

Creating safe spaces

In recognition of the diverse student community at UWS and the Student Union's commitment to fostering an inclusive and respectful environment, this policy seeks to create an environment where every student feels valued and empowered, fostering open dialogue, and understanding.

Our Union, its events and spaces must be safe for all students at UWS to enjoy. Below you will find some guidelines that promote open dialogue, mutual respect, understanding and tolerance among students. Take the following aspects into account when planning society activities:

1. Diversity & Inclusion

- Our student body is incredibly diverse, representing various backgrounds, cultures, and identities. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that every student, regardless of their background, feels included and respected by your society.

2. Mental and Emotional Well-being

- A safe and supportive environment positively contributes to the mental and emotional well-being of our students, offering support for those who may face challenges.

3. Academic Success

- When students feel safe and supported in a positive environment, it contributes to a conducive learning experience and they are more likely to thrive academically.

4. Community Building

- To build a strong sense of community among UWS students, we encourage collaboration, understanding, and a shared commitment to creating a positive and inclusive campus culture.

Breaches of the Policy

If members or participants of your society feel unsafe, or you witness behaviour from another person or group that would be in violation of this policy you should alert the Union's staff or officer team immediately. They will then take appropriate action.

If you wish to report the matter formally, you may do so using the Union's complaints procedures on p.39. Any complaints submitted under this policy will be investigated and if necessary the Union's disciplinary procedures will be used to address behaviour that is not to the standard that this policy expects.

Basic Safe Space Principles

Below you will find the principles for your society activities:

1. No Discrimination or Harassment

- a. Nobody shall be discriminated against based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, disability, or any other characteristic. Any form of harassment, bullying, or discrimination is strictly prohibited.

2. Respectful Communication

- a. All members are encouraged to communicate respectfully, acknowledging diverse perspectives and experiences.
- b. Disagreements should be handled with civility, promoting constructive dialogue.

3. Inclusivity

- a. Events and activities organised by your society should be inclusive and welcoming to all students.

4. Confidentiality

- a. Personal information shared among members and participants, especially during discussions, should be treated with confidentiality.
- b. Respect the privacy of others, and avoid sharing sensitive information without consent.

5. Consent

- a. Obtain consent before sharing personal experiences or information.
- b. Respect the right of individuals to set their boundaries within discussions and activities.

6. Awareness

- a. **Raise awareness about the importance of safe space when introducing society activities.**

7. External Speakers / Guests

- a. External speakers / Guests who have been invited to the Union must be vetted in accordance with the Union's external speakers procedure.
- b. No external speaker or guest will be permitted to address or interact with our members if they have been found to have breached any part of this policy in their past interactions with the Union or other bodies.
- c. See External Speakers Policy.