

Byelaw 18 – Campaigning

18.1 Introduction

- 1 Solent Students Union undertakes hosts or facilitates a variety of activity that might be regarded as involving campaigning or political activity. Political activity is defined by the Charity Commission as activity aimed at securing, or opposing, any change in the law or in the policy or decisions of central government, local authorities, or other public bodies, whether in this country or abroad.
- 2 Campaigning and political activity is undertaken by the union only in support of the delivery of its charitable objects and with due regard to the overall financial position of the union, any risks involved in the proposed activity and its other commitments and legal obligations.
- 3 This statement describes the different types of activity commonly undertaken by the union or using union facilities and sets out whom to contact if you have any questions or concerns.

18.2 Campaigning on matters that advance the education and welfare of students

1. From time-to-time Solent Students' Union undertakes direct campaigning activity to advance the interests of its student members, in their capacity as students. Examples might include campaigning for better contact time, higher quality student housing or a flexible lifelong learning system.
2. Campaigning activity on:
 - a. University Changes
 - b. Local Issues
 - c. National Issues

will only be pursued outside of Solent University to the extent that the Trustees believe it will advance the educational experience of students at the university in furtherance of the union's charitable objects.

18.3 Debating activity

1. Solent Students' Union's democratic structures include the opportunity for students to debate, and sometimes take a position on, matters that do not affect students as students. This debating activity is intended to be educational in character and not to influence law or policy outside of the union and the university, meaning that participation in this activity advances the charitable objects of the union.
2. The Union may reach and communicate a "corporate conclusion" on the subject matter of such debates, to the effect that a particular policy or course of action would be desirable, even if that desirability is justified in the course of debate on the effect it would have on persons who are not students. The union will not seek to communicate or

otherwise adopt that corporate conclusion outside of the union or the university, as this may result in the activity exceeding the boundaries of facilitating educational debate within the union and the university.

3. Solent Students' Union is committed to ensure that the processes of debate are fair, non-discriminatory and impartial, even though the subject matter of the debate may be controversial or politically contentious.
4. The corporate conclusion reached by the union is always subject to challenge by counter-motion, reflecting the motion process as one of continuous debate. The union is committed to assisting those who disagree with union policy in the process of preparing a counter-motion to ensure the continuation of that policy debate.

18.4 Campaigning Student Groups

1. Union resources are sometimes used to support clubs, societies and student campaign groups. These are supported and dealt with in an even-handed way, with funding and other resources being made available by the union on a fair, equitable and non-discriminatory basis.
2. This activity is intended to be educational, and so to further the charitable purposes of the union, by encouraging students to develop their political knowledge and awareness and to debate current political issues.
3. The union does not make any direct donations to external organisations, particularly political parties, or causes, and does not permit union resources to be donated to such organisations, parties or causes by clubs, societies or student campaign groups.
4. Students are entitled to provide personal support to political organisations, parties and causes outside the university at their individual discretion, provided they do not use union resources (including resources provided by the union to a student club, society or campaign group) to do so.

18.5 Processes

1. The Union's Trustee Board oversees the process by which this activity is regulated, funded and managed, ensuring that the charitable funds, property and other resources (including the time of a sabbatical officer) of the union are used to further and serve the union's charitable objects.
2. The Union's Board annually reviews activity and expenditure falling within the categories/definitions outlined above, publishing the results of that analysis and this statement in the Annual Report.
3. Anyone with questions or concerns about the activity should contact the SU President on su.president@solent.ac.uk.