

# UUEAS POLICY 2014

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## **POLICY PASSED AUTUMN SEMESTER 2014**

**OCTOBER 9**

**1576 Ethical Steering Group** passed 9 October 14

Proposer: Chris Jarvis – Campaigns & Democracy Officer

Seconder: Iain Goddard – Environment Officer

### **Union Notes**

1. That we have a substantial amount of policy relating to ethical and environmental issues, a large proportion of which is yet to be effectively implemented.
2. That of this, much relates to the internal practices of UUEAS
3. That policy 1395 b) – Union Commercial Services - states that we should be an exemplar regarding ethical practices and purchasing
4. That policy 659 – Ethical Investment and Labelling calls for the establishment of a working group to develop the Union's ethical investment, advertising and labelling policy further.
5. That at present there is no formal mechanism for regulating the practices of UUEAS in relation to their ethical and environmental performance

### **Union Believes**

1. That the lack of implementation of ethical and environmental policy has, in part, been a result of there being no existing structure for its implementation, and therefore an undue onus being placed on Part Time Officers
2. That the time and energy students exert in writing, debating and passing policy should not be put to waste as a result of institutional inertia
3. That effective communication between staff and students increases the effectiveness of policy implementation

### **Union Resolves**

1. To establish an Ethical and Environmental steering group whose membership shall be:
  - a. The Campaigns & Democracy Officer
  - b. The Ethical Issues Officer
  - c. The Environment Officer
  - d. Two students elected by Union Council
  - e. Staff within UUEAS responsible for procurement, advertising or commercial partnership.And whose remit shall be:
  - a. To oversee the implementation of existing UUEAS policy on ethical and environmental issues

- b. To monitor procurement, advertising and commercial partnership, to ensure that it fits within our existing ethical and environmental parameters
  - c. To proactively seek to improve the ethical and environmental performance of UUEAS
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## **1577 UUEAS: A Democratic Workplace**

passed 9 October 2014

Proposer: Josh Wilson (Ethical Issues Officer)

Seconder: Chris Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer)

### **Union Council Notes**

1. The Union employs over 350 staff.
2. The Trustee Board consists of no employees apart from the Full Time Officers.
3. The Union currently has no democratic processes in place when it comes to employees other than for the Full Time Officers and the proposed election of student staff onto the commercial boards of the Union's companies.
3. UUEAS has the core values of,
  - a) Collectivism - The people collectively, for the benefit of the people as a whole.
  - b) Democracy - Government by the people; power resides in the people as a whole, and is exercised either directly by them or by officers elected by them.
4. Workplace Democracy is becoming increasingly common and can arguably increase employee engagement and productivity\*

### **Union Council Believes**

1. Democracy should be at the core of all the Union's endeavours.
2. Workplace Democracy can be positive for both the employee and the employer.
3. Staff Protocol is in place to protect staff that don't have a right to reply in the democratic process and this should not be eroded.

### **Union Council Resolves**

1. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer with the Democratic Procedures Committee to run a consultation with staff about ways the Union can become a more democratic workplace and report back to Union Council with findings and proposals.

\*<http://money.usnews.com/money/careers/articles/2008/04/24/why-workplace-democracy-can-be-good-business>

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## **1578 Amendment to the Byelaws: Delegation to NUS Conference**

passed 9 October 2014

Proposer: Holly Staynor – Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer

Seconder: Chris Jarvis – Campaigns & Democracy Officer

### **Union Notes:**

1. At NUS National Conference 2014, an amendment to the NUS constitution was passed relating to the delegate rules that Student Unions must follow for electing their delegates.
2. This amendment required all Student Unions to provide a gender balanced delegation, and elect their delegates accordingly.
3. This has meant that Student Unions must send a delegation, of which at least 50% must be self-defined women.
4. As such, an amendment to our byelaws is necessary to adjust our election process accordingly.

### **Union Believes:**

1. That the new NUS rules mean that students who do not identify within the socially constructed gender binary are more restricted in their ability to get elected to NUS conference delegations.
2. That the move towards improving women's representation in conference delegations is positive, but that improving representation of women should never come at the expense of disenfranchising transgender students and those who do not identify within a gender binary.
3. That the new NUS rules are therefore trans-exclusive.

### **Union Resolves:**

1. To adopt new byelaw 14:

#### **Bye Law 14: NUS Conference Delegation**

##### **Background**

Each year the Union offers the opportunity to elect delegates to Conferences of the National Union of Students.

1. NUS requires that unions register a delegation that includes at least 50% women.

##### **Process**

NUS will inform the Union of the number delegates it is entitled to send to Conference each year.

One Full-Time Officer, appointed by the Management Committee, may be appointed to the position of lead delegate for NUS National Conference.

2. The election should be conducted in accordance with the standard election by laws, save that:

The nominations process will include a process for self definition of woman status.

- a. Two separate counts will then be run, using the same ballot papers.
- b. In the first count, all candidates who are not self-defining women will be excluded.
- c. A number of candidates to equal 50% of the delegation size rounded down will be elected in this count.
- d. Where the delegation leader is a woman this calculation will be amended appropriately.
- e. When counting, any preferences expressed for the excluded candidates will be passed over, so that votes are only reallocated to the reserved candidates.
- f. In the second count, all candidates will be reintroduced and preferences examined, save for preferences for those who were elected in the first count.

### **Failure**

3. Where the required number of Women is not elected through this method a by election will be held. Where this also results in a failure to elect the correct number of women, an application will be made by the Returning Officer to the NUS Democratic Procedures Committee for an exemption.

### **Other Elections**

This bye law details the procedures for the appointment of delegates to the National Conference. These principles of "fair representation" will also be used by the Returning Officer for other conferences where there are multiple delegates.

2. To write to NUS expressing our concerns about the trans-exclusivity of these regulations and state our position on this matter publicly.
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## **1579 Postgraduate Representation on Union Council An Amendment to the Bye-Laws**

passed 9 October 2014

Proposer: Liam McCafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer)

Seconder: Chris Jarvis (Campaigns & Democracy Officer)

### **Union Notes:**

- 1) Close to 30% of the student population are registered as postgraduates.
- 2) Just over 5% of union councillors last year were postgraduates.
- 3) That the President of the GSA currently sits on Union Council, but the other members of the Graduate Students Association (GSA) do not.
- 4) That students based at the Norwich Biosciences Institutes (NBI) do not currently have representation on Union Council.

### **Union Believes:**

- 1) Union Council should be representative of all students at UEA.
- 2) The proportion of postgraduate students on Union Council should reflect the proportion of postgraduates in the student community as a whole.

### **Union Resolves**

- 1) Amend 1.18.10 of the Constitution from 'President of the Graduate Students Association' to the 'Committee of the Graduate Students Association.'
- 2) Delete 1.18.09 and renumber accordingly 'One representative from UEA London elected by their peers.'
- 3) Add 1.18.11 'One representative elected from the John Innes Centre Student Voice Committee (SVC) and the Institute for Food Research Student Forum (IFR SF) respectively.'

