

Dear the assigned,

I am disappointed to read this open letter published today. The reality is that the facilitator had the power to make this decision, took admirable care in doing so, and arrived at a conclusion which was both brave and procedurally correct. Your motion has not been rejected. It has been referred to another committee.

To be clear, at other UK-based SU's they have a Council that tries to do 3 things; debate policy, draw up detailed procedures, and scrutinise Officers. That means they have Council meetings which last for hours on end, and which are consequently hard to engage with.

Union Council is the highest democratic decision making body within the Students' Union. That's why the decisions that Union Council makes are very important. To ensure Council has an effective decision making process, past Nottingham students have decided to split the functions of policy creation, procedure making, and Officer scrutiny into three separate but inter-connected forums. It's a bit analogous to how the Commons, Lords and Select Committees together make up Parliament. At Nottingham, our Union Council has several components. Democratic Procedures Committee (DPC) does the procedural side. Scrutiny Panel does the scrutiny (no surprises there!) and specialist committees, such as Elections Committee, also assist. Elected students alone sit on each of these committees. This leaves the Council chamber free to debate policy. The great strength of the current structure is that it allows all students to follow Council's vital policy conversation, without needing prior knowledge of detailed Union procedures. This is good for democracy. It's open. It's inclusive.

Lying behind your motion are many principles worthy of discussion - the use of modern technology in campaigns for example. Those principles would be the sort of thing Council could debate. Unfortunately the specific motion in question is not expressed in terms of principles. But rather detailed rules for the Union to enact. As such, the motion merits special focus. That is why it is best dealt with at a committee specialising in procedures such as DPC or elections committee. If you would like to bring your motion to these committees, I would be delighted. Both committees will meet again this academic year, enabling consideration of the important points you raise to occur, before any previous Officer candidates graduate.

I welcome your acknowledgment that there are legitimate issues with the wording of the motion. Sadly, at only a few hours' notice, there is not time to accept alterations. It is a shame that none of you chose to speak to any SU Officer or member of SU staff about your motion prior to submitting it. Had you done so, we could have helped you structure your motion in a way presentable at Council. Nevertheless, Elections Committee (or DPC) would be a great place for the important questions you raise to be debated. Contrary to what your letter claims, grievances were properly considered by the Elections Committee during the campaigns process. Where the complaints could be substantiated by proper evidence, action was taken. Please trust therefore that Elections Committee will fully consider the many detailed suggestions you make.

On the question of whether the facilitator had the power to refer your motion to another committee- she undoubtedly did. The Union Council Guidance Document clearly states "*Ideas which are longer than 400 words shall be accepted at the discretion of the Chair.*" The Chair took great care deliberating whether to accept this motion. My judgement, for what it's worth, is that she made the right call. And we should all get behind students who have the passion to be involved in Union democracy.

Yours Sincerely

Samuel Peake

Community Officer

Chair of the SU Democratic Procedures Committee