

1774 Student Opportunities for all: Tackling Barriers passed 29 October 15

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Union Notes

1. NUS has recently worked with Universities UK (UUK) to understand how to raise levels of volunteering and social action within Higher Education.
2. A report, drawing on existing literature, has been produced that identifies the key barriers to students taking part in opportunities across all institutions:
 - a. Language and understanding
 - b. Motivations
 - c. Time
 - d. Management of volunteering
 - e. Perception and previous negative experience
 - f. Financial
 - g. Space
 - h. Environment
 - i. Access to expert support and advice
 - j. Bureaucracy

Union Believes:

1. That despite a recognition that not all participation is "equal", the union does not currently have a strategy for tackling barriers in Opportunities
2. The University researches access and participation in formal education by disadvantaged groups but has little understanding when it comes to the wider student experience.
3. The barriers identified can inform how our resources should be used to make a real difference at UEA.
4. An effective way for us to develop our student opportunities is for our work, including discussions with the University, to be focused around breaking down these barriers within our context.
5. We should be working with the University to discuss these barriers seriously with students, including developing ways of gathering evidence to understand the importance of student opportunities within UEA.

Union Resolves:

1. To mandate the undergraduate education officer to cause the University widening participation working group to research participation in extracurricular activity by disadvantaged groups
2. To mandate the Activities & Opportunities Officer to lead on the development of a strategy to widen participation in student opportunities by disadvantaged groups, ensuring students that face barriers lead on identifying ways in which problems could be solved