

  
**nus**  
**NATIONAL  
CONFERENCE**

25-27 April 2017 | Brighton

## Policy adoptions

If you need this document in another  
format contact NUS on 0845 5210 262  
or email [events@nus.org.uk](mailto:events@nus.org.uk)



## Purpose of this document

This document presents motions from a variety of bodies to National Conference.

**National Executive Council:** Sets interim policy that affects the work of the National Union as a whole. This includes motions remitted from National Conference.

**The Nations and NUS-USI:** These are politically autonomous organisations set up to represent the students of a geographical area – Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

**The Liberation Campaigns:** These are politically autonomous campaigns set up to represent those students who are discriminated against or disadvantaged by society because of their background, culture, gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation or ability. They are the Black Students Campaign, Disabled Students Campaign, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans+ Campaign and Women's Campaign.

**Student Sections:** These are groups set up within the HE and Welfare Zones to represent the needs of particular sections of students. These are International Students, Mature and Part Time Students and Postgraduate Students.

### From the NUS Rules:

475 Policy Adoption

476 During each Annual National Conference each of the following bodies will report to the National Conference on its work throughout the year and propose for adoption policies passed at the relevant conference of each body.

- a. Nations
- b. NUS-USI
- c. Liberation Campaigns
- d. Student Sections
- e. National Executive Council

477 Unless an objection is raised these policies will be automatically adoption at the end of the National Conference

478 Objections to the adoption of any such policies or part thereof will be delivered to the Democratic Procedures Committee

479 During the relevant session of the National Conference the Chairperson will invite at least one speech in favour of each objection, and at least one speech against. The Chairperson will then move to a vote where a simple majority will sustain the objection and the policy or part thereof will not be adopted

480 In the event that policy is adopted under these procedures which conflicts with policy passed as a result of Zone or Emergency Motion debates at National Conference the policy passed at National Conference as a result of Zone or Emergency Motion debates shall take precedence over this adopted policy as the position of the National Union.

### What you need to do

**Before National Conference:** You should read through this document and contact the Democratic Procedures Committee before 12:00pm on Day Two of National Conference. You are encouraged to discuss the reasons for your challenge with the relevant Convenor of that policy before you submit your challenge. If there are no challenges the motions will be adopted automatically.

## Policy passed by the National Executive Council since National Conference 2016 (including motions remitted from National Conference 2016)

### International Co-operation with Student Organisations – The Bergen Declaration

#### NEC Believes

1. In an increasingly globalised world, where networks and friendships cross continents, activism knows no borders, and experiences- as well as struggles – are increasingly shared. Uniting with a global student movement offers us an opportunity to expand our networks and partnerships.
2. The European students' union have been facilitating the development of a global student movement, which began by bringing together representatives from around the world to a global student voice seminar in May. The unions (from South America, North America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific) used a process of facilitated debate and discussion to develop a framework of collective values and fundamental rights/principles they believe education should be based on, which then formed the basis of the writing of a declaration.
3. The declaration gives a collective voice to the demands of students globally- that education is a public good, and so all students have the right to access it, with fundamental rights regarding their ability to organise and be represented within it, and that our education system cannot be separated from the society within which it exists.
4. This document will serve as the beginning of a long term process, bringing together students from around the world to cooperate to defend the principles laid out in the declaration – whether through formal or informal structures, or simply cooperation and communication.

#### NEC Further Believes

1. We know we're more powerful when we're united, and even more so when our collectivism and collaboration stretches beyond regional boundaries
2. By joining NUS' from all corners of the globe in the signing of the declaration, we are making a statement of solidarity and commitment to the shared values, and taking an opportunity to join the increasing number of student movements in partnership in tackling shared issues.

3. Signing up to the declaration enables NUS UK to be part of a movement which will unite in common struggles, and adds our voice to a global campaign.

#### NEC Resolves

1. To join the other national and regional unions in adopting the Bergen declaration, and committing to join the global student movement.