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## **1581 A Democratic Framework for Finance**

passed 9 Oct 14

Proposer: C Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

Seconder: C Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer)

### **Union Notes**

Last year Council resolved to make the process of budgeting in the Union more accountable and easier to get involved with

We mandated that a new Bye Law be created to this end

### **Union Resolves**

To amend Bye-Law 10 from

Bye-Law 10: The Budget

10.1 The Chief Executive and senior staff members shall annually review the Union's Budget with:

10.1.1 consultation with the Management Committee;

10.1.2 consultation with Student Officer Committee;

10.1.3 the approval of Union Council or a Referendum;

10.1.4 the approval of the Trustee Board; and

10.1.5 the approval of the Registrar & Secretary for the University.

10.2 The Chief Executive shall be responsible for annually producing a timeline for this process for approval by the Trustee Board in the first semester of the academic year.

To:

## **Bye-Law 10: Union Finance**

### **Definitions**

1. Budgeted Contribution- this is the net amount that each commercial area is expected to contribute to the budget and the amount will be proposed to the Union Council each year.
  2. Estimates- is a policy that is proposed to and approved by Union Council annually and will be the amounts that each activity of the union will be expecting to raise and spent (on a net basis).
  3. Detailed Internal Budgets- this will be the detailed day to day budgets and cash flow projections that the Trustee Board sets for each department in pursuit of the estimates and are managed by union staff and officers through Management Committee.
  4. A report on expenditure & income against the estimates will be presented to union council at least twice per term on a cycle approved at the first Union Council of the year.
  5. At the beginning of each academic year, the Student Officer Committee will approve a timetable for budgetary involvement from the Union Council and students that includes:
    - a. Input from user groups in the commercial areas
    - b. A formative discussion at union council that allows councillors to ask questions and suggest ideas
    - c. A summative Estimates proposal that council will formally vote on as a policy
  6. Council will have the opportunity to make amendments to the budget and Councillors will have time to consult their constituents on the amended budget.
  7. That in the event of the rejection of the Estimates by Union Council an amended budget addressing the concerns of Council will be resubmitted at the earliest opportunity.
  8. That if estimates are passed by the Union at the start of the new financial year there will be no change in the funding allocated in the previous Estimates passed by a majority vote of Council until such time as a fresh set of Estimates are passed by the Union.
  9. That the Management Committee will be required to report to the next council in the event that it becomes aware of deviations from the Estimates arising from performance of different areas of the union.
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## **1582 An Amendment to the Bye-Laws: Criticism of Staff by members**

passed 9 Oct 14

Proposer: C Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

Seconded: C Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer)

### **Resolves 1:**

Delete Clause 6.17 of the Bye-Laws and replace with the following Clauses numbered 6.17.1-8

- Should there be any occasion when a member of UUEAS wishes to raise a criticism of a member of staff, a group of staff or "the staff of UUEAS" this procedure should be followed:
- The matter should be raised with the Chair of the Trustee Board, who will then refer the matter for initial investigation to the Chief Executive. In the event the matter relates to the Chief Executive, the matter will be referred to an external Trustee or external Trustees for initial investigation.
- The CEO or External Trustee as appropriate will be responsible for ensuring that the matter is discussed through the established structures with the staff member(s), in consultation with the staff trade union where appropriate.
- Where the initial investigation reveals that a disciplinary matter may have occurred, the normal disciplinary procedure will apply.
- A reply to the member will be conveyed through the Chair of the Trustee Board.
- If the member remains dissatisfied with the reply, an appeal can be lodged with the Board of Trustees.
- Only after the exhaustion of this procedure may a member raise the issue in the democratic forums of the Union, in the context of debate on the Management Committee's handling of personnel matters. The member shall not refer to the member of staff by name or position and shall not use this as an opportunity to go over the details of their original complaint.
- Given that contractually, staff do not have a right of reply in public or democratic forums, where members fail to abide by this procedure, the matter will be dealt with via the code of conduct and shall be considered as harassment.

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## **1583 The 2015 General Election and a Chance for Students to Shape Their Future**

passed 9 Oct 14

**Proposer:** Dan Wrigglesworth (LGBT Officer)

**Seconded:** Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

### **Council notes:**

1. The General Election is to be held on Thursday 7th May 2015.
2. At the 2010 general election, just 44 per cent of those aged 18 to 24 voted, compared 76 per cent of the over 65s.
3. The introduction of individual voter registration (IER) threatens to further reduce the number of students and young people voting.
4. Evidence from Ipsos Mori public opinion polling shows more than two thirds of people believe the UK government does not adequately consider future generations in the decisions it makes today.
5. Young people and students' prospects continue to worsen due to rising unemployment, underemployment, casual employment and living costs.
6. That Norwich South is a marginal seat, with a Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament and a majority for that Party of just 310 votes.

Council believes:

1. Continued attacks on the prospects of students, their education and their communities represents a whole generation let down by those with power.
2. A feeling of powerlessness and precariousness is increasingly common amongst young people, squeezed by a worldwide recession and biting financial pressures, creating uncertainty about the future.
3. We too often feel let down by politicians who fail to speak on our behalf or stick to their promises in a world in which it feels the odds are already heavily stacked against us.
4. The gulf in voting levels between the young and the old effectively leaves young people losing out in policy terms.
5. That it is through students working with communities that we stand the best chance of achieving a new deal for the next generation.
6. That our Union's approach to the general election needs to be both local and national, supporting students to win locally and on a national level. To win for students we will need public support, and this is best achieved through working together with people in the communities we live in and finding common cause.
7. That the political context of the Norwich South Parliamentary constituency means we have an ideal opportunity to fight locally for a good deal for students and highlight many of the key issues affecting students.

**Council resolves:**

1. To support the NUS in campaigning for a new deal for the next generation.
  2. To use the opportunity of the next General Election to win for students both locally and nationally.
  3. To work with local and national external allies and partners to maximise voter registration and electoral participation among young people and students to ensure their voices are heard.
  4. To use the NUS tools around a general election hub to develop, as a Union, our own election strategy, taking into account the political context of the Norwich South Parliamentary constituency.
  5. To empower students and to connect student communities with wider society, including through community organising work.
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## **1584 Save the Disabled Students Allowance**

passed 9 Oct 14

Proposer: Max Levene – Students with Disabilities Officer

Seconder: Holly Staynor – Welfare, Community & Democracy Officer

### **Union Notes:**

1. The Disabled Students Allowance offers non-medical help and support for over 90,000 disabled students in UK Higher and Further Education.
2. That in 2012/13, 7.7% of UEA students were in receipt of DSA.
3. Earlier this year, the government announced plans to make significant changes to the way support for Disabled Students is funded.
4. The majority of these changes mean that individual Universities will be expected to make provisions for disabled students, rather than funding being provided centrally.
5. Since then, Greg Clark, the current Minister for Universities and Science has announced a deferral of the majority of changes to DSA and a cancellation of some.
6. That the Union of UEA Students have participated in campaigning to stop the cuts to DSA.
7. One of UUEAS's priority campaigns for 2014/15 is to stop the cuts to DSA.

### **Union Believes:**

1. That the Disabled Students Allowance provides a vital support to ensuring that disabled students have access to Higher and Further Education.
2. There is not yet evidence that Universities are willing or even capable of matching the support offered by the Disabled Students Allowance
3. That significant changes to the way DSA is funded are likely to act as a barrier to disabled students' access to Higher Education
4. The alterations that have since been made to plans for Disabled Students Allowance funding are not significant enough. The announcement made by Greg Clark constitutes a deferral, not a cancellation.
5. That as a result of a high profile and well co-ordinated campaign run by NUS and individual Student's Unions which has put significant pressure on government, ministers have been forced to adjust their plans.
6. That further campaigning on this issue has the potential to secure funding for Disabled Students into the future.

