Prevent legislation open meeting 26/04/16

*Judith Ibison first summarised the PowerPoint created by Sophie Bowen.*

**Judith Ibison**: The original Prevent Global Guidance came out years ago, around 2009 or 2011. The Global Guidance affected many public institutions, but it took some years to get specific guidance for Higher Education institutions. In HE it is an important task to promote freedom of speech so there are specific requirements. The HE guidance came out after a long consultation last year and I will go over key areas of this and how SGUL will handle it.

*(Reads from slide explaining ‘The Prevent Duty’)*

The Prevent Duty is not new in general, but our funding body HEFCE has a new duty to monitor how the requirements are put in place.

JI explains the slide showing where prevent fits with other laws that needs to be complied with. She explains that this slide focusses particularly around events with external speakers, but anything could be put in to fit around it.

*(JI Explains the slide about the Equality Act.)*

(Slide on promoting good campus relations) How prevent affects this – there has been long standing Good Campus Relations group at St Georges. There is a set of procedures and policies. The function is to support any student who is vulnerable. In terms of Prevent this covers responding supportively to any student that is picked up as having radical views, problems with academic work, personal tutoring, how concerns are raised and what happens, encouraging open debate and tolerance.

(Integrated approach slide) The response of the institution to any concerns is that of pastoral care to the student. This goes to any student on any course, and there is a well established network of support services available to them.

(Next steps slide) The action plan in terms of how we comply with Prevent legislation includes a training plan which is being developed. For clarification, HEFCE coordinators are not the police or Channel, it is people who work within the HE funding council framework – not monitored by police. It is part of the skills department of government, and so is monitored by the government and not the police. There is risk and reputation of institution and one around external speakers – what was heartening is they are keen to make sure the institution don’t respond at low medium or high levels. We don’t want people to be referred up unnecessarily for example because of how they dress or look. This is not what they are looking for.

There will be sophisticated training so the institution can have a mature look of what they’re looking for. It is important to consult with students – this is why we are here and at were at the last meeting.

**John Hammond**: It is important to say that we, like you, have to think about what government is going to have to respond. You will be in professional associated programmes for example as future doctors or physios and there is a requirement of how you respond to government Prevent. Think of it as wide safeguarding requirement of our institution and of you working in health care – there is a responsibility to think of this under the umbrella of safeguarding. We think we are doing a lot of this already; the student progress committee for example. This applied across a wide range of areas – from health to potential radicalisation, violence and a number of other things.

**QUESTIONS**

**Shamir**: If you identified someone as vulnerable would you ever share that information with future employees?

**Judith Ibison**: It is somewhat dependent on what sort of vulnerability and what the information was, but I can’t imagine when we would been keen to do this. Vulnerability is very broad word – there are so many possibilities; academic, welfare, financial, health. We have a confidential support network that would deal with these things. We wouldn’t expect to share information even beyond the first line of the interface that the student might have. If an external agency asked for information about a student, then there is a protocol that the school goes through. For example, if there were a court order we would have to share information, otherwise if the level of concern is low then the information would remain confidential. I can’t imagine a situation with Prevent in which we would share information with employers.

**John Hammond**: Sometimes students ask for references on your behalf for employers. Employers sometimes ask about discipline or academic misconduct, and what we are trying to encourage sending a message back to the student first to say we are being asked to.

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**Neesa**: What would classify someone as a vulnerable person and is there a checklist to identify these people?

**Judith Ibison**: In the Channel programme there is a checklist of 22 characteristics which are said to possibly be risk factors for extremist behaviour. They’re very generic and unspecific, and wouldn’t stand in terms of screening test – it’s definitely not a checklist that’s used within SGUL so the things happening Sophie described are examples such as extremist literature found by cleaners in a bedroom, which would be dealt with and the student would be contacted.

**John Hammond**: It is similar to being a health care professional – in practice there may be a number of things triggering to make you think someone might be vulnerable. It is hard to define these so there is a wider remit. Its part of safeguarding as a whole.

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**Abdul**: At what point does a counsellor have to break confidentiality, for example relating to criminality?

**Dean Surtees**: What is said to the counsellor is confidential. If someone admits to doing something criminal it’s a different situation but they talk to students confidentially.