Notes: You can read Beth Button (Previous NUS Wales president and ESU exec committee member's) blog on the declaration, and the document itself here <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/articles/uniting-for-a-global-student-voice>

### ARAF Motion

#### NEC Believes:

1. Racism and fascism are rising across society.
2. ARAF committee is defined as a special committee of the NEC, constituted under the NUS Rules.
3. There is currently no clause, provision or process in the Rules as to the composition of ARAF committee, other than the selection of convenors by NEC.
4. This includes a lack of any reserved/guaranteed places on the committee for any member of any liberation group, and/or any marginalised group of students.
5. Therefore, ARAF committee could theoretically be convened by members who do not define into any liberation group, and/or any group affected by racism/fascism. Conversely, in 2013 the ARAF committee was co- convened by two Black members of the NEC.
6. This unclear/inconsistent process for selecting ARAF convenors/committee has long been contentious. Controversy was further ignited following the motion 3: ARAF Convenors, exacerbated by misunderstanding/confusion about the existing process.
7. There are demands for greater resources for, and a new system of deciding, the committee. This also indicates that the system of appointing for convenors is inadequate.
8. ARAF campaign has a crucial role to play in this time of rising intolerance, and should be a point of political unity across NUS to enable it to be as effective as possible.
9. In supporting ARAF we strive to uphold the principles of liberation, equality, intersectionality, self-

determination.

#### **NEC Further Believes:**

1. The historic lack of support given to the ARAF campaign has not allowed for it to function to its full potential, so relying on the status quo is untenable,
2. Many Jewish students were at the forefront of disaffiliation campaigns due to concerns of antisemitism in our movement.
3. Despite only four SUs voting to disaffiliate from NUS, over 13,000 students voted to disaffiliate, with many highlighting concerns of antisemitism in our movement and it's vital NUS acknowledges this.
4. The controversy also highlighted the importance of NEC to consult with those affected by its decisions rather than rushing into mistakes.
5. Therefore it is important to open up a consultation on the ARAF committee system among those affected by its work before deciding this new system, to ensure that its work is as inclusive as possible of those groups of students affected by racism and/or fascism.
6. NEC cannot change the NUS Rules, but should facilitate a wider consultation into how the ARAF committee/campaign should function in future.

#### **NEC Resolves:**

1. NEC to elect an ARAF committee comprised of 7 NEC members
2. The committee will have reserved places for:
  - a. BSO and BSC NEC
  - b. A Jewish member
  - c. A Muslim member
  - d. an LGBT+ member
  - e. an International/migrant member
  - f. one open place for any member
4. The committee will also work with representatives of student organisations who are affected by racism and/or fascism such as UJS and FOSIS
5. Facilitate a consultation with: 2016/17 ARAF committee, Faith & Belief committee, NUS Liberation and International Students' Campaigns into a new system for selecting ARAF committee.
6. Newly formed committee will be tasked – alongside its normal activities – with reviewing the way ARAF campaign functions, to be discussed on the NEC and brought to National Conference 2017.

## **One Day Without Us**

#### **NEC Believes:**

1. Since the Brexit vote, we have seen levels of xenophobia and racism that have been increasingly legitimised.
2. On February 20th, a national day of action will take place called One Day Without Us.
3. The Migrant workers and their supporters are planning a day of action to highlight their role in the UK in what is being billed as a celebration of the contribution they make to British society.
4. The trigger for the event was profound concern about worsening attitudes to migrants in the UK.

#### **NEC Further Believes:**

1. We must fight back against escalating attacks on migrants from the government, and against wider societal prejudice, and against the exploitation of migrant workers.
2. The aim of the day of action is to emphasise the variety of work migrants undertake to help keep the UK afloat – from NHS doctors to those who staff the hospitality sector.
3. Migrant strikes have been hugely empowering and effective in other contexts, for instance in the United States.
4. It is absolutely legitimate to cause disruption to fight oppression and injustice.

#### **NEC Resolves:**

1. To support One Day Without Us, sending a message of solidarity to the organisers.
2. To provide advice and guidance to students and unions regarding the participation of international students in this day of action and protests like it.
3. To promote One Day Without Us to students and unions, helping to build turnout and maximise its presence on social media and in the press.
4. To ensure universities and colleges are at the heart of the day of action, highlighting the difference international students and migrant academics and non-academic workers make to our academic and vocational communities of learning as well as the wider society.

## Solidarity With #FeesMustFall

### NEC Believes:

1. Launched a year ago in October 2015, #FeesMustFall has taken a strong stand for a free and decolonised education in South Africa.
2. The movement has highlighted how racism, classism, sexism, able-ism and other forms of domination intersect in the modern neoliberal university.

