

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment for the activity of	Southampton Debating Union Society's General Activity throughout the academic year 2025-2026, including - Meetings - Information stands - Workshops		Date	07/04/26
Group name	Southampton Debating Union	Assessor	Jonah Bailet (Secretary)	
Supervisor	Amelia Baker	Signed off	N/A, please upload to your groups hub for digital sign-off by SUSU Activities team	
Description of event/activity	General risk assessment for our weekly meetings; where our society learns new debating methods from a pre-prepared slides presentation, and then has a standard BP debate session, all under supervision from an equity and welfare officer. Mondays and Thursdays from 6pm, downstairs of building 58 and upstairs of building 7			

PART A

(1) Risk identification		(2) Risk assessment		(3) Risk management	
Hazard	Who might	Inherent	Residual	Further controls (use the risk hierarchy)	

	Potential Consequences	be harmed (user; those nearby; those in the vicinity; members of the public)	L i k e l i h o o d	I m p a c t	S c o r e	Control measures (use the risk hierarchy)	L i k e l i h o o d	I m p a c t	S c o r e	
Meetings & Socials										

Slips, trips and falls	Physical injury	Event organisers and attendees	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All boxes and equipment to be stored away from main meeting area, e.g. stored under tables • Any cables to be organised as best as possible • Cable ties/to be used if necessary • Floors to be kept clear and dry, and visual checks to be maintained throughout the meeting by organizers. • Extra vigilance will be paid to make sure that any spilled food products/objects are cleaned up quickly and efficiently in the area. • Report any trip hazards to facilities teams/venue staff asap. If cannot be removed mark off with hazard signs 	1	4	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek medical attention from SUSU Reception/venue staff if in need • Contact facilities team via SUSU reception/venue staff • Contact emergency services if needed • All incidents are to be reported on the as soon as possible ensuring the duty manager/health and safety officer have been informed. Follow SUSU incident report policy
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Fire	Smoke inhalation, burns. Risk of extreme harm.	All participants and organisers, any staff and spectators	2	5	<p>10</p> <p>Those leading the session must ensure they are aware of and fully understand the venue or location's fire procedures.</p> <p>Those leading must make sure that all exit routes are clearly highlighted and report any issues immediately to the venue.</p> <p>Highlight to all the participants the nearest emergency exit routes at the start of a session, and the importance of leaving calmly in case of an emergency.</p> <p>Avoid build-up of debris in the activity area.</p> <p>Consider accessibility requirements.</p>	1	5	<p>5</p> <p>In case of an emergency, please pull nearest fire alarm and ensure all participants leave the venue calmly and safely.</p> <p>Once in a safe position to do so, call the emergency services on 999.</p> <p>Any incidents need to be reported as soon as possible ensuring duty manager/health and safety officers have been informed.</p> <p>Follow SUSU incident reporting guide</p>
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<p>Manual handling, including setting up of equipment. E.g. Table and chairs</p>	<p>Bruising or broken bones from tripping over table and chairs.</p>	<p>Meeting organisers and attendees</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Make stall operators aware of the potential risks, follow manual handling guidelines</p> <p>Ensure that at least 2 people carry tables.</p> <p>Setting up tables will be done by organisers.</p> <p>Work in teams when handling other large and bulky items.</p> <p>Request tools to support with move of heavy objects- SUSU Facilities/venue. E.g. hand truck, dolly, skates</p> <p>Make sure anyone with any pre-existing conditions isn't doing any unnecessary lifting and they are comfortable</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Seek assistance if in need of extra help from facilities staff/venue staff if needed</p> <p>Seek medical attention from SUSU Reception if in need</p> <p>Contact emergency services if needed</p> <p>All incidents are to be reported on the as soon as possible ensuring the duty manager/health and safety officer have been informed. Follow SUSU incident report policy</p>
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Inadequate meeting space- overcrowding , not inclusive to all members	Physical injury, distress, exclusion	Event organisers and attendees	1	3	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee check on room pre-booking, checks on space, lighting, access, tech available • Ensure space meets needs of members e.g. considering location & accessibility of space • Committee to consult members on needs and make reasonable adjustments where possible 	1	3	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek medical attention if problem arises • Liaise with SUSU reception/activities team on available spaces for meetings • Postpone meetings where space cannot be found • Look at remote meeting options for members • Committee WIDE training • All incidents are to be reported on the as soon as possible ensuring the duty manager/health and safety officer have been informed. Follow SUSU incident report policy
Activities involving electrical equipment e.g. laptops/ computers	Risk of eye strain, injury, electric shock	Event organisers and attendees	2	4	8	<p>Ensure regular breaks (ideally every 20mins) when using screens</p> <p>Ensure screen is set up to avoid glare, is at eye height where possible</p> <p>Ensure no liquids are placed near electrical equipment</p> <p>Ensure all leads are secured with cable ties/mats etc</p>	1	4	4	<p>Request support and advice from SUSU IT/Tech teams e.g. via activities team</p> <p>For external venues pre-check equipment and last PAT testing dates</p> <p>Seek medical attention as required</p>