**Judith Ibison**: The counsellors don’t tell the Medical School anything that happens in counselling.

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**Neesa**: If someone were to be vulnerable, what would be the following process within St George’s?

**Judith Ibison**: If we were concerned about someone the direction taken would depend what the concern was. We might contact the dignity advisor, the students personal tutor, academic staff member – but the first step is always to talk to the person at hand. If after talking to them the person who talked to the student still had concerns, then after telling the student they would probably talk to Dean of Students, or Rochelle. If there was sufficient concern, we would go to the Good Campus Relations Group to look at evidence to justify concern and then they would make a decision about what to do.

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**James** **Watson**: There hasn’t been any mention of Channel, the Prevent officers and the referral process onto other people outside university. This is not how comes across in training. What happens after the Good Campus Relations process?

**Rochelle Rowe**: In very exceptional cases, it is possible we would be required to make a referral to Channel. Channel is a multi agency panel of support, put into place for people who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Referrals made to Channel also have their own process of checking if it’s a case they need to pursue at all. This has been an agenda since before 2011, at which time it was voluntary but now have to comply. This is not something we have ever had to do and it is unlikely given all our pastoral support that we’d need to refer a case.

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**Imran**: This is being presented in a way that’s innocuous and unlike to happen, but evidence from case studies suggests that it happens a lot more than we are lead to believe. I think that this is part of the reason for the tension people are feeling towards Prevent. I’m not clear on issues such as mechanisms within St George’s already, why must we therefore be involved with Prevent specifically?

**John Hammond**: Our duty is to demonstrate what our mechanisms are and demonstrate them. We don’t have to say about individual students, only that the mechanisms are there and that they’re working.

**Dean Surtees**: We are just demonstrating that we have procedures and policies that are working. As we are healthcare focussed we have to look at these things specifically – so much of it is already in place, so we don’t need much new to fit the agenda.

**John Hammond**: The NHS has a competency framework for anyone going to work in NHS, and all students have to be trained to level 1 or 2. This training involves having an idea of what Prevent is as part of the safeguarding picture. We have to look at how we do that. Our experience in the faculty is that one trust said they wouldn’t have any of our students on placement unless they had undergone training. We have used an online resource and we are looking at a couple of other methods to see what might be best for staff at St George’s and also students, so its not too onerous but gives a broad picture of safeguarding principles. We have to think about how we are going to help you as students with requirements but also under the umbrella of safeguarding.

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**Issi**: How does the SU fit into this? As they’re an independent body why are they involved and how?

**Judith Ibison**: The SU doesn’t have a duty as its separate charitable body. St George’s wants a dialogue with students and going through SGSU is a good way of doing this. Members of SGSU are on the Good Council Relations group and so they are part of the internal decision making. The other issue is that many of the SGSU events take place on SGUL facilities. Under legislation we have to make sure what happens on facilities are under the HEFCE Prevent legislation. The Union itself doesn’t have to have anything to do with Prevent. I am not sure of the relationship between the charity and Prevent but the Union is not a Higher Education body, so doesn’t have involvement in same way that St George’s does.

**Kat Telford**: I sit on the Good Campus Relations group, so in the situation where a case might come to the group I would be involved with assessing it.

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**Abdul**: What scrutiny is placed on external speakers?

**Rochelle Rowe**: It is all on website including the criteria on which we examine when managing events. We have never had to disallow an event and it is unlikely that we would have to. There might have been occasions where in we have been negotiation with the SU and thought something might be contentious, where we might ask if we can chair or support the SU. All our processes are on the website and there are links from the portal to the website. Outside of teaching activities if you want to have an event there is a planning process. If the SU officers had a concern about an event, they might refer it to the Good Campus Relations group they sit on, and we might want to do some of the due diligence we’ve been trained in. We might find out the background of the speakers for example, but we have to balance freedom of speech with other duties such as the no platform policy. These are all listed on the policy and it shows the stages we go through if concern was raised. There is a prescribed list which the government puts on the website which we have to look at.

**John Hammond**: In some situations controversial speakers having a platform to enable debate is encouraged. There have been some things people might say are extremist which have been facilitated and these have prompted discussion in the university so as not to be hidden away outside. This ensures that not just one side of an argument is presented.

