




nus **NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

NUS National Conference 2019

Resolutions

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New Members and AGM

New Members

Conference Resolves

To accept the following new members into membership of NUS:

- Newman College Student Union (Brighton)


Rules Revision Motion: “We won’t be the generation who turn the lights off on NUS”

Submitted by: NUS UK Board

1. The National Union of Students is in crisis.
2. If NUS does not reform, the cost of its student voice work will cause it to become insolvent.
3. NUS’ governance structure is complex, large, costly to NUS and members, and filled with unclear processes running concurrently. The result of this ‘over-governance’ is that the organisation is barely governed at all.
4. These problems are well known and there have been attempts to fix NUS’ democracy and governance as far back as 2004¹.
5. There are 5 Boards, 20 Officers, a total of 66 power-holding bodies, and a total of 200 power-holding individuals, making decision making and accountability impossible. In other words, there’s too many cooks in the kitchen...by far.
6. NUS’ democracy is tied to a model which prizes competition over consensus, argument over agreement, and in-fighting over fighting for the things that matter.
7. While it is clear that a huge amount of decision making bodies have meant NUS does not have a clear line of political decision making, we cannot place the blame for poor corporate governance on student volunteers. We must place primary responsibility as an organisation for poor quality corporate governance processes at a Board level.
8. NUS’ democracy has suffered from a lack of engagement, lack of interest, and a lack of active participation from our members. 80 per cent of NUS’ Further Education members choose not to engage in National Conference and only one third (1/3) of the total possible delegates attend NUS Conference².
9. The burden of participation is currently set too high to enable mass participation in NUS’ democracy. In our current system, members’ ability to be represented by NUS is reliant on their ability to pay, their ability to give up significant amounts of time, and their knowledge of the inner workings of NUS. Our democracy shuts out too many members and must change.
10. NUS’ members want NUS to deliver a powerful national student voice on matters of major importance to students of the day. Members want NUS to offer a coherent plan of campaigning and influencing work that sets out clear priorities and measurable goals for winning.

¹ ‘A New Settlement’ report: <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/a-new-settlement-report> ‘NUS 100’ documentation: <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/nus100> ‘NUS 100’ Theory of change: <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/nus100-how-we-look-to-make-change> ‘NUS 100’ Strengthening Democracy and Governance: <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/strengthening-nus-democracy-and-governance>

² Data taken from NUS’ participation data from the previous academic year


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11. Students' unions are the members of NUS and the funders of NUS. Members want NUS to reduce its current offering down to core work. Rather than doing a thousand things badly, members want NUS to do a few things really, really, well and to make best use of the funds they invest in NUS.
 12. The evidence base for reform is well established. These recommendations are born out of a history of consultations and reports which includes: *A New Settlement*, a report into the costs and benefits of NUS; *NUS 100* the roadmap for the future of NUS; *Independent Review into the Allegation of Institutional Racism in NUS*, which made recommendations on NUS' political spaces; *Strengthening NUS Democracy and Governance*, a set of principles on the future of NUS' democracy built for and with NUS' members; *Membership Satisfaction Survey* which laid out the work our members really value; and finally *NUS Strategic Plan Analysis* which helped establish a direction of support in the future. Cumulatively, these reports have asked hundreds of students and students' unions hundreds of things hundreds of times, and again and again we find a common perspective that NUS needs to be more accessible, less complex, and be more fun to be a part of.
 13. In this period of Turnaround (since October 2018), NUS has carried out lengthy consultation to get to the final proposed reforms, including: the largest ever Strategic Conversation; two consultations with responses from students and students' unions; two consultations with NEC; meetings with dozens of students' unions; and weekly meetings with NUS' full time officers.
 14. Students' unions have told us they believe this could be our last chance to reform. They have indicated a failure to reform could endanger their ongoing affiliation to the national union.
 15. In order to avoid further failure in NUS' corporate governance processes, we must prioritise the inclusion of professional governance expertise on the Board, drawn from lay trustees independent of our membership.

Conference Further Believes

1. NUS has both a clear mandate and an existential requirement for radical reform.
2. In extensive consultation with members this year students' unions have overwhelmingly supported the reforms presented to National Conference.
3. The proposed Articles and Rules are based on the recommendations set out in the NUS White Paper. They offer a new vision of NUS – a lean campaigning machine able to affect significant change on, for and with our Members, and build an amazing movement of students engaged in their students' unions.
4. Like a plant that grows better once pruned, NUS must strip back to its core activity and give the next generation room to grow.
5. Detailed financial modelling has taken place³ showing the following things:
 - a. Students' unions are no longer willing to pay into NUS at the current rate – a new business model is required as outlined in the Notes & Guidance⁴;
 - b. NUS must reduce its costs by more than 50% in order to survive;
 - c. NUS must re-build its cash reserve by at least £3m in order to survive;
 - d. In this context, we must reduce our operations down to an absolute core in order to a) reduce the affiliation fee, b) rebuild the cash reserve, and c) deliver decent campaigns and services for and with members.
6. Full time officers need to be properly resourced within this smaller organisation. It is not acceptable for their work to be peripheral, 'priorities' to never get prioritised, or Officers to feel 'lost' in the organisation they are elected to lead.

³ The financial modelling was commissioned by the Turnaround Board and was undertaken by an external financial consultant. A summary of the modelling is contained in the Notes and Guidance document published to Members alongside this Motion.

⁴ See NUS Reform Notes & Guidance document


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7. Officer support levels are too low to enable them to have a productive and empowering experience. In the context of the financial modelling and the significant financial challenges ahead, the FTOs cannot be more than 7 in order to just maintain a similar level of support⁵.
 8. In our recent consultation⁶ 73% of students' union respondents preferred a full- time officer team with 7 Officers.
 9. In the same consultation 84% of students' union respondents preferred the model of democracy described in the White Paper above either the current situation or the 2017 proposals.
 10. In total, 4% of respondents favoured the current democratic model, and 7% favoured 14 full time officers.
 11. There is a clear mandate from students' unions for radical reform as laid out in these proposals.
 12. The new articles should give NUS the best chance of making it to its 100th birthday by giving NUS a simple governance structure where bodies are empowered to govern effectively, and by focusing its work on core activities and a set of clear priorities.
 13. NUS should have one main Board which oversees all NUS' activity and is fully empowered to govern NUS in line with the wishes of the members (as expressed in the corporate and political spaces) and in line with the purpose set out in the Articles.
 14. All full-time officers should be linked to the Board of the organisation, with a core group automatically holding a place on the Board. This gives them a direct route to power, the ability to govern and lead NUS, the ability to direct resources in line with political priorities, and means every officer has corporate as well as political accountability.
 15. NUS' Articles and Rules, as well as the budget for what will be "NUS Student Voice", should remain a co-decision-making process between NUS National Conference and Company Law Meeting as to give students more ownership over the organisation that delivers for them and their campaigns.
 16. An Executive of FTOs should be empowered to develop a plan of work for the period of their election. The plan should be based on officers' manifesto promises and the political priorities expressed by members. It should also take into consideration research, data and contextual information. This plan should be submitted to the Board for scrutiny and to ensure the plan can be fully resourced. This plan should then be communicated to members to aid their involvement and ensure scrutiny and accountability.
 17. NUS-USI occupies a unique place in the history of NUS and this relationship should be preserved at all costs. As new rules and regulations come into force NUS will seek to maintain and strengthen the tri-lateral agreement.
 18. We considered carefully recommendations that NUS should consider moving elections to every other year as opposed to the current annual cycle. However there must be strong accountability for members, and the need to get re-elected right now provides crucial accountability to officers that could be removed with two-year terms. There is also a reality that without straightforward accountability processes, each year those wishing to become an officer would likely run "no confidence" campaigns in current officers to UK Conference which would be significantly more negative and harmful than the current arrangements which simply ask officers to stand for re-election.
 19. It is a basic principle that the people that set policy should be involved in holding people to account that then execute that policy. So instead of an unwieldy and costly NEC (which sometimes behaves like it is the executive itself) there will be a National Scrutiny Council which will meet

⁵ The Notes and Guidance document sets out that the staff:FTO ratio is 4:1 (pre-turnaround budget with 20 FTOs), 3:1 (2019/20 emergency budget with 12 FTOs) and 3.8 (proposed reform budget with 7 FTOs).

⁶ See NUS Reform Notes & Guidance document

online to hold officers to account. Only in emergency situations as further defined by the DPC will it be able to set policy.

20. On better political spaces NUS should hold elections separate to the formation of policy to ensure policy-making is not simply an extension of the elections themselves. This will enable more genuine discussion between members about their views and will enable us to use seminars, workshops, and consensus-building to form policy.
21.
 - a) Maintaining the democracy of our National Union of Students is as paramount to the existence of NUS as its financial or operating models.
 - b) Pre and post conference ballots should be introduced to clarify where large scale consensus exists, what members want to discuss and allow National Conference to focus on policy issues that require significant debate.
 - c) Voting on policy should be open to members through digital technology, with specific focus on ensuring they are still able to participate in the debate.
 - d) Voting in elections should be open to members through digital technology, with specific focus on ensuring they are involved in the elections through watching election speeches etc. in addition to voting online.
22. Conference is the main representative body of students and students should determine who gets to go. So Conference should remain a large body of students that retains the requirement to hold gender balanced ballots to determine its delegations where possible.
23. NUS should commit to a new model of working in the regions, running organising, networking, campaigning and policy development activities on a regional basis to enable participating in NUS to be easier and less costly.
24. NUS needs a democracy which is both simpler and easier to take part in. NUS will run a small number of conferences run in such a way that enables maximum engagement from across the membership.
25. NUS needs to give members a chance to set political priorities and to hold officers to account through the following new mechanisms: (a) ballot pre and post-conference to determine priorities (b) introduce financial and operational detail into motions (c) introduce accountability surgeries for members (d) enable new types of SUs to join NUS to reflect modern modes of learning.
26. NUS will ease the burden of participation by removing committees, NEC, and other bodies, to instead support our student leaders to do what they are elected to do, deliver powerful campaigns and representation for students.
27. The work in building a more powerful student voice should be mirrored in NUS' students' unions support offer. Members want NUS to sit shoulder-to-shoulder with an organisation that delivers excellent and focused support to students' unions to aid their development and performance.
28. This period calls for exceptional leadership to save NUS from a financial crisis and a crisis of credibility for our movement. We have the information, the data, and the direction. National Conference now has the opportunity to radically reimagine our national union.
29. If NUS is able to afford more officers in the future, Liberation officers should have small committees to hold them to account in-between Liberation Conferences, e.g. 2-4 members each
30. In the case where NUS cannot afford more officers, the VP Liberation and Equality shall be held to account by a committee of autonomous, volunteer officers representing Black, Women, LGBT+, Disabled and Trans students.



31. If NUS is able to afford more officers in the future, there should be full time liberation officers elected in caucuses.

Conference Resolves

1. That the Articles of Association attached are adopted as the Articles of Association of the National Union of Students (United Kingdom), to the exclusion of all other Articles of Association and pursuant rules.
2. That with effect from the revised Articles coming into effect, the attached Rules are adopted as the Rules of the National Union of Students (United Kingdom), to the exclusion of all other Rules.




Priority Zone

Priority Motion - Education on the Edge

NUS Believes

1. The Augar Review of post-18 education and funding is due to report this Spring. Yet the ongoing negotiations around Brexit are continuing to delay its final report.
2. We live in politically uncertain times, and education reform has been pushed far down the priority list of the UK Parliament which is solely focussed on our withdrawal process and relationship with the European Union.
3. To date, there has been a conscious attempt by the UK government to not only undo our hard won gains in education, but to make it near impossible to win that ground back ever again.
4. We are seeing an almost unprecedented threat of universities being pushed to the point of collapse and closure across the UK – a threat which would have been almost unimaginable this time last year.
5. Institutions collapsing will lead to fewer places in HE, and measures such as student number controls and restrictions on funding all point towards attempts to limit the number of students able to access HE courses.
6. Alongside this, FE institutions face a range of immediate threats ranging from mass redundancies to the threatened closure of FE students' unions.
7. Upcoming reforms to tertiary education seem intent on pitting FE against HE, hiding a desire to restrict access to HE for the richest as providing benefit to the FE sector. We will not fall for these divide and conquer tactics.
8. Restricting access to HE might take more students into FE, but we will never build a thriving FE system in this way. While FE is a second chance for many, the government cannot treat it as a second choice.
9. Education policy is devolved in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Still, education reform in Westminster often has a knock on effect across the UK, all of which pales in comparison to the impact Brexit will have on education across all of the nations.
10. Brexit brings with it potentially catastrophic risks to education institutions that risk accelerating institutional collapse from massive drops in international student numbers to the loss of EU funding.
11. All of these challenges are not just affecting the classroom. We are seeing them impact all aspects of students' lives in cuts to mental health support services on campus, extortionate rents and an increasingly hostile environment for students from liberation groups.
12. The Poverty Commission showed that the poorest students end up paying a "Poverty Premium" when it comes to education, whether directly from having to get into debt and paying more interest on it, or indirectly from things like higher transport costs. This not only restricts access and choice – it increases the risk of dropping out.
13. NUS and students' unions face constant smears and attacks, largely because we stand for a different vision of education and society than those who seek to undermine us - our belief in a free and liberated education.
14. Be it tackling the black attainment gap or giving students a powerful voice in their classrooms; ending the silence around sexual harassment on campus or championing diverse, flexible and accessible education pathways; cutting the link between TEF and fees or bringing in affordable student housing for working class students. We have not only stopped these reforms time and again in their tracks; we have continued to advance our vision.
15. Whether selling off universities or exploiting postgraduate workers; or creating a false free speech crisis while simultaneously ramping up the racist PREVENT agenda - the political and social attacks that the student movement and education face come from the same place. They must be tackled together.
16. NUS is also facing challenges on multiple fronts. This makes it all the more essential that we unite behind a unifying campaign, rooted firmly in our values.
17. It is clear that our education is on the edge. But it does not have to be on the edge of collapse – by seizing this moment we could be on the edge of fundamental positive change.
18. Access to education is a right, not a privilege and NUS must reform its movement in striving to ensure that this right is protected for our membership.


