

Policy passed by Union Council 11 February 2016

1848 Policies sent to NUS National Conference

Council voted to send three motions within the 1400 word limit

Motion: NUS Conference Welfare Zone

5 Prioritise Student Mental Health. Now! (322 words)

Proposer: Jack Robinson (Non-Portfolio Officer)

Seconder: Daniel Wrigglesworth (UEA Labour Students)

NUS Believes

1. NUS surveyed 1,093 students in further and higher education in November and December 2015
2. Eight out of 10 students (78%) say they experienced mental health issues in the last year.
3. A third (33%) also said they had had suicidal thoughts.
4. Among those who did not identify as heterosexual, the figure was higher at 55%.
5. More than half (54%) of respondents who reported having experienced mental health problems said they did not seek support.
6. A third said they would not know where to get mental health support from at their college or university if they needed it, while 40% reported being nervous about the support they would receive from their institution.

NUS Further Believes

1. That over the past year NUS has barely mentioned the single biggest Welfare issue facing UK students today.
2. That whilst most Colleges and Universities have well-meaning, overstretched services, almost none have coherent, comprehensive strategies in relation to mental health and wellbeing. This is unacceptable.
3. That too many focus on cure instead of prevention
4. That mental health and wellbeing services in every FEI and HEI should be adequately resourced and the operation and capacity of services should be regularly assessed in relation to demand and effectiveness.
5. That robust arrangements should be put in place for any student with mental health difficulties who are required to undertake a period of time studying off campus, including those studying or working abroad.

NUS Resolves

1. To prioritise mental health in the Welfare Zone in the year ahead.
 2. To lobby BIS, AoC and UUK to form a national student mental health task force, with student representation
 3. To campaign for a specific student wellbeing duty to be placed on Colleges and Universities as a condition of funding.
 4. To ensure that Universities and Colleges consult and collaborate with SUs and student groups when formulating and implementing student mental health-related policies
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Motion: NUS Conference HE Zone

Stop doing over our Nursing Students (327 words)

Proposer: Ruth Stone (UEA Edith Cavell society)

Seconder: Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer)

NUS Believes

1. There are huge problems with academic failure and lack of support for nursing students, across all institutions
2. NSS scores consistently track lower for Nursing and Midwifery courses against the average
3. Many nurses and midwives are on placement for half the year and as a result they are very unlikely to be involved with their Unions, societies and sports clubs.
4. Nursing placements are often some distance from the institution therefore increasing isolation and reducing the amount of contact time for face to face support with their institution to a minimum
5. Students on nursing courses are often mature, with dependants and many institutions fail support those with these and other additional needs.
6. Nursing failure and drop-out rates are at epidemic levels
7. Whilst on placement there is the added pressure to meet the demands submitting and preparing for assessments leads to academic failure, misconduct and stress
8. Nursing students can be course terminated through the means of 'fitness to practice'.

NUS Further Believes

1. Nursing bursaries have been scrapped with barely a whimper from NUS' education zone
2. Year after year NUS passes motions on Nursing and Midwifery that never seem to go anywhere
3. The last NUS Charter for Nursing and Midwifery students was published 21 years ago
4. The NMC's standards for Nursing and Midwifery education (like the QAA for these courses) fail to mention student support, student representation or social activity
5. These students need NUS and our campaigning work now more than ever

NUS Resolves

1. That any review of NUS' governance should address nursing and midwifery students as a specific area
 2. To look at integration of nursing across many Unions and their campuses to increase nursing representation
 3. To work with trade unions to protect placements and future jobs for current nursing students
 4. To hold a national summit on representation of Nursing and Midwifery students in conjunction with Unison, the RCN and the RCM
 5. To lobby the NMC and other bodies to improve the standard of student representation, student social facilities and student wellbeing delivered by HEIs
 6. To carry out research into the student experience of students on Nursing and Midwifery courses
 7. To create a national charter for Student Nursing and Midwifery education
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Solidarity with Migrants and Refugees (451 words)

Chris Jarvis (Campaigns & Democracy Officer)

