

STUDENT EXECUTIVE APRIL 2026 AGENDA AND PAPERS

CONTENTS

Student Executive March 2026 Agenda and Papers	1
Agenda.....	1
TRANS AND NON-BINARY INCLUSION POLICY	2
Ethical Trading Policy.....	6

AGENDA

MEETING START (10MINS)

Approve minutes from the last meeting.

Any FTO updates.

POLICIES (60MINS)

TRANS AND NON-BINARY INCLUSION POLICY (15MINS)

Please refer to the draft policy further down this document.

Discussion and vote.

ETHICAL TRADING POLICY (45MINS)

Please refer to the draft policy and list further down this document.

Initially discuss and vote on the policy content and proposed process.

Secondly discuss and vote on the lists.

AOCB AND DONM (15MINS)

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Does anyone have any other competent business?

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Look at week commencing 18th May.

TRANS AND NON-BINARY INCLUSION POLICY

PROBLEM / CONTEXT

For the purposes of this policy, the term “gender diverse people/students” is used as an umbrella term to refer to trans, non-binary and intersex people. However, the Union recognises that these groups have different/individual lived experiences.

Gender diverse students continue to face discrimination, exclusion, and hostility within wider society, including in higher education spaces. This has been intensified by a volatile political, legal, and media environment, including recent non-statutory guidance and legal uncertainty around trans inclusion in public life.

Evidence from across the UK higher education sector demonstrates that these pressures have real and disproportionate impacts on gender diverse people. Research by the [Higher Education Policy Institute \(HEPI\)](#) found that around 50% of trans students and 49% of non-binary students have considered withdrawing from their course, this compares to approximately 28% of students overall. Furthermore, [national LGBTQ+ surveys](#) also show that many trans and non-binary students hide their identity at university out of fear of discrimination or harassment.

These experiences sit within a broader societal context in which gender diverse people face high levels of everyday discrimination, harassment, and poorer mental health outcomes. For students, this can directly affect wellbeing, safety, participation, and access to support services.

WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

The Student Union exists to represent, support, and empower all students. Gender diverse students are members of our community and must be able to access Union services, spaces, representation, and activities with dignity, privacy, and respect.

The Student Union believes that inclusion, dignity, and equality are fundamental to a positive student experience. Students cannot fully participate in academic or social life if they are unsafe, marginalised, or forced to justify their identity.

Gender diverse inclusion is not a niche or optional issue. It is central to student welfare, mental health, and access to education. Creating diverse union spaces strengthens our community, improves student engagement, and reflects our values as a democratic, student-led organisation.

At a time of heightened hostility and confusion, clear reassurance from the Student Union matters. This policy sets out the Student Unions position, responsibilities, and practical commitments, while recognising that the Union must operate within the confines of the law and its charitable duties

WHAT SHOULD HWUNION DO?

UNION POSITION AND PRINCIPLES

The Student Union affirms that transphobia has no place in Union-run spaces, activities, or representation.

This policy applies to all Student Union-controlled spaces, services, and activities, including, social spaces, toilets, student representation, and affiliated societies. In spaces out of Union control, we advocate for inclusive practice across the wider student experience.

ACCESS TO UNION SPACES AND ACTIVITIES

The Student Union will:

- Ensure all Union-run spaces and services are inclusive and accessible based on self-identified gender.
- Expect societies and student groups affiliated to the Union to operate on a self-identification basis for participation and membership.
- Use inclusive language and practices across Union communications, events, and activities.

Union-managed toilets and facilities will be available to students based on their self-identified gender. The Student Union recognises the importance of privacy, dignity, and safety for all students using its facilities. And would encourage anyone, who - for any reason - may be uncomfortable to use an individual or all-access toilet.

NAMES, PRONOUNS, AND RESPECT

The Student Union affirms each individual's right to be addressed by their preferred name and pronouns.

- Student Union officers, staff, volunteers and representative of the Union are expected to use the names and pronouns requested by students.
- Deliberate or malicious misgendering, deadnaming, or exclusion may constitute transphobia and or bullying.

Genuine mistakes should be corrected respectfully. However, repeated, intentional, or hostile behaviour is unacceptable.

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR TRANSPHOBIA

The Student Union will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or bullying on the basis of gender identity or expression within Union-run spaces or activities.

Transphobia may include (but is not limited to):

- Deliberate and/or consistent misgendering or deadnaming.
- Excluding someone from activities or spaces because they are gender diverse.
- Hostile or degrading comments, behaviour, or assumptions about a person's gender.

