

Contact details

Your name (Proposer of the policy)	Owain Gullam
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The name of a person who supports the policy (Secunder of the policy)	William Styles Jessica Andrews-Smith
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Student Impact

Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how.	Being a candidate in the recent elections and turning in 450+ votes with multiple clubs and societies only getting involved because of this policy idea.
How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students?	<p>This policy aims to ensure all spaces on our campus are safe for everyone, especially to encourage better engagement in sport.</p> <p>Sport and physical activity decreases stress, anxiety and health risks, whilst increasing productivity happiness. All students should feel they have unvetted access to these benefits.</p> <p>A review of the safe space policy would ensure that considering recent events, and changes to the law, everything that can be perceived as intimidation is included in the mitigation of this policy.</p>

Policy Proposal

The Union Notes (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible.

1. That access to the gym is limited, especially during COVID-19 with restrictions that vary.
2. UPSU's Safe Space Policy is out of date as of December 2017.

3. UPSU's Safe Space Policy states "We recognise discrimination can occur wherever it is not consciously challenged".

The Union Believes (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in 'The Union Notes'

1. That all places on campus should not just be safe but also feel safe.
2. That gyms and spaces for exercise can be an environment where inappropriate behaviours can manifest.
3. The gym can be an intimidating place for many individuals and demographics, for many complex reasons.
4. That everyone should have opportunity and encouragement to utilise our facilities.
5. That exercise is increasingly important to everyone's mental wellbeing and shouldn't be impinged by societal norms.
6. That no one group or demographic should be held responsible for the pressures that people feel when entering environments like the gym.
7. That gyms are opportunities for certain minorities (in that field) to feel/be more oppressed, making them potentially unsafe places.

The Union Resolves (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific.

1. To review the safe space policy to ensure that it is up to date and inclusive of all UPSU areas.
2. To ensure that the review is accessible to all members of UPSU and highlighted everywhere it is deemed necessary so that appropriate feedback from UC and students is gathered.
3. To ensure we as a union are continuously highlighting ways that unwanted/unacceptable behaviour can be reported, especially in places such as the gym.
4. To ensure action is taken when those reports are made, in every environment.
5. To advise the UPSU gym schedules new classes and specific hours marketed towards liberation groups, after running extensive trials and research between September 2021-June 2022.*

Appendices/supporting information Please include any supporting information relevant to your motion, this could include; consideration of how you would achieve any points in 'The Union Resolves', links to news articles or online publications

* Trials & research which will give ample opportunity for this policy to work and give times to find different ways of implementing potential solutions.

<https://wonkhe.com/blogs/its-time-to-assure-students-about-safety-on-campus/>

EXCERPT FROM MINUTES OF 20TH APRIL AND 5TH MAY 2021

Safe Spaces Policy Proposal – Appendix 2

Owain Gullam, Part-time Welfare Officer gave an overview of the proposal and explained that it had started off as a manifesto point whilst running in the recent elections as Sabbatical Officer. Many women involved in sports clubs wanted more dedicated women's time but upon further investigation there were wider issues of the UPSU Safe Space Policy being out of date and not easy to engage so this policy addresses that.

Verity Lemm, VP Activities noted that she had discussed this with Owain. The SU have previously tried to run various women only sessions in the gym through different campaigns and for a number of varying reasons they have not worked as intended. Verity explained that she supported the motion but it needed to be acknowledged that a one size fits all approach is not the answer.

Owain Gullam commented that the reason why the suggested trial period is so extensive is so that the right approach can be finessed and mistakes can be identified to allow for the right approach to be found.

Martin Nicholls, Part-time Mature Students Officer questioned if there was an evidence or instances in the SU gym where people have felt uncomfortable, as noted in Union Believes part 7 of the proposal.

Owain Gullam said that he did not have evidence and could not speak to how all people using the SU gym felt but that was one of the comments that came back from clubs when doing manifesto research and speaking on this issue. Owain added that as a student gym it may be different from other commercial gyms.

Libby, School of Biomedical Sciences Rep asked what ideas Owain had for safe spaces in gyms.

Owain Gullam responded that clubs use other spaces as well as the gym and there are opportunities for other groups and demographics to benefit from this policy also. Owain noted the need to learn from all these groups about how they operate and what can be implemented to support them.

Verity Lemm explained that the SU gym is small and underused so there is no data, this serves to highlight the main issue, that it is underused and that more information is needed about how best to support students.

Taku Mawera, Part-time BAME Officer noted the point that negative stimulus can take place in a gym and asked what steps will be taken to address that, what will the complaints process be?

Owain Gullam thought that the process currently would depend on what the nature of the issue was, concerns would probably be investigated and dealt with accordingly. The Safe Space Policy review would address what the process is and how to access that process. The Safe Space Policy needs work and accessibility needs to be addressed

Martin Nicholls pointed out that the SU gym is old, expensive, out of date, it smells funny, booking is online, limited to an hour and you only get 50 minutes. It is currently running in a way that people don't want and don't need.

Owain Gullam thought that if the gym did take its time to review how it operates as part of this then it could lead the way of how to operate across the city.

Viv Hocking, School of Computing, Engineering and Maths noted that he had not been in the gym for a long time but agreed that it was not suitable. There is not a lot of equipment, what is there is largely cardio. Viv wondered if perhaps this can also be addressed and added that some students do prefer the SU gym due to the location.

Owain Gullam thanked Union Council for their feedback and hoped that if spaces can be made more accessible, they will be more widely used which will allow for more investment and changes over time.

The Chair called for Union Council to vote on the policy proposal. Due to the meeting not being quorate, absent members will be asked to vote via email following the meeting.

For: 19

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Absent Union Council members were given 5 working days to cast their vote via email, final voting numbers reached quoracy.

For: 23

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0