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19. It's essential that students from all backgrounds are enabled by universities to progress and succeed in post-18 educations. It is also vital that Universities explore and tackle how marginalised groups face barriers in accessing student finance and other financial support, and seek to break down these barriers.
 20. Potential cuts to tuition fees will leave courses at risk of closure, and universities in crisis, with support staff, facilities and Students' Union block grants likely to be the first things to be cut at a time where mental health is a key issue in Higher and Further Education.
 21. There could be a potential university tuition fees cut to £6,500, under proposals from the Augar Commission addressing Higher Education funding. This could leave some Universities with a third less income from fees, and a £3 billion funding shortfall.[1]

NUS Further Believes

1. NUS needs to articulate a shared political vision: not just for the work of our national union, but for the world we want to build.
2. The power to win this vision is in the hands of students' unions as a movement.
3. Across the UK, across institutions from 50 to 50,000 students: we know our work is at its best when it is rooted in making students' lives and chances better by improving their experiences in education.
4. Education changes lives. Everyone should have the opportunity to access further and higher education. But it's not just about getting in, we have to focus on getting on as well.
5. It is the poorest students who always suffer the quickest and suffer the hardest when negative changes are made. We will put front and centre measures that improve the life chances and educational opportunities of working class students.
6. Everyone should have the opportunity to take a full time residential undergraduate first degree, regardless of family income or class background.
7. We will continue to champion high quality flexible education pathways for all who want them: as an equitable education option, not a second tier option for the working class.
8. Education providers need to play a vital role in communities. Our institutions should be embedded within and engaging with the community that they are a part of, showing the public benefit that education brings.
9. Education funding touches on every aspect of students' lives and is a broader conversation than how undergraduate higher education tuition fees are funded. We have to prioritise the things that affect students every day: not only their ability to pay their rent, fuel, living and transport costs, but the extortionate cost of these in the first place. None of these concerns are unique to those in higher education.
10. We will fight for education funding models across the UK that ensure the poorest can succeed, where all students can afford the cost of living to enable them to survive and thrive on their courses, and which supports an education system which redresses inequalities in society.
11. We will always hold, first and foremost, the need to accept changes which will benefit the most disadvantaged in the first instance.
12. Institutions may be subject to closure, or reducing the range of courses they offer, which will impact upon the choice and opportunities for students. Higher cost subjects, like science, technology and engineering would be in danger of reducing opportunities for students from widening participation groups, including but not limited to, students from African and Asian descent. This also would likely lead to a reduction in the number of STEM graduates which are vital to the economy.
13. According to Prof Chris Day, the Vice chancellor of Newcastle University, should fees be slashed, the focus on social mobility would be among the first things to go. This will have an effect on widening participation groups, and local organisations that are dependent on this funding.

NUS Resolves

1. We will run a priority campaign that actively fights to build an education that is free and liberated, working across all zones and liberation campaigns.

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2. 2019/20 will be the start of a renewed long-term, tactical and determined fight for the education system we need in this country - we will build a campaign that's fit for a fight that will run for years and possibly even decades.
 3. We will build a coalition between the student movement and like-minded organisations who share our vision and values, and a public-facing influencing campaign designed to win public opinion. All this will be backed up by an ongoing General Election strategy focused on delivering a pro-education vote, strong enough to influence party manifestos and government's actions.
 4. We will set out a clear, bold and proactive vision for post-16 education to the sector, to government and to the public calling for:
 - a. full and free access to FE, HE and apprenticeships for everyone,
 - b. maintenance funding so everyone can take part and succeed in education;
 - c. student voice at the heart of education
 - d. equity for all in terms of access and outcomes, with a particular focus on:
 - i. equity for Black students in terms of access and attainment;
 - ii. equity for working class students in terms of access and attainment;
 - iii. equity for learners across HE, FE and apprenticeships in terms of esteem and outcomes
 - e. a government approach that views post-16 education as the engine room for a strong economy and an equitable society
 5. NUS UK will work in partnership with NUS Scotland, NUS-USI and NUS Wales to ensure that our campaign is both UK-wide and also specific to the needs and particular devolved contexts of the nations.
 6. We will support the Love Our Colleges campaign and work in partnership in pursuit of our goals and policies.
 7. We will deliver on the recommendations of the Poverty Commission as part of this campaign.
 8. We will work hand in hand with students' unions to be the unifying national force which brings together local activism and grassroots campaigning.
 9. We will bring students into our vision of education through their unions and empower unions to make change locally and nationally. Most importantly the campaign will be successful in reminding students that their voice and their actions WILL change society.
 10. Using NUS's national and sector influence, we will seize the opportunities that reforms to education provide and use them to build towards free and liberated education.
 11. Through HE Zones, and NUS as a whole, highlight the potential risks associated w reducing tuition fees, and higher subject costs. This limits the access to education for our student membership.
 12. NUS to set roundtables, and consultations with Students, activists and Unions to work in collaboration in the interest of our students.
 13. NUS to work with the Department for Education in ensuring that the Student's voice is involved in all decisions which affect our membership.

Welfare

Vision for Welfare

Conference Believes

1. The marketisation of education has had a profound and disruptive impact on Further and Higher Education.
2. Students are facing a looming crisis- as the impacts of increasing debt, increasing living costs, social isolation, lack of pastoral support, and competition-driven academic experiences combine. This is heightened and exacerbated for students that identify into liberation or minority groups.
3. The NHS is being vastly underfunded and students in allied medical fields are bearing the brunt of these cuts within education, working more hours and under more gruelling conditions.⁷
4. According to the NUS Accommodation Costs Survey, the average annual rent for a student living in halls in 2018/19 is £6,366, up six per cent on the previous year and by a third on 2012/13. In London the average is £8,875 and for the rest of the UK £5,928. The cost of rent in this sector has risen above inflation for over a decade and continues to outstrip available student finance.⁸
5. The level of student debt is rising⁹.
6. The impact of debt and the cost of living increase is having a clear detrimental effect on student wellbeing and mental health.¹⁰
7. Students' access to social security has been severely limited by welfare reform - for example through tightening of the eligibility of Personal Independence Payment , the two child tax credit cap and the roll out of Universal Credit .
8. Students who can claim social security (typically disabled students and student parents) are those with some of the highest costs .
9. From July 2016 to July 2017 there were 95 suicides at higher education institutions in England and Wales. This number is higher than in previous years .
10. Conference Further Believes:
11. There are many reasons for the rise in suicides, including a lack of culturally competent care, high waiting times to see counsellors at many institutions, and the increasing reliance on online mechanisms that do little to actually help students in a crisis.
12. Many on-campus services such as counselling are only offered during a 'standard working day' of 9am-5pm.
13. There is often additional restrictions on appointments, such as they must all be held on the same day of the week, they're not allowed to be held over the phone, etc.
14. Students such as paramedics or nurses who are on placement may be unable to meet these restrictions due to placement schedules.
15. In addition, students who are abroad with partner institutions may not be eligible for counselling services at the partner institution, or these services may not be available.
16. That waiting lists at NHS Gender Identity Clinics are illegally long, with trans patients wanting to access healthcare in the south west having to wait up to five years.
17. The roll out of transition-related healthcare in Wales has been widely criticised, with the British Medical Association reporting an unacceptable lack of progress.
18. Trans students are often early in their transition and therefore are disproportionately likely to access gender identity services.

⁷ https://www.theguardian.com/healthcare-network/2017/jan/04/2016-was-the-worst-year-in-nhs-history-we-must-fight-for-its-survival?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

⁸ <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/nus-and-unipol-accommodation-cost-survey-2018-full-report>

⁹ <https://www.ft.com/content/80fb3686-e4ee-11e7-8b99-0191e45377ec>

¹⁰ (Reference: Current research into the general student population has shown, according to figures released by IPPR in their report Not by Degrees, that over the last decade there has been a fivefold increase in the proportion of students who disclose a mental health condition to their institution (<https://www.ippr.org/publications/not-by-degrees>).


<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/disabilities-minister-penny-mordaunt-dwp-block-benefit-payments-160000-people-emergency-pip-bill-a7598391.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jun/28/two-child-policy-costs-families-thousands-financial-support-figures-show>

<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/students-and-universal-credit-briefing>

<https://www.scope.org.uk/campaigns/extra-costs>

[1] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-44583922>


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19. NUS represents trans children in further education who are accessing the Gender Identity Development Service at Tavistock, one of only a few clinics that provides young trans people with transition-related healthcare.
 20. Trans students widely report their wellbeing being correlated to access to transition-related healthcare.
 21. Due to financial crises many students face periods of homelessness
 22. This disproportionately affects students who are estranged from their parents
 23. This has a particular impact on students in London where we have a housing crisis
 24. Mental health support is particularly important for survivors of Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence and hate crime
 25. This support needs to be delivered by professionals with high levels of training
 26. This support should be prioritised and properly resourced by institutions, universities and colleges
 27. That local SU's will be making the case for proper provision, but need the added support that NUS can provide

Conference Further Believes

1. NUS Welfare Zone has clear policy on what we are against; now it is time to provide an inspiring vision of what we are for. A plan of action is required to explore radical solutions to the long-standing issues that impact on students' welfare.
2. The plan for the welfare zone should be grounded in the absolute belief that education should be free and that NUS should campaign tirelessly to remove the barriers to access to enable everyone to thrive in further and higher education including to campaign for the reinstatement and improvement of Disabled Students Allowance and to bring back grants and bursaries for students.
3. NUS will establish a new definition of what constitutes affordability for further and higher education, that considers the main areas of expenditure for students; namely accommodation, transport and course costs.
4. Everyone has the right to free and accessible healthcare. NUS should always fight for better NHS funding. NUS will stand with students to fight to ensure their access to health services that are fit for purpose and adequately funded, and that are free at the point of use including for International students and migrants. This includes mental health provision, sexual health and contraception services and free safe and legal abortion services in Northern Ireland.
5. NUS will drive forward a clear and coherent plan for change to improve the material wellbeing of students by developing consistent lobbying positions and campaigns that are developed with and shared by member students' unions. We will ensure our campaigns are evidence-based, and truly representative of student voice. We will equip students unions with the tools and expertise to enable them to engage with the work of NUS in a truly collective way.
6. NUS will prioritise the voices of the liberation groups, including but not limited to taking direct steps to tackle racism in halls, discrimination in the private rented sector, the lack of culturally competent support services, staff and student sexual misconduct, period poverty, the racist Prevent Duty in our colleges and universities.
7. Students should have access to social security in a way which is not invasive and punitive such as the current welfare system is.
8. Universities have a duty to make their services accessible to all students regardless of course, mode of study, or current location of study.
9. The current out-of-hours offerings, such as online mechanisms or emergency hotlines are not suitable replacements for face-to-face therapy.
10. The increased amount of scrutiny on trans people has resulted on attacks on the provision of transition-related healthcare, especially for young people.
11. Young trans people are not "going through a phase", those who are lucky enough to have their family support them are waiting years for basic medical treatment.
12. Trans people deserve quality healthcare in every corner of the UK.