### NUS Further Believes:

1. The determination and steadfastness of students, workers and activists in their demand of free and decolonised education has been an inspiration to many across the globe

### NEC Resolves:

1. We stand in solidarity with students, workers and activists in South Africa, demanding a free and decolonised education system.
2. We condemn the State-sponsored violence that has been a response to the legitimate protests of the movement.
3. We call for the ceasing of all mass arrests and abuse of legal processes in South Africa, and an end to the use of violence by universities through private security.
4. We call for South African universities to bring back all suspended, expelled, and interdicted student activists who have participated in #FeesMustFall, and to take a public stance supporting the call for free decolonised education.

## Justice for TOEIC Victims

### NEC Believes:

1. In February 2014, BBC's Panorama aired an 'investigative' episode which showed some people taking the ETS Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) test were cheating by using 'proxy' test takers who took the test in their place. The test was one of a number approved by the Home Office to prove the requisite level of English in connection with visa applications, including student visas.
2. Upon Panorama's discoveries, the then Home Secretary Theresa May promised to 'do something about it'.
3. Within a few months, Educational Testing Services (ETS), the US Company which ran

the tests, provided to the Home Office two lists of people who had taken the previously Home Office-sanctioned test. They had used a hastily prepared computer analysis programme to run all of the voice recordings of the speaking element of the tests and identify those which appeared to contain the same voice more than once, and therefore, a proxy test taker. People in one list were labelled 'cheats' (ETS had decided their tests to be 'invalid') and the others 'suspected cheats' (ETS had decided their tests to be of 'questionable' validity), in total naming over 50,000 individuals<sup>1</sup>.

4. Immigration removal action was taken against the individuals identified on these lists shortly thereafter, leading to over 1,400 of them being detained in detention centres for removal to their home countries.
5. About half of those named have already had action taken against them.
6. The vast majority of those against whom action has been taken were not/have not been given an in country right of appeal, i.e. the right to defend themselves before being removed from the country. Some have no right of appeal at all, i.e. they are not permitted to challenge the allegations against them here in the UK or even after leaving the country either, either because of the process adopted by the Home Office side-stepped this legal protection, or because appeal rights for international students were removed in April 2015.
7. An NUS commissioned expert report, that of Dr Harrison of JP French Associates (dated 5 February 2015), cast serious doubts on the evidence that the Home Office relied upon to identify the cheats and suspected cheats.
8. On 25 October 2016, the Court of Appeal dismissed the Home Office's appeal.
9. In Court of Appeal hearing, the court was critical of the Home Office's handling of these cases and the court called for better case management by the Home Office, and for a review of similar cases (there are some 350 cases pending in the Court of Appeal).
10. On 2 November 2016, the Court of Appeal refused Mr Gazi permission to appeal (from a decision of the President of the Upper Tribunal) the January 2015 decision to remove him from the UK, with only a right of appeal from Bangladesh. Since the Home Office did not have Dr Harrison's report when it made the decision to remove Mr Gazi (because it was not then in existence) it was

entitled to reach the conclusion that there was strong evidence that Mr Gazi had cheated, thus meeting the legal test that he should be removed to appeal from abroad.

11. It is understood that in similar cases the Court of Appeal will shortly refuse permission to appeal, and the students will be told by the Home Office that they must leave the UK to appeal from abroad. It is understood that there will be no review of these cases by the Home Office.
12. Many students fear returning to their home countries with the allegation of cheating against them, not only because this will adversely affect their future international visa applications, but primarily because of the stigma attached to an allegation of cheating and the reception and backlash they will receive because of it.
13. Some students come from small villages in their home countries with limited or sporadic access to electricity and the internet access. For these students, it would not be practical or feasible to bring an appeal once they have returned home. It is notable that the Home Office has not provided any information identifying the number of out of country appeals that have actually been brought, or that have been successful.
14. As also noted above, there are some students that do not have a right of appeal at all, whether in country or out of country. The lead judicial review case on this issue is that of *Mohibullah* which was heard in the Upper Tribunal on 1, 2 and 4 August 2016. Judgment in this case is still pending.