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**James Watson**: The student union President has a role in signing off what events can and can’t go ahead. Is there a process if he says the event unacceptable and is there support from staff in making this decision and can it be challenged?

**Steven Gilbert**: I basically have to “sign on the dotted line” to say if an event is ok. So far this year there have been no concerns. There is a protocol to follow on making decision but it is more of a team decision. If I don’t think it is ok I refer to the team. It is not just me saying yes or no. When I hand over in Summer, the ‘no’ answer to events should still be made between the Campus Good Relations group.

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**Mustafa**: Do you have a proactive plan to work with Isoc as I haven’t seen any relationship between yourself and the society?

**John Hammond**: There is nothing specifically about Prevent but have Interfaith Forum. Isoc is part of this as well as all other faith groups and we talked about Prevent at the last meeting and have had discussions, but not just with one group.

**Mustafa**: We haven’t seen anything as students, this is first real event.

**Judith Ibison**: What would you like to see?

**Mustafa**: More cooperation and communication.

**Judith Ibison**: Did you know about the Multifaith Forum?

**Mustafa**: No.

**Rochelle Rowe**: It has its own chair, Gavin Taylor, and I attend as well as faith society presidents and some other people such as the chaplain from the Trust, John and Kat. We have had some discussion about Prevent. Over the year this duty has become compulsory, so we’ve been working to demonstrate that we have these policies and procedures in place, and also trying to communicate.

**John Hammond**: It would probably send a problematic message if we focussed on Isoc and it would seem like we think it’s the major problem, but we don’t. Prevent has a wider remit across the whole board.

**Rochelle Rowe**: This is something that has been reiterated to us through training. It is not widely discussed but there’s a lot of HE institutions that are being under pressure from things like far right extremism that they have to vigilant about. This is a real concern despite not being so much in the media but its something that features in training.

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**James Watson**: We discussed the Union’s role, I think it is important to clarify if the Union has any reason or duty to share information in similar way to counsellors, for example VP Education and Welfare?

**Kat Telford**: When people come to see me its exactly same as counsellors except I act as a ‘listening ear’. All the info shared is confidential and I would only ever breach that if the student posed a risk to themselves or others, in which case I am bound to.

**James Watson**: Is that an agreement or just in certain situations?

**Kat Telford**: It is within my role when I am providing support as listening ear.

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**James Watson**: There’s a concern that before being sent to Channel, information might be stored and in the future information sharing protocols might allow that information to be accessed and end up in the hands of the authorities. What is the information sharing protocol and how much information is written down?

**Rochelle Rowe**: It is online and you can look at it. There is governing under what circumstances universities release information when requested by the police. There has got to a balance between the duty of data protection and complying to the law.

**John Hammond**: If a concern is raised then there would be something recorded about the concern, but it is a discussion which is in a pastoral and supportive way. That information will be on the student file but it is a mechanism for sharing and supporting the student rather than to share it and ‘tell on you’.

**Dean Surtees**: It is important to say that the police have the right to request information through a court order. However, the police have to be very specific on what they want. Normally they would only ask for name, address and contact number.

**Judith Ibison**: There wouldn’t be anything on the file the student didn’t know was there. If there was any relevant or important information on the student they’d know it was there.

**John Hammond**: When we are referring someone it has to be with agreement of the student, which is one of our best practices.

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**Imran**: I’m one of the doctors here and I come into contact with lots of students. A thing I’ve noticed over the last year is that I think there is palpable mistrust of people doing certain things. I’m a relieved the University is looking at this in broad spirit but I don’t think that reflects nationwide. This system curbing peoples spirit is oppression, which I think is problematic. I think you’re looking at it in a broader and fairer way, but once we have destroyed people’s potential as a HE establishment something to be thought about.

**John Hammond:** I think there are some very oppositional thoughts in HE – we are here to say that were trying to manage this from the HE perspective. For example, Kingston university has someone who has been a key component to this, who has spoken on select community. The government has a thing about Kingston University and I think once you put your head out you do get turned on in a sense. We are trying to make a pragmatic response to this that is workable and proportional. I know we have to demonstrate some things but we don’t want to stifle freedom of expression and want to encourage having external speakers and debate.

