**Policy Proposal Template**

|  |
| --- |
| **Template details**  |
| Policy proposals are written items for discussion and decision at Union Council and when passed become Union Policy for two years. Union Council members are elected to represent the students of the University of Plymouth and need as much information as possible to make an informed decision. Therefore, several items of key information are needed before your proposal can be considered. Please feel free to contact the Student Voice team to discuss your proposal student.voice@su.plymouth.ac.uk |

|  |
| --- |
| **Steps to submitting a policy proposal**  |
| * Contact the Student Voice team to discuss your proposal idea, they will be able to give you general feedback whether your idea will be possible and the kinds of things you will need to consider
* Conduct any further research or additional student consultation, if needed
* Complete the Policy Proposal Template and submit it to Student Voice (you don’t have to be limited to the size of the box here; we expect that you’ll want to add more info).
 |

|  |
| --- |
| **Contact details**  |
| Your name (Proposer of the policy) |  |
| Your email |  |
| The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy) |  |
| Seconder’s email |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Student Impact**  |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. |  |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Policy Proposal**  |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
|  |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
|  |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
|  |
| **Appendices/supporting information** Please include any supporting information relevant to your motion, this could include; consideration of how you would achieve any points in ‘The Union Resolves’, links to news articles or online publications |
|  |

**What happens after you have submitted a policy proposal?**

* Your policy proposal will be reviewed by Student Voice to ensure that your idea is feasible and is possible. They will be checking to ensure that;
	+ Your policy would not contradict or contravene any other current policy or regulation of UPSU
	+ Your policy would not contradict or contravene any other current policy or regulation of the University
	+ That is legal in terms of the legislation that UPSU has to comply with
	+ That it is within the remit of Union Council or students to decide
* Student Voice may seek further clarification from the Board of Trustees and/or UPSU Leadership Team, if needed. This would be regarding compliance with regulation or potential reputational damage to UPSU
* Student Voice will then provide feedback regarding your proposal and notify you of the next suitable meeting where it can be debated and voted on.
* The Accountability Board Chair attends each Union Council meeting to ensure that the meeting is conducted in a fair and democratic way. The Accountability Board Chair may recommend any of the following;
	+ That a policy proposal needs further work before a decision is reached
	+ That further or wider student consultation is needed
	+ If the vote is tied the Accountability Board Chair shall consider if the vote of the Union Council Chair shall have the casting vote
* Once passed, a policy is valid for two years and it remains the responsibility of the Proposer to work with relevant Sabbatical Officer, Part-time Officers and staff to progress the policy.
* Policy progress will be reviewed by the Accountability Board and reported at Union Council meetings. The Chair of Union Council may allocate actions or check the progress of action points at the Union Council meeting.
* Policy proposals on the same or similar issue may not be tabled for discussion within two years of the original debate, unless a significant need to do so is demonstrated by a petition of 400 student signatures.

**Tips on how to Write a Successful Policy Proposal**

* **Show how it affects members**. In order for Union Council to want to vote for your motion it should written in a way that makes it clear how students can benefit from the policy or how a problem / issue affects them. For example – if a proposal is about the American government you need to think if and how Plymouth students are affected by this. An issue that affects all students every day is far more likely to receive lots of support than a policy which does not appear to affect them.
* **Gather support** for your proposal from students before submitting it to Union Council. A proposal submitted to Union Council is more likely to be agreed if it is clear that it has support. If you can state that you have already surveyed 100 students or conducted a focus group which has agreed the issue is important. Encourage other elected reps to canvass students’ opinion on your proposal before the meeting.
* **Be realistic**. A policy which calls for all members to be given £100 printer credit each year is not something the Union can deliver. Your proposal should be practical, realistic and achievable. Be aware that it is not the remit of Union Council to mandate action that involves the operational running of UPSU or that specifies the allocation of resources.
* **Be accurate**. It is important that the proposal is accurate in order to be passed and supported. Reference any quotes you use and be prepared to provide additional context if necessary. For example – if you are referring to a research report then make this available, if current information requires revision then think about what the updated information would say.
* **Be aware of restrictions**. Although policy voted on at Union Council becomes the policy of the Union, the Unions policy cannot override University policy. This means a policy to add an extra 10 weeks holiday to the academic year could not be implemented. The policy could call for the Union to lobby the University to review the academic year, with a view to providing more revision time (for example). UPSU must adhere to several regulatory frameworks. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to ensure that UPSU upholds this duty and as such, the Board of Trustees has the power to overturn any decision made by Union Council if there is a conflict. Whilst we seek to identify any issues before a policy proposal is debated, policy may be overturned by the Board of Trustees at any time during the two year period, in response to any regulatory changes.
* **Be prepared to campaign**. As part of your role on Union Council you are expected to initiate and run your own campaigns, this will be with the help of the other Part-time officers, Sabbatical officers and Staff. You cannot expect others to get enthused and run a campaign you have suggested, if you are not prepared to get involved yourself. It remains your responsibility to implement the policy and you will be expected to update on progress throughout the year.