### **Union Resolves:**

1. To condemn cuts to Disabled Students Allowance
2. To continue campaigning against Disabled Students Allowance cuts
3. To liaise with the University, particularly the Dean of Students office, to ensure that if cuts to DSA go ahead, that alternative provisions are made which directly replicate the current support.

## **1585 Assessment and Feedback**

passed 9 Oct 14

**Proposer: Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)**

**Seconder: Theodore Antoniou-Phillips (Non-Portfolio Officer)**

### **Union notes:**

1. That the 2014 National Student Survey (NSS) reported that whilst UEA students' overall course satisfaction is 8th out of 203 UK HEIs, UEA is 111th for the assessment and feedback category and 146th out of 203 for promptness of feedback.
2. That in the 2014 NSS the proportion of students agreeing that feedback on their work had been prompt was below 50% in a large number of Schools (MED, FMT, HIS, LCS, LDC, MUS, PSI, BIO and DEV).
3. That students have raised the quality and timeliness of feedback as a key issue at SSLCs, through comments in the NSS, as part of the Union's 'What If' consultation and directly to Union Officers.
4. That upon receiving the Union's 2013 Student Experience Report the University made a commitment to explore measures to ensure feedback was returned in timely manner.
5. That the University's current policy of a maximum 20 working day turnaround period for feedback is frequently not met, and that for many schools, the average turnaround period is in fact greater than 20 days.
6. That the 2012 NUS Report Student Experience Research showed that amongst 1994 Group institutions, only 14.4% of students had an average wait of more than four weeks for feedback.

### **Union believes:**

1. That timely and quality feedback is an essential component of learning.
2. That all students have the right to receive feedback on their work in sufficient time to act on it in their next piece of work.
3. That detailed, constructive feedback should be provided on all forms of assessment, including examinations.
4. That feedback encompasses more than just comments on assignments and students should receive continuous verbal, written or email feedback throughout their course.

### **Union resolves:**

1. To campaign for the implementation at UEA of the NUS's principles of student feedback as shown in appendix 1, including that:
  - a. Students are empowered and given the tools and support to co-design their assessment methods in partnership with academic staff.
  - b. Assessments are planned across programmes to avoid clustering, including for joint honours students and that deadline dates are made available at module selection.
  - c. Assessments are planned so that all programmes have their workload spread fairly across the year, with a calendar of deadlines available before module selection and on-going discussions with students throughout the year.
  - d. Submission is electronic where possible, and feedback is provided online.
  - e. Feedback is returned within three weeks, including on summative assessments. Feedback timeliness above an institutional minimum standard is agreed in partnership between staff and students in Schools.
  - f. The opportunities to receive feedback are clearly explained to students at the start of the course, and students can choose the format in which they would like to receive feedback.
2. To campaign for the implementation of a new pilot scheme for examination feedback.

## **APPENDIX 1 NUS benchmarking tool – key principles of student assessment and feedback**

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### **1587 University/Union partnership group on sport at UEA**

passed 9 Oct 14

Proposed	Yinbo Yu, Activities and Opportunities Officer
Seconded	Liam McCafferty, Postgraduate Education Officer

#### **Union Notes**

1. The union operates and supports student run Sports Clubs at UEA through the Union Sports Association, providing help and advice to Union clubs and ensuring they operate safely, as well as holding their funds and running an insurance scheme through the SAM card.
2. The university Department of Sport (based at Sportspark) is responsible for student sport activity, including the 'Ziggurat' challenge and intra-mural programmes.

3. Last year Union Council passed a motion that mandated the formation of a joint University/Union partnership group on sport at UEA.
4. Its aims are to
  - a. Focus on reducing any duplication of effort between the Union and University, maximising the use of students' money.
  - b. Ensure a joint strategy for external funding for sport, and a joint Union-University capital expenditure plan for sport.
  - c. Strive to enhance the student sport / physical activity programme through improved promotion and coordination across campus, working closely together on participation targets.

### **Union Believes**

1. One of the core parts of the Students' Union mission to provide student opportunities is to support and fund Sports Clubs
2. This year the SU's integrated Sports and Societies offer won the WhatUni best Clubs and Socs of the year award
3. We will shortly open an amazing new space to support people running Clubs And Socs in the middle of campus in Union House, easily accessible by students
4. The Union is explicitly democratic- students make the decisions, student elect the Activities & Opportunities Officer, and students make grant funding decisions
5. The average National Student Survey score for Unis where Sports Clubs are run by the University is 11% lower than our score
6. UEA Sports Clubs, a part of the SU, won the Varsity against Essex last year
7. Whilst it is important to work in partnership with the University on things like Capital Expenditure, Participation targets and Planning, there must be no implication that this might mean moving Sports Clubs under University control

### **Union Resolves**

1. As part of the University/Union partnership group on sport at UEA, to rule out any shift of Student Sports Clubs to the University Sport Dept
2. To nevertheless continue to work together on the Sports Partnership group goals
3. To reaffirm the value and benefits of Student Sports Clubs being part of the Union in any partnership group meetings

## **1588 Amendment to the Bye Laws: Student Activity events and groups**

passed 9 Oct 14

Proposed     Yinbo Yu, Activities and Opportunities Officer  
 Seconded    Chris Jarvis, Campaigns and Democracy Officer

### **Union Notes**

1. A number of clubs and societies exist at UEA that are not a part of the Union (or University) procedures
2. Work over the summer identified that the two key tests that the union/university would usually use to protect students' interests (are finances

being operated securely/effectively, and how is health and safety/risk being handled to minimise risk) were therefore not being met.

3. That the Union Officers agreed over the summer to try to work with UEA to put in place adequate support to all students that want to run groups
4. This has involved working with Sportspark and Estates (Events) to ensure that students that want to organise things are supported on a practical basis.
5. Bye Law 9.1 states: "The Union produces information for any individual or group of individuals who wish to form a club, society or peer support group of the Union. Any member may obtain a copy of this information from the Student Activities and Opportunities Officer. No Club, Society or Peer Support Group can be formed when the activity they wish to undertake is already directly provided by a current club, society or peer support group"
6. And Bye Law 8.19 states: "The Union requires that all members of the Union are able to join any of the Union funded clubs, societies and peer support groups"

### **Union Believes**

1. In order to recognise and properly regulate (for example) medical sports clubs, the wording needs to change.

### **Union Resolves**

1. To amend the wording of bye laws as follows:
2. 9.11 No Club, Society or Peer Support Group should usually be accredited when the activity they wish to undertake is already directly provided by a current club, society or peer support group, unless the aim of the proposal is to regulate and support a group of students that wish to undertake that activity within a particular school, faculty or mode of study. Funding procedures and principles will reflect a priority on cross university activity.
3. 8.19 The Union requires that all members of the Union are able to join any of the Union funded clubs, societies and peer support groups, save where a group has been approved whose membership is restricted as per bye law 9.11.

