

Attendance

239 students in total signed up for the meeting on the Guild of Students website
188 students in total (including 2 Scrutiny Panel members) were in the waiting room at the start of the meeting

Present:

Officers: Danielle Murinas (DM, Postgraduate Officer), Jules Singh (JS, Education Officer), Adam Dorey (AD, Campaigns Officer), Aaliyah Simms (AS, Welfare & Community Officer), Mikey Brown (MB, Guild President), Josephine Conway (JC, Activities & Employability Officer), Robin Hayward (RH, Trans & Non-Binary Students Officer)

Scrutiny Panel Members: Jack Bowen (JB), Lucy Shapley (LS)

Idea Submitters/Presenters: Qinyi Zhong (QZ), Zeshaan Iqbal (ZI), Abdur-Rahman Mirza (ARM), Muhammad Abd-us-samad (MA)

In Attendance:

Guild Core Staff: Rozena Nadeem (RN, Democracy Coordinator, Minute-Taker), Houmaa Chaudhry (HC, Senior Representation Coordinator), Tom Snape (TS, Policy & Campaigns Coordinator, Tech), Lucy Gill (LG, Student Voice & Representation Manager), Jo Thomas (Guild CEO), Amelia McLoughlan (AM, Representation Coordinator), Holly Begum (HB, Education & Welfare Advisor)

Apologies:

Officers: George Christian (GC, Sports Officer), Imogen Mann (IM, Disabled Students' Officer), Manisha Kaur (MK, Ethnic Minority Students Officer)

Scrutiny Panel Member: Eloise Watkin (EW), Shaun Keen (SK), Jingke Lin (JL)

Absent Without Apologies:

Officers: Rachel Boucher (RB, Ethical & Environmental Officer), Eleanor Thomas (ET, LGBTQ+ Students Officer), Louisa Martin (LM, Womens' Officer)

Trigger Warnings

Welfare, liberation, genocide, Uyghur people, human rights, islamaphobia, inclusion, wellbeing, mental health

You can find full details of the ideas and policy proposals discussed in the meeting here: <https://www.guildofstudents.com/representation/allstudentmeeting/>

The full slides used during the meeting can be found here (please copy and paste the link): https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1V_NFeKDMqjsNqcL61jr8cW_1hbXsBNTApiLOGZdD8jk/edit?usp=sharing

Meeting Notes

Item No.	Item Title	Meeting Notes
1	Welcome & Introductions	AM opened the meeting and introduced herself.