Hussam Hussein (Ethnic Minorities Officer)

Conference Believes

1. The rhetoric around immigration in the UK is toxic, with politicians from all parties lining up to attack migrants.
2. The current Government's position is that the UK should accept 20,000 refugees over a period of five years, which is a failure of its moral duty for the country to act as a place of safety for people fleeing conflict, oppression, the effects of climate change and other factors which may force people to seek asylum.
3. Ongoing conflict in Syria will heighten the refugee crisis, with more people taking more dangerous action in order to attempt to find safety.
4. The continuing climate crisis will increase the number of refugees and environmental migrants.
5. Across Europe, anti-immigrant policies are being introduced, including the seizure of valuables from migrants in Denmark.

6. NUS has a long and proud history of standing in solidarity with the oppressed.

Conference Further Believes

1. As the referendum on EU membership looms, the rhetoric used by the national media and political figures will become more and more hostile.
2. The United Kingdom can and should accept many more refugees than the current UK government is doing.
3. Western military intervention in Syria will only exacerbate the refugee crisis.
4. Climate change is already disproportionately affecting people in the Global South, as its worst effects will naturally affect these countries hardest, but also because these countries are least well equipped to adapt to a changing climate as a result of a long history of Western imperialism and capitalist exploitation.
5. Migration brings benefits both to the migrants themselves and to the country they are migrating to.
6. Arbitrary national borders that prevent certain people entering a certain country are morally problematic and perpetuate racism and conflict between people, and that freedom of movement should become the norm, not just across Europe but across the Globe.

Conference Resolves

1. To express full solidarity with refugees and migrants.
 2. To lobby the UK Government to accept more refugees for as long as the current crisis continues.
 3. To condemn the aggressive anti-migrant policies of European governments.
 4. To re-affirm our position against British military intervention in Syria.
 5. To ensure that in NUS campaigns on climate change, the explicit link is made between it and the effect this has on people in the Global South.
 6. To support migrant solidarity actions wherever possible by:
 - a. Aiding Student Unions to run collections and organise solidarity runs to the Calais jungle.
 - b. Working directly with migrant solidarity groups that seek to improve conditions in detention centres, combat fascist organisations, resist deportations and other actions in solidarity with migrants.
 - c. Supporting national demonstrations in solidarity with migrants and refugees.
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1849 Policy Lapse

1398 Council voted to keep the decision not to offer for sale the Sun or Star in Union retail outlets

1579 Council voted to lapse the policy on PG Representation with a commitment that a new policy would be brought to a future Council

1724 Council voted to keep the policy on Council accessibility

1854 Amendment to the byelaws: Reforming Union Democracy

Proposer: Theo Antoniou-Phillips (LGBT+ Officer)

Seconder: Ruth Stone (UEA Edith Cavell Society)

Amendment from C Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer)

Union Notes

1. Union Policy is defined in the constitution as “statements which describe that which is in the best interests of students”.
2. The Union’s principal Policy formation body is Union Council which is also the principal method of holding SU Officers to account.
3. The Democratic Procedures Committee is “responsible for development of and promotion of the Union’s democratic procedures, with particular reference to ... Union Council”
4. The Student Officer Committee is “responsible for representation and campaigning work... and the implementation and interpretation of Union Policy”
5. The DPC has not met this year.

Union Believes

1. We should be proud that UEASU is one of the few unions left with a vibrant, functioning representative council of students.
2. Our pride should not leave us blind to the problems with our current structure and set up.
3. Many participants are worried about access - yet there has been little progress on making council more accessible since Union Council mandated important work on this last October (Motion 1769B).
4. Comments and scores in last year’s SU Annual Student Survey suggest that few students know who the SU officers are, few know about Union Council, few feel that the union is democratic and few feel consulted when important decisions are made.
5. A survey of Union Councillors showed very few Councillors felt Union Council was representative and very few felt that students knew about Union Council or the decisions it made.
6. Students on Health Sciences courses and placement courses are particularly underrepresented in our current democratic structures and these are often students who need our support most.