Conference Resolves

1. To work with SUs to map out key stakeholders we can work with to support and amplify our campaigns and lobbying.

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2. To Launch a NUS for NHS campaign that works with students in allied medical fields to fight to save our NHS and improve the learning and living conditions of students.
 3. To relaunch the Students Not Suspects campaign and to fight the Prevent Agenda in education and society as a whole.
 4. To recommission Pound in Your Pocket research to identify the true cost of living for students and use that as a powerful basis for campaigning work nationally. We commit to sharing data locally with students' unions and providing support to them to use the findings to campaign for change on their campuses as well as at a national level with NUS UK.
 5. To establish networks of students' unions working on shared priorities and support them, by providing space, time and resources, to share their good practice and successes with the wider movement. Topics include but are not limited to culturally competent mental health services, staff and student sexual misconduct, anti-gambling initiatives, drug safety and testing kits, sexual health services, mental health strategy development and safety on campus.
 6. To help create a dedicated campaign on PG Mental health and fight for workers' rights on our campuses.
 7. To support housing campaigns on campus aimed at cutting the rent, improving standards, and fighting for a fair deal for renters as well as creating the first NUS campaign to lobby both universities and local councils to provide accessible and adaptable housing.
 8. For the VP Welfare and the Welfare Zone to work alongside the Disabled Students' Campaign, Parents and Carers' Campaign and Women's Campaign in their campaign to stop and scrap Universal Credit.
 9. For the VP Welfare and Welfare Zone to work with different campaigns in NUS and external claimants groups in coming up with a vision for social security that works for students and claimants in wider society.
 10. The VP Welfare and Welfare Zone should continue work on student mental health and suicide prevention by continuing to campaign for fully funded counselling services on campuses and tackling the causes of student mental ill health, and in the case of Further Education colleges to campaign for ring fenced funding.
 11. The VP Welfare and Welfare Zone should continue to campaign for counselling services to remain confidential, so that students do not have to fear their parents being notified of them accessing wellbeing services.
 12. The Welfare Zone should prepare Post-vention materials so that students unions can lobby to have them implemented in their institutions in the case of a student suicide.
 13. The VP Welfare should work alongside student unions to lobby institutions to have a institutional mental health policy, written in partnership with the student unions.
 14. The VP Welfare and Welfare Zone should campaign on ensuring that students who reach out for counselling or support aren't then penalised by Fit to Study policies.
 15. The Welfare Zone will lobby for more funding to go into university mental health services.
 16. The Welfare Zone will issue guidance to SUs on how to lobby for extended opening hours for counselling services and how to ensure all students are able to access the services.
 17. To stand in full solidarity with trans students in their fight for quality healthcare, and especially with young trans people.
 18. To work with NUS Wales in supporting student lead campaigns around improving trans healthcare in Wales, and to offer assistance in integrating work around trans healthcare into campaigns on mental health.
 19. For any campaign on healthcare to include specific work on improving access to transition-related healthcare.
 20. To work with the NUS Trans NEC representatives in doing the above.
 21. Tackling the housing crisis should be a priority for the Welfare Zone, tackling student homelessness will require a joined up approach from government, local councils and institutions which NUS should campaign for.
 22. To produce examples of best practice by both institutions and SU's in providing high quality support to survivors
 23. To produce research on the impact that access (or lack of access) to high quality support has on students
 24. To lobby the government to make it a legal requirement for institutions to provide resource to support survivors



NUS Commitment to Reproductive Justice and Supporting NUS-USI 'Trust Us' Campaign

Conference Believes

1. The theory of reproductive justice promotes a comprehensive and inclusive approach to reproductive rights discourse that examines a multitude of barriers to reproductive capacity and autonomy including; access to welfare, healthcare, childcare and the impact of poverty, as well as access to contraception and abortion.
 2. The term reproductive justice originates from "SisterSong", an activist group comprised of women of colour in the United States.
 3. Currently, pregnant international students and any dependants will normally need to leave the UK and apply for new Tier 4 entry clearance in order to return to the UK and resume their studies. If they do give birth in the UK, and then leave, they are not allowed to return with their dependents.
 4. Migrant patients may also be asked to show their passports at maternity wards before giving birth.
 5. The continued criminalisation of abortion under sections 58 and 59 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, which currently applies to England, Wales and Northern Ireland, perpetuates stigma and places people who terminate their pregnancies outside the NHS at risk of prosecution.
 6. The Abortion Act 1967 was never extended to Northern Ireland. Abortion is legally accessible in NI only where:
 - a. there is a risk to the life of the pregnant person; or
 - b. there is a risk to the long-term mental or physical health of the pregnant person.
- Current abortion law in NI excludes cases of fatal foetal abnormality, or pregnancy as a result of rape or incest.

Conference Further Believes

1. Reproductive justice is the appropriate framework for NUS to use when campaigning on reproductive rights, as it addresses intersecting oppressions that limit reproductive capacity and autonomy.
2. Tier 4 visa implications for international students who give birth in the UK promote a disregard for the human rights and family life of migrants, and current policy denies them reproductive justice.
3. The inaccessibility of safe and legal abortion in Northern Ireland is a denial of reproductive justice. This puts pregnant international students in NI in a position where they can neither give birth in the UK nor access abortion in their university area.
4. People who travel from Northern Ireland to England to access a termination are eligible to receive free abortion care on the NHS as of November 2017, but the cost and logistics of arranging transport, accommodation, time off work and childcare continue to present practical barriers to accessing abortion outside Northern Ireland.
5. Obtaining an early medical abortion by purchasing abortion pills online is a method of abortion frequently relied upon by people who face additional barriers when travelling to access abortion. Taking this action is actively criminalised in Northern Ireland.
6. Individuals who give birth or terminate a pregnancy should be supported and cared for in their local healthcare system, rather than disempowered and isolated by having to travel elsewhere to do so.

Conference Resolves

1. NUS should commit, across all reproductive rights work, to a reproductive justice approach.
2. NUS should lobby the government to reform current Tier 4 visa policy to allow international students, regardless of nationality, to be able to either give birth or access abortion services in the UK.
3. NUS should lobby the government to decriminalise abortion throughout the UK.
4. NUS should support the Abortion Support Network (ASN) and other organisations providing financial, emotional and logistical support to individuals who cannot access abortion services in their local area.
5. NUS should actively engage with, and support the NUS-USI 'Trust Us' campaign for the decriminalisation of abortion in Northern Ireland.



Mental Health Charter

Conference Believes

1. Higher Education in England is facing a 'mental health crisis'. Figures released by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) show that the number of students withdrawing from their studies due to mental illness increased from 380 in 2009-10, to 1,180 students in 2014-15 (Marsh 2017). 64% of the population of University students are between the age group of 16-24year olds and are vulnerable to Mental Health issues, as 75% of Mental Health problems are developed by the age of 25 (Education Policy Institute, 2018).
2. The number of suicide deaths among UK students has also risen by 56% from 2007 to 2016 (Rudgard 2018). In a twelve month period ending July 2017, the Office for National Statistics recorded 95 student suicides, with students now being at increased risk of suicide compared to young adults in the general population (ONS 2018).

Education Policy Institute (2018) Prevalence of mental health issues within the student aged population [online] available from <<https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/prevalence-of-mental-health-issues-within-the-student-aged-population/>> [06 November 2018]

Marsh (2017) Non-continuation summary: UK Performance Indicators 2016/17 [online] available from <<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/08-03-2018/non-continuation-summary>> [06 November 2018]

Office for National Statistics (2018) Estimated suicide among Higher education students, England and Wales [online] available from <<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/estimating-suicide-among-higher-education-students-england-and-wales>> [06 November 2018]

Rudgard (2018) Universities have a suicide problem as students taking own lives undertakes general population [online] available from <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/04/12/universities-have-suicide-problem-students-taking-lives-overtakes/>> [06 November 2018]

Conference Further Believes

1. UK universities are commonly under-resourced with respect to their mental health services and facilities and universities should prioritize to improve accessibility of mental wellbeing support.
2. Universities should provide funding for mental well-being services, that is proportionate to the student population of a University. UK universities have issues gathering data on students who seek mental health support externally.
3. Students to have an improved knowledge on what services are available for them with respect to Mental Wellbeing. UK universities post sign students to seek support from the NHS, and students often do not get the support due to the lack of NHS services.

Conference Resolves

1. NUS to campaign for Universities to have a proportionate number of dedicated Mental Health Staff available to students in relation to total student number OR Spend on Mental Health as a percentage of University Total Spend.
2. NUS to work with SU's to ensure all Universities have mental health services and dedicated trained staff.
3. NUS to work with universities in order to make sure that at universities it is clear and transparent, WHAT services are available on and off campus.



'She's Fine, It's Not A Hate Crime'

Conference Believes

1. Misogynistic behaviour as a hate crime is defined as "incidents against women that are motivated by the attitude of men towards women and includes behaviour targeted at women by men simply because they are women".
2. There is a national discussion with many MPs having supported the idea that misogyny needs to become a recognised feature to the hate crime bill to allow women access to reporting and supporting services.
3. In January 2019, the bid to make upskirting a criminal offence through 18 months of tireless campaigning which was a positive step forward in recognising misogyny as a hate crime. Violations like upskirting, spycam porn, deepfakes, and revenge porn are all crimes aided by new technology that attaches itself to everyday life meaning it is becoming increasingly difficult to detect and monitor.
4. In July 2018, misogyny as a hate crime became policy by Nottinghamshire police, which became the first force in the UK to record public harassment of women – such as groping, using explicit language, or taking unwanted photographs – as well as more serious offences such as assault as a misogyny hate crime.
5. Researchers from Nottingham and Nottingham Trent universities found harassment of women and girls in public spaces remained endemic, with nine out of 10 (93.7%) respondents saying they had either experienced or witnessed it.
6. In Nottingham and Nottingham Trent's survey around female campus experience, a main focus was sexual assault, which had been experienced by 24.7% of survey respondents, indecent exposure (25.9%), groping (46.2%), taking unwanted photographs on mobiles (17.3%), upskirting (6.8%), online abuse (21.7%), being followed home (25.2%), whistling (62.9%), sexually explicit language (54.3%), threatening/aggressive/intimidating behaviour (51.8%), and unwanted sexual advances (48.9%). This shocked both institutions into lobbying the hate crime bid.
7. Within NUS' research, of those who experienced sexual misconduct, a fifth of women reported losing confidence in themselves; just under a fifth experienced mental health problems, 15.5% reported avoiding going to certain parts of campus, and 13.2% felt unable to fulfil work roles at their institution.

Conference Further Believes

1. Nottingham's pilot for misogyny as a hate crime had 'shocked' university researchers. They were overwhelmed by the sheer volume and nature of the incidents that were reported.
2. By being able to report on misogyny; locally we can focus on what issues are arising and focus Students' Union's sexual harassment campaigns so preventative work can take place on campuses.
3. There should be the ability to keep the definition of misogyny flexible to encompass a variety of behaviours and actions on the back of wolf whistling not being accounted for, as sexual harassment, in Nottingham.

Conference Resolves

1. Create discussions on the experiences of women on campus and help students' unions to inform on current sexual harassment legalisation.
2. Empower Students' Unions to train activists to focus on gender specific issues and provide them with campaigning tools.
3. Where applicable, encourage Students' Unions to create third party reporting centres within their advice centres to ensure that students have a safe and welcoming environment where they can discuss their report and receive extra support.



Culturally Competent Care for all students in our institutions

Conference Believes

1. The mental health crisis has been exacerbated by the the impacts of increasing debt, increasing living costs, social isolation, erosion or inadequate provision of long-standing inclusive sources of pastoral support, and competition-driven academic experiences combine. This experience is heightened for students that identify into liberation or minority groups.
2. Over the last decade, there has been a fivefold increase in the number of students who disclose a mental health condition to their institution. (<https://www.ippr.org/publications/not-by-degrees>).
3. Students from liberation backgrounds are more likely to be diagnosed with mental health problems, are most likely to experience a poor outcome from treatment and more likely to disengage with mainstream mental health services, leading to social exclusion and a deterioration in their mental health.
4. This impacts the way students engage with support services, their institutions, their course and the wider student experience.
5. Welfare and education are inextricably linked, as each have an impact on the other. Our educational establishments have a duty of care to all students and should be providing care that takes into account the social, cultural and linguistic needs of all students.

Conference Further Believes

1. Wellbeing services are not the only department within the institution responsible for ensuring students receive culturally competent advice and care. The onus is shared between senior management, academic staff, support staff and all other student facing services to ensure that students feel welcome and supported throughout their time in further and higher education.
2. The inclusion of the Prevent agenda within safeguarding frameworks alienates Muslim students from accessing services due to the fear of how disclosures may be construed.
3. Universities must put in place provisions for placement students who may need to access counselling services whilst away from campus.
4. NUS will create a comprehensive, coherent plan to improve the wellbeing of students that is built on student feedback, particularly those of liberation and minority students. Our campaigns and stances will be inclusive and caring, and developed with and for all members of students' unions.
5. NUS will prioritise the voices of the liberation groups, by taking direct steps to tackle the lack of culturally competent support services in colleges, sixth forms, universities and placement providers.

