Evidence Based Drugs Policy

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY: Welfare Officer
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The Students’ Union notes:
1. A recent Government report, commissioned by Sheffield MP & Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, to examine drug policies of other countries, which showed tough criminal sentences for drug users make no difference to the rates of drug use;
2. The State of Colorado recently legalised Cannabis and saw a 5% fall in crime in the six months after legalisation;
3. The previous Government fired Professor David Nutt for citing his own research which found that cannabis, LSD and ecstasy were less harmful than tobacco and alcohol;
4. Drug use in England has fallen for several years

The Students’ Union believes:
1. The decades long campaign by law enforcement agencies against the global narcotics trade, referred to as the War on Drugs, can never be won;
2. People who suffer from drug addiction, including students, need medical help, not imprisonment;
3. Policy should be formed by evidence, not ideological dogma;
4. Governments have failed to tackle the black market that exists with currently illegal drugs;
5. Drug decriminalisation and legalisation ensures better quality of the product and more safety for the user;

The Students’ Union resolves to:
1. Launch a campaign for the end of imprisonment for personal drug use & for the Government to immediately review the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971;
2. Lobby Government to move responsibility for the drugs policy from the Home Office to the Department of Health.

FOOTNOTES:
1 Figure 2.1: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/drugmisusefindingsfromthe2013to2014csew/drug-misuse-findings-from-the-2013-14-crime-survey-for-england-and-wales
2 http://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/sep/28/timeendwardrugsukpolicechief
3 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk24342421

POLICY HISTORY:
The above policy was passed by Students’ Union Council in February 2015.
This Policy is due for review in November 2017.