7. Speaking at council is highly gendered- participation of women and non-binary students speaking in motions debates has been routinely around half that of those defining as men last term.

8. National research from NUS suggests that most students do not want elected representatives to make decisions or act on their behalf without consulting them first.

9. In addition the research suggests that the majority of students do not feel comfortable running in an election to make decisions themselves. This is especially true for those defining as women.

10. Improvements this year such as the introduction of less formal sessions, training and better communication have been helpful but do not sufficiently address the issues.

11. Our form of policy making is inherently oppositional and only tends to involve councillors at the last minute when a policy has already been developed. This approach prevents most of us from feeding in ideas and thoughts at the development stage.

12. Union officers are rarely held to account in a meaningful way. This is similarly the case for trustees of the Student Union.

13. A healthy democracy has a plurality of feed-in points, offering different mechanisms through which different students can feed in, recognising the diverse needs of our student body and the means that are available to them.

14. Democratic models are not a one-size-fits all. Different systems and structures will be more effective for different organisations at different times, and therefore keeping our democracy under review is vital to ensuring it serves its purpose and delivers for our members.

15. Looking at Union Council in isolation from the rest of our democratic structures and processes will not be as effective as keeping our entire democracy under holistic, continuous review.

16. Significant problems exist not only within Union Council itself, but also with the way in which its agendas, decisions and debates are communicated to the student body more broadly.

17. Democratic reform should not be viewed as a one-off, revolutionary overhaul, but instead as an ongoing, evolutionary process, where new models can be trailed without discarding the old and existing democratic processes can be complimented by new additions.

18. The current model for DPC currently does not work – electing students to stand for two year terms, which leads to them holding office after they have graduated is problematic and does not lead to an effective committee.

Union Resolves

1. To mandate the Campaigns & Democracy Officer to bring to the next meeting of Union Council a revised constitutional framework for electing the Democratic Procedures Committee.
2. To hold elections to the Democratic Procedures Committee as soon as is feasible possible.
3. To amend byelaw 2.37 to read:

“Bye-Law 2 must be reviewed by the first Union Council alongside a broader review of democratic processes once a term on consideration of recommendations made by the Campaigns and Democracy Officer in collaboration with the Student Officer Committee and the Democratic Procedures Committee.”

4. To ensure that in the process of reviewing Byelaw 2 and wider democratic processes takes into account an assessment of the following:
 - Accessibility of the meeting
 - Different mechanisms through which to improve the communication of democratic structures and processes
 - Ways to improve the communication between councillors and their constituents
 - Investigating ways to involve more students in the development of policy rather than just the debate of it
 - Investigating ways to ensure that council’s membership is more representative of the wider student body
 - Investigating ways to improve the accountability of officers and trustees
5. To ensure that a plurality of information and data are used to inform this process including:
 - National Student Survey results
 - Student Union Annual Student Survey results
 - Annual Union Council survey results
 - Open discussions at Union Council
 - Focus groups
 - Discussions at liberation caucuses and equal opportunities assemblies
6. To ensure that as part of the ongoing process of reviewing democracy, the full diversity of our student body is included, so as to ensure fair representation. In doing so, efforts shall be made to consult the following groups of students:
 - Postgraduate students
 - International students
 - Mature students

- LGBT students
- Women students
- Ethnic Minority students
- Disabled students
- Students from all faculties and all schools
- Care leavers
- Students with caring responsibilities
- Students on both the East and West campus
- INTO students

1856 Why is my curriculum white?

Proposer: Asia Patel (BME Caucus)

Seconded: Julian Canlas (BME Caucus)

Union Notes

1. That a lot of schools (especially in the Humanities and Social Sciences) teach from a colonialist perspective
2. That most of the reading lists set by schools has a white eurocentric focus, even when discussing non-European countries
3. That relevant literature written by non-BME people that is relevant to course topics exists
4. That the UCL Student's Union set up a 'Why is my curriculum white?' campaign in 2014

