

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST STUDENTS' UNION
MINUTES

Statutory Meeting of the Students' Union Council
held on 17 November 2025, in The Cube, One Elmwood.

Present:

Abisha Rufina	Postgraduate Taught Faculty Representative (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS))
Adhamh Sterio	Student Associations (Irish Language Students' Association Chairperson)
Aditi Singh	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor - Postgraduate)
Anna Hutchinson	Students' Union Council (Sporting Clubs Representative)
Annuj Nadarajah	Undergraduate School Representative (School of Chemistry & Chemical Engineering (SCHEM))
Arran Ashfield	Postgraduate Research Faculty Representative (Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS))
Callum Smith	Postgraduate Research School Rep (School of EE Engineering & Computer Science (SEECS))
Cameron Worbey	Student Associations (Disabled Students' Association Chairperson)
Chloe Beattie	Student Associations (Trans Students' Association Chairperson)
Claudia Liu	Student Associations (International Students' Association Chairperson)
David Bingham	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor (Undergraduate))
Eli McBriarty	Student Officer (Student Officer Undergraduate Education)
Eliza Monaghan	Students' Union Council (Student Societies Representative)
Emile Dowling	Students' Union Council (Student Societies Representative)
Emma Edgar	Postgraduate Taught School Rep (School of Law (SLAW))
Emma Yeanan	Students' Union Council (Sporting Clubs Representative)
Eoghan Fitzpatrick-Harkin	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor (Undergraduate))
Erin Barnes	Student Associations (Student Parents' and Carers' Students' Association Chairperson)
Ewan McClelland	Student Associations (LGBT+ Students' Association Chairperson)
Georgia Miles	Postgraduate Taught Faculty Representative (Medicine, Health and Life Sciences (MHLS))
Jack Lydon	Student Officer (Student Officer Welfare and Community)
Jay Basra	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor (Undergraduate))
Jodi Williamson	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor (Undergraduate))
Kenji Nagano	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor (Undergraduate))
Kwame Le Blanc	Postgraduate Taught School Rep (School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences (SMED))
Lee Walker	Students' Union Council (Student Societies Representative)
Luke Teggart	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor (Undergraduate))
Maithín OHagan	Students' Union Council (Student Societies Representative)
Mál Farrell	Student Associations (Mature and Part-Time Students' Association Chairperson)
Marianne Barnes	Undergraduate School Representative (Social Sciences, Education and Social Work (SSESW))
Matthew McCallion	Postgraduate Research Faculty Representative (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS))
Mórrigan McEvoy	Student Officer (Student Officer Accessible Education)
Muhammad Abdul Rehman	Student Associations (Ethnically Diverse Students' Association Chairperson)
Muskan Gujrati	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor (Postgraduate))
Nadine Curtis	Student Officer (Student Officer Postgraduate Education)
Nesochi Okezie-Enyioma	Students' Union Council (Student Societies Representative)
Oliver Boyce	Postgraduate Taught Faculty Representative (Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS))
Róisín Costelloe	Student Officer (Student Officer Activities and Engagement)
Sajid Khan	Students' Union Council (Student Councillor (Undergraduate) – Union Speaker, in the Chair)
Shauna Murray	Postgraduate Research School Rep (School of Pharmacy (SPMY))
Zachary Savage	Students' Union Council (Student Societies Representative)

In Attendance:

DAMIEN CORRIDAN (CLERK OF COUNCIL)
 BARRY CRUICKSHANK (STUDENT ENGAGEMENT CO-ORDINATOR)
 ANNA LEAHY (STUDENT PARTNERSHIP CO-ORDINATOR)
 EMMA GOREY (STUDENT VOICE ASSISTANT)
 EOIN KELLHER (STUDENT VOICE ASSISTANT)

The Speaker of Council welcomed all attendees to the Second Statutory Meeting of the 2025-26 session of the Students' Union Council.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received for the following Councillors:

Amy Smith	Student Officer (Students' Union President)
Beth Elder	Student Associations (Environmental Action Students' Association Chairperson)
Holly Dougan	Student Associations (Women Students' Association Chairperson)
Peter Campbell	Students' Union Council (Sporting Clubs Representative)

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2.1 Minutes of Statutory Meeting (Annual Business Meeting) of 23 October 2025 SUC/M/25/6

It was agreed that the minutes of the Statutory Meeting (Annual Business Meeting) of 6 May 2025 (SUC/M/25/6) were a true and accurate record of proceedings.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Policy Updates

There were none.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Condolences

Council took a moment to acknowledge with great sadness the recent death of student Liangchen Chen. The Council expressed its deepest condolences to her family, friends, and all members of the Queen's University Belfast community, and noted its sympathy and support during this difficult time.

4.2 SU Voice Updates

The Student Voice Team provided Council with an update on recent and upcoming democratic activity within the Students' Union.

Council was informed that the Autumn Elections took place from 7–9 October 2025, with 137 nominations received for 63 roles. A total of 829 students voted, representing a 4% increase on the previous year. Work is ongoing to explore the longer-term transition of most elections to the February/March period to increase engagement and alignment across Union activity.

An update was also provided on National Conference Delegate Elections 2024–25, with Abisha Rufina and Sreekutty Satheesan successfully elected as delegates.

Council noted the proposed schedule for SU Elections 2026, with nominations opening on Wednesday 17 December 2025 and closing on Thursday 29 January 2026 (5.00pm). Polling is scheduled to open on Monday 2 March 2026, closing on Thursday 5 March 2026, with results announced on Friday 6 March 2026.

Finally, Council was advised that SU Council membership currently stands at 52 members, with no change since the previous update.

4.3 SOS-UK Drugs and Alcohol Programme

Jack, Student Officer Welfare & Community, updated Council that Queen's Students' Union is now approaching the conclusion of its two-year participation in the SOS UK Drug and Alcohol Impact Programme, which focuses on promoting responsible drinking norms and harm reduction in relation to drug use within the student community. Throughout the programme, Queen's has utilised online toolkits, conducted surveys on student drug and alcohol consumption, and implemented targeted interventions to strengthen policies and practice in this area. The Students' Union is scheduled to undergo its final audit in January 2026 and is hopeful of attaining full accreditation. The programme, supported by leading organisations in the sector, aims to create a healthier and safer campus environment while addressing the complexities of substance use among students.

4.4 Student Councillor Support and Priority Issues

The Student Voice Team updated Council on the range of support and priority issues currently being addressed through Student Councillor engagement. Council noted that councillor motivations and manifesto priorities continue to inform the work of the Students' Union, alongside issues recently raised through the Student Ideas webform, including (but not limited to) cost of living pressures, wellbeing support, inclusive facilities, accessibility, student space, and international student experience.

Council further noted that this work sits alongside the Student Officers' annual Plans of Work, delivery of the Students' Union Strategic Plan, responses to emerging and ongoing student issues, and significant day-to-day operational activity. It was highlighted that, collectively, this represents a substantial volume of work for the Student Officer team and Students' Union staff, which is increasingly challenging and may raise concerns around long-term sustainability and capacity.

4.5 Creating SU Policy – Overview

The Clerk of Council gave Council an overview of the Students' Union policy creation process, outlining how student ideas progress from initial submission to official Union policy. Council noted that the process begins with a digital submission by a student member, followed by consideration by the Proposal Support Committee (PSC), including screening for factual accuracy, equality, legal considerations, and conduct.

Council was informed of the range of decision pathways available to PSC, including rejection where proposals are not valid, referral to relevant Officers or bodies, progression to an online vote, or referral to a Student Assembly where further deliberation and development is required. It was noted that students retain the right to appeal PSC decisions to Council.

The distinction between Mandatory Policy and General Policy was outlined, including how each is created, approved, and reviewed, and the circumstances under which policies lapse or remain in force.

Council also received a practical example demonstrating how a submitted student idea is developed, screened, and progressed, highlighting the transparency and accessibility of the process and the Union's commitment to ensuring student-led policy development that is representative, inclusive, and evidence-informed.

5. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS/RULE AMENDMENTS

There were none.

6. BUSINESS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Clubs and Societies Committee – Recommendations

The following applications for recognition were considered by the Clubs and Societies Committee when it met on 30 October 2025:

- 6.1.1 QUB Diversity in Law Society (Academic Society)
- 6.1.2 QUB Korean Society (Cultural Society)
- 6.1.3 QUB Quantum Machine Learning Society (Academic Society)
- 6.1.4 QUB Bar Society (Academic Society)
- 6.1.5 QUB Nephrology Society (Academic Society)
- 6.1.6 QUB Connolly Youth Society (Campaigning Society)
- 6.1.7 QUB Medical Humanities Society (Academic Society)

Róisín Costello, Clubs and Societies Committee Chair updated Council that all applications had completed required documentation and met the criteria in the Constitution to be considered for recognition.

She further stated that The Committee considered the application and met with representatives from each group and finally noted that the Clubs Societies Committee recommends that Council formally recognise these group as an official Clubs and Society, categorised as follows:

- QUB Diversity in Law Society (Academic Society)
- QUB Korean Society (Cultural Society)
- QUB Quantum Machine Learning Society (Academic Society)
- QUB Bar Society (Academic Society)
- QUB Nephrology Society (Academic Society)
- QUB Connolly Youth Society (Campaigning Society)
- QUB Medical Humanities Society (Academic Society)

Following a vote, the above Clubs & Societies were ratified.

6.2 Student Officer Plan of Work 2025-26

SUC/P/25/45

The Elected Student Officer team presented an overview of their Student Officer Plan of Work 2025-26 to Council.

Following a vote, the Student Officers Plan of Work 2025-26 were approved.

6.3 Standing Committee – Recommendations

6.3.1 Students' Union Policy Review

Background

The Students' Union Council is required to review all SU advocacy policies on an annual basis. It is proposed that Council delegate responsibility for coordinating this activity to the Standing Committee of Council who shall review policies on behalf of Council and then report to Council with recommendations on whether specific policies should remain as SU policies or be allowed to lapse.

Recommendation

The Standing Committee to lead on oversight of a review of the QSU policy file to:

- Examine all current policies for relevance, accuracy and timeliness.
- Provide reports to Council detailing progress on QSU policies.

- Recommend to Council, whether Council should object to the lapse of any specific policies.
- Recommend to Council, where deemed appropriate, a redrafting of existing policies to reflect the current policy landscape, maintaining broadly similar policy principles and outcomes as current policies.
- Ask Council to consider referring these revised policies to the Proposal Support Committee for consideration under the Student Ideas Submission process.
- Review the structure and format of the QSU policy file to enhance accessibility for general students.

Any policies scheduled to lapse at the end of a current academic year - which have not been examined in a current academic year – shall be subject to a recommendation that Council should object to the lapse of any specific policies.

The Standing Committee shall not make any determination or recommendation on the substantive matters of a policy that may materially alter or negate established policy.

The Standing Committee may liaise directly with the Proposal Support Committee to minimise duplication of efforts when reviewing existing policies.

The Clerk of Council and the SU Voice team shall be available to provide support for the process, focusing Committee efforts on key areas of consideration.

Following a show of voting cards, this was approved.

7. BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION

7.1 Cost of Living Crisis – Update

There were none.

7.2 QUB Academic / Support Services Issues – Update

Eli, Student Officer for Undergraduate Education updated Council that he is currently working with the University on the development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy. Eli reported that he is supportive of the initial concepts, ideas, and proposed wording being used within the draft policy and feels it represents a positive approach. He will continue to engage with the University on this work and will provide further updates to Council as the policy is progressed and finalised.

7.3 Students' Union Mental Health Activity – Update

There were none.