#### **NUS Further Believes:**

1. An enquiry was launched by the Home Affairs Committee in April 2016 into the way the Home Office handled the situation due to demand from NUS and other organisations. The inquiry is still ongoing.
2. Given the chair of the Home Affairs Committee has been replaced, there is a concern that the matter would fall off the agenda and the Home Office and Theresa May would not be scrutinised for their actions.
3. The Home Office is reviewing all appeal cases in the Court of Appeal but it is understood that there will be no review of the majority of cases, which are judicial review cases (like that of Gazi) where there is only an out-of-country appeal.
4. Even of the very few who had the opportunity and means to defend themselves in successful in-country appeals

many have had their subsequent visa applications rejected.

5. Many of the affected students who are in touch with us have and continue to suffer from mental health problems arising from the stress of the situation they have found themselves in over the past couple of years.
6. We know of at least one case where the wife of one of the accused students lost her unborn baby due to the stress she was under.
7. Many have been denied access to the NHS or have been asked to pay for any treatment they receive as they are considered to be in the UK illegally despite that their cases are still ongoing.
8. Many affected students were studying degrees which require a high level of English proficiency and were performing very well, clearly proving they would have had no reason to cheat at their English language test.
9. Many affected students had paid thousands of pounds to colleges and universities but have been prevented from completing their studies.

#### **NEC Resolves:**

1. National Union of Students supports those affected by the Home Office's disproportionate actions and politically motivated criminalisation of such a big proportion of our membership.
2. NUS asks that all cases (not only in-country appeal cases) are subject to review by the Home Office - with independent oversight - in the light of the various expert evidence and judgments that have become available since most decisions were taken in 2014/2015, and that all students are interviewed before a new decision is reached. If, following the review, the Home Office remains of the view that the evidence against a student reaches the evidential burden, such to justify making a formal decision that they cheated, all students should be afforded an in country right of appeal so that they have a fair opportunity to put forward their evidence in response in an appeal.
3. NUS requests that the Home Affairs Select Committee make enquiries to the Home Office and the First Tier Tribunal/Upper Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber) to identify the number of out of country appeals that have been brought, and that have been successful, following removal of a student accused of TOEIC fraud to determine if out of country appeal should at all be considered.

4. NUS demands that the Home Affairs Select Committee concludes the inquiry with actionable, fair and clear outcomes as a matter of urgency.
5. NUS strongly recommends the Home Office to consider offering each student a retest of a suitable English Language test, in order for students to prove proficiency in their English ability, eliminating the requirement for numerous lengthy litigations.
6. While NUS is fully aware no amount of money or any kind of apology can undo the unspeakable injustice that these students have faced, we demand compensation, monetary and otherwise for those who have been wrongfully accused of unlawful behaviour.

## Student Survivors Deserve Better

### NEC Believes:

1. Recent research has highlighted the problem of abuse and harassment by staff towards students, and faced by, particularly junior, women staff<sup>2</sup>.
2. Sussex University allowed a senior lecturer to continue working despite allegations of abuse and police investigation<sup>3</sup>. At Goldsmiths, Sara Ahmed, the former head of the Centre for Feminist Research, publicly quit her post, citing ongoing and endemic harassment<sup>4</sup>.
3. Last month Universities UK published the findings of its taskforce on campus sexual violence, alongside guidance replacing the outdated Zellick Report.
4. That we welcome this work and is happy to see that survivors will no longer be forced to report incidents to the police before receiving any support from their universities.
5. However, that the guidance and report did not adequately consider harassment and abuse perpetrated by staff, and indeed, that staff themselves face, is a serious failing.
6. That the abuse and harassment endemic in higher education cannot be understood without seeing it in the context of marketisation and cuts. These make it harder for survivors to speak out, fearing for their future careers.

### NEC Resolves:

1. To stand in solidarity with students and staff who have faced harassment and abuse

and challenge institutional cultures which enable and mask abuse.

2. To produce resources to support students facing and wanting to campaign against sexual violence perpetrated by staff, and to offer our support to existing campus campaigns
3. To demand that universities record and make public their data on sexual violence, including that faced by staff
4. To work closely with the 1752 Group to carry out research into experiences of student-staff misconduct and produce a report at the end of the research

