations are targeted
- Ensure products are relevant
- Ensure all potential partners adhere to the advertising policy

Student Groups will be asked to consider not obtaining sponsorship from organisations involved in/contravening (a) prohibited categories; (b) SU Policies;(c) named organisations and (d) other prohibited categories as outlined above.

Student groups are encouraged to share any advertising agreements with the Student Communities team prior to confirmation. If the Student Communities team identify any partnerships or agreements which may cause concern in relation to the terms of the UPSU Advertising Policy this will be referred to the Communications and Engagement Manager and Deputy Chief Executive where appropriate.

Student Groups may display the logos of their sponsors, providing they adhere to this policy and are permitted to advertise and promote events, socials and activities, even though they may take place in venues other than UPSU Students' Union, as long as this is the Student Group promotion and not that of the external venue.

7. Sports Clubs and Societies Activity Fairs

External advertising is not permitted inside the Fairs if an equitable distribution of space cannot be guaranteed for Student Groups. Moreover, if this requirement is met and external advertisers are allowed in then they should not be afforded more space or areas of greater footfall than Student Groups. The primary purpose of these fairs is to help students join groups to enhance their student life; this shouldn't be or appear to be compromised.

8. Officer Led and Union Campaigns

At times external organisations promoting their services is not only beneficial to our members but may also closely align with the priorities of the Union or elected representatives at the time. Any such organisations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and the approach to these organisations will be agreed by the Communications and Engagement Manager and the Deputy Chief Executive.

Where attendance at a specific event is requested, the owner of the event in question will be consulted and make a decision as to whether attendance is appropriate. As a guide, if the organisations are not selling products or services directly or indirectly to students, they can be afforded limited free exposure either in person or online. If there are products or services for sale to students then they can be offered up to 25% off the normal rates that are in place at the time.

9. Arrangements with University

9.1 Careers Service

At the discretion of the Students' Union, the University Student Careers and Support Services can benefit from ad hoc advertising free of charge as long as there is no cost to UPSU and no commercial element to the booking. This does not include external graduate employers, as they are not considered part of the Careers Service. If a Careers Fair is to be advertised, all stallholders must comply with this policy.

9.2 Student Services

All services provided by the University Student Services are entitled to free advertising by the Students' Union.

These include but are not limited to:

- Student Services teams (including inclusivity support teams)
- University Counselling Service

- Mental Health and Wellbeing advisors
- Wellbeing workshops

9.3 Other University Departments

All other internal University departments are welcome to get in touch with us about advertising and or having space within our building. Requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. There may be a charge (reduced rate) if the aim of the activity is of a commercial nature.

10. Student Military Reserves

Service Units, specifically the University Officer Training Corps (UOTC), Navy Cadets, and University Air Squadron, are permitted to establish a promotional stand during Freshers'/Welcome Week by arrangement with the University. This allows student members of the Units to provide information to new students who may be interested in joining.

Combat fatigues can be intimidating or uncomfortable for some students, particularly those from conflict zones or with negative experiences related to military presence. In the interest of inclusivity and consideration for these individuals, students staffing the stand must not wear combat fatigues. The number of representatives able to attend events from each service unit will be subject to agreement between the Units and the Student Communities and Communications and Engagement Managers.

Additionally, the Units may attend the Activities, Sports, and Freshers Fairs, charged at the standard rate, and must again refrain from wearing full uniforms. Representatives of the Units may also participate in national remembrance events.

11. Landlords and Housing Providers

We will only work with accommodation providers who demonstrate a commitment to providing good quality student accommodation in relation to safety standards and ethical operational practices.

Sponsorship/Advertising will not be accepted from housing providers between the dates of 1st September and 31st October (inclusive) each year. Advertising between 1st November and the date of the Housing Fair each year will include a footer or similar advertising details of the Housing Fair.

Advertisements for housing must not actively encourage students into rushing to book their accommodation and must not refer to a desirable date to book by.

Where a rental price is included within an advertisement, the basic contract structure relating to that price must also be referenced in the copy e.g. length of contract term and included

items. A sample of the contract relating to rooms at that price must be supplied to the Communications and Engagement Team.

12. Due Diligence

In order to uphold the values and reputation of the Students' Union, all potential partnerships with external organisations, including religious groups, will undergo a due diligence process. This process will assess the organisation's objectives, activities, and alignment with the Union's values of inclusivity, respect, and community engagement.

The Union will consider factors such as the organisation's track record, reputation, and any history of activities that may conflict with our commitment to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all students.

This assessment will involve consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the relevant University team(s), and will ensure that all partnerships are not only legally compliant but also ethically sound and conducive to fostering positive relationships within the student community.

13. Delegation of Authority

Communications and Engagement Manager, with consent from the Deputy Chief Executive without prior Board approval, is authorised to approve sponsorship and advertising agreements up to £5,000 provided they satisfy all provisions of this policy.

Deputy Chief Executive, with consent from the Chief Executive and without prior Board approval, is authorised to approve sponsorship and advertising agreements up to £10,000 provided they satisfy all provisions of this policy.

Chief Executive Officer without prior Board approval is authorised to approve sponsorship and advertising agreements of more than £10,000 provided they satisfy all the provisions of this policy.

Board of Trustees is responsible for approval of any agreement that does not satisfy the provisions of this policy or are for an amount more than £25,000.

14. Raising Concerns

Students are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have about a partnering organisation, by emailing info@su.plymouth.ac.uk, especially if they believe there are issues or activities that the Union may not be aware of, ensuring that the collective voice of the student body is heard and considered in our decision-making processes.

15. Review of Policy

The Board of Trustees will review this policy every 12 months or more frequently if required.