7.4 QUB Raise and Give (QUB RAG) Review – Discussion

Council received a presentation from Elaine Reid, SU Volunteer Manager, on QUB Raise and Give (RAG). The presentation outlined the history of RAG, its purpose, and its long-standing role within the Students' Union, as well as the challenges it has experienced in recent years. These challenges include a decline in student engagement and a significant reduction in funds raised, arising from a combination of factors.

Council noted that, at present, RAG is operating at a financial loss and is therefore unsustainable in its current format. To inform the future direction of RAG, Elaine facilitated small focus group discussions with Council members to gather feedback and ideas on how RAG could develop or adapt moving forward.

The feedback gathered will be used to support an ongoing review of RAG, with the aim of identifying more sustainable and engaging approaches to student fundraising in the future.

7.5 Northern Ireland Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles – Discussion

The Clerk of Council noted that Council engaged in a discussion on the Northern Ireland Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles. Council considered the importance of a strategic, student-led approach to mental health and wellbeing, informed by student needs, behaviours, and lived experiences.

The discussion highlighted the value of compassionate academic policies and procedures, early intervention and prevention, and the application of recognised best practice within higher education support services. Council also reflected on the need for effective internal referral pathways, strong communication of support services, and collaborative working between higher education institutions, local government, and regional partners to strengthen student mental health support across Northern Ireland.

7.6 Students' Union Strategic Plan 2020-25 - Overview

SUC/P/25/46

The Council received a briefing on the main elements of the Students' Union Strategic Plan 2025-30 as approved by the Council in 2024-25.

7.7 Union President Updates

There were none.

8. BYE-ELECTIONS

There were none.

9. ELECTIONS

9.1 The Clerk of Council updated Council that the results of the elections conducted at the Inaugural Meeting of Council (Thursday, 23 October 2025) are detailed in the minutes of that meeting (SUC-M-25-05).

10. MOTIONS

10.1 **A Welcome Inclusive Union Bar**

Council Notes:

1. The Union Bar is a social space for students and should not display symbols that cause others to feel unwelcome.
2. There is a mural on the wall of The Union Bar which displays decorative symbols and references that are deliberately provocative to those of the Christian faith, such as a "666" and other symbols.
3. There are many Christian students who would be opposed to the presence of such imagery when attending The Union Bar which may make them feel unwelcome. Images that are not needed in such an environment.

Council Believes:

The Students' Union building and its facilities should be an inclusive space for all students regardless of background and faith.

Council Directs:

The Executive Management Committee to seek the removal of such imagery from The Union Bar.

Proposer: David Bingham (Councillor – Undergraduate)
 Seconder: Jay Basra (Councillor – Undergraduate)

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was carried.

10.2 QSU Partnership with University Colleges

Context

QUB, St. Mary's University College (Belfast) [SMUC] and Stranmillis University College (Belfast) (SUC) are three higher education institutions with a shared history of collaboration.

The three institutions are legally independent organisations, with separate arrangements for funding from government, separate student support services, and separate financial decision-making powers, and separate students' unions.

The two colleges are largely academically integrated with the University and deliver higher education programmes through educational collaborative agreements with QUB, with degrees and other programmes accredited and awarded by the University.

Queen's quality assurance regulations and academic and student regulations apply to these programmes and to students undertaking these programmes. They are known as "Colleges of Queen's University Belfast".

In practical terms, most students of the two colleges are treated as Queen's students – studying through the college – which gives them access to many QUB services and facilities.

This includes access to some Queen's Students' Union opportunities facilities. However, there are also restrictions, reflecting the reality that students in SMUC and SUC are members of their own respective students' unions and not members of Queen's Students' Union.

Formally the relationship between QUB, SUMC and SUC are governed by a set of multi-year partnership agreements which are reviewed and approved by the governing bodies of the institutions. The partnerships were most recently reviewed and renewed in the 2024-25 academic year.

In these new agreements, Queen's committed to encourage formal cooperation and engagement between the three Students' Unions of the respective institutions and between the University and SMUC and SUC students' unions.