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**Saeed**: I have found that people to have very polarised views towards Prevent. Why do you think there is this view, and why are organisations like NUS and other SU’s boycotting Prevent and running campaigns against it?

**Judith Ibison**: There is lots in the press. I think it’s thought that it is a narrow perspective of Prevent on radicalisation, and the damage it does to freedom of speech.

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**Abdul**: If a student has concern about another student, how do we check this is not being done maliciously?

**Judith Ibison**: This is an important important, but is an issue can happen in all sorts of disputes not just Prevent. There are the same checks in any situation which are to listen to both perspectives and dig deeper into the issue.

**John Hammond**: In IFP there was a scenario where you look at safeguarding and supporting colleagues – I think it’s a continuation of that; talking to colleagues, supporting individuals and how you might do that.

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**Ahmed**: From my perspective and being in contact with the university and certain groups in meetings – how I feel will reflect other students. I have contacted other universities and asked how they deal with their Isoc. I realised that at St George’s, although there is Interfaith Forum, I think the nature of those meetings has changed drastically. It went from 2 years ago when all there would be was 5 or 6 individuals talking about Isoc intimidatingly to now where it is a lot friendlier, but still there is something lacking. At Kings the Deans often approach their Isoc president to look to collaborate and move forward. I have only been contacted when something goes wrong. As president we have 100s of students. Realistically speaking they feel they are most affected by the Prevent strategy – we need to clear up misconceptions. Ideally if there was more of a collaborative approach this would help us move forward and students would have less concerns.

**John Hammond**: This sounds like a very good opportunity for us to talk but I don’t know how – email? Another meeting?

**Ahmed**: Interfaith is one opportunity but it doesn’t seem like the safest environment and I tend to be more reserved because I know there are other students leading other faith societies so it is hard to talk about things. There should perhaps be an opportunity to discuss things directly with members of staff for example when I needed an urgent meeting I had to wait 5 weeks because it is very diff to get hold of people.

**Judith Ibison**: I am surprised to hear the difficulties and am very sorry for any group who has experienced this. On our end it feels like people contact us all time and were are very reactive. As far as I know there is an open door for any society or student and we would make ourselves available. There should be more of a conversation about how to use interfaith forum and help people feel more comfortable with it. I also think to open a dialogue would be good.

**Ahmed**: I think there need to be a more specific dialogue between Islamic Society and the university. I feel bad taking over the meetings and it goes on for ages and everyone gets a bit frustrated. There should be a way for Islamic Society to work directly with the university and see how they can move forward in a positive light.

**John Hammond**: That is a good plan but we need to balance the needs of all students and societies. I see the urgency around that in this agenda in particular, but it should be proportionate, reasonable and short lived because we would be dealing with this particular issue now rather than an on going thing of meeting with this group but no one else. We need to be careful with the message we are sending out.

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**James Watson**: Protest and Activism Forum asked students if they would like to give testimonials on how they feel about Prevent. We are aware that from the last meeting that Prevent is benign and not going to negatively effect people – but the testimonials demonstrated that even with the measures put in place the emotional impact on a lot of Muslim students has been quite negative. We don’t know how representative this is but we had around 15 responses on a Facebook poll. Some of the testimonials are unsettling and show how Muslim students feel victimised or like targets, we can read a couple if that would be helpful.

**Mohammad**: I think it’s important for committees and organisations to understand where the Muslim population of St George’s lies and how they feel. This is especially prevalent in the media, so obviously it is happening and the legislation is occurring in the rising environment of Islamophobia. This is anchored by weak evidence - the Prevent agenda is based on a conveyor belt theory suggesting certain extreme thoughts automatically transfer someone to violent extremism ,which has been proven wrong. There are more things like economic factors and social grievance etc. For a Muslim, knowing this legislation lies also on weak evidence it’s a very heavy feeling and the feeling has spread across the board.