<p>2</p>	<p>Scrutiny Panel Report</p>	<p>AM introduced this agenda item, and handed over to the Scrutiny Panel members to present</p> <p>JB explained the purpose of the Scrutiny Panel and how it works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Panel scrutinizes Guild Officers on their work and progress, in the form of questions, and positive and constructive feedback • This feedback is provided at Scrutiny Panel meetings • The Panel write up a feedback report at after each meeting • The Scrutiny Panel provide a summary of this report at All Student Meetings <p>JB explained that EW had worked on the summary of their report, and presented the contents of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Panel understand the impact of COVID-19 and 3 lockdowns on Officer’s work, and Officers have done a great job of getting the Guild running again • We can tell how passionate each and every Officer is • Positive feedback - TikTok is a great idea – lines with launching into the 21st century. Officers generally have lots of good ideas and wonderful initiatives, and just need to ensure that these are implemented through tangible policies • Improvement – it would be good to have all of the Officer reports in advance, as some were submitted late
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We'd like to note that the comments are only applicable to those Officers who submitted a report and/or attended the meeting - some Officers could not attend the meetings for very legitimate reasons <p>JB presented some thank-you's to the Officers on behalf of the Scrutiny Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President – thank-you for creating the tenants' rights union and Activist Network • Campaigns Officers is very passionate • Delighted with the AEO's hard work addressing the drink spiking issues, and increasing access to the employability hub • Education Officer – pleased with their progress on their work on the attainment gap and academic support for disabled students • Postgraduate Officer – submitted a fantastic, informative and detailed report, and like the work on the PG wellbeing network and making connections between graduate schools • International Officer – communications with international students is great, as some are not on campus due to COVID-19 restrictions – Scrutiny Panel would like to hear a follow-up about this, as well as about encouraging committees to attend inclusion training, and the support in Semester 2 for international students • Sports Officer - couldn't attend the meeting, but would like to thank them for their wonderful report and their
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		<p>policies to increase inclusion and welfare in sports societies</p> <p>JB noted that the Panel would like to hear updates on these topics before the next Scrutiny Panel/All Student Meeting.</p> <p>JB also thanked the Democracy Team on behalf of the Scrutiny Panel for introducing them to their roles.</p> <p>AM thanked the JB and asked students if they had any questions.</p> <p>No questions were asked.</p> <p>AM closed this item.</p> <p>ACTION: Officer Team to work on feedback provided from the Scrutiny Panel, ahead of the next Scrutiny Panel meetings in January</p>
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<p>3</p>	<p>Stop the Genocide: Solidarity With the Uyghur People</p>	<p>AM introduced trigger warnings for this idea, and clarified that students are welcome to leave the meeting/not listen to this section of the meeting, should it be triggering.</p> <p>AM introduced the idea, and handed over to the idea submitter to present.</p> <p>Another student presented the idea on behalf of the idea submitter verbally.</p> <p>A copy of the full idea submission can be found in the “Idea & Policy Submissions” doc on the All Student Meeting web page: https://www.guildofstudents.com/representation/allstudentmeeting/</p> <p>AM clarified that students were free to ask questions and/or provide comments, regardless of whether they agreed or disagreed with the idea.</p> <p>JS noted that they had met with the idea submitter to discuss this, and so were able to provide context. As the Guild is a charity, we have to operate within our charitable objectives, and accommodate for all members of Guild. For this idea submission, we’re therefore limited to what we can do in line with Charity Law.</p> <p>JS provided further clarification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can’t provide money or resources for work off campus
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Officer Team are otherwise happy to support any student-led campaigns in line with our charitable objectives • MB has regular 121s with the VC, and can raise this issue • The Guild cannot go beyond what has been done for similar ideas in the past, and we must expend our resources in line with Charity Commission Guidance • We could come to a corporate conclusion on this matter, but there are some limitations to what we could do in practice <p>AC asked the idea submitter and student who presented the idea if they had any questions/comments for JS.</p> <p>ZI noted that they would appreciate any support. If we can come together and do a campaign, we'd appreciate working together on this</p> <p>Student: I understand that we're not quorate, can we amend the idea before the All Student Vote?</p> <p>AM provided clarification - amendments that can be made to idea submissions.</p> <p>MB noted that they would like to talk in support of the motion. They noted that it is important for the Guild to have a stance on this, and the Guild can include it in our Beliefs & Commitments. MB was also happy to talk to the idea submitter to look at how we can work together</p>
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Student: I support this motion. I'm just wondering, does anyone know if the Guild of Students will lose any money if this motion as far as possible goes ahead?

AM: No, the Guild won't lose any money – please someone clarify this?

MB: We won't lose money, but we can't extend our resources outside of our charitable objectives

AC: Is the idea submitter happy to work with MB to amend this idea?

ZI confirmed.

ACTION: MB and ZI to meet to amend the idea, before it is uploaded to the Guild website for the All Student Vote.

ACTION: Idea allocated to the All Student Vote

A student posted the following question in the chat: Would social media awareness count under resolution 4 of the motion?

JS answered this question in the chat: We could provide information on the website.

AM asked everybody in the meeting if anybody else had any questions or comments on this idea.

		<p>No further questions were raised.</p> <p>AM thanked ZI and the student who presented the idea, and this item was closed.</p>
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4	Islamaphobia Definition	<p>179 attendees were present at this point in the meeting (including Officers and staff).</p> <p>AM introduced trigger warnings for this idea, and clarified that students are welcome to leave the meeting/not listen to this section of the meeting, should it be triggering.</p> <p>AM introduced the idea, and handed over to ARM to present.</p> <p>ARM presented the idea.</p> <p>The full slide content for this presentation, provided by the idea submitter, can be reviewed in the meeting slides (please copy and paste the link):</p> <p>https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1V_NFeKDMqjsNqcL61jr8cW_1hbXsBNTApiLOGZdD8jk/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>AM thanked the idea submitter, and asked students if they had any questions, before being placed into breakout rooms.</p> <p>AM also clarified that students should be respectful to each other's views, and this idea is a sensitive topic.</p> <p>No questions were asked.</p> <p>Students were placed into 14 break out rooms for around 5 minutes, and each breakout room included around 12 students each.</p>
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When students were brought back from the breakout rooms, AM asked students to place their feedback in the meeting chat for her to read, then she would present a summary of the feedback provided.