Conference Resolves

1. To work with SUs to collate student experiences on the care they currently receive and provide them with tools to work with wellbeing services in developing a care strategy and staff training plan tailored to their own university.
2. To relaunch Students Not Suspects, and fight the Prevent agenda in education, counselling services and society as a whole.
3. To facilitate cross-learning opportunities between students, students' unions, institutions and sector specialists to share experiences and develop best practice.



Fight for Funds

Conference Believes

1. Nearly two thirds of students and graduates have experienced sexual violence at UK universities. Of these, only 2 % felt able to report the experience to their university (1) with some data reporting that students are twice more likely to be sexually assaulted than robbed (2).
2. The UK government has asked UK Universities to set up and lead a taskforce to develop a code of practice to help tackle sexual violence and harassment on campuses. In March 2016 Universities UK launched a taskforce to develop a cross-institutional approach on violence against women. (3)
3. A report released by NISVIS reported increased prevalence of sexual assaults within LGBT+ communities with 44% of lesbian women having experienced rape, physical violence or stalking. (4)
4. Creating the culture is a joint venture with Cardiff and Birmingham Universities. It targets three key areas of prevention, intervention and response.
5. The Statistics from the Online Disclosure System are an encouraging start, however there is significant evidence to assume that these reports are a small proportion of the larger picture (1). We want to celebrate that Cardiff and Birmingham University have started to become part of the solution. Students starting to report is a success, but we need to reduce the barriers that students face when they come forward.
6. We believe that it is imperative for all universities to create funding for "Creating the Culture" project
7. We call on all universities to strengthen safeguarding procedures to reduce levels of student on student violence and abuse.
8. The current complaints procedure doesn't follow a trauma informed approach. There needs to be a separate process in place for violence-based complaints with trained investigating officers who are appointed promptly compared to the current process. There also needs to be more diverse solutions to experiences of relationship harm between members of our University communities.

Conference Further Believes


1. The 'Create the Culture' model is excellent and should be mirrored by other establishments, therefore raising the profile of this devastating issue.
2. Recent research shows that 47% of bisexual men, 46% bisexual women and 25% of gay men have experienced sexual violence at some point in their lifetime (5). Furthermore, 80% of the Trans Community will experience at least one incidence of abuse within a relationship (7).

Conference Resolves

1. To lobby all HE funding bodies to agree to enter monthly progress meetings with key í from NUS and external bodies to monitor & continually develop this service in all universities with SMART objectives.
2. EO to lobby SUs to agree a timeframe of events with their universities. By July 2020 the SUs will have entered into an agreement for long term investment with their University and produce a 5-year plan on further implementation & funding to tackle this issue.
3. Part of the service should include an informal complaints system and an allocation of cases to investigating officers within 3 weeks. This would provide the space for restorative mediation.
4. To work with SUs to improve provisions for our students with protected characteristics, especially LGBT+ community who are presenting to campus services with sexual assault, harassment & domestic violence.
5. To continue open dialogue and active lobbying of the Government for them to adopt a similar approach in tackling sexual violence and abuse in the wider society.

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 10. "Domestic Violence." Stonewall, 1 Aug. 2018, www.stonewall.org.uk/help-advice/criminal-law/domestic-violence. [Accessed: 28.09.2018].



Rent Strikes

Conference Believes

1. NUS has committed to ending rent practices that make university harder to afford for students, including letting fees and council tax [https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/nusdigital/document/documents/36493/2e19f96cbfc0861b028b3607f9d2efb7/Welfare_Zone_Live_Policy_201518.pdf]
2. Student housing prices are continuing to increase well above what ordinary students can afford [<https://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/student-housing-a-look-beyond-private-renting/>] [https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ben-grech/the-student-housing-market_b_16682922.html]
3. Rip-off accommodation fees inflate housing costs for both students and residents
4. Due to the maintenance loan system, high accommodation costs leave a significantly higher debt burden on poorer students

Conference Further Believes

1. Unaffordable accommodation systematically lowers access to education for poorer students and negatively impacts student welfare
2. Rent strikes are an effective form of direct action against exploitative fees and practices, evidenced in campaigns at UCL and SOAS [<http://studentsunionucl.org/articles/union-and-cut-rent-secure-rent-reductions-for-2018-19>][<https://soasunion.org/news/article/6013/SOAS-Student-Rent-Strike-Wins-Compensation/>] among others

Conference Resolves

1. To mandate relevant Officers to provide a range of effective support to student groups undertaking rent strikes, including informational and material support
2. To work to build relationships between student and non-student housing campaigns,
3. To support the creation and growth of tenants' unions



Bursaries, pls & thanks

Conference Believes

1. Bursaries for students are offered for a variety of factors, such as academic, disability or extra-curricular; however, this motion shall focus on bursaries for students with low residual household income.
2. Bursaries have been shown to increase the likelihood of academic success at university.
3. For each additional £1,000 of bursary, the chances of achieving a 'good' degree increase by 3.7%.
4. Financial support spending is predicted to decrease from £408.7 million in 2017/18 to £382.7 million in 2018/19.
5. Of this £382.7 million, 78.6% (£300.9 million) shall be spent on bursaries, scholarships or similar hardship programmes.
6. However, the wider variety of thresholds and financial settlements can be confusing for students. Thresholds vary from £20,000 to £42,875.
7. Thresholds also vary within university years. For example, at Lancaster University, the threshold for students who started in 2018/19 is £30,000. However, those students who started in 2016/17 only have to reach a threshold of £42,620.
8. This leads to inequalities between students and means that some students do not receive financial support despite them having a greater need for it.

Conference Further Believes

1. The present bursary system appears to be working efficiently, in that the poorer and most able students appear to receive the largest proportion of the funding.
2. However, since the abolition of a national minimum bursary, too much variety has been allowed to form with some universities reducing their bursaries from below 10% of their tuition fees (pre-2012 rule).

Conference Resolves

1. To campaign for one bursary threshold to be applied across universities for all UK students.
2. To work with SUs to lobby their individual universities to review their financial settlements with a view to a uniform threshold based on the current academic year and not the academic year they started at university.
3. To highlight the importance of bursaries as a lifeline for students and ensure that they are a part of NUS-Government dialogue and SU-University discussions.



Rogue Landlords

Conference Believes

1. That 'rogue landlords' are a significant cause of the housing problems students face
2. That some landlords make vast amounts of money whilst students are paying to stay in poor quality accommodation which in some cases doesn't meet legal requirements
3. That local councils have both a moral and a legal obligation to take action to improve housing
4. That many Landlords charge some rent over the summer to "save" the house for the summer.
5. That despite this, many students live in terrible situations.
6. That summer retainers are not compulsory, they are put on by landlords, even though in many cases students wouldn't be able to live there in the first place due to repairs.
7. That many students do not know their tenancy rights.

Conference Further Believes

1. That rent retainers are unfair and disproportionately affect lower-income students and care leavers.
2. That cost of living is one of the main factors stopping students from lower-income backgrounds going to University.

Conference Resolves

1. That NUS should support Students' Unions to lobby local councils to introduce local landlord checkers which provide information to students about the status and reputation of potential landlords
2. That this support should include (but not be limited to) producing a toolkit, delivering a briefing and holding a training event for housing activists
3. To focus on upcoming local elections, producing a student manifesto for housing which local council candidates can commit to.
4. To lobby Westminster and the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, to abolish rent retainers.
5. To lobby NUS UK to provide information on students letting rights to all students across England.



Restrict the Rents

Conference Believes


1. Nearly two-thirds of university halls cost more than the minimum student loan.¹
2. Universities which rent rooms or halls from private student accommodation providers e.g. Unite Students and Urbanest are unable to lower student rents below the cost of renting from these providers without making a loss.
3. The 2018/19 Accommodation Costs Survey shows that 49.5% of student accommodation is owned by private providers rather than institutions.
4. The 2018/19 Accommodation Costs Survey recommends that “the Office for Students should require those it regulates to have an affordability policy relating to their own and partnered student accommodation, which should contain meaningful commitments to ensure affordability”.
5. The Office for Students cannot directly regulate private student accommodation providers.
6. The NUS/Unipol Accommodation Costs Survey shows that rents have gone up – again.
7. Rents rose by 6% since last year.
8. Rent increases are consistently higher than rates of inflation for the same period
9. On average rent comprised 55% of the maximum available loan in 2012-13.
10. It then rose to 62% in 2015-16 and by 2018, accounted for 73% of the that amount.
11. Just a small proportion of students are eligible for the maximum loan – which means that there will be many students spending a considerably higher proportion of their available funds on rent.
12. Once upon at time HEFCE would give grants to Universities to builds student accommodation.

Conference Further Believes

1. Housing is a human right.
2. No student should have their student experience curtailed by unaffordable accommodation.
3. The amount universities can spend on renting halls or rooms from private providers drives private providers to charge higher rents.
4. Serious measures must be taken to address unaffordable student housing.
5. There are a lot more people living in HMO's than just students (Migrant workers, young professionals, people in halfway homes) the average age of renting today is 35, we are in the middle of an economic crisis but somehow someone somewhere thought that this would be the perfect time to dictate where people should be living.
6. Students often contribute a great deal to their community – not just through boosting the local economy, but also through their charity and fundraising activities.
7. The HE sector has shown a comprehensive lack of responsibility to self-regulate over housing. Universities instead have chosen to use student housing as a way of adding to fee income. Student loan debt and government funding are now lining the pockets of universities and private investors (which provided 87% of new bed spaces in 2017-18).
8. Many students are sold university on campus accommodation on the basis of FOMO. This is manipulative and distorts the market.

Conference Resolves

1. To campaign for the Office for Students to follow the recommendation in Conference Believes 4.
2. To campaign for the Office for Students to cap, as a percentage of university expenditure, the amount universities can spend on renting halls or rooms from private providers, while still providing a minimum accommodation guarantee to students.
3. To call on OfS, DfE, CMA to act on student housing
4. To call for regulation that requires universities to produce an action plan annually demonstrating how it is actively engaging with the private market to ensure the market conditions are sustainable, affordable and high quality.
5. To call for legislation and regulation requiring universities to provide, or to actively intervene in the private market, to ensure a more affordable accommodation market with better value for money.
6. To call for a ban on universities making a profit from student accommodation



7. To call on OfS to ensure that Universities only offer a place to a student if they could guarantee that there was somewhere affordable to live.

(1)<https://thetab.com/uk/2018/08/01/nearly-two-thirds-of-uni-halls-cost-more-than-the-minimum-student-loan-75633>



The Student Rail Card

Conference Believes

1. There is no discounted rail travel for 16-25 (Students) or 26-30 rail card holder for fares under £12 before 10am Monday to Friday.
2. Students living at Home, Mature students, Post-graduates, Students with families and Student carers are more likely to be affected by this problem.
3. Part-time students from the same categories listed above can't have a rail card if they are studying 15hrs or less a week.
4. Students in both FE and HE often have to take on part-time jobs and work many hours while studying purely to afford to get to class.
5. Commuting often students struggle to engage in their student unions due to travel and timings of activities.
6. Rail fares rose 3.6% in 2017 and have risen again by 3.1% in 2018.

Conference Further Believes

1. Any student regardless of age can access a 16-25 railcard; a scheme designed to assist in reducing rail costs. However, you cannot use this card before 10am, the time when the majority of students will need to use it.
2. The costs of buses and trains have once again risen, increasing the daily cost of commuting.
3. There is a lack of representation and support nationally for commuting students.
4. Rail travel is faster than bus especially at peaks times.
5. Students with responsibility for others benefit from cheaper travel and extra time.
6. High rail fares are a huge barrier to many students accessing their education
7. Improving rail travel access is good for student's education and the environment
8. Senior Rail card holders and Disabled card holders have fewer or no restrictions for discounted travel before 10am Monday to Friday.

Conference Resolves

1. For NUS to campaign to Department of Transport, Welsh Assembly Minister for Transport, Scotland Transport Minister, ATOC & Transport Focus for lower rail fares for students and for the lifting of peak restrictions when using a 16-25 railcard, 26-30 railcard.
2. To lobby for a card called The Student Rail card that can be used by both Higher and Further Education Students whether full or part time to receive discount before 10am.
3. NUS to campaign for all new rail franchises to include student discounts.
4. NUS to campaign to bring in same rules for travel before 10am as Senior Rail Cards, Disability Rail Cards.



Make Xenophobia a Hate Crime

Conference Believes

1. International students and other migrants face nationality-related harassment and violence (xenophobia), which includes but goes beyond race-based discrimination and harassment.
2. The Brexit referendum resulted in the largest spike in hate crime on record. Regardless of the outcome of Brexit in March 2019 there is likely to be a similar response.
3. The NUS has paused funding to the International Students' Officer for 2019/20. (1)
4. Currently, while race is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, nationality is not.
5. The Law Commission is currently reviewing hate crime laws, including "the existing range of protected characteristics, identifying gaps in the scope of the protection currently offered and making recommendations to promote a consistent approach."

