

# Recommendations

## Themes

The following themes are consistent throughout the research:

In terms of grouping students together **we need to look at what students have a natural affinity to** such as their school, department, where they live or what society they're a member of. In light of this, having departmental reps, society reps, hall reps and community reps taking a more a direct role in decision making makes a lot of sense. Decision making should become more localised and done by those who the issues are relevant to.

**Policy should be acted on quickly and effectively** in order to install belief in the democratic system amongst the membership. Democracy should be measured as a complete cycle: Measuring both the input and the output of the process I.E a) number of ideas submitted b) number of votes or participants in the decision making process and c) to what extent that decision/ policy is acted upon and implemented successfully.

**Voting should happen simultaneously** within the different student localities (halls, societies and schools). In other words all union elections should be used to measure democratic activity rather than only those that occur centrally.

It's essential that any new form of democratic organising ensures that **minority groups are represented.**

The system must **embrace wider participation** from more students in combating the perception that the union is run by a clique.

The **language used around democracy needs to change** to make it more instinctual and accessible.

## Appropriate models

It is clear from the research that no one form of democracy<sup>1</sup> seems appropriate to fulfil the needs of decision making at LUU. However the models below have their benefits:

**Economic democracy** – relevant as research shows that students are interested first and foremost in fiscal issues and how they affect them. Giving members a direct say in how union money is spent would be likely to help promote the idea that LUU is led by its members and would increase participation.

**Deliberative democracy** – using demographically representative focus groups in the creation of policy could eliminate the perception of union politics being a clique, guarantee a minority voice in decision making, tie in the desire for market research as a method of decision making, educate non-involved members about union decision making and ensure deliberation amongst “general students” on policy issues.

**Direct democracy** – Referendum (a form of direct democracy) is the most popular form of decision making as it allows everyone a say on the big issues. This makes the process more open participatory and less cliquey.

**Consensus democracy** – A more consensual process would encourage students to try and find mutually agreeable solutions, break down factions and promote political cohesion. It would also help ensure minority voices are not dominated by a well organised majority.

**Representative democracy** – electing members ensures participation by installing a sense of duty within the elected candidate and in turn creates capacity for action and change. It ensures deliberation amongst elected students. Furthermore, members do not wish to be consulted individually on all issues and therefore are happy for an elected representative to speak for them.

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