Comments from the chat are copied below:

- Group 2: Support the motion
- Group 4: Unanimously agreed to support the motion
- Group 5: Support the motion
- Group 13: In agreement with amendment, Muslim students need to be consulted
- Student: My group did not have any specific feedback
- Student: Our group was supportive of the motion and emphasised the need for extensive consultation with groups of students directly affected
- Student: The people that are affected the most can have their say with the definition i.e. the ISOC and Muslim students
- Group 8 - no specific feedback

ARM posted the following comment in the chat:

One person said that the current definition treats Islam as a race which is not correct. I was thinking that systemic islamaphobia was good. But I think one problem with the motion is that calls for the removal of the definition, rather than the replacement of the motion. This might mean we would be left with no definition. This raises the question of whether the current definition is actively harmful.

		<p>AM asked ARM if they were happy with the feedback provided from students, and clarified that the idea would be allocated to the All Student Vote.</p> <p>ARM confirmed that they were happy.</p> <p>AM thanked ARM and students and closed this item.</p> <p>ACTION: Idea allocated to the All Student Vote</p>
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5	<p style="text-align: center;">Remote Learning on Campus</p>	<p>AM introduced this item, and handed over to the QZ to present.</p> <p>QZ presented the idea. The full slide content for this presentation, provided by the idea submitter, can be reviewed in the meeting slides (please copy and paste the link): https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1V_NFeKDMqjsNqcL61jr8cW_1hbXsBNTApiLOGZdD8jk/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>AM: Thanked QZ and explained that students would be placed into breakout rooms to discuss the idea</p> <p>A student posted the following text in the chat: “I agree with the student. However, this should be take into account all students as the Omicron variant is now in UK too. Even those who have had both jabs have still caught COVID-19. I know of some people outside university who have been in this case. I believe all January exams should be switched back to online and semester 2 be taught online. We are still at risk in UK and also students being forced to travel to UK to study in person are at risk too.”</p> <p>MB and WLC provided some additional comments about their communication with the University on this issue</p> <p>WLC: We also have concerns about in-person teaching, and the current situation – the best option is for students to decide whether they would like to be back on campus. In the past few</p>
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weeks, we have talked to the Pro Vice Chancellor (International) as a priority issue. It's best to allow international students to have the online option for teaching and learning.

AM asked MB if he wanted to add anything else.

MB: We're grateful for everyone who emailed us and raised their concerns - we have raised this strong concern with the University. The University have said that if the Department of Education allow it, they will allow remote learning. We have made it clear that students feel strongly about this.

A student posted the following text in the meeting chat:

- "The price has doubled and the route is unstable.
- So far, there is no direct flight between the two countries. International students flying to the UK need to stay in one or two countries on average, and need to shuttle between different countries in more than 20 hours.
- Not only does it pose physical and psychological challenges to students, it also greatly increases the risk of infection.
- In addition, the upcoming Lunar New Year, Winter Olympics, etc. are coming to special periods that also bring many unknown variables to travel.
- According to the 2020 and 2021 Spring Festival travel policies, the government may restrict travel (including

the suspension of flights) to prevent the spread of the epidemic.

- I myself just came back from the UK last year.
- I bought a dozen tickets in total, and the purchase amount was as high as several hundred thousand yuan.
- In the end, all the tickets were cancelled due to various reasons.
- As a result, I had to go to the agent who sold the tickets.”