## Combatting Racism and Facism

### Conference Believes:

1. Racism and fascism continue to be prevalent in our society.
2. In the past year, particularly since Brexit, we have seen a rise in hate crimes.
3. The election of Donald Trump has legitimised racist rhetoric which we must stand against, especially his ban on Muslims from entering the United States.
4. As a movement, we must stand against all forms of racism.
5. The far-right are on the rise across Europe and it is our responsibility to stand firm against it.
6. In December 2016, the government proscribed the far-right neo-Nazi group, National Action.
7. Despite this the group are still appearing on campuses. In the past year they have been at Nottingham and Leicester, using stickers with the phrase: "Hitler was right".
8. Incidents of islamophobia, antisemitism and xenophobia have increased in the last year.
9. We should oppose state bans of organisations, including fascist organisations, as these strengthen the state's repressive powers, which are mostly used against the left, anti-racists and oppressed groups. As far right groups aim to take control of the state and use it against the left and oppressed groups, it is vital that the left does not strengthen the repressive power of the state and organises to oppose fascism without relying on it.

10. We must recognise that any level of fascist organisation represents a physical threat to us. We must seek to stop fascists marching and holding rallies, including through physical confrontation where necessary.

#### **Conference Further Believes:**

1. It is the right of a minority group to define their own oppression as per the Macpherson principle.
2. It is crucial that NUS has a strong and well-functioning ARAF campaign.
3. In a time of rising islamophobia, racism, antisemitism and xenophobia, it is more urgent than ever to develop this area of work.
4. Currently the ARAF campaign has limited resources to be able to fully combat racism and fascism.
5. Combatting racism and fascism must be at the heart of NUS' work.

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To reaffirm its commitment to fighting all forms of racism and fascism, wherever it may manifest, in our movement and in wider society.
2. To unequivocally support the principle that those who face anti-Semitism, racism and islamophobia should be the ones who lead the fight against it.
3. To provide more resources to the ARAF campaign in order for it to effectively and fully combat racism and fascism.

### **Support Picturehouse Strikers**

#### **NEC Believes:**

1. That workers at Picturehouse cinemas have been striking since September for the Living Wage, sick pay, maternity/paternity pay, and union recognition.
2. That the owner of Picturehouse, Cineworld, made £30 million profit in the first half of 2016.
3. That many students are employees of Picturehouse.
4. That Picturehouse often sells memberships and conducts marketing through Students' Unions.
5. That we support the demands of the Picturehouse workers and we want them to win.

6. That they set a good example for all low-paid workers and their victory will encourage others.
7. That striking for better pay is an excellent way to fight inequality

#### **NEC Resolves:**

1. To publicise the Picturehouse dispute and encourage members to support their strike fund.
2. To encourage students who work for Picturehouse to join BECTU and find out about the dispute.
3. To encourage Students' Unions to deny Picturehouse access to Freshers' Fairs and other marketing opportunities until they concede to the demands of the strikers.

### **NUS to Condemn Muslim Ban**

#### **NEC Believes:**

1. Donald Trump's first days in office have been marked by repeated acts of naked racism and xenophobia.
2. Black people are disproportionately impacted by Trumps administration through mass incarceration, state surveillance, state executions through police brutality and now black Muslims through the Muslim ban.
3. The administration's decisions continue the state violence of migrants and Muslims, especially black Muslims who face the double of oppression of anti-black racism and islamophobia
4. The so-called Muslim Ban, which prevents migration from Syria, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Libya, Somalia and Yemen, is the latest state violence issued by the US.
5. US citizens with dual nationality as well as Green Card holders have been stopped at borders.
6. Detained persons have been questioned about their religious and political beliefs and affiliations, including on their support for President Trump.
7. The British government has remained silent and repeatedly refused to comment on its US counterpart's actions.
8. The British government has remained silent on the US state violence enacted by racist ideology and policies.

9. The British government's own track record on the targeting of migrants and Muslim communities has led many to believe that its silence is motivated by tacit support for President Trump's actions.

#### **NEC Further Believes:**

1. That the structural discrimination of minorities and the most vulnerable by governments is unacceptable.
2. That migrants are welcome in our society.
3. Anti-black racism and added islamophobia doubly impact black Muslims.
4. That Muslims should never be targeted for their faith or their beliefs.
5. That the right of free movement is a key human right.
6. That the British government's own policies regarding Migrants, black people and Muslims are practically and institutionally racist.
7. That students and students unions have a key role to play in offering support and solidarity to those affected by the ban.
8. That students and students unions have a key role to play in the development of effective and broad political movements to turn the tide of xenophobia and Islamophobia which have been normalised for too long within our society and are reaching worrying heights.

