

1913 Student Officer Committee Review

Proposer: Theo Antoniou-Phillips (LGBT+ Officer)

Secunder: Sharmin Hoque (LGBT+ Committee)

Union Notes

- 1) Motion 1526 mandated the Student Officer Committee to do all it can to achieve a gender balance in all future elections including looking at quotas
- 2) The "Women in Leadership" action plan that arose from that proposed investigating introduction a full-time women's officer
- 3) In October the Student Officer Committee created a working group to look at the issue of a Full Time Women's Officer, as well as to look at other areas of potential reform following a broad piece of research from the Union
- 4) It also proposed to look at gender balancing committees; whether or not the current division of work between officers is fit for purpose; and looking at the Non-Portfolio Officer roles "and how we make them work effectively"
- 5) This working group did not continue to meet and the piece of research commissioned did not happen
- 6) Motion 1854 mandated a review of the union's democracy and Bye Laws
- 7) The SOC currently includes a the GSA President but the GSA has been wound up by the University

Union Believes

- 1) Union research suggests that students regard the Union as not having a sufficient number of leadership positions
- 2) Our current structures shut out enthusiasm and talent through a lack of positions and unnecessary barriers
- 3) Gender is a real issue and a mixture of encouragement, quotas and dedicated positions should be looked at properly
- 4) Too many of our student leaders come from the Humanities and not enough from other faculties
- 5) Nursing students rightly argue that their representation within the union is poor, as do others, including but not limited to students on professional body courses and placement-based courses, who find our democracy inflexible and difficult to engage with
- 6) The issues facing EU students and non EU students are sufficiently different for NUS to recognise the difference in their structures, and we should look at these issues too
- 7) Proper representation for PG students is crucial and we need to look at how we might examine their under representation on the SOC
- 8) There is a real debate about whether the PG sabbatical should be a general PG sabb or one that focuses on education
- 9) Many students would struggle to fill a full role on SOC alone and we should look seriously at options to reduce those barriers
- 10) That the failure of SOC and the working group to complete the review of SOC this year should not mean that we rush to solutions without looking at the range of issues properly and holistically

Union Resolves

- 1) To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer to carry out a review of Student Leadership positions within the SU focussed on, but not looking exclusively at, part time roles on SOC
- 2) The review should adopt similar terms of reference as the one originally launched last October; examine all relevant council mandates on the issue; and look at good and emerging practice from other unions
- 3) That the review group should be supported by three Union Councillors elected at this meeting
- 4) That the review should undertake preparatory work over the summer; consult with all relevant groups this and next term; and report by the December meeting of 2016 in time for recommendations to be approved for elections in the Spring