

We're Bugging You: Equality and Diversity training for all Students Union Council Reps

Proposer: Emilia Bugg (Disabled Students Liberation Society: Open Place)

Seconder: Zinnia Bugg (Chemistry School Convenor)

Summary

This motion proposes mandatory diversity training be put in place for all union council members. Incorporating the knowledge of representatives of these groups. These diversity groups for this motion are as follows: Disabled and Neurodiverse, Women+, LGBTQ+, and BAME. As a union council we are setting a standard for staff across the university, and we need to make a stand that we are assessing our own biases when we are asking them to do the same.

Union Notes

1. What happens in Union Council, and what motions we pass affect the University as a whole, therefore the votes each of us make matter. That's the whole point of us all being on this council.
2. It can be easy for diversity groups to be missed when making plans for events, motions, university changes, mostly because if you are not a part of the group in question you are more likely to only have bias views to base your view on, which can result in the plans being unconsciously biased or discriminatory.
3. We currently require union councillors to have training to help them get the most out of their time on union council. With some union councillors receiving more specialised training depending on their role. The content of this training varies.
4. Union Council can be overwhelming, with many groups to consider and hundreds of years of history of bias to unpack, motions can be hard to understand without backstory of the group it is related to. Collaboration with other members of union council goes some way to help this but everyone votes, and these votes should be as informed as possible.

Union Believes

1. By educating councillors about diversity issues we can have university wide effects. Ideas spread, union councillors are typically action takers in their schools of study and at the broader university level.
2. Biases affect each, and every one of us, they are ingrained into our education and our socialising, without addressing these we act as propagators to the spread of ableism, racism, sexism, disablism, transphobia, homophobia and other discriminatory ideas.
3. It is the responsibility on the Union council should set an example for staff across the university, by educating ourselves, we set an example of our expectations for our lecturers, advisors and other staff. As a result, when we request, they do the same we are in a better position to argue our point.
4. Training will give all Union Council members the foundations to make choices that benefit diversity groups, even those they may have no personal experience with them.

Union Resolves

1. To introduce mandatory equality and diversity training for all union councillors. This could be done online or in person.
2. To include information on the key issues and background information about each of the liberation groups.

3. To do this in consultation with members and representatives of these groups, to best reflect the concerns they feel are important