#### **NEC Resolves:**

1. To support demonstrations and actions taken by students and community groups against the ban as well as against our own government's complicity.
2. To continue to campaign against the UK government's discrimination of migrants, Muslim communities and black lives.
3. To encourage students to offer refuge to stranded migrants, students, and dual-nationality US citizens.
4. To collaborate with migrant solidarity campaign in the UK against detention centres and deportations such as the 'Shut Down Yarl's Wood Campaign' and 'Black Lives Matter'.

## **Motion of Censure for VP UD**

#### **NEC Believes:**

1. Al Jazeera did an investigation into the actions of the Israeli Embassy.
2. During the course of this investigation which found influence by the Israeli Embassy leading to dismissals and resignations, the investigation led to Labour Students and NUS.
3. The investigation implicated Richard Brooks who stated he was organising against the NUS President.
4. Richard was filmed stating that he went on an all-expense paid trip to Israel
5. Student in HE and FE unions have released statements and open letters in response to the findings of the investigations demanding that VP Richard Brooks be held to account by the appropriate democratic body. Others have called for his immediate resignation.

#### **NEC Further Believes:**

1. That NEC was not informed of any such trip
2. That NEC is the accountable body for the Vice President Union President
3. That NUS FTOs are obliged to declare significant benefits of this kind
4. Richard has rejected all wrong-doing and claimed that the undercover reporter was introduced to him as a student organiser.
5. NEC rejects the notion that it is acceptable for a VP to hold a meeting to discuss the undermining of a democratically elected officer with a student introduced by an embassy, and therefore by a foreign government.

#### **NEC Resolves:**

1. To censure the Vice President Union Development for violating democratic procedures of accountability

## **Condemn the violation of BDS policy**

#### **NEC Believes:**

1. Several members of NEC have taken part in an all-expenses paid visit to Israel and Palestine in January 2017.
2. Evidence strongly indicates that this trip included trips to settlements, classified as illegal under internal law; land from which

Palestinians have been ethnically cleansed and which are re-populated exclusively by Israeli settlers.

3. NUS has democratic policy on supporting the Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions movement. BDS is a movement rooted in human rights that promotes freedom, equality and justice for the Palestinian people occupied, colonised and brutalised by the state of Israel, and which outlines a strategy of leveraging pressure on the state of Israel and on our own governments and institutions.
4. Our BDS policy was voted through and later re-affirmed, on the back of growing support for BDS among our membership. This support itself was born of the recognition that all previous tactics of engaging with Israel only enabled, facilitated or validated its flagrant human rights abuses – including its apartheid policies, ethnic cleansing, its inhumane siege on Gaza, its colonial practices throughout the West Bank and more.
5. Undertaking trips such as these that serves to undermine BDS policy and run counter to the principles of solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people that inform it.
6. A petition initiated by FE college students criticising the decision of the FTOs concerned has been signed by hundreds of students, and has urged the NEC to hold them to account.
7. An open letter signed by 32 Palestinian student and/or student-led organisations urged the FTOs to reconsider their participation in the trip

#### **NEC Further Believes:**

1. The decision to participate in the trip represents a violation of NUS' democratic policy on BDS and warrants censure.
2. Coming at a time when Al Jazeera's 'The Lobby' documentary series has raised serious allegations of interference by the Israeli embassy and related organisations into NUS' democratic structures, the decision to participate in such a trip shows a disregard for the for the stability of NUS.
3. Coming at a time when the UN Security Council has recently reaffirmed the illegality of settlements under international law, the decision to visit settlements as part of trip is an embarrassingly regressive one, and an affront to the values of human rights and

respect for international law that the student movement embodies.

4. The situation in Israel and Palestine is not an equally balanced equation – Israel is a militarised state that enjoys broad support and funding from superpower nations, whereas the Palestinians are an occupied and subjugated population.
5. There is a vast expanse of writing and documentation available for education on the Palestine-Israel issue. It does not require all expense-paid trips to formulate a political opinion.
6. International solidarity with a people should be rooted in a principled position of respect for human rights and dignity, and against oppression and should not be swayed by full-expense paid trips.