<p>Reputational Risk:</p> <p>For the club or society, as well as to SUSU and the University</p>	<p>Incidents causing reputational damage to the group, Southampton University Students' Union or Southampton University itself.</p> <p>This could be controversial posts, conduct during a game, conduct during social, or anything else that brings the clubs/societies, SUSU or the University's name into disrepute.</p>	<p>The club, SUSU or the University's reputation</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Ensuring all parts of this risk assessment are adhered to.</p> <p>Ensuring all members are reminded that they are representing the club/society, SUSU and the University, often in branded clothing.</p> <p>Members are reminded that they need to adhere to SUSU's Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Consider risks at activities as well as digital presence (e.g. social media posts)</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Ensure that any incidents involving public or others are recorded and addressed.</p> <p>Follow SUSU incident reporting guide</p>
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<p>Socials: Costumes/Fancy Dress</p>	<p>Props/costumes causing injury or offence</p>	<p>Participants Members of the public</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Ask members to only bring small items and use sensibly. Members of the society are responsible for their own possessions and the use of them.</p> <p>Choose a theme unlikely to cause offence. Any participant wearing items deemed offensive asked to remove these.</p> <p>Society to follow and share with members Code of conduct/SUSU Expect Respect policy</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>SUSU Expect Respect policy to be followed</p> <p>Committee WIDE training</p>
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Insufficient Fire Safety awareness	If a fire alarm is triggered, people may not know where to go- Crushing, falls, burns and smoke inhalation arising from induced panic, reduced space in buildings and external walkways, obstructed fire exits, build-up of flammable materials i.e. waste cardboard/boxes.	Members	2	10	5	<p>Ensure that members know where the nearest fire exist are and the meeting place is outside, should it be needed</p> <p>Build-up of rubbish is to be kept to a minimum. Excess build up is to be removed promptly and deposited in the designated areas.</p>	1	5	5	<p>All incidents are to be reported as soon as possible ensuring the duty manager/health and safety officer have been informed.</p> <p>Call emergency services and University Security (on campus) or venue staff (external venue)</p> <p>Emergency contact number for Campus Security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tel: +44 (0)23 8059 3311 • (Ext:3311) • Follow SUSU incident report policy
Demonstration / Strike / Awareness Raising / Debating Activity										

Overcrowding due to nature of demonstration event	Physical injury	Event organisers and attendees	2	3	6	<p>Do not push/shove.</p> <p>If large crowds form, barriers can be requested by SUSU facilities team (if available on the day) to assist with crowd management.</p> <p>Book during quieter times when less activities taking place on Redbrick/book all available space.</p> <p>Inform other bookings on the Redbrick/in the area of the event.</p> <p>With support from a SUSU Activities Coordinator, inform UoS Security Team of the event and any potential security needs on the day.</p> <p>To contact the Security Team on campus 3311, off campus 02380 593311. unisecurity@soton.ac.uk</p>	1	3	3	<p>Seek medical attention if problem arises.</p> <p>Security Team may inform the police of the event if required (e.g. marches).</p> <p>Follow SUSU incident reporting guide</p> <p>Call emergency services as required.</p>
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Anti-social, Violent or offensive behaviour due to nature of demonstration event	Distress, Physical Injury	Event organisers, event attendees	2	5	10	No alcohol served/consumed as part of demonstration/protest events. Society to follow and share with members Code of Conduct/SUSU Expect Respect policy.	1	3	3	If the situation becomes very serious and results in the participant being arrested then it will be made clear that they cannot be accompanied to the police station. Follow SUSU incident reporting guide Call emergency services as required.
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Disturbance to public, students and staff	Conflict, noise pollution, crowds	Event organisers and attendees, general public	2	2	4	<p>Protest/demonstration events should be planned on University grounds (primarily Redbrick) avoiding residential areas.</p> <p>UoS Security Teams informed of the event.</p> <p>Everybody will be encouraged to stay together as a group.</p> <p>Shouting, chants, whistles etc. will be kept to a minimum around busy university buildings and residential areas.</p> <p>If applicable, book space during quieter times when less activities taking place in local lecture theatres (lunch, Wednesday afternoons).</p>	1	2	2	<p>With support from a SUSU Activities Coordinator, inform UoS Security Team of the event.</p> <p>University Security 24 hours – on campus 3311, off campus 02380 593311. unisecurity@soton.ac.uk</p> <p>Inform UoS/SUSU teams of the event- Comms teams can brief others via SUSSED or social media posts.</p> <p>Follow SUSU incident reporting guide</p>
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Counter protest, discrimination against the demonstration/Campaign	Distress due to threatening/aggressive behaviour, injury due to assault/violence	Event organisers and attendees	2	4	8	<p>Event planned for Highfield campus - a route well signposted and known for students.</p> <p>Leaders to advise all participants to not engage/respond to any counter protests or aggressive behaviour.</p> <p>If safe to do so, encourage group to move on and remove themselves from situation.</p> <p>The event will be ended and students advised to return to campus if this continues.</p> <p>Prior information about event and what to expect given out so participants know what to expect, e.g. via Facebook/social media posts. Participants made aware they could join and leave the event at any time.</p> <p>Ensure that people are aware that this is an open space for discussion to discourage protest.</p>	1	4	4	<p>Event organisers to call University Security if necessary.</p> <p>Emergency contact number for Campus Security: Tel: +44 (0)23 8059 3311 (Ext: 3311)</p> <p>Building 32, University Road Highfield Campus.</p> <p>Any incidents will be reported via UoS reporting tools Contact emergency services if needed</p> <p>Organisers will, following the event, share relevant information on support/signpost via social media channels etc.</p> <p>Follow SUSU incident reporting guide</p>
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<p>Talks/debates</p> <p>- subjects that could be sensitive or personal to some members</p>	<p>The audience feels negative emotions around the topic or becomes distressed by images or events shown/discussed.</p>	<p>Members</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Prior information about event and what to expect given out so participants know what to expect.</p> <p>If inviting external speakers, follow UoS Code of Practice to Secure Freedom of Speech within the Law. Do not confirm speaker's attendance before final confirmation from UoS Legal Services & SUSU Activities Team is given. More info on the process for inviting external speakers can be found here.</p> <p>Be aware this process can take time, so be sure to give plenty of notice.</p> <p>Members made aware they could leave the event at any time.</p> <p>Members referred to The Student Hub (02380 599 599, studenthub@soton.ac.uk), and/or signpost to support organisations (e.g. via presentation slide, or by speakers/committee</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Organisers will, following the event, share relevant information on support/signpost-Facebook/email/newsletter.</p> <p>Committee WIDE training.</p> <p>Seek guidance from Activities/SUSU Advice Centre/UoS Student Hub as required.</p>
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						members).				
						SUSU reporting tool available.				

