

Idea/Policy:	Anti-Apartheid Week [link]
Date/Time/Location:	04/12/2025
Student Attendees:	Antonia Listrat (Pres),
Staff Attendees:	Chloe Batten (SCV – DE), Jane Baston (SVRM), Zakaria (Islamic Society Student Affairs Officer)
Apologies:	
Actions/Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CB: Arrange another action group in Jan and invite student socs ▪ CB: Send AL resources/contacts around decolonising the curriculum ▪ AL: speak to societies further about ideas suggested in AAW ▪ AL: speak to Officers about making a public statement about AAW ▪ AL: submit marketing requests before end of Term 1

Minutes

JB provides explanation of how AGs work. They're formed to review the idea/policy, refine it and work towards implementation. We can reject, send to ASV, send to Student Forum (if we want wider student input – often for controversial topics or wide spectrum of student views to inform action groups on next steps. Not an end step, but deciding what to do) or do direct implementation.

AGs are an iterative process - we can have a more than one, especially if we want to talk to other student groups.

AL flags that the idea is part of the manifesto she was elected on and so proposes moving to implementation as she's already submitted marketing requests for events. Anti-Apartheid Week (AAW) should be student led and student societies should come together to run it. The AG could be held annually for student groups to come together to run the AAW.

JB: having it go to ASV could give it more of a mandate. We can do both (ASV and implement). Want to look at feasibility and what is possible to do. E.g. guild making a public statement – that would have to go to officers and might need larger mandate. Consider things in the Idea we want a democratic mandate on and things we can just do.

AL: suggests going through the policy.

AL: There's an emphasis on intersectionality and discussing oppression and apartheid systems that happen today. AAW has been happening at other SU's so can look at how others do it. Not just events but fundraisers, panel discussions, etc. Idea has an emphasis on apartheid in Palestine but want it to be broader. Recently looking at oppression in Mexico. Should add more on systemic oppression and occupation.

JB: need to be careful not to drift too much and try to include everything. There aren't boundaries to liberation, but we don't want to include too much that the Idea is unspecific intention isn't clear.

Need to think about how it aligns with Guilds charitable objectives and impacts students in their role as students. Exeter took an educational approach. Not saying we need to amend Idea but if sending to ASV need to make clear how it impacts students as students.

AL: The background given in the Idea explains how it aligns with the Guild's values. It will be educating students. Have spoken to Jo for advice. While we can't take stance on political parties, we can do things like this (AAW).

AL: First bullet point - "the Guild should make a public statement..." Happy to add that we need to speak to officers.

JB: any statements need to go through officers. Does it need to be formal statement, or could it go out on social media announcement rather than a formal statement to ease process?

AL: intention of the Idea was for accountability. To say that we'll collaborate annually with societies as per this democratic motion. And to take a stance against apartheid like SU's used to in the 70s.

AL: Point 2 – "the event should be hosted around Feb/March each year". Would need to discuss with societies about timing. We can revisit details after the AG.

Zak: (in Teams chat) notifies that Ramadan and Discover Islam week will be happening around this time.

AL will speak to other societies to find a date that'd work best

AL: Point 3 - "the Guild should get in touch..." Already in process.

JB: On point 2 – logistical perspective, marketing request turnaround has 5 week deadline of assets and promotion. With 2-week promo that's 7 weeks before event.

AL has most marketing requests done, should be submitted this side of Christmas.

AL: Point 4 – "the Guild should reach out to international students from affected regions". Could reach out to sanctuary scholarship students.

JB: worth thinking about which regions we're considering and how we might be able to contact.

AL: could put a call out. Could do a human library and have discussions about lived experiences people have. Discussed with Sudanese soc last year

Point 5 – "Guild should invite student speakers". Black voices campaign at UoB doesn't exist anymore but can involve other societies. Was a previous manifesto about decolonising the curriculum. Good but the uni doesn't want to invest in that anymore. Wrote this Idea before this new context.

CB: could contact previous academics working on it

AL: yes, can you send those links/resources. We can share knowledge that the Black Voices Campaign have

Point 6 – "events should be student led with collaboration with academic departments". Decolonisation network has reading groups - can ensure one is scheduled during AAW.

Point 7 – "encourage acts of activism such as walk outs". LSE did this - on last day of AAW did a protest that their SU organised. Like Reclaim the Night (RTN). Would there be resistance to us doing that, Jane?

JB: depends on purpose and plan. RTN is a march and rally. We've also done a Trans Day of Remembrance vigil. In other spaces Guild and officers haven't run protests themselves but have supported them. E.g. SANDAM run protests – not the guild running but officers go. Need detail on what the protest is about, who the targets are, where located, what it looks like

AL – at LSE target was the uni and about divestment, Led by SU so made students feel safe protesting. A lot of students don't feel safe to at UoB bc of oppression. LSE managed to, can't see why we wouldn't.

AL – can submit request to the uni and see what happens

JB – no reason why we couldn't. Need to define the aims. LSE was about divestment, would ours be? Or about changes to decolonising? What's the ask/pressure point? It'd need to go through uni's process and Guild's. Need risk assessment and method's statement.

Might be worth talking to Max as well.

AL – good to include protest against stopping decolonising the curriculum. Should also be about divestment of assets in apartheid. Happy to discuss more in 121 and with Caitlin before she leaves as she's done similar things

AL: Point 8 – “facilitate creative activism”. Will talk to societies about this.

JB: would need risk assessment. Art installations would be a challenge – what art, where it's going and who's providing the art

AL: apartheid wall used as canvas in Gaza – could have something that simulates that. At other unis students have done a 'flash mob' but acting? Would be a conversation with interested students. During encampment societies got involved, e.g. 'writers' block'

AL: Point 10 (point 9 unintentionally skipped) – “use AAW to involve students to reflect on SU policy commitments, such as supporting BDS” We can't directly support BDS due to charity law but we have a Palestine solidarity motion that says we need to not support companies that have links to violations to international law. Can look into this.

JB: worth thinking about what kind of investments there are and what that reflection looks like in terms of incorporating into the week. Discussion, workshop.

CB: could also be part of an art installation.

AL wants to write a list of companies we don't want to work with and share with students.

AL: Point 9 – “Incorporate fundraisers for orgs”. Guild can't fundraise as a charity, but societies can

JB: Worth a conversation with Finance

AL: Point 11 – “encourage SU to create an online hub with recommended books etc”. Could be start of a student-staff decol netowrk. Told there may be more availability to add to Guild website next semester. Will speak with socs.

JB: Needs a marketing request because Shaun’s time gets booked quickly. Usually Jo has to approve what goes on the website. Also want content to not be time-bound.

Point 12 - “create a student committee or working group”. This would oversee AAW each year so there's continuity beyond student leadership.

JB asks whether send to ASV and if so, should amend the text of the Idea so it explains what anti-apartheid week will looks like, or whether we implement through action group work.

AL: Want it to be implemented through continuing action group work as it's on the manifesto elected on which is enough mandate

JB: happy to support that. ASV might support with continuity. When you finish in your term a new officer team might continue and ASV perhaps gives a stronger democratic mandate. We don't have to make that decision now. Can amend our plan next year if we want to.

AL: Sounds good. Noting that if something becomes policy/is implemented, it'd be there for 3 years before lapsing (re continuity)

JB: yes that is the case. But people can show diff levels of commitment. Future officers may not have same level of commitment.

AL ends meeting here, with next steps to arrange another AG meeting with additional societies