Conference Further Believes

1. Regardless of race, no person, student or not, should be the subject of xenophobia.
2. Criticism, protest or boycott of a state or a person who is defending or condoning its behaviour should not be considered xenophobia.
3. If the remit of the International Officer is transferred to a NUS Vice-President, National Conference can pass policy defending international students.
4. While the ideal solution to xenophobia is to eliminate its roots, an interim solution to the problem is urgently required.
5. Recognising xenophobia as a separate hate crime will send a message that it is unacceptable and give international students another avenue of legal recourse.

Conference Resolves

1. To work with student unions and partners in the education sector and government to lobby the Law Commission for xenophobia to be recognised as a separate category of hate crime.
2. To support student unions in supporting students who are victims of xenophobia.

(1) https://nusdigital.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/document/documents/46295/ef759eaa92b6a6d2c288dd3880303085/Letter_to_all_NUS_members_22_January_2019_-_Turnaround_update.pdf



Support For Autistic Students

Conference Believes

1. In the UK, there are around 700,000 people who are on the autism spectrum – more than 1 in 100. (ref 1)
2. Almost half of autistic students in higher education have not been diagnosed by the time they start university. (ref 2)
3. Autistic people are underrepresented in higher education, and are 25% less likely to complete their studies than non-disabled students. (ref 3)
4. One of the key challenges faced by autistic students is lack of access to appropriate support due to lack of diagnosis, compounded by negative experiences of self-advocacy. (ref 4)
5. Only around 44% of universities offer screening for specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) and/or autism, and most still rely on self-disclosure and evidence of previous diagnosis. (ref 5)
6. Although national guidelines state that diagnostic assessment should occur within 3 months of referral, availability through the NHS varies significantly by location and is generally prohibitively limited, meaning that the process can be prolonged, difficult, and a significant impediment to students accessing appropriate support while at university. (ref 6)
7. Other options, including referral outside the local area and private diagnosis, bring up additional complications to the process and can be expensive. (ref 7)

Conference Further Believes

1. Difficulty in accessing an initial screening prevents students from taking the first step towards diagnosis and self-advocacy.
2. Autism&Uni, a project focused on widening participation in higher education for autistic people, has produced best practice guidelines for universities and toolkits for autistic students.
3. Autistic students can thrive and excel in higher education if they are able to receive the appropriate support when they need it.
4. It is the responsibility of all institutions to create a culture of inclusion and an environment in which all students are supported to achieve positive outcomes, including autistic students.
5. Where shortfalls in public healthcare and/or other external factors prevent students from gaining clinical diagnosis, universities should try to mitigate the impact on their access to disability support.


Conference Resolves

1. To lobby universities and colleges to offer free, accessible screening for SpLDs and autism as part of their basic disability support provision.
2. To work with organisations such as the National Autistic Society to campaign for improvement of autism assessment provision nationwide, and an end to the 'postcode lottery'.
3. To support students' unions and other student campaigns to improve autism assessment provision in their local NHS regions.
4. To lobby universities to mitigate the effects of difficulty accessing a diagnostic assessment for autism, by e.g.
 - a. accepting private diagnoses as legitimate.
 - b. Covering the cost of private diagnosis for students in financial need where the NHS wait time is longer than 6 months.
 - c. Provisionally offering institution-based disability support and reasonable adjustments after an initial screening, to be reviewed after diagnostic assessment.
5. To encourage universities to adopt best practice guidelines and tools from projects such as Autism&Uni.

1. <https://www.autism.org.uk/about/what-is/myths-facts-stats.aspx>

2. <http://www.autism-uni.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/1373-Autism-Hurdles-and-Drivers-LBU.pdf>

3. Ibid., section 3.1

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4. Ibid., section 3.10: "85% of study respondents stated they did not feel comfortable explaining their needs to other people at university, and ensuring that these needs were met. They felt they would be misunderstood and dismissed ... Having to fight for appropriate support is difficult and tiring, and the effort required is not well understood."
 5. <http://www.autism-uni.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/D2.3-AutismUni-Mapping-Survey-Report.pdf>
 6. <https://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/media-centre/news/2018-07-18-autism-diagnosis-postcode-lottery-exposed.aspx>
 7. <https://www.autism.org.uk/about/diagnosis/adults.aspx>: "You can be referred to a service outside your area, but as this costs more, your local NHS commissioning body might question why you need to go there, or whether you really need a diagnosis. Private diagnosis is always an option, if you can pay for one, but you may occasionally find that local service providers (for example, social services) will not accept private diagnoses and will insist upon you having an NHS diagnosis, too."



Trans Healthcare Funds

Conference Believes

1. That the UK trans health system is in crisis due to illegally long waiting lists at gender identity clinics, a lack of doctors and other specialists entering the service, a lack of funding, and demand which increases 20-30% each year. Additionally, services are often not accessible to non-binary people and disabled people.
2. That many trans people end up paying to access healthcare privately because NHS gender identity services are so bad. Moreover, a significant number of trans people are self-medicating using hormones bought online.
3. There is a long history of mutual aid schemes in unions and in other membership-based social movements.
4. Students' unions are often incredibly skittish around giving money to students for the purpose of accessing healthcare, with multiple trans students having been blocked by SU trustee boards in doing so.

Conference Further Believes

1. Seeing students' unions as unions should go beyond the work that trade unions do in the workplace. We should recognise the life-saving systems of mutual aid that have been instituted by many unions across history.
2. Students' unions should financially support trans students who want to access healthcare privately due to illegally long waiting lists.

Conference Resolves

1. Working with the NUS Trans Campaign, to investigate the feasibility and produce a briefing on students' unions setting up trans healthcare funds, to be funded through student fundraising.
2. To work with the NUS Trans NEC representatives in doing the above.



Part-Time Students need Special Support too!

Conference Believes

1. Maintenance loans for part-time students were introduced for courses commencing from 1st August 2018.
2. Full Time students who are eligible for state benefits have a proportion of their maintenance loan that is titled "Special Support Element". This proportion of their loan is omitted as income for means tested state benefits.
3. Part-time students who are eligible for state benefits do not get this "Special Support Element" and therefore receive less in state benefits (which they do not pay back) and see it replaced by their loan (which they pay back).

Conference Further Believes

1. We should encourage and support the widening participation agenda within higher and further education.
2. Part-time study is a legitimate method of study and those who undertake it should not be penalised for doing so, financially or otherwise.

Conference Resolves

1. To lobby the government to ensure that those who are part-time students and are entitled to state benefits get the same provisions offered to those in full time education.
2. lobby government to ensure there are no barriers to education and that they support those who are worst off and need our support the most.



My Money. My Choice.

Conference Believes

1. As a result of the current loan system, payments in England and Northern Ireland are paid at termly intervals throughout the academic year. These are roughly equal payments at the beginning of each term, as advised by the relevant University (www.gov.uk).
2. This conflicts with varying term lengths and costs throughout an academic year, resulting in an excess or shortfall of finances during one term or another for students. This can lead to students taking out further loans and getting in to further debt.
3. NUS research shows that many students find budgeting difficult and hardship funds see an increase in applications at the end of each term.
4. One in Four adults will have a mental health problem at some point in their life. One in two adults with debts has a mental health problem. One in four people with a mental health problem are also in debt. Therefore, debt can cause and be caused by mental health problems (Royal College of Psychiatrists).
5. The stress of financial pressures can affect student wellbeing and have a domino effect on the student experience for the rest of the academic year which can influence degree outcomes (www.nasma.org.uk).
6. In Scotland the Student Loans Company pay loans in monthly instalments. Scottish students also get a double payment in their first month to help pay for start-up costs, such as a deposit (www.saas.gov.uk).

Conference Further Believes

1. Students come from a wide range of backgrounds and study under a variety of circumstances. The English and Northern Ireland student loan arrangements do not currently allow for students in different circumstances to use the loan that they're entitled to as they may need to.
2. More consistent payments could avoid periodic shortfalls in money and therefore debt. This may impact on students' nutrition, physical and mental health and their housing situations.
3. The option of student loan payments on a monthly basis would allow students to experience budgeting and spending in line with other forms of payment such as wages.
4. Greater flexibility in payment options would allow students to select payment schedules appropriate to their personal circumstances.
5. Larger, termly lump sum payments can cause increased debt for students who do not continue studying or take a break from education.

Conference Resolves

1. To consult with students regarding increased flexibility in the loan payment schedule. This may include monthly (over 12 months), monthly (term time only) and termly options for payment.
2. To begin and increase the lobbying of Student Finance England to implement viable options for the provision of more flexible loan payments for English and Northern Irish students. This will include the opportunity for students to alter their payment schedule with each annual reapplication.
3. If implementation of a new system is successful, to work with Student Finance England to provide students with guidance in selecting payment options.



Equal Access to Faith and Wellbeing Resources for Students From non-Abrahamic Faiths and Traditions

Conference Believes

1. That there is a lack of adequate tailored faith-based support from university chaplaincies and students' unions for students of non-Abrahamic faiths creating a distinct barrier to the proper resolution of all wellbeing-related issues that they face.
2. That most UK universities will usually have chaplains from Abrahamic faiths but chaplains from other faiths and traditions are significantly underrepresented relative to the number of students from these communities.
3. That existing multi-faith prayer spaces are not equally accessible to students from all faiths and traditions.
4. That very few UK universities have equal access to multi-faith prayer rooms for Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Buddhist students although dedicated prayer spaces are provided for students from Abrahamic faiths.

Conference Further Believes

1. That university campuses today should be an environment where all students, irrespective of their faith, beliefs or traditions, have equal access to tailored university-provided wellbeing support.
2. That all students should have this access notwithstanding the size of their faith community relative to the overall student population.
3. That faith-specific chaplains can provide better support to students from their faith as they better understand the cultural and religious context in which these students navigate their university lives.
4. That the equal provision of and access to multi-faith prayer rooms is crucial in enabling all students to connect to their religious practices as a means of maintaining good wellbeing.

Conference Resolves

1. That all affiliated unions should collaborate with representatives from non-Abrahamic faiths and traditions to gain an understanding of the basic principles underlying them.
2. That all affiliated unions must collaborate with student societies representing non-Abrahamic faiths and traditions to understand the needs of these students whilst at university.
3. That all affiliated unions should provide a space on campus that can be used as a multi-faith prayer room for students from non-Abrahamic faiths and traditions.
4. That all affiliated unions should liaise with their university chaplaincies to create a strategy for recruiting chaplains from non-Abrahamic faiths and traditions.



Protecting students at white t-shirt parties

Content Note: Explicit content

Conference Believes

Content Warning

1. In September 2016 at Exeter University Snowsports Club, students graffitied "The Holocaust was a good time" and "Don't speak to me if you're not white." on t shirts at a social event
2. In October 2018 at a Plymouth Conservative society social, swastikas and Hitler moustaches were drawn, as well as references to Enoch Powell and "f**k the NHS"
3. In November 2018, at the Lancaster Snowsports society white t shirt party, students drew offensive pictures and slogans on t shirts. This included "Jimmy Savile was misunderstood", "I like 12 year olds", "Gary Glitter innocent", "Sandyhook woz bantz", "Mandela touched kids", a swastika in a heart and a Hitler moustache.
4. In Autumn 2018, at Newcastle University, students drew graffiti of antisemitic statements, trivialising the Holocaust, on t shirts
5. In February 2019, pictures were taken at a Coventry University sports night of students with swastikas and "the Jews deserved it" written on t shirts

Conference Further Believes

1. SUs have a duty to protect minority students
2. SUs must effectively discipline students responsible for such acts
3. SUs opposition to hatred, including antisemitism, misogyny, islamophobia and homophobia, must be realised through decisive action

Conference Resolves

1. To publicly condemn such instances whenever they arise, and work with the relevant minority groups to ensure their safety and security on campus
2. To issue guidance to SUs on the necessary procedures to undertake if these incidents arise
3. To encourage SU officers to use the appropriate disciplinary proceedings, including escalating cases to the university where relevant
4. To encourage SUs to include such examples in their equality and diversity training for societies



Education Zone

Further Education Zone Proposal

Conference Believes

1. Further education can boost social mobility, providing students with the necessary skills they need to progress into work or education and qualifications to go on to succeed. For many students, it is a second chance.
2. Increasingly, the lines between further and higher education are blurred, with Higher Level Technical Education increasingly bridging the divide. This means there is a greater need to think about the whole tertiary education sector, rather than enforcing division or competition between further and higher education.
3. We are seeing innovation in further education, as new qualifications, such as T Levels, and training programmes are developed.
4. If developed in the interests of students, higher level technical education and the new T Level qualifications could be widely beneficial
5. Education funding is at a time of great instability. There is a funding discrepancy within further education, as newer initiatives such as apprenticeships and T Levels receive growing proportions of the funding available in comparison to existing providers.