 (Read from testimonials)

* *As a Muslim student I feel the Prevent legislation manifests intolerance and discrimination against Muslims. I am conscious of the religious profiling I now receive and avoid discussion with peers out of fear that they may be taken out of context and I may be labelled as extremist.*
* *I have no qualms at all that identifying people who have the potential to go on to commit heinous crimes is a good preventative measure, to stop acts of terrorism from occurring. Whatever their religious, political or ideological affiliation may be. However what concerns be is how these individuals are being identified; how exactly does one identify an individual at risk of becoming a terrorist. I don’t feel this question is being answered justly as a lot of people are interpreting terrorism as something that is relative.*
* *I have friends studying the Conflict and Catastrophe Medicine module who are too scared to revise in public in fear of being snapped up by Prevent, like the famous case of a Muslim student who was studying for his course in Terrorism, Crime and Global Security and was reported to the university by someone who saw him studying in the library. In general, Prevent is causing a lot of fear in the Muslim community and has left an atmosphere of suspicion hanging over Muslim students. Now every time a lecturer asks a question about Islam or Middle Eastern politics, you feel on edge. As Muslims we always get asked about these things and you feel as though you are being interrogated and anything you say will be used as evidence against you.*

We have lots of testimonials showing constituent worry about the criteria used against Muslims, what they can say and can’t say, activism on campus, activities they can and can’t take part in, etc. Those running this at St George’s need to reassure students and make it clear what criteria a student would need to match to say they could be extremist. This provides a framework to work with assuming St George’s has something similar, what kind of moulds of accountability are there within the university apparatus to account whoever wrongly supplies legislation on students?

**John Hammond**: It does sound like we need to do something about communication and some reassuring. It has been highlighted to us that we need to think about that. This has raised some important things about student experience and the curriculum. Part of our strategic view this year is to develop looking at, and helping staff to look at, curriculum that’s inclusive. This may not happen over night but it is something we are trying to put into a developmental programme for staff around looking at unconscious bias, introducing topics in the classroom, engaging and involving all students. Pockets of that we do, but over the next few years we will be looking at staff development and training to improve that at St Goerge’s. In the short term need to do something about communication.

**Rochelle Rowe**: This is like nothing I’ve heard before, and I am grateful to you for sharing it. This is certainly not our intension – we don’t represent the government. This is a government policy we need to demonstrate, not a St George’s policy. This is the sort of thing we definitely want to hear about to know about and we want to do more to reach people feeling like that. Its absolutely not what we want to encourage as with any kind of discrimination. In terms of accountability, no one person presses a button and makes decisions, it is the same as the Dignity at Work and Study policy in raising vexatious concerns about someone without evidence wouldn’t get beyond even the initial stages, and if it were found to be some sort of invention that would have repercussions for the person who raised it. In terms of creating an inclusive and positive environment, we don’t want anyone feeling victimised. I am aware of the national picture and the over reactions shown in the media which is horrifying and we have been careful to ensure that sort of reaction to the new government agenda isn’t what happens at St George’s. We would be keen to communicate that more widely and I’m glad this forum is happening, but there’s many other ways to get in touch and ask questions.

**John Hammond**: We are looking to introduce online training or an alternative simple process which would be very similar for both staff and students. This would be a way of knowing what training staff had as well as students, leading to the same sort of understanding.

**Judith Ibison**: This is so sad, and I have seen it mirrored by patients I meet too. I remember what it was like in the 70s with Ireland’s conflict. I realise it doesn’t make you feel better but the same thing happened to Irish students and Irish people in the community. It is very sad that it’s happening again but with a different community.

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**James Watson**: From my own opinion and through Muslim students this has become a serious welfare issue and I think that’s how the university and the Union have to approach this in future. It is a complicated issue and some people welcome it, but a lot of Muslim students feel attacked and fearful of it. I want to say is an urgent welfare issue and is something the university should respond to. Communication is a key part of this and making answers to questions asked here very accessible to them.