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## **1589 A Better Deal for Postgraduates that Teach** passed 9 Oct 14

Proposer: Liam McCafferty (PG Education Officer)

Seconder: Thomas Withers (Fell)

### **Union Notes:**

- 1) That a recent NUS report found that the 'experience of postgraduates who teach differs widely between institutions as well as internally between departments.'
- 2) Almost one in three postgraduate teachers did not receive a contract.
- 3) One in five postgraduate teachers receive no training or induction before they start in their role.
- 4) The average postgraduate teacher will work almost twice the hours they are paid for.

- 5) Almost one in three postgraduates who teach earn below the minimum wage.
- 6) Several Postgraduates at UEA have indicated they do not feel current contracts reflect the actuality of the work commitments they are expected to fulfil.
- 7) Furthermore, some postgraduates feel they do not have the same access to teaching opportunities as others.

**Union Believes:**

- 1) That teaching is often essential to postgraduate research students. Both financially and in terms of the experience it provides.
- 2) That all postgraduates that teach should be offered a contract that properly reflects the work they are expected to do.
- 3) That the recruitment process for postgraduates should be fair, transparent and equitable.
- 4) That postgraduates should receive a fair rate of pay for all hours worked.
- 5) That the university should take measure to implement a fair and consistent process for the recruitment and training of postgraduates in a teaching capacity.

**Union Resolves:**

- 1) To call on the university to adopt the Postgraduate Employment Charter.<sup>1</sup>
- 2) To mandate the Student Officer Committee to set up a regular working group with the University College and Lecturers Union (UCU), to discuss how better to represent and campaign on behalf of postgraduates that teach.

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/l/r/postgrademploymentcharter.pdf>

## **OCTOBER 30**

### **1601 The Importance of Getting the Student Vote Out**

Passed 30 October 2014

**Proposer:** Robbie Wishart (ECO)

**Seconder:** Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

#### **Council notes:**

1. The General Election is to be held on Thursday 7th May 2015.
2. The European Parliament elections were held on Thursday 22nd May 2014.
3. This government is removing the block registration of students living in university accommodation, effectively disenfranchising thousands of students in a general election.
4. NUS National Conference 2014 reaffirmed the organisational belief of NUS that the BNP is a racist and fascist organisation, but also for the first time determined UKIP as a racist party.

#### **Council believes:**

1. That as a Union we should promote inclusivity, equality and fairness.
2. This government has launched an attack on students while simultaneously removing their right to recourse as seen in the lobbying bill and individual electoral registration.
3. That students can play a big role in preventing the rise of racism, fascism and homophobia in our local community and our local and national political systems by taking part, registering to vote and using their vote at the ballot box.

#### **Council resolves:**

1. For the Union to email every student contact we have on polling day of the General Election, urging them to use their vote and reminding them of our values, and the key policies of every party.
  2. To have a clear focus on an electoral registration drive amongst UEA students before the closing date for voting registration.
  3. To run a campaign after the voter registration drive up until polling day reminding students of why their vote matters and encouraging as many students to vote as possible.
  4. To work with NUS to harness all tools available for this campaign.
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### **1602 Transforming the Graduate Student Experience at UEA**

Passed 30 October 2014

**Proposer:** Liam McCafferty, Postgraduate Education Officer

**Seconder:** Oliver Steward, Postgraduate Officer and President of the Graduate Students Association

## **Union Notes**

1. UEA is a good university with a good reputation for its “student experience”. It consistently does very well in the NSS and last year came top in the Times Higher Education (THE) student experience survey.
2. UUEAS is a large registered charity with two trading subsidiaries and a turnover of £8m.
3. For some years a separately constituted Graduate Students Association has existed. It is a small unincorporated charity exempt from charity registration.
4. It has both a representational function and a social function, and a bar which is operated on its behalf by UUEAS under a management agreement.
5. As a legally separate organisation, the GSA bears administrative costs (ie insurance) that other groups that are federated into the union do not bear (ie Concrete).
6. The University is currently recognising and regulating two students’ unions- the GSA “counts” as a Students Union under the Education Act 1994, and would be keen to reduce this to one, believing that the union’s wider infrastructure should be supporting the functions that the GSA carries out.

## **Union Believes**

1. The overall perception of the situation on campus is that there is a focus towards undergraduates and their experience/needs.
2. The Union has historically been widely perceived to not be interested in Graduate Students, with its leadership positions dominated by undergraduates and its social activity dominated by them.
3. The GSA is very poorly funded for the activity it carries out- just £5k a year comes in from grant funding and nothing is contributed by the Grad Bar once management costs are taken into account.
4. Few students believe that either the GSA or the Union act as effective representative bodies for postgraduate students.
5. GSA volunteers feel they have to spend considerable time “running” the GSA as an organisation, reducing the time they can spend on direct activity for the benefit of PG students.
6. During August and September the Union worked with the GSA to undertake a consultation with students on “Building a PG Community on Campus”. Over 200 students took part and fed in detailed comments about both the proposed new Graduate Centre in Union House and the nature of activities and services that should be put on for PG students at UEA.
7. The conclusions of the consultation can be summarised as follows:
  - a. That a proper strategy for the representation of Graduate Students should be in place.
  - b. That dedicated social and recreational activity should be arranged for Graduate Students.
  - c. That activity for Graduate Students should be led by them wherever possible, with autonomous organisation of Graduate Students enshrined constitutionally.
  - d. That all groups of students on campus should be able to benefit from the underpinning infrastructure that the union has to offer.

## **Union Resolves**

1. To progress plans to enhance the Graduate Student Experience at UEA, developing detailed plans that fulfil the following aims
    - a. Create a Graduate Students' Centre inside Union House, operated by the Union under leadership from PG students who will provide reps for a Graduate Centre Management Group. It should feature a fully-licensed bar, dedicated social learning facilities, bookable space and some office space for use by Union and University services focussed on postgraduates on a non-permanent basis.
    - b. Create a Graduate Assembly within the legal framework of the union with a specific remit of coordinating the representation of Graduate Students. With staff support provided by the union, it should direct the work of a committee headed up by the Postgraduate Education Officer and will support Graduate Reps and Committees across the University in their representative function.
    - c. To mandate the Postgraduate Education Officer to hold a referendum of postgraduate students on the proposal to merge the Graduate Students' Association into the legal framework of the union with a social and recreational function. With staff support and a budget provided by the union, it should coordinate a programme of trips, social, society and sporting activity focussed around Graduate Students both within schools and across the university.
    - d. Reform Union Council to create more dedicated spaces for PG students, and to cause the union's other functions- advice, opportunities, live music etc through a co-ordinated Graduate Students' Strategy, to be developed by the Postgraduate Education Officer in conjunction with reps from the GSA and GSC.
  2. To refer this implementation of this motion to the union Trustee Board, Student Officer Committee and Democratic Procedures Committee and to report to each Union Council on progress.
  3. To request that implementation of this motion also be considered by the Committee of the Graduate Students Association.
- 

### **1603 Amendment to the byelaws and constitution: Accountability of the Democratic Procedures Committee**

Passed 30 October 2014

Proposer: Chris Jarvis (Campaigns & Democracy Officer)  
Seconder: Liam McCafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer)

#### **Union Notes:**

1. As a result of a referendum held in February 2014, UUEAS established a new body – the Democratic Procedures Committee
2. The Democratic Procedures Committee is elected by a cross campus ballot.

3. Other bodies of the Union, whether elected cross-campus or otherwise, including the Board of Trustees and the Student Officer Committee are accountable to Union Council
4. There are currently no constitutional mechanisms through which to hold the Democratic Procedures Committee to account

**Union Believes:**

1. Accountability is key to a functioning democratic process
2. Those who are elected to hold office should be held to account by those who elect them.