Conference Further Believes

1. The development of new qualifications presents an opportunity to ensure they are delivered in the student interest. These qualifications do need to be informed by what is needed in the workplace, ensuring that they meet standards which will allow students to progress into skilled employment. This does not mean that employers' needs should be front and centre though: student voice should be key to the development and delivery of any new qualifications.
2. The experience of a further education student is not limited to the learning that they undertake in the classroom. A broad, non-prescriptive student experience is as valuable as the qualification that a learner gains at the end. As such, things that detract from this, such as compulsory English and Maths resits should be challenged.
3. No part of education should be forced to compete with another for funding, whether that is between the higher and further education sector, or between different parts of further education. NUS will not advocate taking funding from one part of the education sector to finance another.
4. The further education sector should be sustainably funded in order to allow students at all levels and within all parts of it to thrive, whether funded by central government, devolved powers or topped up by local authorities, as specialist colleges are.
5. Students should receive maintenance funding directly to allow them to study and undertake placements. Providers should be funded to a level which allows them to deliver high quality education which meets the needs of their students. This includes provision of high quality support services, and fair pay for staff.
6. Advice and guidance for students and prospective students is a crucial part of ensuring a healthy further education sector. This needs to be independent, timely, and delivered both on campuses and within communities. Practitioners should be trained to deliver this in an inclusive way to all students.
7. Strong student voice is integral to high quality education and placements, as well as to and sector- and institutional governance.



Conference Resolves

1. To work to influence the development of new areas of further education in the best interests of students. This means calling for collective, democratic and independent student voice to be embedded across the sector. It also means ensuring that high quality provision is at the forefront of all qualifications and placements, and developing quality assurance that has student voice at its heart.
2. To lobby for the provision of clear, independent and timely advice and guidance, available both for students and within communities.
3. To advocate for funding, financial support and services which enable the delivery of high quality education, and students to successfully access and thrive in further education.



Higher Education Zone Proposal

Conference Believes

1. The goal of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 was to force higher education institutions to compete against each other and organise it as a market.
2. Implementing the HERA means that the government drives forward policy initiatives designed to make universities fight over fee income. Instead of leading to improvement, this leads to lower quality provision, as services are being cut and the experience of students and staff worsening.
3. The government is prioritising the political project of creating a 'well-functioning' competitive market, over nurturing a sustainable and well-funded higher education sector which serves the needs of students and communities.
4. For those who propose marketisation, the ultimate sign of an effective market is 'market entry' and 'market exit' – making it much easier for new providers to set up, but with fewer checks and balances, and then not intervening when other institutions face financial difficulty and could shut down. To encourage this, the regulator and the government have been clear that they will let universities go bankrupt and collapse should they face financial difficulty.
5. This ideological move away from supporting and funding our universities could prove to be one of the most dangerous moments for our higher education system in years.
6. National policy levers are being pulled to encourage universities to the point of collapse. These include proposals of differential fees or headline fee cuts. Without a top up from government funding, both of these represent nothing more than cuts to education disguised as progressive measures to give students less debt.
7. Marketisation is linked to the current system of tuition fees, however at its heart is a system of regulation which encourages competition between institutions.
8. If tuition fees were abolished, but the regulation of the system stayed the same, it would still show the worst excesses of marketisation; the burden of funding would just move from the student to the government.
9. The introduction of a market incentivises universities to behave in certain ways. From only taking action to improve student services where the result will bring in money, to valuing the NSS over informed student lobbying, to rapidly increasing student numbers without increasing provision, the effect of this is being felt across higher education.
10. Marketisation encourages a culture of individual and atomised student engagement, on the basis of 'making customers happy' through asking their opinion in surveys, rather than listening to collective, political lobbying from unions.
11. Tools such as the NSS and the Teaching Excellence Framework have been used to further competition between institutions, rather than collaboration and enhancement, and as such have become a key part of the marketisation agenda.
12. Marketisation also threatens effective widening participation work. The current policy landscape, including measuring institutional success and teaching quality by graduate salaries, incentivises the recruitment of students likely to gain higher graduate outcomes. This prevents universities from carrying out truly collaborative outreach, and incentivises school and academy sponsorship with a mindset to setting up a pipeline of recruitment to their institution, rather than promoting educational access and choice.
13. The sole purpose of education is not as a pipeline of graduate training to move people into the workplace. However, students are concerned about their job prospects on graduation, and these concerns do not mean that they have uncritically accepted a marketized system.
14. The education sector is changing. There is no longer a solid divide between further and higher education qualifications and provision, with higher level technical education often bridging this divide. Our responses and organising as a student movement should reflect this.



Conference Further Believes

1. Regulation of higher education should be based on collaboration and solving common problems, not competition and 'survival of the fittest'.
2. Collaboration should span not only other higher education institutions, but further education providers. Universities and colleges should play a central role within communities: this means meaningful co-delivery and sharing of resources, not activity designed only to recruit students.
3. Students should be active partners in their education, with democratic, collective engagement central to the design and running of both institutions and throughout the higher education sector.
4. There should be no limit on the number of students able to access tertiary education.

Conference Resolves

1. To challenge the culture of individualised student engagement by advocating for democratic and collective student engagement throughout higher education; and to challenge the manipulation of student voice to further or justify marketisation through the TEF and uses of the NSS
2. To advocate for a clear vision of free education, not regulated through competition but through collaboration and partnership, with collective, democratic engagement at its core, and to prioritise lobbying work against policies which exacerbate marketisation, lobbying in the first instance to secure education funding at the current level.
3. To work with students' unions to build a comprehensive picture of the ways marketisation is affecting students on campus, and to present this to the regulator, government and the public at every opportunity.
4. To develop a shared understanding of marketisation among the mass student population through students' unions



International Student Fees Cap

Conference Believes

1. According to HESA* 268,805 international students enrolled UK universities in the academic year 2017/18 taking up as high as 14% of total student population in the UK
2. Other EU(non-UK) students enrolled in the academic year 2017/18 account for 6% of the total UK student population (108,335)
3. Looking at the available data on distance studies (overseas, online etc.) it is noticeable that almost 90% of students are international
4. Living expenses of international student coming to the UK also feed into the local economy based on their location of residence
5. Although course fees are capped** for UK and EU undergraduate students, that is not the case for international students and does not apply to postgraduate study
6. Students experience fee raises throughout their course thus paying more from year to year.

*<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/>

**https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2018/9780111170946/pdfs/ukdsiem_9780111170946_en.pdf

Conference Further Believes

1. After Brexit all non-UK students might be considered as international hence looking at the current HE statistics more than 20% of entire student population in the UK will be international making a considerable impact on the HE market
2. International students should have the same financial rights and security as UK students in terms of a transparent, secure and invariable fee payment scheme
3. Universities across UK should ensure a contract binding relationship between them and the students at enrolment stating the terms and conditions of tuition fees clearly

Conference Resolves

1. NUS to campaign to have International Student Fees capped at a rate proportional to that of home students.
2. NUS to ensure that Universities confirm the exact cost of tuition fees for the entire duration of a student's course. This information needs to be readily available at the application period.
3. To work with Office for Students and Government to ensure students do not encounter fee increases whilst studying. They pay the same for every year upon commencement of their course.



Graduate Levy

Conference Believes

1. Society benefits from having an educated population, the quantity and quality of which has always been a general measure of social progress
2. The increase in tuition fees introduced since 2012 has severely limited people's ability to receive higher education
3. The competition produced by the marketisation of higher education has reduced the quality of education
4. Both the staff and students attending higher education have suffered due to the need to make universities more profitable
5. A Grad Levy would link course funding to employability.
6. Courses would become more focussed on employability as education is shaped to fit the will of the market.
7. A Grad Levy would result in universities avoiding recruitment of students from marginalised backgrounds because they know these students earn less later in life.
8. Post-92s would suffer more than older institutions because they're more likely to recruit working class and widening participation students, who again are less likely to get high paying jobs.
9. A Grad Levy would also discourage employers from hiring graduates in areas when they could hire non-graduates – it makes university more of a risk for working class students.

Conference Further Believes

1. Integral to opposing marketisation is the belief that the principle of free education should be funded by higher taxation.
2. Lecturers, teaching assistants and support staff deserve a fair living wage and pension
3. There is enough money and resources in society to provide free education for all
4. Profit should have no place in education
5. NUS' support of the Grad Levy undermines its own ongoing work fighting marketization.

Conference Resolves

1. To oppose the Grad Levy at any point it is brought up.
2. To clarify publically that NUS opposes a grad levy.
3. To re-iterate that NUS believes in funding HE through general taxation.
4. To work with UCU, and other unions present on campuses nationwide, to campaign for a national and democratic plan of education and research based on the good and needs of society.



Publish programme costs; transparency in HE

Conference Believes

1. Education is a public good.
2. As providers of a public good, Higher Education providers need to be transparent not only to their students, but to society.
3. Data from Tredence shows that students want institutions to be upfront and open about the costs of individual programmes.
4. Most people come to university hoping to graduate
5. The moment of physically collecting a degree is a central part of the myth and rhetoric which surrounds education
6. There are only two providers of most graduation gowns in the UK
7. Graduating in front of a students parents can cost 100s of pounds
8. Having paid so much to get a degree students shouldn't have to pay to collect it
9. Like all hidden course costs graduation costs are bad

Conference Further Believes

1. Universities should be publicly owned, and as such publicly accountable.
2. NUS should campaign for transparency in costs of study for individual programmes.
3. The lack of competition in this sector is a real problem
4. Most universities take large commission payments from graduation gown providers
5. Strathclyde has recently abolished graduation fees

Conference Resolves

1. To lobby UUK to advise institutions to publicise the individual costs of programmes.
2. To create a campaign briefing for Students' Unions to lobby their own institutions to be upfront about the costs of individual programmes.
3. To also create a campaign kit for Course Representatives to lobby for transparency around the cost of their courses.
4. To conduct research into the average cost of graduation in the UK
5. To work to reduce this cost
6. To cause NUS to investigate a student owned social enterprise model for graduation gowns and photographs
7. To carry out an FOI on all UK HEs to identify the hidden commission being made on gowning
8. To call for an outright ban on graduation fees



Fair Pay for Students on Placement

Conference Believes


1. 2016 National Conference policy 'NUS for the NHS' (Motion 401), which resolves to support campaigns to reverse NHS bursary cuts, is due to lapse this year.
2. Since the removal of the bursary, applications to study nursing in England have declined by around 40%. (ref 1)
3. Further to the removal of the bursary, the compulsory clinical placements for NHS students create an additional financial burden due to:
 - a. the limit this places on their capacity to do paid work alongside their course.
 - b. the cost of travelling to placements that are often far away from their campuses, which they are expected to pay
4. These hidden course costs also affect non-NHS students who have compulsory placements as part of their course, such as undergraduate trainee teachers.
5. The increased financial pressure faced by these students is detrimental to their success in their course and their wellbeing, and is a barrier to widening participation for low-income, mature, and other underrepresented students.
6. Paramedic students were never eligible for any kind of NHS bursary despite going on placement frequently and having course schedules similar to those of other allied health courses.
7. Most other allied health courses were affected by the bursary cuts and implementation of fees, including courses such as orthoptics, radiography, physiotherapy and several others.
8. All of these courses incur plenty of additional costs over and above those of most other students, such as travel to placements and necessary equipment.
9. Applications to allied health professions have fallen since the removal of the bursaries.

Conference Further Believes

1. Students should not be expected to bear the full burden of additional - sometimes extortionate - travel costs to complete compulsory placements, particularly as they have very little control over where they are placed.
2. All workers should be paid a fair wage for the work they carry out, whether they are trained professionals or on placement.
3. The struggles of workers in the healthcare and teaching sectors are essential to the fight to preserve our public services as public goods, and oppose the privatisation which is also currently damaging higher and further education.
4. Particularly in the context of the ongoing national shortage of NHS and teaching staff, NUS should do everything in its power to ensure our healthcare and education services are sustainable and work for the many in society.
5. Most of these allied health courses have high course costs - such as travel to placements and equipment - and students are increasingly finding themselves in significant financial difficulty as a result.
6. Most of the attention has been focused on nursing and midwifery students after the loss of the NHS bursary, but there are thousands of students on these other health courses who are just as vital to the UK health services and who are suffering because of a lack of funding.
7. Not enough work is being done to raise awareness of the effect on these students, or to lobby for these students to get their bursaries back, or given to them for the first time.

Conference Resolves

1. To lobby providers to calculate compulsory placement travel expenses as a necessary cost of delivering a course, and as such offer bursaries to all students that cover any such costs incurred.
2. To continue to support SUs, NHS workers, and related groups campaigning to reverse NHS bursary cuts.
3. To lobby the government to classify placement work as work, and ensure students are paid at least the National Minimum Wage.
4. To work with SUs and trade unions to campaign on this issue, in conjunction with related issues such as the exploitation of young workers through low pay for apprentices. (ref 2)
5. To promote trade union membership to students, and particularly those on placement.
6. To support and campaign for an end to cuts, marketisation, and privatisation in the NHS and public education system, and for public services that are fair for all service users and staff, including trainee staff

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7. To lobby to get bursaries returned to all allied health students who were previously in receipt of them.
 8. To lobby to get bursaries given to Paramedic students.

