

## **SAFER SPACE POLICY**

SOAS Students' Union safer space policy is intended to help SOAS be a supportive, non-threatening and inclusive environment for all who participate. We want our spaces to be welcoming and engaging, and we encourage everyone, both from the SOAS community and beyond, to be proactive in creating an atmosphere where the safety of others is validated. In this spirit, we are survivor-centric and survivor-oriented, and all forms of violence, abuse, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated.

Everyone entering SOAS Students' Union spaces is asked to be aware of their language and behaviour, and to think about whether it might be harmful to others. We will interrupt oppressive behaviour, which we define as any conduct that demeans, marginalizes, rejects, threatens or harms anyone on the basis of ability, activist experience, age, cultural background, education, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, physical appearance, race, religion, self-expression, sexual orientation, status as a parent or other such factors.

**By entering SOAS Students' Union and/or participating in SOAS SU events and activities, you agree to abide by the following guidelines:**

- Respect everyone's identity and background, including pronouns and names. Do not assume anyone's gender identity, sexual preference, survivor status, economic or immigration status, background, health, etc. Also, respect the space and others who are using it.
- Respect everyone's physical and emotional boundaries. Check in before discussing topics that may be triggering (e.g. sexual abuse, racism, physical violence or encounters with police). Get explicit verbal consent before touching someone.
- There are varying opinions, beliefs, experiences and privileges in our space. Collectively we recognise the power dynamics that exist here. Be aware of the space you take up, your assumptions and prejudices and allow space for all voices to participate.
- Be responsible for your own actions; be aware that your actions have an effect on others, despite what your intentions may be.

Think about how they might be influenced and who they might exclude or harm. Listen and reflect on your behaviour if someone tells you it is causing harm.

- Respect peoples' opinions, beliefs, experiences and differing points of view, as well as different ways of learning and interacting. Call in, not out. When someone behaves in a way that challenges your values, do your best to invite them into awareness rather than dismissing, shaming, or shunning them.
- Be an active bystander - support others in upholding the guidelines listed here. Take collective and individual responsibility for creating a safer space for everyone. There will be occasions when people will be asked to move back and give space for others, or step out of certain spaces entirely.
- There is zero tolerance to verbal and physical violence and abuse under any circumstances. Disruptive individuals may be asked to leave the space.

The SOAS SU staff members are empowered to enforce these rules. If you cannot abide by the guidelines mentioned above, SOAS SU reserves the right to ask you to leave.

If you experience harassment, abuse, or sexual assault, or someone is interfering with your participation or presence at an event or in a space, please approach a Welfare Contact or a SOAS SU staff member whom you feel comfortable talking to in person or via email. They are here to help with any conflicts arising from the violation of our policies.

We welcome the continuing discussion about and improvement of this safer space policy. It has been guided and inspired by the agreements at [Soul Fire Farm](#), a movement committed to ending racism and injustice in the food system.

If you want to find out more, please get in touch by emailing our Co-President for Welfare & Campaigns on [welfare.campaigns@soas.ac.uk](mailto:welfare.campaigns@soas.ac.uk)

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