Another student posted in the meeting chat:

“When I bought a ticket, I was cheated on this ticket. I called the police. The hardship of returning to China last year is still unforgettable. I can’t bear this kind of experience again. My family’s spirit cannot bear this kind of torture. I was in the UK last year because of me. Unable to buy air tickets to return to China, my parents and grandparents were unable to sleep all night. This was a serious mental torture for my family and me. At the same time, I don’t think online learning will affect the quality of teaching. Through this year’s learning experience, I feel that online courses are more quality because I save a lot of time on the road. I can use this time to read literature and read books. I don’t have any mental pressure in China, and I devote myself to learning. My learning efficiency is higher, so I don’t think online learning will affect the quality of teaching.”

Student: I really agree with QZ

		<p>Student: I think safety and health are the prerequisite of study and remote learning will not affect learning efficiency. Hopefully, classes and assessments will be online, just like in the first semester.</p> <p>Students were placed into breakout rooms for 5 minutes to discuss the idea.</p> <p>When students were brought back from breakout rooms, AM asked them to post their feedback in the meeting chat.</p> <p>The following feedback was provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group 2: Support the motion• Group 11: Support the motion. Noted that there is no consistency among schools and bimodal learning. Noted the need for fairness among summatives being either all online and all in person. Also want bimodal teaching for all, not just international students as some students have caring responsibilities• Group 6: Support the motion• Group 13: We had a discussion, but time ran out. I was going to say that the PM said a lockdown is unlikely but has not been ruled out• Group: Support the motion.• Group 8: Agreed - support the motion. The university need to prioritise student wellbeing, especially with the uncertainty of the safety of students. They have shown they can deliver remote learning.
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- Group 4: Support the motion
- Group 13: We support the online experience
- Student: I strongly agree with the idea to have online teaching

A student posted the following text in the chat:

- “Everyone wants to study in as safe an environment as possible, not 'live with a virus'.
- In contrast, we are completely virus-free at home and no one wants to complete their studies in a dangerous environment, especially if they are dragging a very fragile body with them.
- As you know, a 0.1% risk to a student can be a 100% disaster for the student and their family.
- Please don't put the family of an international student at risk of losing their child to an exceptional medical condition!”

A large number of students (~30+) posted “Support” in the meeting chat.

AM clarified that the idea will be allocated to the All Student Vote, where students will have the chance to vote on the idea, and closed this item.

ACTION: Idea allocated to the All Student Vote

Note:

		<p>While this idea was being discussed, MA posted in the meeting chat by a student regarding the policy submission on the Islamaphobia definition:</p> <p>“If we remove the definition we will still be covered under 2.7. Religion and Belief for our religious beliefs and 2.6 Race under the Guild's Zero Tolerance Policy - until we can get a more suitable definition adopted”</p>
	(ACCESS) BREAK	
	AM noted that students could take a 5-minute break.	

6		<p>160 students were present in the meeting after the break.</p> <p>AM introduced this idea, and read out MA's presentation text from the meeting chat on his behalf. No additional slides from the idea submitter were used as part of the meeting slides.</p> <p>AM presented the following information on AM's behalf: "Why I believe external members should not pay a £25 fee and should instead pay no fee?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Firstly</i> - the guild of students can do this, as this has previously been their policy, for many years. • <i>Secondly</i> - the £25 fee looks past all the value that external members add to the guild of students. Many of them have extensive knowledge of how to run societies and how to organise events, as well as specialist knowledge for individual societies. This institutional knowledge with this £25 fee will be mostly lost, as it discourages many people from coming back. • <i>Thirdly</i> - because the number of external members would be decreased by a £25 fee, this also has an impact on the revenue of societies, as external members can purchase membership of societies. One of the Guild's charitable aims is to promote social intercourse (societies) between students and this is harmed as the financial viability of student societies is impinged. • <i>Fourthly</i> - the fee of £25 makes it much more difficult for potential external members who do not have financial
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		<p>means to engage with the guild and societies. Groups of people who are more likely to be in poverty include people who are disabled, from racial minorities and women. So this fee has the effect of making the guild of students less diverse, which I do not believe is the intention of any of you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fifthly</i> - Associations in particular would be hurt by the £25 cost, as the cost to join an association is £0, so for many former members it might make little sense to join at £25 for the purpose of joining the association with the cost of £0. Also as per the previous point many potential external members of the association are more likely to not have the resources for a £25 fee. Volunteering societies would also be hit. • <i>Sixth</i> - external members may impose a cost on the guild, but they also generate revenue, with them more likely to purchase items of food and drink from the campus, if they are external members and probably part of societies too. Finally, many of these external members are our friends or mentors and it would be a shame if we are not able to have fun with them because of the difficulties associated with the fee. <p>MA thanked AM for presenting their idea on their behalf.</p> <p>AM asked students if they had any questions before being put into a break out room.</p>
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A student posted the following in the meeting chat: “External members can’t join societies without paying external membership fee”