Union Believes

1. That having reading lists which rarely feature content created by non-BME people provides a very biased and partial version of history and of opinions that are unrepresentative of the whole picture
2. That having content on reading lists for topics based around a different countries' history written by people not from that country is not a fully inclusive portrayal as content created by people who are
3. That all students should be represented, even in academia

Union Resolves

1. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer and the Ethnic Minorities Officer to conduct a campaign based on the UCL Student's Union campaign 'Why is my curriculum white?' to encourage more diverse reading lists from a post colonialist background
2. To lobby the university to change their reading lists to include more content created by non-white people

1857 Amendment to the Byelaws - Part Time Officer Terms of Office

Proposer: Chris Jarvis (Campaigns & Democracy Officer)

Seconder: Theo Antoniou-Phillips (LGBT+ Officer)

Union Notes:

1. The term of office of Part Time Officers is not defined in the byelaws.
2. The term of office of Full Time Officers is defined in the byelaws.
3. Decisions have been made in the past to determine the term of office of Part Time Officers on an ad hoc basis, based on convention, rather than on formal rules.

Union Believes:

1. Students standing for election should have clarity on the terms of office of the role they are to be elected to.

Union Resolves:

1. To add new byelaw 4.22 and renumber accordingly: "Part-Time Officers shall begin their term in office on July 1st and end it on June 30th the following year. A handover period will be organised with the previous office holder in the period between their election and their taking of office."

1858 We are not unicorns

Proposer: Tasneem Nawaz (Students with Disabilities Caucus's Invisible Disabilities Rep)

Seconder: Kate Snape (Students with Disabilities Caucus's Physical Disabilities and Mobility Issues Rep)

Union notes

1. Invisible disabilities cover a wide spectrum including such things as, ADHD, HIV, Asperger Syndrome, Autism, Behavioural disorders, Cancer, Chronic Fatigue, Diabetes, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Epilepsy, IBS, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health Issues, Sensory Disabilities and many more
2. 18% UK population is disabled (Census, 2011)
3. 1 in 4 people will have a mental health issue in the UK every year (Mind, 2013)
4. Around 1.5m people in the UK have a learning disability, this means they can have difficulty: understanding new or complex information, learning new skills, coping independently (NHS, 2015)
5. It is thought that up to 350,000 people have severe learning disabilities. This figure is increasing (NHS, 2015)
6. Disabilities do not discriminate through age, class, religion, sexuality, gender and race
7. Many students with invisible disabilities are not aware that they are classed as disabled and are entitled to help
8. Invisible disabilities do not receive the same amount of discussion and recognition as visible disabilities
9. They often do not receive as much accessibility adaptations as visible disabilities
10. People with invisible disabilities also face obstacles – such as being accused of misusing accessible toilets, disabled parking spaces and other facilities, as well as challenging misconceptions about their conditions
11. There is serious stigma around invisible disabilities

Union believes

1. Union believes in equality for all
2. Union believes everyone should be included and adaptations should be made for people to be included
3. Union believes everyone should be able to access all the same resources
4. Union believes in tackling stigmas, prejudice and discrimination
5. Union believes in raising awareness of important issues that are not commonly understood or discussed

Union resolves

1. Union resolves to support and organise events surrounding students with invisible disabilities
2. Union resolves to campaign to raise awareness of invisible disabilities
3. Union resolves to lobby the university to ensure better help is given to people with invisible disabilities in relation to receiving the support they are entitled to (for example the use of DOS in providing a disability adviser, tutoring for learning disabilities, DSA and mentors)
4. Union resolves to mandate the Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer to ensure we provide sufficient support for students with invisible disabilities within our advice service

1859 It's Time to Talk about Costs on Campus

Proposer: Philippa Costello (Non-Portfolio Officer)

Seconder: Finn Northrop (1st Year LDC)

Union Notes:

- 1) That student feedback, such as that found in the Union's Annual Student Survey (ASS), consistently reports dissatisfaction with the costs of retail outlets on campus.
- 2) Likewise, last years' 'The Real Costs of Study' report highlighted concerns that many hidden course costs were unaffordable and presenting a significant financial hurdle for many students.
- 3) That many educational costs, such as those offered by the university's central services, have become increasingly expensive against a stagnant student maintenance package.
- 4) Some students, such as those in HSC, incur substantial further costs for example through placement.
- 5) Essential costs from external providers, such as transport, are also increasingly expensive, with students expressing dissatisfaction with the quality and price of the service currently offered.
- 6) Many students cannot afford to eat on campus, and those that do opt for cheaper, less nutritious options.

