

**SGSU Policy on Initiations**

THE UNION NOTES:

* A high profile, serious incident occurred at Southampton University a few years ago, following a sports club initiation ceremony, where two members of the club narrowly escaped death.
* Freshers joining clubs and societies are faced with immense pressure and a desire to conform to 'club traditions' in order to be accepted into the club or society.
* NUS and BUCS advocate the banning of initiations.
* St George's is a multicultural environment, and SGSU aims to encourage diversity through its activities.

THE UNION BELIEVES:

* That initiations are dangerous and degrading.
* That initiations jeopardise the safety of members of SGSU and can be a source of negative publicity for the union.
* That SGSU has a duty to protect its members interests and safety, and that students should be able to participate in sports and societies in an atmosphere free from discrimination and intimidation.
* That as a medical school, we ought to promote safe and responsible drinking, and not have alcohol as the main focus of events. Excessive drinking poses a significant risk to students’ degrees and careers. Students who drink to excess and behave irresponsibly as a result can find themselves with a criminal record. In the case of medical students this breaches the Fitness to Practice Policy.
* That non-alcoholic alternatives should be both provided and accepted.
* That attendance at social events should in no way influence team or society member selection.
* That many students join a club or society partly for the social element, and will continue to congregate and consume alcohol. Social events are an excellent way to bond as a team/society, and promote team spirit.
* That we need to relay a positive image of student sport and activities.

THE UNIONS RESOLVES:

* To ban all initiation ceremonies.
* To encourage safe traditions of clubs, societies and families of SGSU.
* To educate both committees and student members of our policy and to therefore encourage wider participation in sport, societies and family events.
* SGSU encourages all societies/clubs/families to not hold events that isolate, neglect, embarrass or intimidate members of a different religion, belief, opinion or circumstance.