MB: I’d like to ask JC to provide thoughts, as the AEO.

JC: The previous AEO raised the membership fee to reflect the admin cost and resources required to administer the program, as it’s time consuming for staff and the President. We did some benchmarking, and found that some SUs charge up to £100 in comparison to other SUs. We do ensure that the £25 goes back into student groups, and used for groups activity.

MA posted the following in the meeting chat: “I believe the Guild of students is better than all other student unions”

AD: Do we have data on what demand there is for external memberships?

AM clarified that JC was searching for the relevant information for this.

MA posted the following in the meeting chat: “It would be a privilege for us to have these wonderful people who volunteer themselves to become external members of the Guild, contribute to the Guild.”

	<p>Student: Does the money from external memberships actually go into groups? I've heard it goes to the Guild?</p> <p>JC: The money will go into the student groups grant pot – the Activities Committee, in September and January, allocate the grants – they allocate money to student groups. We have a budget for this, and money from external memberships will go into the grant pot, and to student groups and student groups' activity. Does that make sense?</p> <p>JC confirmed that there are 13 external members, and 19 external memberships which are from students who are on a leave of absence. JC clarified that students on a leave of absence are not charged for external memberships.</p> <p>MA posted the following in the chat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “25 * 37 = £925• All that talent lost for £925” <p>AM asked for clarification on relevance on the above information that MA posted in the chat.</p> <p>Student: The question is how many people would want to pay it vs how many people pay it?</p> <p>MA posted the following in the meeting chat: “All the knowledge of the external members who could not pay the fees, all the different group of people who are negatively</p>
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affected by the cost. There are many people who want to be external members in my societies, but they can't or are discouraged because of the fee.”

A student posted the following in the meeting chat: It's maybe worth lowering the fee to like £20 and make more spaces available?

AM noted that students would be put into breakout rooms to discuss this.

Students were put into breakout rooms for five minutes to discuss this.

When students came back from the breakout rooms, the following feedback was provided in the meeting chat:

- Group 7 - there were some confusion as to why the contribution to societies was connected to external memberships
- Group - there is some support, although also concerns about financial stress on the student Guild.
- Group 8 – Discussion about a constant fee, unclear answers to “admin fees”. I noted that the Guild is a not-for-profit organisation and all money goes towards the running of student groups and so on. Valuable discussion was had.

- Group - Could there be safeguarding issues with alumni joining for free, particularly considering on Brumfess, there have been some suspicious alumni?
- Group - thinking of a possible lower membership of possibly £10 - £15 for those who are not originally residents of Birmingham or UK. I mean those who live in non-Midlands area or abroad.
- Group 13 - Mixed views – abstain
- Group - Did not support the motion and believe it should stay at £25
- Student: I don't think the it should be free but £25 is also way too high

AM provided a summary of students' feedback to the meeting.

MA posted the following text in the meeting chat: "Anyone could join before. Also there was never a vote on this idea."

AM clarified that the vote for this idea would take place during the All Student Vote, as this meeting is not quorate.

AM closed this item.

ACTION: Idea allocated to the All Student Vote

A student posted the following question in the meeting chat: "Can a new idea be submitted before the all student vote?"