Union Believes:

- 1) That previous work to highlight hidden course costs has been largely successful, meaning the priority should now be tackling how 'unhidden' costs are presenting a barrier to study and having a negative impact on both student attainment and wellbeing.
- 2) That students should not be expected to pay for items that are essential to their core study.
- 3) That the current rate of fees for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught programmes are more than sufficient to cover all costs incurred through duration of study and should be inclusive of those costs.
- 4) That the university could do more to influence external providers, such as First Bus, to ensure that the service they provide is affordable and of an acceptable quality.
- 5) As per its charitable objectives, the union should strive to provide an affordable offer for students in its retail outlets.
- 6) Although progress has been made to offer cheaper options in both union and university catering outlets, these are options are by and large significantly less nutritious.
- 7) That a balanced, healthy, diet is crucial to the attainment of students.
- 8) That the combined effect of these costs on campus: upfront course costs, transport costs, and other essential costs such as food and drink, are representing a significant squeeze on student finances.
- 9) That the accumulative impact of the increasing costs are leading to many students feeling forced to work an increasingly number of hours, which has a proven effect on attainment.

- 10) That this will hit students from poorer backgrounds the hardest.

Union Resolves:

- 1) To research the impact of these accumulated costs through producing a 'Costs on Campus' report – providing a comprehensive review of the kinds of costs encountered by students, the effect on their overall finances, and the potential impacts on attainment. This should include a set of recommendations on how the university can make these costs more affordable, and include a commitment to move towards all course costs being inclusive of fees.
- 2) To produce a key set of objectives on how pricing in our retail outlets can be adapted to meet the needs of our students.
- 3) To explore offering healthier, affordable options in union-operated retail outlets to complement the current hot food offer.
- 4) To lobby for the creation of a Student Forum whereby students can provide feedback on the university's catering outlets.
- 5) To lobby First Bus to implement a 'Student Fare' – similar to the Young Persons Fare currently offered for those under-20.

1860 Amendment to the Bye-Laws: NUS LGBT+ Conference Delegates

Proposed by: E Folan (Students with Disabilities Caucus)

Seconded by: T Antoniou-Phillips (LGBT+ Officer)

Union notes:

- 1) That at the LGBT+ Caucus on 20th January, members voted to have all NUS LGBT+ Conference delegates directly elected by the voters;
- 2) That the Caucus rejected the idea of having the LGBT+ Officer(s) be automatic delegates to the conference, and that the Trans and Non-Binary Caucus rejected the idea of the newly elected LGBT+ Officer (Trans and Non-Binary place) going automatically;
- 3) That the Bye-Laws currently state that the two LGBT+ Officers are automatic delegates.

Union believes:

- 1) The LGBT+ Officers' job descriptions should reflect the wishes of the LGBT+ Caucus;
- 2) Council should formalise this decision and clear up the constitutional inconsistency.

Union resolves:

- 1) To delete byelaws 4.14.5 and 4.15.5;
- 2) To add new bye-law 13.6:

NUS LGBT+ Conference Delegation

13.6 The entire UEA delegation to NUS LGBT+ Conference will always be directly elected in a manner determined by the LGBT+ Caucus. The LGBT+ Officer (Open Place) and LGBT+ Officer (Transgender and Non-Binary Place) will not have any automatic right to a delegate place.

13.6.1 All NUS LGBT+ Conference delegates are required to vote in line with policy passed by the LGBT+ Caucus, unless that policy mandate contradicts a manifesto pledge that a delegate has explicitly made.