Contact details

Your name (Proposer of the policy)	Vivian Hocking
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The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy)	Neve Peat Katherine Collins Jean-Michel Evelyn Owain Gullam
Seconder's email	neve.peat@students.plymouth.ac.uk katherine.collins-7@students.plymouth.ac.uk jean-michel.evelyn@students.plymouth.ac.uk owain.gullam@students.plymouth.ac.uk

Student Impact

Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how.	In seeking to present this policy, the proposer has consulted with other elected members of the Union Council, the VP Activities, the VP Education and both the Student Voice and Volunteering departments of the Union.
How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students?	This policy aims to restore community faith in the comms output of UPSU by highlighting student success stories, wins for students and ensuring that student led events are not overshadowed by commercial output.

Policy Proposal

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

1. The 2021 digital refreshers fair highlighted commercial affiliates instead of spotlighting student activity.

2. The 'Wins for Students' page on the UPSU website has sparse content and is not kept up-to-date with actual attainment of improvements or solutions delivered for students.

3. The last tangible 'Win' on the 'Wins for Students' page was the introduction of Microwaves in the SU one year ago.

4. The 'Campaigns' page on the UPSU website features three campaigns launched by the prior VP Education and does not highlight any of the work undertaken by the incumbent Sabbatical team.

5. The 'Campaigns' page does not highlight any campaigns undertaken by members of the Union Council.

6. The different departments within UPSU previously had their own social media output channels that enabled them to spotlight student achievement.

7. Social media output of the Union has been consolidated into single branded channels resulting in reduced departmental output.

8. The current media output of UPSU is heavily biased towards advertising and does not highlight any of the extra-curricular activity undertaken by the community.

9. Visibility of the Union Council is low, there is no promotion of work being undertaken by its elected members.

10. The Union Council page on the UPSU website is sparsely populated and does not list its members.

11. The Union Council page on the UPSU website does not list any of the policy proposals that have been passed in the current council.

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

1. The brand behaviour of UPSU should be student focused and should be comparable to other charity operations.

2. The brand behaviour of UPSU should not parallel multinational for-profit organisations.

3. The brand behaviour of UPSU should lead by example – highlighting student led activity and policy.

4. Student fairs such as Freshers Fair and Refreshers Fair exist to spotlight student activity and encourage community engagement.

5. Community engagement is essential to enable the Union to operate.

6. Student fairs such as Freshers Fair and Refreshers fair should promote sustainability within the community, reducing the handout of single-use plastics and throw away material as "freebies."

7. Social media output of the Union should focus on celebrating the student community.

8. Visibility of democratic operations within the Union should be high.

9. Students deserve to have an awareness of the Union Council and what it can do for them.

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

1. Celebrate and promote student achievements and community activity through UPSU social media channels, drawing from regular community engagements such as student forums, representative 1-2-1 meetings and sabbatical officer reports.

2. Work with members of the Union Council to publish articles relating to their activity and increase the visibility of their work to the student community by enabling members of the Union Council to engage in social media takeovers and to produce content posts that highlight their work.

3. Ensure that the Union Council webpage is maintained in good condition and kept up to date with policy decisions and minutes whilst also ensuring that succinct points from these documents are highlighted in a format that is accessible to the wider community.

4. Ensure that student fairs are student focused, preventing commercial aspects from overshadowing community activity whilst also working with commercial affiliates that attend student fairs to ensure their offerings are both attractive to students and are considerate of UPSUs sustainability objectives.

5. Involve the elected Sabbatical Officers in the commercial department of the business, improving their knowledge of commercial operations and enabling the Sabbatical Officers to have more say in the contracts and advertisement agreements undertaken by UPSU.

6. To circulate all Union Council papers and reports to SU Directors so they are aware of student-led business and enable them to cascade student business from the council within their respective departments and attend the meeting as observers if required.

https://www.upsu.com/studentvoice/representatives/unioncouncil/

https://www.upsu.com/studentvoice/campaigns/

https://www.upsu.com/wins/

https://www.facebook.com/upsunion

https://www.instagram.com/up.su/

https://twitter.com/upsu

Excerpt from the minutes of meeting 18th March 2021

Communications Output Refresh Policy Proposal

Viv Hocking - School of Computing, Engineering and Maths Rep and Accountability Board Member gave an overview of the proposal. Viv explained that the resolves seek to increase the visibility of student achievements and to promote student business, making sure that students are being represented and not just treated as a commodity.

Taku Mawera – Part-time BAME Officer commented that they agreed with the overall points in the proposal but felt that it was exclusive of people not involved in societies and by extension clubs and the wider student body.

Viv Hocking expressed confusion as to how Taku Mawera had drawn that conclusion as they had been very careful not direct to any one branch of the Union and clarified that the policy proposal encompasses all students and that the words clubs and societies did not appear in the document.

Owain Gullam – Part-time Welfare Officer explained that initial conversations did take place over a month ago and came about is a direct result of what had happened at Freshers Fair so that may be where the confusion has come from.

Taku thanked Viv and Owain for the clarification.

Martin Nicholls – Part-time Mature Students Officer asked Viv Hocking if, when he was speaking to UPSU about their strategy, was there anything in the current strategy that could hinder how this policy is implemented. Was there any friction about sponsorship deals for example?

Viv Hocking responded that he met with the Director Of Student Experience, Oliver Horne and didn't experience any friction, he noted Oli was very enthusiastic about this policy and it has been recognised by UPSU that working practice from a previous culture needs to change.

Emi Dowse – VP Education noted that she is in agreement with what this policy says however, it needed to be noted that a reduction in promotion and partnerships will decrease the money available to SU services.

Emi Dowse added that she agreed that students deserve to be celebrated and many of these systems are already in place but students may not always come forward and share their achievements. Emi asked if there were any suggestions how to improve engagement in this area.

Viv Hocking suggested regular one to one meetings need to continue happening, there needs to be engagement from the SU departments with different student groups. For example, at the Societies Forum, student groups are given the opportunity to share what they have been doing but that just sits in the minutes document and is not shared more widely. The Union could be doing work to support promoting this more. More communication between the SU and students who volunteer their time is needed.

The Chair called for a vote

For: 24
Against: 0
Abstentions: 1
The proposal passed