**Union Resolves:**

1. To amend byelaw 1.7.9 so as to read: 'To pass a motion of Censure or Commendation on any member of the Trustee Board, member of the Student Officer Committee, member of the Democratic Procedures Committee or member of Union Council, including the Chair of Council'
  2. To add new clause 67 and renumber accordingly: 'A member of the Democratic Procedures Committee shall cease to hold office if they are subject to a motion of no confidence passed by a two-thirds majority of those voting at a quorate meeting of Union Council.'
- 

**1604 An accessible campaign**

Passed 30 October 2014

Proposer: Max Levene (Students with Disabilities Officer)

Seconder: Daniel Wrigglesworth (LGBT+ Officer)

**Union Notes:**

1. The Equality Data Annual Report April 2014 found that 10.3% of students declared having a disability at UEA.
2. The report also found that there is an upward trend of the number of students who declare as having a disability are attending UEA.
3. This year NUS LGBT passed policy for increased accessibility for students who are disabled to enable them to attend campaigns and events.

**Union Believes:**

1. Students with Disabilities form an integral part of the student movement.
2. Students with Disabilities face additional barriers to campaigning attendance in comparison with their non- disabled counterparts. For example, factors including but not limited to:
  - a. Physical accessibility of travel;
  - b. Frequency and duration of access breaks;
  - c. Unexpected changes to event scheduling or location;
3. When considering campaign accessibility, meeting the needs of all students with a disability/disabilities is vital.

**Union Resolves:**

1. UEA SU to consult members of the Union whom have a disability/disabilities regarding their experiences as students with disabilities, and in particular, how these have affected their participation in UEA SU events, campaigns and the wider student movement, both in their institutions and on a regional and national level.
  2. This consultation to consider ways in which we can improve accessibility when organising campaigns ensuring all students have a voice.
  3. Responsibility for implementing this consultation to lie with the equal opportunities committee, with support from Student officer committee and other members of staff.
  4. The findings of this consultation to be made publicly available and used to inform planning of future UEA SU events and campaigns.
- 

**1605 No to the Marketisation of Education (The Future of Undergraduate Funding)**

Passed 30 October 2014

Proposer: Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)  
Seconder: Chris Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer)

**Union notes:**

1. The current government policy is for a market for fees with a cap of £9000.
2. The Liberal Democrats reneged on their General Election promise, signed by all their Members of Parliament, to vote against any rise in fees.
3. Several Vice-Chancellors have called for the cap on tuition fees to rise further, or for the cap to be removed.
4. Several political and media commentators have speculated that the lifting of the cap in its entirety could form part of the next Conservative Party manifesto.
5. The General Election is to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015, representing an opportunity for a new deal for students.

**Union believes:**

1. Higher Education should be treated as a right and not a privilege.
2. That the marketization of higher education is a disgusting notion which attempts to determine a student's standard of education on their ability to pay and not their ability to learn.
3. Access to education should be equal for all people. Regardless of any artificial distinctions between them, such as class, place of birth, race, gender and sexual orientation.
4. That the threat of £9000 fees and huge levels of debt puts students off University regardless of the actual mechanics of repayments.
5. That a return to £3000 fees, or a reduction to £6000 fees, is unfeasible and still a poor solution to the issue of student funding.
6. That none of the major political Parties are set to offer a free education policy alternative to a system based fundamentally on fees and debt.

7. In a fair system of living loans and living grants that cover the costs for students and ensure no student has to live in poverty.

**Union resolves:**

1. To replace the policy 'No to the Marketisation of Education' that was outdated and set to lapse with this policy.
  2. To always campaign aggressively against any further marketization of Higher Education.
  3. To campaign and support any campaigns to ensure a fair system of living loans and living grants.
  4. To lobby the University to support the notion of lessening the burden of Higher Education funding on students whenever they are consulted on the future of undergraduate funding.
  5. To support campaigning efforts encouraging the main political Parties to offer free education.
  6. To continue to support campaigns for free education at a local and national level as appropriate, such as providing transport for the Free Education Demo on 19<sup>th</sup> November in London.
  7. To review our Higher Education funding policy after May 2015 in light of the General Election result and government Higher Education funding policy.
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**1607 Sanitary Products Subsidy**

Passed 30 October 2014

Proposer: Dolly Ogunrinde Women's Officer

Seconder: Holly Staynor Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer

**Union Notes**

1. That the Union Shop currently sells three types of sanitary products
2. That the cheapest non-reusable products currently cost £1.19 upwards and reusable alternatives are priced at £19.99
3. That other students' unions across the country currently give away sanitary products for free or sell them at a subsidised price
4. That policy 1395b 'Union Commercial Services' states that:  
'The union should be an exemplar in relation to safety, security, responsible retailing and ethical practices and purchasing'
5. That tampons and towels are currently taxed at a rate of 5% as a 'luxury, non-essential item', and hence subject to Value Added Tax (VAT).
6. That many products are free from VAT as they are viewed as fundamental: food, prescriptions and children's clothes, but not sanitary products.
7. That some students opt to take the contraceptive pill continuously to avoid a monthly cycle and the costs that come with it. Some research, however, suggests a continuous use could be harmful.

**Union Believes**

1. That the cost of sanitary products is an unfair burden placed on those that need them
2. That, in accordance with policy 1395b, we should seek to offer ethical products in our commercial services wherever possible

3. That sanitary items are also crucial to health and hygiene - using homemade alternatives can put you at risk of infection.
4. That it is unethical to charge for the upkeep of a natural bodily function, let alone ask people to give a contribution to the Government each time
5. That no student should have to make a choice between taking the contraceptive pill to stop their period, using unsuitable items or cutting down on other essentials in their budget.

### **Union Resolves**

1. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer, as Chair of the Commercial Boards, to investigate the costs of offering all sanitary products at cost price through Students' Union Services Limited
  2. To mandate the student officer committee to raise the results of this exercise through the relevant structures and, unless there is a major and significant adverse effect on union finances, to implement offering the products at cost price as soon as practicable
  3. To, as part of this exercise, seek out sustainable and organic alternatives to existing sanitary products in the Union Shop
- 

### **1608 Sleepy Time**

Passed 30 October 2014

Proposer: Liam McCafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer)

Seconder: Yinbo Yu (Activities & Opportunities Officer)

### **Union Notes**

1. As part of the consultation on the new Graduate Centre, a number of students have indicated to us that they want somewhere to take a nap on campus during the day
2. In the US, a James Madison University student interested in promoting sleep education and healthy sleep habits among students launched a "Nap Nook" at JMU.
3. The student wanted a catnap to be perceived as an energy booster rather than a last resort after endless hours of coursework, and she thought The Nap Nook was the ideal solution for JMU.
4. Dubbed "the world's first designated student napping centre in a university setting," The Nap Nook opened in the 2013 autumn semester to provide students with a place to recharge.
5. The "nook" is located in the "lower drum" of the Festival Conference & Student Centre (ie the SU building) at JMU where students can reserve a large bean bag for forty minutes.
6. The forty minute limit was chosen deliberately because of the benefits associated with light sleep as, according to The Nap Nook website, a power nap will wake students up without leaving them with the sluggish feelings experienced after a longer doze.

