



Useful Information About The Guild For Your Written Statement & Campaign

Autumn Elections 2023

Your Voice
Only Louder

What is the Guild?

The Guild is an independent charity that is here to support the social and academic experience of UoB students, and ensure that you get the very best experience!

Asides student elections, we offer a variety of services and opportunities to students, including:

- [Decision-making \(democracy\)](#)
- [Student Rep System](#)
- [Campaigns](#)
- [Guild Advice](#)
- [Societies, Student Groups & Associations](#)
- [Joe's Bar](#)
- [Nightclubbing events \(e.g. Fab\)](#)
- [Student Mentors](#)
- [Community Wardens Scheme](#)
- [Student-Staff Jobs](#)
- [Employability Support](#)

...and lots more volunteering opportunities!



Guild Strategy 2022-2027

The Guild, supported by the University, has set a new strategy for the next five years.

The Trustee Board has set the strategy with different Guild departments responsible for different areas.

We'd suggest that you read the strategic plan to understand where the Guild is heading over the next five years.

It has three key aims for the Guild:

- Engagement and Participation
- Representation
- Community and Support

[The Guild of Students Strategic Plan](#)





What is the NUS?

NUS (National Union of Students) is the largest democratic student organization in Europe

- NUS was founded in 1922, with UoB Guild being a founding member!
- NUS works to represent students on a national level – lobbying the government and universities on a variety of issues including tuition fees, teaching standards and liberation issues.
- It's achieved lots of successes over it's history e.g. securing an exemption from paying Council Tax for students
- It has two key conferences every year in the Spring – National Conference & Liberation Conference
- [You can find out more about NUS here](#) , and [more about NUS national campaigns here](#)



What Do We Know About UoB Students?

- Over 38,000 students
- There are UG, PGT & PGR, Full-Time & Part-Time students
- UoB students are from all over the world
- Students study at either the Birmingham campus, abroad, at joint institutions, the Dubai campus, or are distance learners

Further detailed information about student demographics will be available in the shared candidate Google Drive.

A link to this shared drive will be circulated via email to all candidates after applications have closed.



