**Arms Trade Action Group minutes – 8th May 2025**

**Attendance:** Syed Saddath, President (SS), Fern Warwick, EPS Student Rep (FW), Max Williams, Sustainability Officer (MW)

**Staff:** Paige Archer, Student Voice Coordinator (Democratic Engagement) (PA)

**Apologies:** James Lindsey, Director of Community and Representation (JL)

**10:22 - Start**

SS – Let's start the conversation and bring James in in the next meeting.

This policy was submitted by past president Amira Campbell.

Look like it is along the lines of what the UN suggests.

MW – This is inherently political, but this is about ethics and sustainability. It isn't necessarily a political decision. It’s morally not ok to invest in this sort of thing.

This predates Palestine October 7th and the Palestine Solidarity Motion.

SS – Fern, you're from EPS, what is the effect?

FW – If you have a student who is interested, they will go out and look for these opportunities. Job posting sites that happen to advertise these places I don't think we should be discouraging, I think we should look to promote for ethical opportunities.

SS – I don’t think the university has any careers specifically where students are making arms.

FW – You’re contributing to a company that goes onto making these things. The reason these companies want grad schemes is so that you would stick around and hopefully go onto making arms etc.

We should be making people aware of this and steering people towards working for these more ethical companies.

Within universities, it's a good place to start.

SS – Any idea of the number of EPS students who go through these companies?

FW – No.

SS – It would be useful for us to find out. EPS is one of the larger colleges int he university.

We should lobby that we don't get companies who also make armaments or ammunitions. Opportunities should be there, but the person taking the opportunity should be well educated on it and the ethics.

FW – Another thing to consider, I was speaking with computer science students. They have to include a ‘box ticking’ paragraph on ethics in their final project.

We need to promote how we can be ethical scientists.

I don’t want to argue for fewer jobs for EPS students, but there is a need for ethical consideration. Having an ethical education part of it, for students when they leave, hopefully this sticks with them through their careers.

SS – Can we look to have a PGR rep at the next meeting?

PA – Yes, I'll look into it.

SS went over the bullet points within the policy, referring to officer team lobbying.

SS thinks the motion overall is fine.

MW suggests adding the following sentence -

‘T*o ensure the University provides relevant information about the ethics of working for companies involved with armaments and munitions.’*

FW and MW discussed how ethics education could be blended into the curriculum.

SS – Instead of focussing on each company, perhaps EPS would need to do an ethics course, to read about what is happening and what these companies do. Providing knowledge on how it effects people if they contribute.

MW – All students as of this year, are expected to do ‘Sustainability in action’ on canvas. The person who runs that training I have frequent meetings with, so I could potentially be a link there.

SS – Yes, would be useful.

I’ve read the motion, and I can't see anything that could break any charitable objectives.

MW - This is more pushing for lobbying rather than the guild adopting a policy and to encourage future officer down this path. It’s similar to the fossil free careers idea.

FW – There have been cases of things being advertised as a computing challenge (to computer science students) or something along those lines. But then it was an event ran by an unethical company. Transparency is needed for students to be able to make informed decisions.

MW – If we were to encourage naming and shaming, this could bring legal issues. But, yes, transparency is really important. I have heard similar stories.

SS – We've gone straight into looking at what we can off the back of this policy.

MW – That shows that we’re mostly happy with this policy as it is written.

It’s not our job to tell the university how to do it. This policy is encouraging the university to go in that direction.

SS – Let's arrange another meeting, with feedback from other stakeholders.

Fern, please get some feedback from EPS students on the policy. Max, can you also look at gathering some feedback.

MW and FW agreed.

**CLOSED 10:03**