

Should LSESU introduce a Student Council?

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This Union notes:

1. That attendance at Union General Meetings (UGMs) has declined over the last five years
2. That despite the introduction of online voting for policy, last year one motion did not reach quoracy (the minimum number of votes needed for the motion to pass) and several others only just reached it
3. That students proposing and voting on UGM motions are disproportionately home, Undergraduate students, while more than 50% of LSE students are Postgraduates and more than 70% are EU or international students
4. That deciding policy through UGMs is not accessible for lots of students, particularly international students and Postgraduates who are only here for one year
5. That in LSESU's 2014 Annual Survey, UGMs have been criticised for being cliquy and exclusive, however there are some aspects of the UGM that do work and so it is important to protect these
6. That students demonstrate a high-level of identification with Clubs, Societies the Media Group and Halls
7. That other similar students' unions, including Nottingham and Manchester have introduced Councils

This Union believes:

1. That introducing a Student Council is a fairer, more transparent, more accessible and more democratic way to decide policy
2. A Student Council will allow Clubs, Societies, the Media Group and Halls Committees to be more involved in deciding policy
3. A Student Council will enable students to better hold the Sabbatical Officers and the rest of the Executive Team to account
4. A Student Council will have the power to send issues to a vote of all students

This Union resolves:

1. To amend the bye-laws of the Union to introduce a Student Council
2. To amend the bye-laws so that the Student Council has power to call a UGM (all-student vote)
3. To amend the bye-laws to ensure that referenda are the final authority over Union matters
4. To retain an Annual General Meeting, which any student can attend and vote at
5. For the Executive to seek retrospective agreement from the Student Council if it passes policy
6. The Student Council will have 45 members
7. 15 places will be reserved for the Student Executive (this is the Sabbatical Officers and Part-time Officers), 15 members will be elected by an all-student vote, of which two places will be reserved for Postgraduate students and two for international students. 15 Committees of

Clubs and Societies, the Media Group, Halls Committee Presidents, the Research Students' Officer and General Course President will be selected at random and asked to nominate a member

8. The UGM Chair will become the Chair of Student Council. They will not have voting rights
9. Elected Student Council members will serve until the end of the academic year in which they were elected
10. In the instance that there is a vacancy, the Council Chair shall seek to fill this as soon as is feasibly possible during term time
11. Student Council meetings should take place a minimum of three times per term, in Michaelmas and Lent Term
12. All students will be welcome to attend Student Council meetings and to debate for and against policy
13. All students are able to submit policy to be voted on at Student Council
14. Policy proposals should be submitted online at llesu.com/yourideas
15. The same, or a similar policy proposal may not go to Student Council more than once in an academic year. The Chair of Student Council should exercise discretion in determining what constitutes the same or similar
16. Only Student Council members will vote on policy
17. Each Student Council member will have one equal vote
18. The vote will be open and the results published
19. 66% (30 members when all seats are held) of the Council will need to be present for the vote to take place, including at least 33% (5 members when all seats are held) member from each third of the Council (elected members, Club/Society /Halls Committee Presidents/ Student Executive)
20. Quoracy of a vote will be a super majority (two thirds) of members present
21. If a motion passes with 50 - 66% in favour, it will be returned to the student body for an all-student vote, in order to ensure that the decision is truly reflective of what students want
22. If a motion falls with 50 - 66% against, it will be returned to the student body for an all-student vote, in order to ensure that the decision is truly reflective of what students want
23. Student Council may also decide at its discretion to put a proposal straight to an all-student vote
24. Quoracy for the all-student vote will be 250 students and a simple majority is needed for the policy to pass
25. If the need for an emergency meeting arises, the General Secretary will ask the Chair to take all reasonable steps to ensure a meeting can take place
26. The bye-laws will be updated to reflect these changes, with the Student Council and Democracy Committee mandated to review these changes within the next calendar year
27. The Student Council will have the power to hold the Student Executive to account, to debate and develop policy as appropriate, to send policy discussions to UGM (all student vote) and additional rules in this spirit which do not contradict the Articles or bye-laws
28. The Student Council's order of business will be
 - Update and report from the Chair
 - Report from Student Executive Meetings
 - Accountability session of the Student Executive
 - Report from Democracy Committee

- Report from Trustee Board
- Updates and reports from Student Councillors
- Policy discussion and debate