### **Union Believes**

1. We should inform people about the dangers of sleep deprivation and the important qualities of sleep.

2. Sleep deprivation is associated with weight gain, depression and is a proven carcinogen, by suppressing melatonin and leading to immunodeficiency.

### **Union Resolves**

1. To mandate the Management Committee to investigate the practicalities of introducing a bookable Nap Room within Union House as part of the 2015 redevelopment.
  2. To trial a Nap Room where possible this academic year
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### **Emergency Resolution: Solidarity with UCU – Support the Assessment Boycott**

Passed 30 October 2014

**Proposer:** Liam Mccafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer)

**Seconded:** Chris Jarvis (Campaigns & Democracy Officer)

### **Union Notes:**

1. Universities UK have stated their intention to make significant reform to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme, which UEA academic staff are a part of.
2. These reforms would include a move from pensions based on career-end salaries to pensions based on career average salaries.
3. On October 20<sup>th</sup> 2014, UCU announced the result of its ballot for industrial action – 78% of members voted for strike action and 87% of members voted for action short of a strike.
4. This was on a record turnout in a national Higher Education ballot since UCU was formed
5. On October 27<sup>th</sup>, UCU announced that the result of the ballot would see lecturers taking industrial action short of a strike in the form of an Assessment Boycott at 69 Higher Education institutions, including UEA taking place from the 6<sup>th</sup> of November.
6. An assessment boycott would see coursework and exams not being set or marked.
7. Some UCU members are Postgraduate students, who are therefore also members of the Union of UEA Students and the UEA Graduate Students' Association
8. History has shown that in the event of assessment and marking boycotts, there has been an expectation from HE institutions that Postgraduate teaching staff will take up the marking responsibilities on behalf of staff taking industrial action
9. Last year, the Union of UEA Students stood in solidarity with staff taking industrial action against attacks on their pay at UEA, with students and officers attending picket lines at every strike, officers hosting rallies for UCU in Union House, and ultimately supporting the proposed marking boycott through policy 1557 – UCU Marking Boycott – Standing By Our Staff'

10. UUEAS has a history of this solidarity and has supported previous industrial action as evidenced by policies 1101 – ‘Motion in Support of UCU Industrial Action’ and 1178 – ‘Students Supporting Strikes Should Not be Disciplined’

**Union Believes:**

1. The proposed reforms of the USS would see members of the pension scheme lose thousands of pounds after retirement.
2. While the industrial action will cause disruption for students, a workforce that is well paid and well remunerated in their retirement is in the interests of students
3. That the interests of students and staff in Higher Education institutions are aligned – reforms in Higher Education, particularly since 2010 have had negative impacts on both students and workers.
4. University staff have repeatedly stood in solidarity with students fighting the marketization of education and tuition fees, most notably by marching side by side with students in the 2010 student protests.
5. The marking boycott that was proposed to take place on April 2014 was, with support from Student Unions across the country, effective in securing a 2% pay rise from UCEA without actually taking place.
6. The best way for UUEAS to prevent any potential disruption to students, is to join in solidarity with staff and pressure the Universities UK to grant their demands. Solid and widespread support can help to resolve the dispute quickly, averting or minimising disruption to students.
7. Postgraduate members of the Union of UEA Students who are also members of UCU should have our unwavering support in their role as students who teach.
8. Any attempts to push Postgraduate Students to take up marking or assessment work on behalf of those lecturers taking part would undermine the aims and efficacy of the industrial action as well as putting additional pressure on those students.

**Union Resolves:**

1. To support the UCU in their call for an assessment boycott
2. To mandate the Student Officer Committee to put forward time and resources in order to communicate effectively this position with staff and students as well as run a campaign in solidarity with staff participating
3. To directly support any Postgraduate students participating in the assessment boycott and actively encourage Postgraduates who teach to join UCU
4. To publicise the support services we offer for students affected by the industrial action

## **20 NOVEMBER**

### **1618 Can I have your attendance please?**

Passed 20 November 2014

Proposer: Tohfa Walker (Fetish Society)

Seconder: K Collis (Mainstream Media Society)

#### **The Union Notes:**

1. There are between 350 and 400 union council positions of which only 231 are currently filled<sup>2</sup>
2. Of the positions filled, many do not attend council. <sup>3</sup>
3. 67 of the constitution states "Any member of the Union Council, including a Student Officer, who is absent without valid apology for two meetings of the Union Council per semester shall cease to hold all Union offices unless the Union Council, at its sole discretion, shall decide otherwise."

#### **The Union Believes:**

1. Union council is vital to represent the student body.
2. There are many perceivably valid reasons for lack of attendance, and in case of emergencies, notification of absence may not be in people's priorities.

#### **The Union Resolves:**

1. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer to investigate ways of engaging more students and recruit for the council positions that are currently available.
  2. To not remove councillors who have not attended two meetings of union council until the first union council of 2015 to give time for resolves 3 as made possible by item 67 of the constitution.
  3. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer to contact councillors that have not attended two meetings of union council to discuss how to increase engagement and accessibility.
- 

### **1620 Amendment to Byelaw 14 – NUS Delegate Voting Rules**

<sup>2</sup> Accurate number of positions available is not currently available due to not knowing the number of societies and clubs. 392 if you count all 249 clubs and societies listed on <http://www.ueastudent.com/>

<sup>3</sup>There are only 80 councillors with voting records available online, however there are a number of representatives who have attended – whether in person or online – whose voting records are not available.

Passed 20 November 2014

Proposer: Josh Wilson (Ethical Issues Officer)

Seconder: Liam McCafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer)

**Union Council Notes:**

1. NUS Conference happens every year, to decide national NUS policy.
2. UUEAS sends 4 delegates elected in a campus wide ballot.
3. UUEAS sends 1 Full Time Officer as lead delegate.
4. Delegates receive all travel expenses from the Union.

**Union Council Believes:**

1. Delegates go to represent the UUEAS, who in turn represents the students of UEA.
2. Union Council is the only democratic and accountable body that forms the policies and shows the views of students.
3. Delegates should vote with the spirit of Union Policy.

**Union Council Resolves:**

1. Add to By-Law 14, "Delegate Voting Rules 14.5 A committee should be formed consisting of all delegates, the chair of the DPC, the chair of SOC and two elected councillors in which the way delegates must vote are decided in line with existing union policy. If there is an overlap of the holders of the positions stated above another member of the committee should be elected by the wider committee."
2. Add to By-Law 14, "14.5.1 All delegates are required to vote with Union Policy."

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**1621 Ensuring Fair Voting Procedures at Council**

Passed 20 November 2014

Proposer: Tom Etheridge (Non-Portfolio Officer)

Seconder: Ross Attfield (Law Society)

**Union notes:**

1. That Union Council is a safe space.
2. Previously councils have run using electronic voting with little problems

3. At the last meeting of council, certain councillors were laughing at the way in which other councillors were voting.
4. On close votes manual counting of members of Council has a significant time implication.

**Union believes:**

1. Peer pressure can significantly impede democratic proceedings
2. It is possible for councillors to vote privately in council using the clicker system, whilst still recording their votes on paper to go on record for their constituents to see after the meeting.
3. Members of council should always be free to vote as they feel their constituents would wish

**Union resolves:**

1. Add bye-law 2.29 and renumber accordingly: "Meetings of council must ensure that when a vote takes place, it must be conducted through a method of secret voting."
2. To mandate the Democratic Procedures Committee to look into methods of reporting voting directly to and only to, constituents.