**Judith Ibison**: We could put an FAQ page on the SU website.

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**Ahmed**: We have mentioned the importance of collaboration and how that shouldn’t be focussing on any particular group by the university, which I fully support. I mention this because I’ve seen how things have been at George’s and within the SU. What I know is there are students who feel out of place and need reaching out to. Muslim students come up a lot. It is not just the university but also the SU. This is something that universities like Imperial and Kings have made an active effort to reach out to and this is for a good reason. It’s them who are feeling vulnerable. I was looking at the SU minutes and there was a Muslim student who mentioned something about Prevent, or a similar matter, which was completely ignored and they just said something about Isoc and actually he had views that were very different to mine for example, and it’s the stereotyping that is prevalent on campus. It is the elephant in the room, but it is them and us and many people would agree with us. I hear things about Isoc, for example during elections last year people were saying things about someone who ran which were horrendous, and this year we are not sure about about anyone who wants to run for the SU because that experience was so bad. Maybe its safer for us to remain in our ‘hub’ but that’s not the healthiest way forward. We do need to be equal and fair to all students but part of that is perhaps putting the focus where it needs to be at the time. This is the situation at hand. We are a society that is heavily involved in the SU but a lot of the students don’t have the connection, just a few of us on the committee. The reality is that it affects students on campus and it would be good to see positivity that can work and we have to be honest and true to ourselves about the situation on campus and we need to try work to resolve it.

**John Hammond**: These are some actions I think would be helpful to think about. This is a dialogue; we are not making a decision. I think we have made assumptions to treat everyone the same but maybe we should focus on Islamic society and work on how we support you. We need to get a wider group together and think about communication. We need to be talking about something broader going out to the student community. That might include steps you’ll have in training alongside staff so you have an idea of what might be included. I don’t feel we’ve addressed the criteria by which we assess someone. We have talked a little bit but we need to say the criteria to assess vulnerable students currently that might trigger a referral to a counsellor for example are already out there.

**James Watson**: You have made it clear that you are not following the Prevent criteria, so what are you following?

**Judith Ibison**: There is no set of specific screening questions that anyone is using – there is no surveillance. That is a myth that’s out there and in terms of training I’ve had from HEFCE there is no surveillance. Its about looking at specific evidence and situations where there might be a lot of things raising concern about specific students.

**Rochelle Rowe**: The Good Campus Relations group is not getting referrals in and I understand concerns about the atmosphere and how it feels. To reassure you the group exists anyway and we’ve had to demonstrate what we’d do hypothetically, and were sharing that with you. We’re not processing cases and if we were then that would be something people would be talking about. What you’re sharing is how horrible it feels in the current atmosphere and climate with the debate in the media. This is us transparently showing what our procedures would be.

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**?:** The website is horrendous. The information needs to be collated so that students can access it and read it.

**Rochelle Rowe**: If you go on sgul.co.uk and look up Equality and Diversity you will see all the things we’ve been referring to. It might be something you haven’t been aware of previously.

**John Hammond**: It is on the external website as everyone needs to be able to see it, not just internal staff and students.

**Judith Ibison**: It is good to know what people are feeling. It would be great to have your ideas back about how we can continue to communicate in more creative ways and we are very open to that.

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**Ahmed**: I understand that the university is not following any criteria. From the government vulnerability assessment framework, they say things to look out for include things like “changing style of dress or appearance to accord with the group”, and I just see ‘check: Muslim’. Girls especially who want a certain dress code should have the right to do so, and I was informed that when they put a headscarf on or grow a beard there is a change in behaviour of how people look at them and all of a sudden a lecture might start being rude. You can’t control what everyone does. It might be good if the training showed the importance that there isn’t that stereotype, and shows that appearance doesn’t mean you’re going to do something stupid but just that you want to observe your faith in that way. It would be nice if that was addressed and clarified.

**Judith Ibison**: The training does address that so you might be reassured.

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**Mustafa Dashti**: What can we do about the Prevent agenda? As it is implemented by the government and as HEFCE provides funding if we boycott the agenda then is the funding cut and can the SU undergo sanctions as we are on SGUL property? What can SGUL or the SU do if the student body decides they want to boycott Prevent?

**Judith Ibison**: It depends which part you wanted to boycott. There are many other things involved than only what you might do on the university premises in terms of being active.

**Dean Surtees**: We have a duty to follow legislation as we are governed by HEFCE. We don’t have an opt out so we have to follow it, but the SU can decide if they want to support it or not.

**Steven** **Gilbert**: We don’t have to follow it, we are on SGUL property but the student body can mandate us to boycott Prevent if they wish. We need to decide where we agree and what we oppose, and that is down to the student body to decide. It was made clear earlier that lots of Student Union’s boycotted it across the country. In light of the recent NUS elections I think that Malia will push against it and the student body will have to help us decide to what degree we back it, if at all. We can start to have this discussion whenever questions are ready. SGUL can’t do anything about it though, only the SU.

