



## Student Council 23/01/2017

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### **Motion Name:** More Student Voices: Integrate voter registration and enrolment

#### **Background:**

1. Student voter registration numbers are chronically low, and when they do register, they often do not do so at their term-time address.
2. In 2014, after the move to individual voter registration, many students who were previously registered dropped off the electoral register. It is estimated that a total of 800,000 people were lost from the electoral register following the change.
3. Consistent low turnout amongst students and young people has meant that successive governments have failed to act on the behalf of students' interests, for example raising tuition fees.
4. Voter registration has been integrated with enrolment at other institutions across the country, including the University of Sheffield and the University of Birmingham.
5. At the University of Birmingham, 2040 students had registered to vote during enrolment as of 1 September 2016.

#### **Purpose:**

1. The voices of students are of the utmost importance when governments are making decisions that will affect our futures. Low student turnout diminishes our ability to be an influential voting group.
2. The low turnout of young people for the EU referendum is symptomatic of a systematic failure to involve young people in the political process, not a reflection of a lack of interest.
3. As a Students Union we should be encouraging students to be active and engaged members of society, this includes ensuring that there are less barriers to participation in our democratic processes.

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**Action:**

1. Lobby the university to integrate voter registration and enrolment, so that students are able to submit information to register to vote via an online form during the enrolment process.
2. Utilise the 'Sheffield Model' that has been implemented at other institutions, where the university has an agreement with the council that allows it to collect data for voter registration via its existing online system for enrolment.

*Proposed by:*

Your first and last name: Rebecca Filer

Seconder first and last name: Ben Duncan-Duggall

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