

KSU supports peaceful protest which promotes thought, discussion and positive action.

We support students' rights to freedom of expression and peaceful protest. This guidance is intended to enable student groups to organise protests lawfully, safely and responsibly.

### What is a protest?

For the purposes of this guidance, a protest includes any organised activity intended to express opposition, support, or dissent in a public or semi-public way.

This may include (but is not limited to):

- Demonstrations, marches or rallies
- Sit-ins, occupations, or vigils
- Pickets or mass leafleting
- Banner displays or placard-based activity
- Online campaigns where these are linked to physical protest activity

### Legal Information

Freedom of expression and assembly are protected rights, but they are not absolute. Student group protest activity must comply with:

- UK law (including public order, health and safety, and safeguarding legislation)
- Kingston University regulations and campus rules
- KSU policies and procedures
- Charity law requirements applicable to KSU and its affiliated groups

### The Dos and Don'ts

Student Groups can:

- Organise peaceful protests related to their aims and objectives
- Campaign on social, ethical, educational or welfare issues
- Criticise institutions, policies and decisions
- Collaborate with other KSU student groups

Student Groups cannot:

- Support or oppose a political party, political candidate or election campaign
- Encourage or engage in violence, intimidation, harassment or unlawful activity



- Stick material to the fabric of buildings
- Occupy buildings or restrict access without permission
- Block emergency routes, teaching spaces or essential services
- Organise or promote unapproved or spontaneous protest activity under the society's name.
- Allow hate speech, threats or discriminatory language at a protest

### The Process

All activity organised by a student group must be approved in advance, this includes a protest.

Student groups must submit an event proposal at least **10 days** before the planned activity. This should include:

- A description of the proposed protest and its purpose
- Date, time and location
- Estimated number of participants
- Named lead organiser
- Any collaborators or externals being invited – especially if coming onto campus
- A completed risk assessment

KSU will then:

- Approve the activity
- Approve the activity subject to changes/conditions e.g. due to large numbers, security presence etc.
- Or, refuse approval where risks cannot be mitigated or legal requirements are not met. In these occasions, we will support you to make the necessary changes to deliver the activity safely on another date.

Where protest activity takes place on University premises, Kingston University will be notified as part of the approval process.

### Support from KSU

KSU is committed to supporting lawful and effective student campaigning. Support available includes:

- Advice on protest planning and compliance
- Support with risk assessments
- Guidance on alternative or complementary campaigning routes
- Signposting to student voice and democratic mechanisms