Guild Democracy

The Guild is a “democratic” organization

Democracy -> NOUN

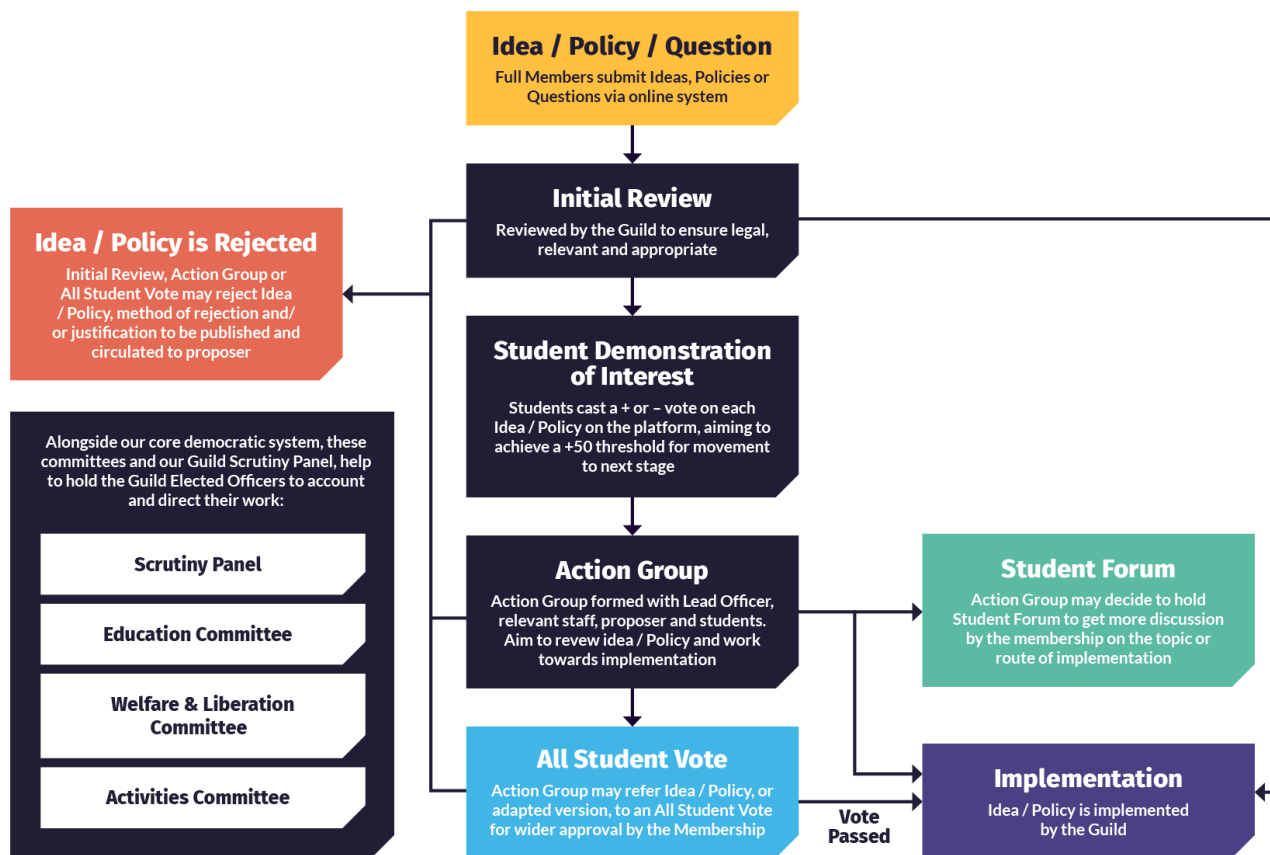
Democratic -> ADJECTIVE

- Democracy is all about people being able to have their say in what they want to see change & being able to choose who they want representing them
- As the Guild is a democratic organization, all of its members (UoB students) are able to have their say in things they want to change in the University, Guild and local community, and elect who they want representing them.
- Decisions are made by UoB students – UoB students have decision-making power in the Guild!!!

The Guild should be representative and inclusive of ALL UoB students!



The Guild's Decision-Making (Democracy) Structure



[You can find more info & details about how Guild decision-making works here](#)



Your Elected Officer Team

- As the Guild is a democratic organization, students can have their say in which students they want representing them
- 7 Elected Full-Time Officers and 7 Elected Part-Time Officers are elected every year to represent UoB students
- Elections are a big part of democracy!
- As an Officer, although the President is the lead Officer for Guild democracy and elections, ALL Officers still play a HUGE role in Guild democracy



[Find out more about your current Officer Team here](#)



How Can You Find Out More About What UoB Students Care About?

- Student Ideas, Policy & Campaign Submissions
- Decision-Making Committee & All Student Meeting Minutes
- Scrutiny Panel minutes & Officer reports
- NSS, PTES & PRES Data
- Issues raised by Reps/Previous Rep Impacts
- Officer Priority Campaigns & Black Voices Campaign
- Impact of COVID-19

We recommend that you include information in your written statement & campaign that is relevant to the role that you are applying for!



Student Idea & Policy Submissions

[At the Guild, students are able to submit ideas and policy proposals for things they would like to see change in the Guild, University and local community, on the Guild of Students website.](#)

These ideas and policy proposals may be allocated to the Action Groups, to Officers, the All Student Meeting, or core Guild staff.

Ideas and policy proposals that have been submitted in the past year have included:

- Providing an icebreaker event for 2nd year Economics students
- Remote Learning at UoB
- Updated Islamaphobia Definition
- The Guild Should Offer Low-Budget Cooking Classes
- The Guild Should Support the University and College Union Postgraduate Research Manifesto to Recognise Postgraduate Researchers as Staff.

For a full list of submitted ideas and policy, in addition to progress that has been made on them, please email elections@guild.bham.ac.uk



Student Campaign Submissions

[Students can also submit ideas for campaigns](#), and [request funding for campaigns!](#)

Funding for campaign ideas related to welfare, liberation, equality and diversity and wellbeing are approved by [the Guild's Welfare & Liberation Committee](#).

Funding for any other campaigns are approved by [the Guild's Campaigns Committee](#).

Previous campaign ideas that have been submitted have included:

- Evening of Elegance 2021 Campaign
- Raising awareness of sustainable fashion
- Guild to Endorse the UoB Amnesty International Society's Campaign to Stop "Killer Robots"
- University-Wide Campaign for the Climate & Ecological Emergency Bill (CEE Bill)

For information about campaigns, please email campaigns@guild.bham.ac.uk



Decision-Making Committee & All Student Meeting Minutes

Student ideas, policy proposals and campaigns, in addition to relevant funding, Guild policy and other relevant topics, are discussed at the Guild's decision-making committee meetings (Activities, Campaigns, Welfare & Liberation and Education Committees), and at the All Student Meeting

At the All Student Meeting, decisions about the Guild's aims as a charity may also be discussed.