#### **NEC Resolves:**

1. To condemn the participation of NEC members in trips, which contribute, to the normalisation of the situation of Palestinians
2. To condemn the normalisation of Israeli settlements which are illegal under international law
3. To condemn the violation of BDS policy by elected officers and members of the NEC
4. To re-affirm our solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine

## **Unaccompanied Children in France**

#### **NEC Believes:**

1. The 'Dubs Amendment' created a scheme for unaccompanied refugee children in Europe to be offered safe refuge in the UK by inserting a special section into the Immigration Act 2016 [Section 67].
2. The amendment passed through Parliament in May 2016 with many Parliamentarians speaking passionately about our collective responsibility to pull our weight to ease the refugee crisis and offer protection to children forced to flee their homes without parents or other family.
3. At the time the Dubs Amendment was passed, it was estimated that there were 90,000 unaccompanied children in Europe.
4. The House of Lords wanted to offer sanctuary to 3,000 children under the scheme and pushed through the 'Dubs Amendment' named after the proposer, Lord Alf Dubs.

5. To date, only 200 children have been brought to the UK from France (mainly directly from the Calais camp) under the Dubs Amendment Scheme.
6. However at least 100 unaccompanied children are living in dangerous conditions in the Dunkirk camp. Yet the Government has not yet considered any children from the Dunkirk camp for transfer to the UK under the Dubs Scheme.
7. Children in the Dunkirk camp are at serious risk of trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse, violence and exposure to drugs such as heroin and morphine.
8. Children under the age of 16 living in the Dunkirk camp are not receiving proper full time education in schools and children between the ages of 16 and 18 (who do not want to claim asylum in France) are denied access to any education.
9. The camp's population has increased beyond capacity: facilities are overused posing severe risks to health and sanitation. Many of these children live in overcrowded shelters – there can be as many as twelve sharing a space designed for just four people. At least 40 unaccompanied children do not have a shelter and are bedding down on floors in communal areas.
10. There are also a significant number of unaccompanied children in Paris who are similarly excluded from consideration for transfer under Section 67, Immigration Act 2016. Many of whom are sleeping rough in areas such as St Denis and the north of the city, after the so-called 'Stalingrad' camp was broken up by police. We understand that many of the children in Paris were previously resident at the Calais camp.
11. That the Government's Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme has recently stopped accepting children with complex needs, including those with disabilities and learning difficulties due to a lack of suitable accommodation and "suitable reception capacity."

#### **NEC Further Believes:**

1. The numbers of unaccompanied children living in the Dunkirk camp have increased over the last nine months and we are deeply concerned that neither the French nor UK authorities have taken responsibility for protecting them. The UK government must keep to its commitments, made in Parliament to give

sanctuary to a number of unaccompanied children.

2. The government must, as a matter of urgency, start considering unaccompanied children from the Dunkirk camp for transfer to the UK under Section 67, Immigration Act 2016.
3. The denial of these children access a proper education - by both the French and British authorities is something that NUS should must be at the forefront of challenging.
4. The specific exclusion of disabled children from entering the UK as asylum seekers speaks to the wider disableist rhetoric, policies and beliefs purported by the Conservative Government – namely, that disabled people are a "drain on the system" which can be seen through the massive cuts to disability benefits.
5. There is a significant lack of accessible housing and our public services are under immense pressure – however, this is not due to (disabled) refugees, but due to policies of austerity.

#### **NEC Resolves**

1. To encourage individual Students' Union to contact their MPs and any member of the House of Lords who has a relationship with their institution to pressure the government publicly and in private to honour its obligations.
2. To encourage Student Unions and work with other education trade unions to call on their educational establishments to lobby the government and to support our calls for "right to live and the right to lean" for unaccompanied children in the UK.
3. To work with activists and lawyers who are present at the camp to see what logistical support is needed and help individual unions to arrange for these needs to be addressed.
4. The president to publish an open letter to the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary, reminding them of their obligations under the amendment and raise the issue of access to education, healthcare and decent housing conditions as a matter of urgency.
5. To circulate the crowdfunding campaign organised by Dunkirk Legal Support team " Help Bring Dunkirk's Forgotten Children to safety" to NUS members and over social media

(<https://www.crowdjustice.org/case/dunkirk-unaccompanied-children/>)

6. When campaigning for the right of refugee children to come to the UK, to specifically mention the plight and additional needs of disabled refugees – e.g. accessible housing, disability benefits, suitable accommodations in education.

