



Annual Members' Meeting 19/02/2015

Motion Name: UBU's Commitment to Widening Participation

Background:

1. The University of Bristol has a notoriously contentious status when it comes to the recruitment of Widening Participation (WP) students (a term generally used to describe those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, but includes all under-represented demographics)
2. The actions that are currently in place are heavily regulated by incredibly senior members of University management, who have very little personal experience of what WP actually means for students. This has dramatic implications for the wellbeing and success of a significant number of both current and prospective students.
3. UBU has taken a step in the right direction towards challenging the current situation through the creation of the Equality, Liberation and Access Officer (ELA Officer).
4. This role does not guarantee representation for this faction of students, as it is elected by cross-campus ballot, and could not feasibly require self-definition or understanding of all the demographics within its scope.
5. Improving the situation for WP students at the university actually improves the situation for everyone.

Purpose:

1. Challenging the damaging University rhetoric around WP students and their experience.
2. Improving the situations of all students in a climate of marketisation and the rising cost of university life.
3. Safeguarding against the inherent vulnerability within the ELA Officer role, and ensuring there is always the opportunity for students to be represented by their union.

Action:

1. Reinstate the Widening Participation Part Time Officer.
2. Demonstrate UBU's commitment to improving the recruitment and retention of WP students through a dedicated, well trained staff commitment.
3. Ensure the needs of WP students are considered with regard to UBU events, democracy and policy

Proposed by:

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