All complaints or concerns will be handled through the existing complaints processes as set out in the Student Unions Bye-Laws, or through relevant University procedures where appropriate. Complaints relating to a person's gender identity should never be handled publicly or 'in the moment', but through proper, confidential processes.

SUPPORT, ADVOCACY, AND LEGAL CONTEXT

The Student Union will:

- Advocate for the issues affecting gender diverse student within the University where Union-controlled services or policies intersect with student welfare.
- Signpost students to appropriate support services.

- Explore offering training on trans inclusion for elected officers and relevant staff.

LEGAL CONTEXT AND EXTERNAL GUIDANCE

The Student Union recognises that the legal and regulatory landscape relating to trans inclusion is complex and subject to change, including recent non-statutory guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

The Student Union will:

- Operate within the confines of the law and its charitable obligations.
- Avoid premature or harmful changes to inclusive practice where legal clarity is lacking.
- Do as much as it lawfully can to protect the dignity, safety, and wellbeing of gender diverse students.

During periods of heightened political or media hostility, the Student Union will provide clear public reassurance to gender diverse students about its commitment to inclusion and support.

ETHICAL TRADING POLICY

PROBLEM/IDEA

This policy sets out Heriot-Watt University Student Union's (HWUnion) commitment to ethical procurement and trading. This policy solidifies that HWUnion's financial decisions are clear; we have respect for human rights, environmental responsibility, and fair treatment of workers and communities worldwide.

Many multinational corporations have been associated with unethical practices, including poor working conditions, displacement of indigenous communities, exploitative supply chains, environmental damage, and animal welfare concerns. Government regulation often fails to hold such corporations adequately accountable.

Student Unions have historically engaged in consumer boycotts, which have played a significant role in shaping corporate behaviour. Most notably the global boycotts during apartheid South Africa. As consumers and as an organisation, HWUnion has the power to drive positive change by choosing ethical alternatives.

WHY SHOULD HWUNION DO IT?

HWUnion makes significant purchasing and commercial decisions each year. How we spend money can have a wider impact by using our collective purchasing power responsibly, recognising that where we spend money has wider social and environmental implications.

This policy is not about individual or ad hoc decisions. It is about establishing a structured, evidence-informed approach that allows HWUnion to make consistent, proportionate, and justifiable choices over time.

By doing so, HWUnion can both minimise potential harm within its operations and support more responsible business practices through its day-to-day activities.

WHAT SHOULD HWUNION DO?

HWUnion will adopt a two-tier list for its ethical trading. These lists will consist of:

1 – Prohibited list

HWUnion will suspend and cease all trading and relationships with these organisations. Including but not limited to; partnerships, events, sponsorships, and purchasing.

2 – Restricted list

HWUnion will seek to reduce and where possible cease trading with. HWUnion recognises that fully disengaging with these organisations is not feasible due to a financial, operational or contractual reason. However, in these circumstances HWUnion will do its best to minimise reliance over time.

PROCESS AND FORMAT

Both list will outline organisations the Union shall be prohibited to working with and the reasons for. This list at minimum will be reviewed annually by the Student Executive.

The List can be amended by students following official processes outlined in Bye-law 12. The list will be published and easily accessible from the website to guide students and staff in making more ethical choices. The list will include:

- Organisation name
- Reason for being listed
- Date of listing

EXCEPTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

In applying this policy, HWUnion will:

- Refuse listed organisations access to Union ran events.
- Consider and prioritise the most ethical option when making large purchases.
- Lobby any relevant third parties to also cease their relationship with organisations on either list.
- Have a reasonable transitional period to become compliant when amendments to either list is made.

Exceptions may apply in the following instances:

- Where products from the list are already available through the University and cannot be reasonably separated.
- Where products from the list are available second-hand.

ORGANISATIONAL NAME	REASONS	PROHIBITED / RESTRICTED
AXA,		Prohibited
ChatGPT,		Prohibited
Chevron,		Prohibited
Crufts,		Prohibited
DELL,		Prohibited
Disney+,		Prohibited
Ecover,		Prohibited
Hewlett Packard (HP),		Restricted
Intel,		Restricted
Method,		Prohibited
Mitie,		Prohibited
Oreo and Ritz		Restricted
Nestle,		Prohibited
Pantene and Herbal Essences		Prohibited
Reebok,		Prohibited
RE/MAX,		Prohibited
Siemens,		Prohibited
SodaStream,		Prohibited
Starbucks,		Restricted
Tesla,		Prohibited
Twitter/X,		Prohibited
Wendy's.		Prohibited

[Visit this website to see why these companies are being boycotted.](#)