		<p>RN clarified that any new submission would need to proceed through the Allocations Process.</p> <p>Student: The reason I ask is because of the international student idea about online study and assessment. It should take into account home students too.</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>Students posted the following text in the meeting chat regarding the remote learning idea, whilst this idea was being discussed:</p> <p>“Offline examination in the first semester meant that online courses were meaningless. Due to the epidemic, travel restrictions prevented us from arriving in the UK, so we could not take the offline examination and apply for online courses Taking tests at embassies can be used during the pandemic”</p>
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7	Self-Defence	<p>AM introduced and presented this item, and explained the the purpose of Belief & Commitments (B&C). AM noted that the B&C was allocated to a meeting of Welfare & Liberation Committee, which was not quorate, and so had been allocated to the ASM.</p> <p>AM noted that the ASM can choose to renew the B&C as is or with amendments.:</p> <p>The full slides for this item, including the current policy, can be found in the meeting slides (please copy and paste the link): https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1V_NFeKDMqjsNqcL61jr8cW_1hbXsBNTApiLOGZdD8jk/edit?usp=sharing</p> <p>AM asked students if they had any questions or comments.</p> <p>AS asked to provide comments.</p> <p>AS: As mentioned, the W&C discussed this item. I'd like to mention that we provide self-defence classes already, and I'm working with the wellbeing society on this. It's worth noting that these classes are currently being run by the Community Wardens, and there was one last night.</p> <p>Student: Perhaps publicity for these could be improved too, I didn't even realise they existed until now!</p> <p>Two students noted their support of the motion.</p>
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		<p>AS: Valuable feedback, thank you. Some of them were also dedicated to women and non-binary students.</p> <p>Students were not placed into breakout rooms to discuss this item by resolution of the meeting.</p> <p>AM clarified that this idea will go to the All Student Vote.</p> <p>ACTION: B&C allocated to the All Student Vote</p>
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8	<p>Officer Topics: Change in Mind Campaign and Student Protests & Freedom of Speech</p>	<p>AM introduced this item, and handed over to the Officer Team to present.</p> <p>Change in Mind</p> <p>MB introduced the campaign, and the purpose of it.</p> <p>DM: Change in Mind Charter is based on the Student Minds Charter, and we're also looking at wellbeing and mental health support of PGT and PGRs. I'm happy to have a chat with any PGs about it.</p> <p>MB: This is a wide campaign, we're not just asking university for more counsellors. We're looking for more volunteers and happy to chat about it.</p> <p>MB posted the Officers' email address in the meeting chat: fto@guild.bham.ac.uk</p> <p>Student Protests & Freedom of Speech</p> <p>MB talked about the Freedom of Speech Bill that is going through Parliament.</p> <p>AD talked about how this Bill relates to campus politics.</p> <p>MB/AD: What action would you like the Guild to take?</p> <p>ZI: Can I ask if the bill does pass, how will the university respond to it – is it the university that will be enforcing it as well?</p>
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MB further clarified on the Bill (e.g. excess noise during a protest would become a criminal offense)

MB: We're lobbying the House of Lords to make amends to the Bill, through our contacts with other Russell Group Universities, and we will ensure that Student Unions don't come under that process - that's what we're concerned about.

AM asked to comment on this in her capacity as a student (and not as the Chair of ASM).

AM: I think students would feel passionate about doing something about it. Would you be able to send information about this out to students, and encourage students to write to their MPs. You could inform students it's going on. People would feel strongly about not being able to protest on campus. For future reference, this might be helpful.

MA posted the following text in the meeting chat: "If the Guild of Students are forced to platform hate speech, could we make it so that they are given the worst possible legally allowable platform, like maybe an empty room."

ZI (to AD): We've sent a template previously on different petitions. I can drop you an email about this?

AD agreed.

		<p>ACTION: AD and ZI to meet to discuss templates for petitions.</p> <p>AM noted that she returned to her capacity as Chair of ASM.</p> <p>AM asked students if they had any more questions.</p> <p>No more questions were asked, and AM closed the item.</p>
9	AOB	<p>AM asked if there was any other business (AOBs), or questions from students.</p> <p>MB posted in the meeting chat, clarifying that him and the Officers were happy to take questions on anything else.</p> <p>No questions were asked.</p> <p>RN posted a feedback survey in the chat (https://forms.gle/wWSYyumKwakSpUHY8), and AM informed the meeting of this.</p> <p>AM thanked students for their attendance and closed the meeting.</p>