

Dear David,

Firstly, on behalf of the Welfare Council, I would like to thank you for providing a response to the open letter. We also look forward to starting the conversation with the University around sexual violence and appreciate the time you have taken to get back to us.

We have read your response to our open letter regarding the University's Sexual Violence Policy (2017) and have chosen to write our own response to each of the points raised as follows:

1. Communicate sexual violence as a priority; including facilitating dialogue with students.

- The University need to ensure all backgrounds are involved in the two-way dialogue underway regarding this issue. The Women's Committee is an available resource that could be utilised in this instance, as well as the Welfare Council, but the University needs to make sure that male students and other vulnerable groups are included in this dialogue as well.

2. Implement a Zero Tolerance Approach to Sexual Violence

- In your response you stated that: "The University takes a zero tolerance approach to sexual violence and that those who have perpetrated sexual violence are held to account through disciplinary processes and through the criminal justice process where appropriate". Our aim was never to insinuate that procedures are not in place. However, although we have acknowledged that individual cases cannot be discussed, it is known that some victims of sexual violence have had to maintain contact with their perpetrator, during their time at university. We need to ensure that all students are protected, supported and not subject to the distress that comes with having to interact with their perpetrator within campus.
- In light of this, we would acknowledge that while the University cannot take any action to pursue their own investigation while a criminal investigation is ongoing, we would ask that the University excludes accused students from campus in order to protect and support the victims concerned. Given the recent advances in Panopto and further online resources, students would still be able to effectively continue their studies even whilst having been excluded from campus.

3. Show genuine partnership with the SU by funding a front-line Sexual Violence Liaison Officer through the Students' Union.

- If a situation arose involving a person or persons who are actively aligned with the University (i.e. Lecturers, Personal Tutor, etc.) then the students also need a Sexual Violence Liaison Officer (SVLO) who is not also aligned with the University. In this instance, if a member of the Students Union were to have the necessary SVLO training then we, the Students Union as a partnership with the University, would have the necessary resource to make sure that the maximum amount of support is being provided for the students.
- It is also important to clarify here that we are not asking for a separate system to be implemented for the Students Union, but for the SVLO scheme to be extended to include it.

4. Work with the Students' Union to lobby local council(s) to increase student safety

- We appreciate and understand that we need to set priorities in regards to this campaign, and therefore we would suggest that although this is a long term issue for improvement, we would prioritize the previous points raised over this.

5. Drafted staff training should be ready for the 2018/2019 cohort and should be rolled out across all student-facing staff.

- This is a prioritised area for the Welfare Council and the campaign and we would like to see this implemented by September 2018 as a deadline.

Finally, we would like to thank you for taking the time to reply to this petition and providing us with a response. I hope that this message clarifies the aims and goals of this petition and we look forward to working with the university and moving forward with this policy.

Best Wishes,

Luke Ellis

On behalf of the Welfare Council 2017-18