PART B – Action Plan

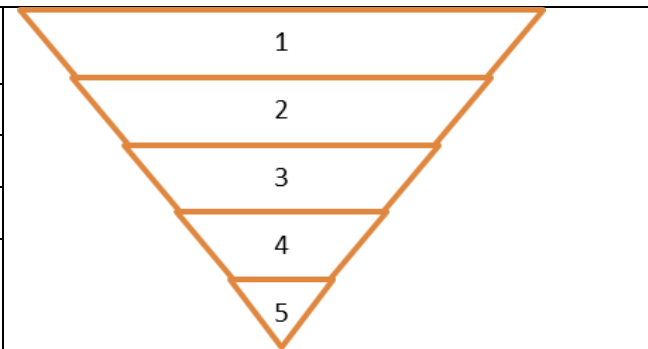
Risk Assessment Action Plan

Part no.	Action to be taken, incl. Cost	By whom	Target date	Review date	Outcome at review date
1	Individual risk assessments for individual events with higher risk levels and anything not covered by generic assessment. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trips and Tours • Fundraising events e.g. Bake Sales • External Speaker Events • Events involving home-cooked/prepared food or external catering • Other large or medium- to high risk events e.g. balls, club nights, pub crawls, sporting 	Relevant committee members – president to ensure complete.	17/04/2025	17/04/2025	

	activities...				
2	Committee to read and share SUSU Expect Respect Policy	Relevant committee members – president to ensure complete.	17/04/2025	17/04/25	
Responsible committee member signature: Amelia Baker			Responsible committee member signature: Jonah Bailet		
Print name: Amelia Baker			Date: 07/04/25	Print name: Jonah Bailet	
				Date: 07/04/25	

Assessment Guidance

• Eliminate	Remove the hazard wherever possible which negates the need for further controls	If this is not possible then explain why
• Substitute	Replace the hazard with one less hazardous	If not possible then explain why
• Physical controls	Examples: enclosure, fume cupboard, glove box	Likely to still require admin controls as well
• Admin controls	Examples: training, supervision, signage	
• Personal protection	Examples: respirators, safety specs, gloves	Last resort as it only protects the individual



LIKELIHOOD	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5
IMPACT						

Impact		Health & Safety
1	Trivial - insignificant	Very minor injuries e.g. slight bruising
2	Minor	Injuries or illness e.g. small cut or abrasion which require basic first aid treatment even in self-administered.
3	Moderate	Injuries or illness e.g. strain or sprain requiring first aid or medical support.
4	Major	Injuries or illness e.g. broken bone requiring medical support >24 hours and time off work >4 weeks.
5	Severe - extremely significant	Fatality or multiple serious injuries or illness requiring hospital admission or significant time off work.

Likelihood	
1	Rare e.g. 1 in 100,000 chance or higher
2	Unlikely e.g. 1 in 10,000 chance or higher
3	Possible e.g. 1 in 1,000 chance or higher
4	Likely e.g. 1 in 100 chance or higher
5	Very Likely e.g. 1 in 10 chance or higher