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**Emergency Motion to approve Rooster Teeth Society**

Passed 20 Nov 14

Proposer: Ryan McDonagh (CHE Other Yr UG)

Seconder: Christopher Lancaster (Korfball)

**Union Notes:**

- 1) That Rooster Teeth Society is a new Union Society, having started up over Summer (2014)
- 2) That the constitutional aims of the Rooster Teeth Society are "To provide screenings of Rooster Teeth content, arrange social RT themed events, create machinimas following the RT style and to bring the UEA RT fans together in one society."
- 3) That the society sought out new members at SocMart 2014 with permission of the Union
- 4) That the society was approved at the first Societies Committee meeting in October, before the first Union Council meeting of the year (October 9<sup>th</sup> 2014)
- 5) That the society, as of November 17<sup>th</sup> 2014, have approximately 45 members

- 6) That the society have held several socials since being approved at Societies Committee, each with a sizable turnout of around 10-20 people
- 7) That, since the society is not authorized, that the society's Union Council representative can't represent the views of the Society at Council
- 8) That this anomaly has been brought to the attention of the Union on several opportunities and the situation is still unresolved

**Union Believes:**

- 1) That miscommunication between the Union and the Society should not prevent the views of the society's membership from being heard at Council
- 2) That the Society has already been successful in meeting its goals, in terms of socials and promoting further communication between Rooster Teeth fans throughout UEA
- 3) That the Society has aspirations to collaborate with other societies within the Union to further meet its goals for the future

**Union Resolves:**

- 1) To approve the Rooster Teeth Society as a society at today's meeting
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## **DECEMBER 11**

### **1632 Students Need Homes – Campaign Against Article 4 Restrictions**

Passed 11 December 2014

Proposer: Holly Staynor (Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer)

Seconder: Chris Jarvis (Campaigns & Democracy Officer)

#### **Union notes:**

- 1) Norwich City Council is in the process of consulting on options for planning for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Norwich.
- 2) An HMO for the purpose of this consultation is all accommodation shared by 3 or more unrelated individuals who share basic amenities. Even if they have a shared (joint) tenancy they are regarded for planning purposes as having separate households.
- 3) In the ten years between 2001 and 2011 the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in Norwich grew by 53.5% and the percentage of HMO's increased from just over 5% to 7%. In this period the number of student only HMO's doubled from 675 to 1423 and the student market was seen as the key driver in the growth of HMO's in the city.
- 4) Some local authorities, particularly those in areas that have a sizeable student population have introduced planning policies in an attempt to restrict the increase of HMO's, (Canterbury, Bath, Oxford, Nottingham and Leeds); these are considered under an Article 4 Direction
- 5) There are several issues that concern local residents and that have prompted this consultation; waste management, the aesthetic nature of student properties (HMO's), noise and nuisance and parking. These are all issues that the Union does not believe will be effectively dealt with by an additional Article 4 Direction and there are existing ongoing initiatives aimed at tackling all these issues. (See appendix 1 for more detailed information)
- 6) There are 4 options included in the consultation:
  1. A blanket restriction on all HMO's across the city
  2. Introducing a percentage threshold equivalent to 20% - limited Article 4
  3. Introducing a ban of additional HMO's in a specific area
  4. Supporting specific developments and city-wide accreditation

#### **Union believes:**

- 1) In the positive benefits students bring to Norwich; economically, socially and culturally. UEA and its student body of 14,500 make a significant contribution to the local economy. Student spending in Norwich contributes to the economy as well as generating countless prospects for volunteering and job opportunities.

- 2) An introduction of Article 4 affects not just students but those who are most vulnerable in society and for whom choice is limited due to their economic circumstances such as young people and migrant workers.
- 3) In light of the Local Housing Allowance particularly regarding under-35s and the shared accommodation rate, Norwich City Council needs to have an adequate supply of shared housing and accommodation to meet expected demand
- 4) Nationally, it has been shown that Article 4 Directions have a considerable effect on the rental prices of shared properties, which have been shown to increase quite dramatically. In this sense, the only party that benefits from Article 4 Directions are landlords with existing HMO's.
- 5) If restrictions are placed on the conversion of homes to HMOs, this will lead to both higher rents in pre-converted student houses and a likelihood of students being pushed out of traditional student areas
- 6) Option 4 of the consultation document to expand the number of purpose built development types to slow the conversion rate of HMO's and the adoption of a citywide accreditation and licensing programme is preferable to all others
- 7) That this is the only option that will increase standards and improve the quality of private accommodation in Norwich for all. This option also results in no current reduction in housing choice for those with fewest housing options and requires no new planning requirements.

**Union resolves:**

- 1) To mandate the Welfare, Community & Diversity officer to submit a formal response to the consultation supporting option 4.
- 2) To mandate SOC to run a campaign to encourage students to engage with the consultation process in light of the above policy
- 3) To launch a high profile campaign to ensure that an Options 1, 2 and 3 are not enacted by the City Council

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**1633 Access is not the only issue**

Passed 11 December 2014

Proposer: Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

Seconder: Holly Staynor (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer)

**Union Notes:**

1. The Institute for Fiscal studies has researched what happens to young people from different backgrounds once they arrive at university.
2. The research explores socio-economic differences in drop-out, degree completion and degree class.
3. They conclude that large differences in university outcomes between individuals from different socio-economic backgrounds can be explained by the fact that they arrive at university with very different levels of human capital.

4. Those with similar grades from higher socio-economic backgrounds are 3.4 percentage points less likely to drop-out, 3.7 percentage points more likely to graduate with a first or 2:1 and 5.3 percentage points more likely to graduate than those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

#### **Union Believes:**

1. It is a scandal that individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to drop-out and less likely to graduate with a first or 2:1 than individuals from higher socio-economic backgrounds.
2. The UK press is obsessed with application and access figures for poor students- but not completion or success rates.
3. This means all the expenditure tends to be on tempting poor kids into Uni- and they're then left high and dry with inadequate support when they get to uni
4. UEA's access agreement is all about application and access with little on success and drop out.
5. More should be done to improve the skills of individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds.
6. Too often Universities blame the school system but Universities should shoulder some responsibility.
7. If those from poorer families are more likely to experience unexpected challenges that make them more susceptible to dropping out, universities like UEA should increase the support available.