If you read the minutes for these meeting, you will be able to see what decisions have been made by students, and what other issues students have raised.

[You can find minutes for previous decision-making committee meetings here](#)

You will need to be logged into the Guild website first to view the minutes!



Scrutiny Panel Minutes & Officer Reports

The Scrutiny Panel consists of 5 recruited UoB students

The Panel scrutinizes the work of your Officer Team, and ask them questions based on reports that the Officer Team write, to ensure that they are making progress on their written statements (manifestos), ideas and policy, and any other work that is in their remit

The Panel also provide positive feedback and suggestions for improvement to the Officer Team, and provide a short report at All Student Meetings

[Minutes from previous Scrutiny Panel meetings can be found here](#) (you must be logged into the Guild website first to view them)



National Student Survey

The NSS is a survey that all final year Undergraduate students at UK Universities complete

The survey asks these students for feedback on different areas of University life (e.g. teaching, University services etc)

[You can find out more general information about the NSS here](#)

Data from this survey shows that students are mainly happy with “Teaching on my course”, “Learning Resources” and “Learning Community” and the overall experience at Birmingham.

Areas where students show they are not as satisfied include:

- Assessment and feedback
- Learning opportunities
- Organisation and Management
- Student voice (listening to student feedback)
- Provision of welfare services
- University’s responsibility for student safety
- Workload

For more information, please contact elections@guild.bham.ac.uk



PTES & PRES Surveys

The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) are surveys which aim to find out more about the PG student experience. The University of Birmingham will next participate in these survey's in 2023 so any data from 2022 is from the UK wide survey and not Birmingham specific

Key points from these surveys:

- In 2022 the PTES showed that 82% were satisfied with their course.
- In 2022 the PRES showed that 81% were satisfied with their course.
- Postgraduates showed higher rates of loneliness and isolation than in the wider student population.

- In 2022 Birmingham participated in the OfS's new Postgraduate Experience Survey.
- This showed that 89% of students rated their course as either "Very good" or "Good".

For more information about these, please contact elections@guild.bham.ac.uk



Issues Raised by Reps

Rep Impacts are when Reps raise an issue, the issue is resolved, and a positive impact has been made on the student experience. When asked what changes were made to their school/college/course this year, Reps provided answers such as:

- “Timetable and Room changes during both semesters. Improvement of teaching quality and revision notes given by lecturers in the second semester”
- “Assignment deadlines changed, simulated exams put in place, current second year course content introduced in first year”
- “Shaping year 3 project dissertations discussion – making them inclusive by removing the need for first year grades and including keywords to help students rank all of the projects”
- “Changes to PGR study space policy and procedure, access to HEFi modules for distance learning PGRs, clarification and (hopefully) improved access to PGTA opportunities for distance learning PGRs, updated guidance regarding international PGTAs, access to scanning services for shielding and isolating students during the pandemic”
- “One module has been reviewed so it is more accessible to disabled students”

[You can also find out more about representation of academic interests on the Guild website](#)

...or by emailing studentreps@guild.bham.ac.uk



Officer Priority Campaigns

In previous years, your Officer Teams hosted 1-3 Priority Campaigns.

These have included:

- Change in Mind Campaign
- Black Voices Campaign
- Care Leavers Representation

This year, the Officers' priority campaign is the Cost of Living Campaign (see the next slide).

Black Voices Campaign

The Black Voices Campaign is still ongoing, and is run by a group of student volunteers.

[You can find out more about the Black Voices Campaign here](#)



Cost of Living Campaign

This year your Officer Team have decided that the Cost of Living is their focus for campaigning this academic year.

This activity is focus on a number of different areas:

- Community Pantry
- Guild Hardship Fund
- Housing and Renters Rights
- Supporting students and researchers throughout their time here.



If you'd like more information on this work you can contact the Full-Time Officers fto@guild.bham.ac.uk



Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on various areas of the student experience, including:

- Welfare
- Money
- Housing
- Teaching & learning
- Placements, jobs & years abroad
- Social experience
- Accessibility of university services

You may want to talk about this in your campaign and written statement.



Thank-You For Reading!

Please email any questions, queries or concerns to
elections@guild.bham.ac.uk