The respective formal agreements state:

- *"The St Mary's Students' Union president will have ex-officio representation on the Student Councils of the University and Stranmillis University College."*
- *"The Stranmillis Students' Union President will have ex-officio representation on the respective Student Councils."*

This approach is supported by the elected officers in all three students' unions, recognising that there is mutual benefit to collaboration in areas of shared interest and priority. There is also significant potential to empower the students' unions of the two colleges by utilising Queen's Students' Union's representative role in the University to influence Queen's decisions which impact students in SUMC and SUC, who are studying Queen's programmes.

The QSU Constitution and Rules state:

"Persons who are enrolled on a course of study at St Mary's University College, Stranmillis University College and any and all other bodies with which the University has a collaborative agreement, shall, although not members of the Union, be entitled, subject to the Rules, to enter the Union premises and make use of Union facilities as designated by the Union from time to time. Such persons shall not, however, be entitled to access any of the advisory or support services provided by the Union."

The student officers from the three students' unions are currently engaging in discussions on how to develop greater partnership working between the three unions on areas of mutual benefit and interest. Any formal outworkings of these discussions will be presented to Council at a future date.

The proposal detailed below is to give effect to the provision of the formal agreement between QUB and SMUC and SUC relating to representation on the QSU Council, by including the text in the QSU Council Orders which are a set of operational procedures for Council.

Amendments to the Council Orders require the support of two-thirds of those present and voting at a meeting of the Council.

Proposal

Insert the following into new section into Council Orders and renumber all existing sections and clauses accordingly:

EX-OFFICO ATTANDANCE AT COUNCIL

The elected president of St. Mary's University College Students' Union may attend any meeting of the Council and have full speaking rights.

The elected president of Stranmillis University College Students' Union may attend any meeting of the Council and have full speaking rights.

Proposer: Amy Smith (Union President)
Seconder: Eli McBriarty (Student Officer Undergraduate Education)

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was carried.

10.3 The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)

That this Council recognises and affirms the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) as the legitimate and lawful policing authority for Northern Ireland, and rejects any rhetoric or behaviour which seeks to delegitimise or threaten those serving to uphold the rule of law.

Proposer: Jay Basra (Councillor – Undergraduate)
Seconder: Lee Walker (Councillor – Societies)

Following a show of voting cards, the motion fell.

11. REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Report of the Management Board

The Committee noted the Report of the Management Board as detailed in paper SUC/P/25/54.

12. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1	Report of the Executive Management Committee (October 2025)	SUC/P/25/47
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.2	Report of the Executive Management Committee (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/55
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.3	Report of the Union President (October 2025)	SUC/P/25/48
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.4	Report of the Union President (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/56
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.5	Report of the Student Officer Activities and Engagement (October 2025)	SUC/P/25/49
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.6	Report of the Student Officer Activities and Engagement (Nov 2025)	SUC/P/25/57
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.7	Report of the Student Officer Accessible Education (October 2025)	SUC/P/25/50
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.8	Report of the Student Officer Accessible Education (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/58
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.9	Report of the Student Officer Postgraduate Education (October 2025)	SUC/P/25/51
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.10	Report of the Student Officer Postgraduate Education (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/59
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.11	Report of the Student Officer Undergraduate Education (October 2025)	SUC/P/25/52
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.12	Report of the Student Officer Undergraduate Education (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/60
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.13	Report of the Student Officer Welfare and Community (October 2025)	SUC/P/25/53
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	
12.14	Report of the Student Officer Welfare and Community (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/61
	This report was <u>accepted</u> .	

13. REPORTS FROM OTHER UNION COMMITTEES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following reports were noted:

13.1	Report of the Standing Committee (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/62
13.2	Report of the Proposal Support Committee (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/63
13.3	Report of the Clubs and Societies Committee (November 2025)	SUC/P/25/64

14. REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

There were none.

15. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

There were none.

16. QUESTIONS (TO ELECTED STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES)

There were none.

17. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

18. DATE OF THIRD MEETING OF THE STUDENTS' UNION COUNCIL

The third Meeting of the Students' Union Council 2025-26 will take place on 20 January 2026, In the Cube, in the Students' Union Building.