**Judith Ibison**: There are many ways of having debates and taking decisions on different aspects of this as there are many different issues.

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**Tanisha**: For reassurance it might be worth communicating to the student body that although you are complying to the legislation, technically due to our healthcare nature, you haven’t changed anything that was already there.

**Judith Ibison**: How do you think would be best to do that?

**Tanisha**: Email comes to mind, but that is not always so well received.

**Judith Ibison**: Through every channel of communication then, really!

**Ahmed**: Via email would be a good start!

UNIVERSITY STAFF MEMBERS LEAVE

**James Watson**: Do you know about what local Student Unions have done when they’ve boycotted Prevent?

**Kat** **Telford**: In my brothers Student Union they created a promo video of members of the Union speaking about the issue saying they don’t agree and are boycotting, but also explaining why to try and raise awareness of what the agenda is and why they’re against it to promote the bigger picture that we should all feel safe and comfortable on our campus.

**Steven Gilbert**: I have done broad research but not into individual unions The approach taken is that we should all feel safe and those who don’t agree we can put our voice out through the NUS. There hasn’t been a huge amount of very active progress but there is some.

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**Mustafa** **Dashti**: If there was 99% opposition from the student body, and we decided to boycott Prevent, what sanctions would SGUL take upon us?

**Steven Gilbert**: In the most extreme scenario the Union said no to Prevent completely, the worst thing that could happen is that SGUL would withhold room bookings and external speakers would bypass us. I think that’s why it is important to know that if we go fully against it we may come to loggerheads with the university which would bring difficulties being on their ground. If we negotiated and went perhaps 80% against Prevent for example, or however you wish to grade it, we will face less or no sanctions but can still publicly say what our opinion is. How passionately do people feel, what are the pros and cons?

**Kat Telford**: How passionately you feel is definitely something that has hit home is that this is a welfare issue and this shouldn’t be a case of ‘us and them’. We are all in this together and we all need to feel safe and secure in this environment. That requires engagement on our behalf and your behalf to meet in the middle to make this a safe environment so we definitely want to meet with you and make sure that we are picking away at all the problems and barriers making you feel this way.

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**James Watson**: If there are people thinking that the Union should do something about this, how would we measure that and what are the steps involved and how do we move forward?

**Steven Gilbert**: Every other university I have looked at passed it through their council. A representative of the student body decides to give the mandate and the action whatever that may be. For issues through year we ask those who feel affected to put a list of signatures on my desk and that acts as a stimulus to get the conversation going and that declaration of interest can be taken forward if there’s enough people for it to be representative of the Union.

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**Mustafa Dashti**: Is this going to be similar to the AGM/EGM situation where we need to impose a referendum and see what the students think from there?

**Kat Telford**: There are other ways we can go about changing the SU’s view. It hadn’t happened before which is why we went down the EGM/referendum route. I don’t think its sensible to hold that every time we want to change a view on something, so there are other ways such as going through exec or council which is a much quicker turn around for change. We should be funnelling the views and opinions of our students we so need to make better use of our governance cycles. When we held the EGM and had the referendum over the Junior Doctor dispute I talked to our NUS contact and asked if we need to do that every time. He told me its within our governance that we can change the decision monthly and we need to make better use of that cycle and get the ball rolling. No constitutional changes are needed.

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**Alice Walker**: We are going to find all the documents and circulate them with the power point slide everyone can read them. I would encourage you all to send them on to friends and people in your societies to get the word out. Kat is a representative on the Multifaith Forum, so if you have any feedback or suggestions for improving it please feel free to come and talk to us about this or any of the other issues we discussed today.

**James Watson**: If people think its an issue should we suggest people to come and talk to you and bring signatures to you?

**Steven Gilbert**: If you put some names and signatures in front of me and that will kick off the process. Tell us that you disagree and why.

**Kat Telford**: For anyone that this is affecting on a welfare note or who wants more information, our doors are always open so please do come in and see us. We would be happy to meet with Islamic Society representatives to see how I can be more approachable and help more on welfare lines, too.