**GUIDANCE: Single-use Plastics**

Worcester Students' Union (WSU) understands the devastating impact that single-use plastics have on the environment. Single-use plastics are goods that are made primarily from fossil fuel–based chemicals (petrochemicals) and are meant to be disposed of right after use. Single-use plastics are most used for packaging and service ware, such as bags, bottles, wrappers, and straws.

Eliminating single-use plastics is crucial for student unions as it reduces pollution, protects ecosystems, and promotes sustainability. It ensures student health by avoiding harmful chemicals and creates cleaner, safer campuses. Economically, it lowers waste management costs and reallocates savings to other initiatives. It raises environmental awareness, encourages sustainable behaviour, and ensures compliance with regulations. Socially, it benefits the broader community and aligns with ethical commitments to protect the planet.

To ensure Worcester Students’ Union (WSU) fulfils its commitment to reducing the environmental impact of single-use plastics, the following actions will be taken:

• Conduct an annual single-use plastic audit to gather data for implementing strategies to replace single-use plastics with sustainable alternatives.

• Collaborate with the university and Plastic-Free Worcester to educate and raise awareness about the environmental consequences of single-use plastics.

• Ensure that single-use plastics are consistently discussed in the sustainability committee meetings, with a particular focus on operations at the Hangar bar where food and beverages are consumed, to embed regular and ongoing dialogue on this issue.

**Compliance and Review**

This guidance will be formally reviewed every 2 years but will be regularly reviewed and updated by the sustainability committee as needed to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all members of Worcester Students’ Union.

Date of Adoption:

Signed: (SU elected president)

Person responsible for review: Director of Representation and Membership Services