#### **Union Resolves:**

1. To lobby for issues of drop-out, retention and success rates to be a key consideration in the University's access agreement and widening participation strategy
2. To lobby the University to review academic, induction and financial support for poorer students
3. To work with NUS to lobby the Government's access regulator (OFFA) to look at issues of drop-out, retention and success rates rather than just application rates

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### **1634 Equality in Higher Education**

Passed 11 December 2014

Proposer: Holly Staynor (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer)

Seconder: Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

#### **Union Notes:**

- 1) That the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) works to further and support equality and diversity for staff and students in higher education institutions across the UK.
- 2) That every year it publishes national equality data on the age, disability, ethnicity and gender of staff and students in Higher Education.
- 3) That the data reveals that younger students are more likely to qualify; UK-domiciled full-time first degree entrants aged 21 and under had both the highest rates of qualifying or continuing in their studies (92.0%) and rates of transfer (2.0%) among the age groups.
- 4) That a higher proportion of full-time first degree qualifiers aged 21 and under achieved a first/2:1 than first degree qualifiers in older age groups.
- 5) That six months after qualifying, 10.8% of black and minority ethnic students were unemployed, compared with 5.2% of white graduates.
- 6) That there continue to be low proportions of women studying engineering and technology, despite initiatives to increase numbers in these subjects. Only 15.8% of engineering and technology students were women.
- 7) That at UEA, 3% of white students leave UEA with a third class degree. For Chinese students, the figure is 11%.
- 8) That 13% of white students receive a first class degree, but only 3% of black students.
- 9) That UEA's Athena SWAN bronze application reported that in 2011, 78% of Heads of School were men. Three years later, this has risen to 81%. The gender gap amongst the University's senior positions is in sharp contrast to the student population, of which 58% are women.

#### **Union Believes:**

- 1) That institutions like UEA need to focus on supporting the retention and achievement of older students, for example how they support students with multiple commitments or those whose courses have high levels of distance learning.
- 2) That it is unacceptable that some black and minority ethnic students are more likely to leave before the end of their course, are receiving lower degrees, and have lower rates of employment after qualifying.
- 3) That the gender gap in HE needs to be closed. Now.
- 4) That the figures are a stark reminder of how far we need to go on equality both at UEA and in Higher Education general
- 5) That UEA should be a leader in tackling inequality amongst staff and students but too often looks and sound behind the curve

#### **Union Resolves:**

- 1) To mandate the Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer to lobby for more resource to drive E&D change at UEA
- 2) To mandate the Union Officers to ensure that the forthcoming University Corporate plan has a dedicated section on E&D
- 3) To seek detailed figures on attainment gaps, discuss these at union liberation caucuses and ensure the University responds with clear action to close those gaps

## **1635 The Competition and Markets Authority**

Passed 11 December 2014

Proposer: Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

Seconder: Chris Jarvis (Campaigns & Democracy Officer)

### **Union Notes:**

- 1) The Competition and Markets Authority has recently released draft guidance for universities on student contracting and how universities' practices compare with consumer laws.
- 2) The draft guidance covers areas including: information provided at application, terms and conditions of student contracts and complaints and appeals practises.

### **Union Believes:**

- 1) The Union does not agree with the view that students are consumers however under the current arrangement this guidance could be usefully applied.
- 2) That the draft guidance, if approved, would lead to more fair and solid legal rights for students.

### **Union Resolves:**

- 1) To mandate SOC to respond to the CMA consultation
  - 2) Should the guidelines be passed, to work with the University to ensure they are followed at UEA
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## **1636 Vegans Need Food Too**

Passed 11 December 2014

Proposer: Vraj Patel (PHA Other Yrs UG)

Seconder: Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

### **Union Notes:**

1. Vegans are different to vegetarians.
2. Hot meals on campus, particularly in Zest, are rarely suitable for vegans while there is always at least one vegetarian option.
3. Only a very small number of vegan suitable sandwiches are available for sale in Union premises

### **Union Believes:**

1. Vegans should have the option of having hot meals on campus. It is an important student welfare issue and also impacts on the educational capacity of students if students are not able to eat well.
2. Vegans should be able to have a reasonable choice if they want to buy food on campus.

3. The Union should always seek to be as accessible and provide for as many of its members as possible.

**Union Resolves:**

1. To mandate the Campaigns Officer to raise the issue with the University around the provision of Vegan choice in Zest and other University campus outlets.
  2. To mandate the Campaigns Officer to find ways to provide more Vegan food, especially suitable sandwiches and/or wraps, in Student Union owned premises.
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**EMERGENCY MOTION**

**Postgraduate Loans**

Passed 11 December 2014

Proposer: L McCafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer)

Seconder: H Staynor (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer)

**Union Notes:**

- 1) In the chancellor's Autumn Statement, a new loan system for postgraduate taught programmes was announced. George Osborne stated that this will "revolutionise" access to postgraduate university courses.
- 2) The National Union of Students (NUS) has been lobbying for a loan scheme for postgraduate programmes since the publishing of its funding proposals in 2012, and hailed the announced as a 'major step in the right direction.'
- 3) The loans would cover fees up to £10,000, and available to students enrolling between the ages of 18-30.
- 4) The details of the loan repayments are yet to be finalised, with the expectation rates will be higher than undergraduate loan payments on earnings over £21,000.
- 5) That the union has policy in support of a Free Education funding model.

**Union Believes:**

- 1) Access to education is a fundamental right at all levels.
- 2) It should be available to all based on ability and not ability to pay.
- 3) That whilst loans are a step in the right direction, they will fundamentally be unable to settle the long-term problem of access to postgraduate-level study.
- 4) Since the rise in undergraduate fees, many graduates already find themselves saddled with debt. It is not clear how adding an extra layer of debt will incentivise students to consider postgraduate study.
- 5) Combined levels of debt means that students could pay up to 20% of earnings over £21,000. This is a significant portion of income for new

graduates, and could be considered to mitigate the potential benefits for completing a postgraduate taught programme.

- 6) The proposed loans only cover tuition fees, meaning only those students who can fund living costs for the duration of their course will be able to access postgraduate level study.
- 7) That a £10,000 fixed loan amount may lead to Higher Education Institutes such as UEA considering a substantial rise in fees, with the £10,000 being considered an 'unofficial cap'.
- 8) That government should consider a more radical approach, such as the one suggested by the University College Lecturers Union (UCU) – writing off part of the undergraduate debt or restoring grants for postgraduates.

### **Union Resolves:**

- 1) To campaign for a fairing funding model for both PGT and PGR level programmes – and to ensure that postgraduate demands form an integral of our Free Education campaign.
- 2) To mandate the Student Officer Committee to write a letter to the Vice-Chancellor expressing concerns over any drastic increase in the cost of postgraduate course fees, and request that a cap be set for a negotiated period.

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### **Emergency Motion: Recycling**

Passed 11 Dec 2014

Proposer- Heather Baker (Circus)

Seconder- Iain Goddard (Environment Officer)

### **Notes**

1. One of the union's key values is sustainability, as laid out in bye-law 7.5.6.
2. There is currently no policy in place to encourage recycling in unio.
3. During September & November 2014, the student union has produced over 8 tonnes of landfill waste. This represents a 16% increase on last year's waste figures.
4. The paper cups provided by the café are compostable.
5. The only bins found in the café area are for general waste.
6. Other areas of the union do have recycling schemes in place.

### **Believes**

1. Not recycling is unsustainable.
2. There should be a policy to encourage recycling in unio.
3. The union has a responsibility to ensure the quantity of waste sent to landfill is minimised.

4. Not correctly recycling the cups in the café undermines the purpose of using compostable materials.
5. Wherever there is a general waste bin, there should also be a bin for mixed recycling waste and for compostable waste.
6. It would be easy to integrate recycling practices from other union areas into unio.
7. Given the substantial quantity of waste in question, changes should be implemented as soon as possible.

**Resolves**

1. To mandate the campaigns and democracy officer, and the environment officer to implement recycling options in unio, specifically for mixed recycling and compostable waste.
  2. To continue to evaluate the effectiveness of this going forward
  3. To encourage procurement of environmentally sound disposables in union owned services.
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