-- REFERENCES --

1. <https://www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/news/removing-the-student-nurse-bursary-has-been-a-disaster>
2. <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2018/07/National-Minimum-Wage.pdf>



Society and Citizenship Zone


Environmental Justice

Conference Believes

1. Across the globe, and particularly in the so-called global south, Black and poor communities disproportionately experience the gravest impacts of environmental pollution and climate change.
2. Moreover, those who are the key contributors to climate change globally are western powers, predominantly white states and rich corporations. Those who benefit from the airports, power plants, oil companies that cause climate change are mainly richer people who live in cities.
3. Whilst there is amazing work happening across the UK, in NUS and at students' unions, often this work fails to sufficiently highlight the racialised and classed aspect of the causes and impacts of climate change.
4. The US Environmental Protection Agency describes environmental justice as: "...the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies." [1]
5. Across the globe, people of colour are often at the forefront of campaigning but have their voices and interests shut out of decision making on issues regarding the environment.
6. The Environmental Justice Foundation estimate that between 2008 and 2016, 21.5 million people became displaced because of extreme weather events caused by global warming. The United Nations predict that the number of climate refugees worldwide could reach up to 1 billion by 2050.
7. These environmental refugees do not currently have the right to stay in the UK
8. These people will be from the most vulnerable communities across the globe – 99% of direct victims of climate change come from countries which overall contribute to just 1% of global emissions.
9. In 2016, it was reported that Black African and Caribbean people living in London are disproportionately exposed to air pollution. It had already been acknowledged that poorer people in London most greatly feel the effects of air pollution, but this was the first time that the UK Government had been exposed for the impact this was having on Black communities too.
10. The idea of environmental justice isn't a new one, it arose in the 1980's from the struggles of Black communities in the US trying to challenge the impact that environmental injustices were having on their local communities.
11. Climate change is real and it is happening now, caused by the burning of fossil fuels predominantly by the world's richest nations.
12. The effects of climate are already being felt through warming global temperatures, leading to more frequent extreme weather events and rising sea levels.
13. The world's poorest people will suffer most from climate change. 4. Local and indigenous communities on the frontline of fossil fuel extraction face land grabs, violence and ill health. The colonial models of extraction employed by the fossil fuel industry must not be replicated as we decarbonise.
14. UK HE institutions have led globally on fossil fuel divestment with over 72 making some kind of commitment. Banks are a major source of finance for fossil fuel companies allowing them to continue profiting from climate change.
15. Barclays provided \$10.927bn to fossil fuel companies and projects between 2015 and 2017.
16. Barclays supports the companies behind fracking in Yorkshire, the clearance of Hambacher Forest for coal mining, and the Keystone XL pipeline extension.

Conference Further Believes

1. Environmental justice should be adopted as a framework for ensuring that the needs and voices of Black communities locally and globally are central to our work tackling environmental challenges.
2. Our work must centre the needs of and amplify the voices of Black and working-class people who are already feeling the impacts of climate change most dramatically, in communities across the UK and internationally.

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3. The principle of environmental justice should exist at every level of our sustainability work, from our supply chain through to our work with activists on campus.
 4. That action on climate change is best delivered on an international and local level. Students' unions are in an excellent position to build relationships with activist groups on and off campus in order to ensure that their campaigning work is as inclusive and effective as possible.
 5. That climate refugees should have the right to enter and remain in the UK.
 6. Divest-invest is effectively stripping the fossil fuel industry of its social license to profit from climate breakdown and we should aim for all UK HE institutions to divest.
 7. The Fossil Free movement should expand to target banks and cut off a key source of financial support for the fossil fuel industry.
 8. Climate injustice is a class issue and requires leadership from workers in and outside the energy industry.

Conference Resolves

1. NUS should support students' unions to develop relationships with activist groups on and off campus to ensure a variety of voices are reflected in their sustainability work
2. NUS should collaborate with expert organisations and already working within an environmental justice framework, such as War on Want and People and Planet and launch a toolkit
3. NUS should continue its commitment to the Divest-Invest Campaign
4. NUS should work with the Black Students' Campaign on this issue
5. NUS should lobby the Government to provide robust rights and protections for climate refugees once they arrive in the UK
6. Divest-invest and fossil free finance should be high-profile campaigns for NUS.
7. NUS should work with campaigning organisations such as People & Planet, BankTrack and 350.org to continue divest-invest and develop fossil free finance campaigning.
8. Make links with trade unions working on just transition and climate justice to co-develop solidarity campaigns between students and workers.
9. Society and Citizenship zone to support SU Officers to increase the number of Students' Union and university boycotts of Barclays and incorporate fossil free finance into annual SU and NUS officer trainings.
10. Society and Citizenship zone to work with Further Education zone to ensure FE is prioritised in NUS' work on divest-invest and fossil free finance.
11. NUS to boycott Barclays until they stop financing all fossil fuel companies and extraction projects, including:
12. Do not bank with Barclays.
13. Have no financial dealings with Barclays.
14. Do not allow Barclays to sponsor, advertise or recruit at NUS events or across its digital platforms.
15. Do not accept awards sponsored by Barclays.
16. Have no other dealings with Barclays.



Institutionalised Islamophobia

Conference Believes

1. Islamophobia is on the rise across wider society, however there is little acknowledgement of the institutionalised forms and practices of racialised and gendered islamophobia
2. NUS has not been exempt from this Islamophobia with wrongful and irresponsible reporting and misrepresentation of events taking place at NUS NEC & other NUS Events and meetings leading to abuse of Muslim Officers and Volunteers
3. The Muslims in Education Report stated "1 in 3 Muslim Students felt unwelcome at NUS Democratic Events" with many stating they had faced anti-muslim rhetoric and hatred.
4. The NUS IRR specifically states the concern in which the media gave 'partial or highly selective coverage of elections and motions' at the national conference 2016 and reporting of the election announcements using words such as 'shock and controversy'. This rhetoric was magnified by comments made on social media
5. The NUS IRR also noted worries regarding the ability of NUS to respond and manage such incidents and that students are unaware of resources available to them
6. Muslim students, sabbatical officers and FTOs across the student movement are subjects of double standards of scrutiny and media attention
7. Muslim students and officers running in elections and volunteering for NUS have suffered considerable damage to their mental, physical and emotional well-being as a result despite leading on some of the most important and progressive work undertaken
8. Use of islamophobic and racialised language when referring to Muslim and racialised students by the leadership of NUS has gone unchecked despite concerns raised by Muslim students and officers repeatedly
9. This came to a head with candidates at National Conference 2017 running openly Islamophobic election campaigns
10. Sections and zones of NUS have failed to critically engage with and support Muslim students, the burden of which has fallen to liberation campaigns
10. Symptomatic of NUS's institutionalised failure towards Muslim students is the fact that NUS events were held on Eid Ul adha, Eid Ul Fitr and Ramadan.

Conference Further Believes

1. The treatment of Muslim volunteers has caused many Muslim students to re-consider getting involved in NUS
2. NUS and elected full-time officers need to do more for Muslim students and officers beyond tokenistic practices and lip service
4. The Women's Campaign this year has run campaigns on Gendered Islamophobia and shed much light on the experiences of Muslim women within the movement.
5. There is a pressing need to highlight the experiences of Muslim students more broadly, including Islamophobia but also when engaging with NUS and student democratic structures more broadly
6. That the NUS Womens Campaign and Black Students Campaign have engaged with the APPG on British Muslims in the Islamophobia Defines Report.

Conference Resolves

1. To subscribe to the definition of Islamophobia as laid out by the APPG on British Muslims - Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.
2. To introduce training on islamophobia and implicit bias into NUS Lead and Change programs to be directed by Muslims FTOs, NEC Members & FOSIS
3. To mandate the NUS VP UD to work on an action plan specifically to target institutionalised islamophobia within NUS and training for FTOs
4. To ensure that officers and volunteers are sufficiently held to account for the use of racialised and Islamophobic tropes such as the 'far left', 'extremist' in reference to Muslim students and students of colour
5. To issue a statement in light of this motion to re-assure Muslim students across the movement of NUS's commitment to tackling this issue



Brexit

Conference Believes


1. That many students have concerns and uncertainty about the impact that Brexit is going to have on their future education and status in the UK
2. That many of the government and sector briefings have been vague
3. That this uncertainty poses a huge risk to both those students as individuals and also to the sector
4. A critical role of NUS is to take complex national policy and translate it into more accessible briefings
5. Brexit is almost guaranteed to mean the biggest increase of immigration controls in decades; a deepening of the xenophobic "hostile environment" policy; and the biggest attack on migrants' rights in a generation. This will affect all migrants, whether they are here on EU papers (as are many migrants from non-EU countries), or other papers, or are undocumented.
6. We must campaign to end detention, deportations, the denial of access to services and the 'no recourse to public funds' policy for migrants.
7. Many of the lowest-paid and most exploited workers on our campuses are migrants: Brexit will make it much easier for employers to bully and exploit them. We should stand in solidarity with these workers, alongside others who will be hardest-hit by Brexit's xenophobia and attacks on workers' rights.
8. We should loudly oppose Brexit and campaign for a People's Vote with an option to remain, hand-in-hand with campus trade unions such as the IWGB.
9. From the 'Fortress Europe' border regime to the neoliberal economic policies it pursues, the EU must be radically transformed. But we can only fight to change it from within: EU membership and social and economic integration across borders provides a higher platform for united working-class struggle across Europe, for free movement and migrants' rights; against austerity and neoliberalism; for social levelling-up across Europe; and for democracy in the EU.
10. In the context of the growth in right-wing and nationalist political parties and movements worldwide, it's now more important than ever that we promote internationalism.

Conference Further Believes

1. NUS must fight to defend and extend EU and non-EU migrants' rights and freedom of movement as a human right. However, the For Our Future's Sake (FFS) campaign for a People's Vote, spearheaded by the NUS President, VPHE and VPFE, is silent on this issue, despite a mandate from 2017 NUS Conference to "fight uncompromisingly against capitulation by the left and the student and trade union movements on migrant rights and free movement."
2. FFS lists a member of 'Young Conservatives for a People's Vote' as one of its 'Young Leaders', and includes Tory MP Anna Soubry and the Lib Dem Deputy Leader Jo Swinson in its list of supporting politicians. Any coalition with Tories, business leaders and Lib Dems makes it impossible to lead an anti-Brexit campaign in the interests of students and the working class.
3. 2017 policy mandates NUS to "argue and campaign for a programme of immediate real solutions to the problems facing students and working class people, including: uniting migrant and British-born workers in trade unions to fight for improved pay and conditions for all; reversing anti-union laws; raising and enforcing the minimum wage; decent housing accessible for all; secure, decently-paid jobs, training and education for everyone; serious taxes on the rich and their businesses in order to redistribute wealth and reverse cuts to welfare and education, fund decent public services and rebuild the NHS." This cannot be done in a lash up with Tories, Lib Dems and business leaders.

Conference Resolves

1. NUS should produce briefings both for SU's and directly for students outlining the latest developments in relation to Brexit and their likely implications for students and the sector
2. That these briefings should be as clear as possible about the implications for students in different circumstances taking into account different levels of understanding for the politics and bureaucratic process of the UK
3. NUS should also prepare a briefing for SU's on the impact of Brexit for our elected officers and staff members

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4. To support and campaign for a Remain vote in any upcoming Brexit referendum, in favour of the retention and extension of free movement for all, regardless of income, education or employment status, while fighting for radical social and democratic changes within the EU.
 5. To campaign for any second referendum to give migrants living in the UK and 16 and 17 year olds a vote.
 6. Oppose all restrictions on migration, with the understanding that border controls are in opposition to the interests of the working class



Tackling Knife Crime

Conference Believes

1. Knife crime is a society wide issue which is ruining lives and destroying families
2. In London alone in 2018 there were 14,769 knife crimes reported by the Metropolitan Police including 70 fatal stabbings
3. Many of the victims are our members

Conference Resolves

1. Knife crime needs to be treated as a public health issue, such an approach in Scotland has seen knife crime reduce by 69% in a decade whilst it has grown across the rest of the UK
2. This requires a joined up approach between the NHS, Police, Schools, Colleges, Universities and Charities
3. NUS should seek partners to launch a national campaign against knife crime focussed on the importance of education



Living Wage Motion

Conference Believes

1. Everyone deserves to be paid a wage that they can live on.
2. Just over 20% of Universities are currently Living Wage Employers ¹¹
3. As of 2018, 92% of students believe all university staff should be paid a Living Wage¹²
4. As evidence shows many students struggle with the cost of living, NUS Wales' 2015 "pounds in your pocket survey" found many students must work or take on personal debt to support their study.
5. Around 55% of students working 0-8 hours a week feel they struggle with their course due to work commitments, with close to 70% of students who work more than 25 hours a week feeling they struggle with their course due to work commitments.
6. Students also have high levels of personal debt beyond their student debt
7. Close to 50% of undergraduate students have personal debt ranging from overdrafts to payday loans.
8. Outsourcing of workers by universities creates a two-tier workforce where outsourced staff experience poorer working conditions and earn less per hour¹³
9. Workers currently paid less than a living wage in UK universities are predominantly women¹⁴
10. When universities are a large employer in their area, they possess wage-setting power that determines the pay of workers beyond the university as well as within.
11. As of April 2018, the minimum wage for those aged 16-17 is £4.20, 18-20 £5.90, 21-25 £7.38 and £7.83 for those over the age of 25.
12. The current minimum wage set out by the government is not sufficient to properly subsidise students during their time at university.
13. By April 2019, the minimum and living wage is set to rise.

