



# SUSU LGBTQ+ SOCIETY

## Minutes

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	<b>Meeting Time:</b>	11am
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	Student Union Building, Highfield Campus		

Attendees	
An-Sophie Van Rafelghem Kit Dibben Raphael Rafferty	SUSU Societies & Campaigns Manager LGBTQ+ Society Vice President LGBTQ+ Society Secretary
Apologies	

### ***Agenda:***

LGBTQ+ Society has had a longstanding policy of not requiring membership registration via SUSU, which has been supported by the students' union but not specifically documented as a practice. With the introduction and implementation of the new rules surrounding societies' conditions for affiliation with SUSU, and the expectation that societies will hold their AGMs and EGMs via the SUSU website, the LGBTQ Society would like to formalise an agreement to permit the society to run in a way that both meets with SUSU expectations as much as possible, without compromising members' privacy.

It is very important to the LGBTQ+ society that queer students feel safe, comfortable, and confident to participate in our society. Importantly, there should never be any expectation for them to identify themselves to the wider university community in order to be a registered member.

### ***Discussion:***

The LGBTQ+ society had contacted SUSU at the start of the academic year and been told that they were aware this was a potential issue, however we have had no communication since. SUSU's initial concerns are that registration data will be necessary for insurance purposes, and that they have legally motivated reasons to hold GDPR data (and protected characteristics) of members, for both conflict resolution and administrative reasons.

We received confirmation that the digital AGM system will not be coming in this term as it is still in development, however registration will be expected in due time. Membership data will be apparently necessary for the Groups Hub system update. The delay in communication between LGBTQ+ Society and SUSU since semester one was due to this



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change in development time. SUSU has asserted that they feel as if they need, in every capacity, this membership data.

Concerns over the misuse of this data were discussed. Unfortunately, there have been two transphobic sabbatical officers in the past two years, with available public knowledge of this. The society is concerned that actors with bad intentions may have access to this sensitive data, and not confident that this data will be safe. One of the previous sabbaticals stood down from their position but was never reprimanded by the university or the union, the society is concerned there are not robust practices in place to deal with this situation properly. SUSU has said that apparently only VP Activities and few members of staff, such as Activity Coordinators and the Data Protection Officer, have access to these membership lists. However, they later clarified that VP Sports also has access to this data.

SUSU also asserts that this change is to do with SUSU being far more on top of their regulations and compliance. There has been a move to focus on the legal statutes of regulations such as the move to Money Hub to manage society funds. For SUSU, this is a reasonable step to take to protect funds and legal compliance. If the society went on a trip, and something happened to a member, the student would have to be a registered member to be covered by the insurance.

However, if the society were to agree to these new regulations on these particular conditions (and current knowledge), and these conditions changed in the future, this would jeopardize member data. Therefore, the society cannot be fully assured that this data will be indefinitely protected.

The LGBTQ+ society also received an email about how many members voted in the recent 24/25 sabbatical elections. While the only registered members (at current) are the societies committee, this is arguably an illegitimate use of our data, especially if this were to continue with members. Based on these emails, there are also other students involved with the numerical data. SUSU uses data on how many society members voted to foster a competitive spirit to vote between societies. However, the society believes this would be a gross misuse of members data. The society believes publicising anything referring to the number of members it has, and whether they have been voting within the SUSU system, is an illegitimate use of data. On the other hand, SUSU contests this is a legitimate use of data, as the society is within the SUSU wider organisation.

Another concern is that it is not easy to 'un-register' from SUSU. This is more of a concern now that membership registers are expected, meaning that students cannot so easily join and exit societies. Kit has had personal issues with removing students as members on multiple occasions. At the moment, SUSU are the only ones who can directly remove someone as a society member, therefore either the society or the individual member would have to directly contact SUSU to be able to exit the society; the society does not believe this an



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accessible way for individuals to manage their membership, which is important if registration is to be required.

SUSU has reaffirmed that online AGMs and various other new regulations are often standard practice in other universities, and these new regulations are one of the ways the university is adapting as others are. While there is concern that this data could be breached within SUSU, this could also be the case within the LGBTQ+ committee. SUSU stresses the importance of having a third party to step in, if necessary, as there may be a conflict of interest within society actors.

The society also stresses that the committee has bare minimum information on their members, our members are not expected to use their legal names in any capacity and are not expected to share information they do not want to. The committee stresses the importance of privacy and confidentiality and has a personal stake in keeping this data confidential as they are queer students also – and don't believe a breach in data would ever be done in malice. The society has suggested there may be a way the committee could be formally entrusted to manage the data of the society, separate from SUSU.

SUSU is concerned that in instances where the union needs to manage insurance, and liaison with the university, that they may not be able to access the data quickly enough. The society and SUSU agree that in the scenario it was necessary, the society would give access to this data in a time sensitive manner if this ever where the case.

A lot of the societies members do not have a lot of faith in SUSU, due to previous experiences that have impacted the community, the committee want to address this concern; as they believe that members would be very sceptical for signing up for a SUSU registry, having to place their trust in the system. The committee feels it is difficult to tell their members they must place their personal and legal information with SUSU after these poor experiences. They feel as if they cannot expect that of their members, who they are supposed to represent, and their concerns must be considered.

While the society is affiliated with SUSU, our values and members' beliefs do not often align with SUSUs regulations. The society does not want to tell their members they cannot join the society unless they pass their data onto SUSU. This may be a core issue between the society and SUSU, both parties discussed the possibilities of dis-affiliation. This would not be an amazing look for the university to have their LGBTQ+ society disaffiliated from SUSU, although it may be the only option if a compromise cannot be made.

Discussion continued onto ED&I within SUSU, and professionalism and how this can be enforced. Additionally, the society sought clarification on the insurance terms; while taster sessions are open to all students, members must be officially registered for all other social events. SUSU reminds that they cannot take formal disciplinary against a student unless



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they are a registered society member. That's why SUSU says it's important to know who is involved; if a member is added to a group chat (e.g. WhatsApp, Discord etc.) or they any attend social events, they should be officially registered as a member. The Society believes this could be a barrier to entry.

### ***Action (agreed by both parties):***

Further discussion will take place with SUSU's Data Protection Officer to see what we can do to manage expectations on both sides.

SUSU suggested multiple initiatives to make the process of registration easier. This included additional steps within the system to inform members when they register, specifically; how their data will be used, what will be collected, and why. This may also be implemented on the internal side of SUSU, so when any actors are accessing this data, it will inform them they are looking at protected characteristics, and what reasons they need to have to access it.

Society suggested that if a committee member could be given official GDPR training, they would be able to independently manage their data. This way, the society could provide access, when necessary, but this does not breach the consent of societies members. SUSU will discuss to see if this is amenable to them in any way, and if this could be managed effectively.

If a compromise cannot be made, the society may have to disaffiliate from SUSU. This will be discussed in full by the committee to decide what options suit the needs of our members best.