Conference Further Believes

1. Students, and student-led-campaigns, can play a vital role in holding their universities to account for their failure to pay a real living wage to all staff.
2. Moreover, student activists should be working to improve the lives of every member of their university communities, students and staff alike.
3. This is an area where Students' Unions across the country have a responsibility and an ability to take action.
4. Concerns over debt and money, often linked to socio-economic background, shouldn't be something which inhibits a student's ability to study.
5. Current government legislation has not gone far enough to address these problems.
6. The current structure of the minimum wage is insufficient to addressing these problems.
7. The age structure represents a form of discrimination which disproportionately affects students.

Conference Resolves


1. To mandate the Vice President Society and Citizenship, or relevant officers, to work with the Living Wage Foundation and Citizens UK to develop strategies for securing the Living Wage for university employees.
2. To support the creation of student-led campaigns for the living wage through Students Unions' nationally
3. To mandate officers to provide relevant resources, expertise and guidance to students campaigning for the living wage in their universities.
4. To investigate the extent of outsourcing in universities, as an obstacle to securing a living wage for all.
5. That the NUS should campaign to make every Students' Union across the country a Living Wage employer.

¹¹ [The Living Wage Foundation, 15th September 2018, <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/news/news-students-shocked-vice-chancellor-excess-back-call-living-wage-universities%C2%A0>. The Living Wage is calculated based on the real cost of living determined by a basic basket of goods drawing from the Minimum Income Standard. It is currently £9.00 outside London, and £10.55 in London].

¹² [<https://www.livingwage.org.uk/news/news-students-shocked-vice-chancellor-excess-back-call-living-wage-universities%C2%A0>].

¹³ [The Living Wage in the UK Higher Education Sector, Unison and NUS, 2013. <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2013/11/Briefings-and-CircularsLiving-wage-research-Exec-summary3.pdf>].

¹⁴ [<https://www.livingwage.org.uk/news/news-women-continue-be-hit-hardest-low-wages-uk>]

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6. That Students' Unions across the country should pay the national living wage to all students in place of the minimum wage to all students regardless of age – this is currently set at £7.83 per hour.
 7. Furthermore, that Students' Unions should increase the wage paid to SU staff in line with increases set out by the government.
 8. NUS should support workers' struggles in education and beyond, work with Labour and trade unions to win £10ph minimum wage and ban zero hour contracts. Run a campaign to organise student workers, from postgrad lecturers and nursing students to those working in the fast food industry. The NUS should actively support workers in struggle, including offering practical solidarity, particularly to young student workers, such as those involved in the recent McDonalds and Picturehouse strikes.
 9. Campaign to bring all workers engaged in work on campus "in-house", for better pay, working conditions and job security.

DPC Note: This motion resolves to mandate Students' Unions – this is not within the power of NUS to resolve and can only be advisory



Students' Rights in the Workplace, End Precarious Work, Precarious Workers on Campus

Conference Believes

1. In order to deal with rising living costs students are increasingly working alongside their studies.
2. In 2015 around 77% of students were in paid employment alongside their degrees. (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-33843987>)
3. As of 2017 less than 8% of working 16-24 year olds were members of a trade union. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/trade-union-statistics-2017>)
4. Students can find themselves subject to undesirable, or sometimes unlawful, employment conditions.
5. Students on tier 4 visas have limits on the amount of work they are allowed to do.
6. A significant number of students as part of their course are required to take unpaid work.
7. Precarious employment has become a typical feature of our lives under capitalism.
8. An upsurge in precarious work is a natural product of capitalist crisis.
9. Over 10 million people in Britain are currently considered to be in precarious employment. (1)
10. Low pay, poor working conditions, zero-hour contracts and minimal rights have become standard.
11. Many workers on campus, from cleaning staff to lecturers, are employed on precarious contracts, often on zero hours.
12. Many students are themselves engaged in precarious work in order to pay their way through university or college.
13. There has been a rise in the number of academic staff employed on precarious contracts at universities, with some institutions employing 70% of their teaching staff on insecure contracts.
14. Postgraduate students are often employed on highly insecure contracts, expected to work for low pay and inconsistent hours.
15. This leads people to be barely able to live off their wages and are living in a desperate social and financial situation. (2)
16. At Universities, the result of this has been recent campaigns to bring cleaners and other staff in-house.
17. The Conservative government has been promoting and encouraging precarious employment. (3)

Conference Further Believes

1. Many of the most precarious and acutely exploited workers on campus are migrant women. This means our approach to improving the conditions of these workers is bound up with the tasks of women's liberation and the fight for migrant rights: extending free movement of peoples and working towards a more equal society in which the expectations of reproductive labour do not fall disproportionately on women.
2. It is the task of students and workers alike to organise against this move towards job insecurity as both groups stand to lose from the current state of affairs. The working conditions of campus workers deteriorating invariably means the deterioration of students' learning conditions.
3. We have the technology, resources, and ability to plan the economy so that no-one has to work in precarious employment,
4. All workers should get a real living wage, fixed-term contracts, and full workers' rights.
5. Student workers can face specific difficulties in managing academics and working. ('I could have got a better degree' <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/aug/07/grades-experience-yourstories-working-studying-university>)
6. Student workers can feel excluded from student life as short notice events are difficult to attend, especially students with varying working schedules. This can lead to some student workers feeling excluded from wider student life.
7. Trade Unions are key organisations in providing protection and resources for those who are employed.
8. Students Unions and Trade Unions share the values of collectivism and democracy and should work together to achieve their shared goals.



Conference Resolves

1. To provide a best practice guide for student unions and student groups inclusion of student workers.
2. To work with the TUC and other relevant organisations to provide resources and information surrounding student workers' rights.
3. To create a toolkit to encourage students to join the relevant trade union and provide resources to this effect.
4. How students on tier 4 visas ensure they are working their legal allowance should be included in the toolkit.
5. To provide guidelines to universities regarding how best to support student workers and their academic studies.
6. The NUS should campaign for all unpaid work within courses to be paid.
7. Oppose all restrictions on migration, with the understanding that border controls are in opposition to the interests of the working class.
8. Support existing campaigns such as UoL Justice for Cleaners and any trade union action to that end.
9. To support, with financial help and active participation, the struggles of precarious workers.
10. To help organise a joint committee of union representatives of all precarious workers at universities, colleges, and schools.
11. To make the case for and participate in joint union action, on a national scale, in defence of the rights of precarious workers.

(1)<http://www.gmb.org.uk/newsroom/millions-insecure-work>

(2)<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/minimum-wage-failing-working-parents-children-budget-cost-child-poverty-cpag-a8498556.html>

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21508526?fbclid=IwAR3wi9hkqcli9h5Mz5MRWF0m_c332wPwkcbTErnGP3f2XaVJIQLPrDyt1ZM

(3)<https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/workers-rights-reform-new-overhaul-zero-hours-contracts/>



Support the Love Equality Coalition

Content Note: Suicide

Conference Believes

Content Warning: Suicide

1. That marriage is a fundamental human right that everyone, regardless of their identity, should have access to.
2. That it is our duty as a Students' Association to fight for marriage equality and LGBT+ rights in Northern Ireland, not only on behalf of our LGBT+ and Northern Irish student populations, but also as a fundamental right.

Conference Further Believes

1. In the most recent vote, 51% of Northern Irish MLAs (Members of the Legislative Assembly) voted for marriage equality, but the DUP (Democratic Unionist Party) was able to veto it by invoking a petition of concern [1].
2. 70% of the Northern Irish public are in support of marriage equality [2].
3. Northern Ireland is the only place in the UK where same-sex marriage is still illegal.
4. Reduced LGBT+ rights in Northern Ireland has led to a mental health crisis in the community that is particularly severe, with 35% of LGBT+ individuals self-harming compared to 13% in rest of UK, 57% drinking to hazardous levels compared to 24% in England, and 25% attempting suicide [3]

[1] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-politics-34692546>

[2] <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/survey-shows-70-support-for-samesex-marriages-in-northern-ireland-34842125.html>

[3] <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/mental-health-northern-ireland-fundamental-facts>

Conference Resolves

1. To support the Love Equality Coalition campaign for equal marriage in Northern Ireland during LGBT+ history month.
2. To support the Love Equality Coalition further by publishing a statement of support as a Students' Association, and running an awareness-raising campaign about marriage equality in Northern Ireland.
3. To encourage local LGBTQ+ organisations to do the same.



Union Development

Unions as Unions

Conference Believes

1. The student movement exists alongside and within a strong trade union movement in the UK.
2. Attacks on education and Students' Unions are happening side by side attacks on our colleagues and siblings in the Trade Union movement.
3. The success of our movement and society is best served by standing in solidarity and working closely with the wider Trade Union movement in the UK.

Conference Further Believes

1. That there needs to be far more done in our education system to raise awareness about the important role Trade Unions have played and continue to play in the creation and protection of valuable rights workers in the UK have earned.
2. Students' Unions around the country can build strong local links through their trade union branches in their institutions and in the local community more broadly. This can help in development of campaigns and the engagement and support of groups beyond our immediate members on campuses.
3. Solidarity between our movement and the trade movement has been proven to work when we share beliefs, such as in the case of our continued fight against the PREVENT strategy.

Conference Resolves

1. The Vice President Union Development should work to create support for SU's to link in with local Trade Union branches.
2. To integrate political and historical training of the Trade Union movement into Lead and Change for sabbatical officers within Students' Union's.
3. That NUS should be providing SU and/or student staff with information on joining a Trade Union.
4. We should continue to grow and develop our integration with the wider Trade Union movement in the UK.



The Elections Commission - making democracy accessible!

Conference Believes

1. One of the unique and special aspects of our student movement and individual Students' Unions is our democratic spaces, elections and decision making. Our movement should be run by elected student leaders representing the voice of millions of students around the UK.
2. The absolute aspiration of all should be to ensure that our democratic spaces in Students' Unions and NUS is accessible for all and capturing the full wealth of experience, talent and diversity of our membership.
3. The NUS Black Students Campaign, Women's campaign, VP UD and many other campaigns and officers consistently hear of the difficulties that both candidates and Students' Unions face during their individual election season.
4. The work surrounding the elections commission by the zone this year is welcomed, but needs to be grown and expanded much further.
5. Students Unions often run elections with several weeks of campaigning and voting, and candidates are encouraged to spend as much time talking to students as possible. Many SUs consider this best practice. This can lead to long days of campaigning, with candidates sometimes spending 12 or more hours trying to 'sell themselves' to students. This is by its very nature exclusionary to many disabled students, including but not limited to those with chronic physical health conditions and those with poor mental health.

Conference Further Believes

1. There have been a plethora of experiences shared by students showing consistent examples and experiences of both conscious and unconscious bias as well as discrimination in elections on campuses.
2. Many Students' Union's struggle specifically with encouraging women to stand in elections and often end up with all men teams and very often men as presidents. In places where all women teams are elected, it is frequently faced with backlash and calls for 'Men's officers' or representatives for reasons that can be addressed through liberation campaigns.
3. International students have particularly found in recent years that elections are increasingly inaccessible and have been disproportionately affected by suspensions and disqualifications.
4. Black students are often homogenized and disproportionately targeted through sanctions, suspensions and disqualifications during elections.
5. Students' Union's themselves have told us they have also struggled in many places with running of elections and engaging all students.

Conference Resolves

1. The Vice President Union Development should continue to work on the Elections Commission work in supporting SU's and candidates in accessibility of SU democracy.
2. To particularly work with all Liberation campaigns and officers to support students and candidates that define into these groups.
3. That we also take a stance against Men's officers/representatives, and that we redirect these calls for support to the relevant liberation campaigns.
4. To provide particular attention to the experiences and support of international students in SU democracy.
5. The UD Zone will work with the Disabled Students Officer, the Disabled Students Committee and member unions to evaluate the impact of lengthy elections periods on both turnout in elections, and the impact on disabled candidates.