## Shiromini Satkunaraja

### NEC Believes:

1. On 21/2/17, Bangor University student Shiromini Satkunaraja and her mother, Roshani, were arrested and detained to be deported to Sri Lanka.
2. That Shiromini is due to complete her degree at the end of this academic year, and deportation on the proposed date of 28/2/17 would have precluded her completion - projected to be a first class honours degree.
3. Bangor SU Vice President Helen Marchant and NUS Wales Deputy President Carmen Smith have led a campaign over a very short period of time, to have secured Shiromini and Roshani's release from Yarl's Wood detention centre yesterday Monday 27/2/17.
4. Shiromini and Roshani's lawyer has stated, "these positive developments came about only because this case has seen a groundswell of public opinion" crediting the coordination by NUS Wales of a huge response by the student movement to secure the release of one of our own.

### NEC Further Believes:

1. The Westminster Government's immigration and asylum policies are inhumane, dehumanising and rely on tropes of "the other"
2. Securing the safety of a third student in a year who is within the confines of the asylum process, is a significant win for the student movement and demonstrates the true purpose and value of our collectivism.

### NEC Resolves

1. For the President to write together with the Presidents of NUS Scotland, NUS Wales and NUS-USI, to the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd,

specifically noting our concerns with the treatment of students who are asylum seekers and refugees, but underlining our belief that students should be removed from net migration targets.

2. For NEC to congratulate Helen Marchant of Bangor SU, and Carmen Smith of NUS Wales, for the hard work and national coordination of the campaign to release Shiromini and Roshani from detention.

## Policy passed by the Nations since National Conference 2016

### NUS Wales Policy

#### Brexit: Ensuring the best outcome for Wales

Submitted by: NUS Wales National Executive Committee

##### Conference Believes:

1. The EU has provided countless benefits for the post-compulsory education sector in Wales.
2. 25,000 UK students studied or undertook work placements in the EU as part of the Erasmus+ scheme in 2015/16; since 2014 Erasmus+ has included UK school students, volunteers and apprentices and invests nearly £100 million each year into UK mobility in Europe [1]
3. The ability to study abroad has been proven to have long term benefits for those individuals who partake – in their future employment, and in developing an understanding and awareness of other cultures and societies. [2]
4. UK Universities receive an additional 15% in research funding from the European Union (EU), on top of contributions from the UK government [3]
5. Since the referendum was announced we have seen a serious and worrying rise in hate crime in Britain. In the month following the vote to leave the EU, the latest figures show that racist or religious abuse incidents recorded by police in England and Wales increased by 41%. [4]
6. The UK should remain a cooperative partner with EU countries and always seek to promote universal human rights, peace, stability and free movement within the EU and around the world.

##### Conference Resolves:

1. To lobby the Welsh Government to ensure that they are calling for the best deal for students when trying to influence the Brexit process, including calling for free movement and to remain in the single market.
2. To work with the Welsh Government to ensure that Welsh students in the post-compulsory sector have access to an outward mobility programme. [5]
3. To proactively engage with the European Students' Union and Obessu to ensure the voices of students in the UK are heard at the European level.

4. To work with STAR (Student Action for Refugees) and relevant organisations and support their campaigns.
5. To work with NUS UK to support Students' Unions to lobby their MPs and the government, calling on them to remove international students from net migration figures.
6. To publically oppose and campaign against any attempt to repeal the Human Rights Act and EU conventions those protect human rights and replace it with the British Bill of Rights.
7. To work with other organisations and our liberation campaigns to tackle discrimination, prejudice and hate crime.

[1] [erasmusplus.org.uk/key-erasmus-facts-and-figures](http://erasmusplus.org.uk/key-erasmus-facts-and-figures)

[2]

[http://www.lse.ac.uk/study/generalCourse/PDF/the\\_benefits\\_of\\_a\\_year\\_abroad.pdf](http://www.lse.ac.uk/study/generalCourse/PDF/the_benefits_of_a_year_abroad.pdf).

[3] [fullfact.org/education/how-much-money-do-british-universities-get-eu/](http://fullfact.org/education/how-much-money-do-british-universities-get-eu/)

[4]

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/559319/hate-crime-1516-hosb1116.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/559319/hate-crime-1516-hosb1116.pdf)

[5] If Westminster creates an Outward Mobility scheme for the UK, NUS Wales will need to work with NUS UK to ensure that it is one that works for students and explore how the Welsh Government can increase the participation of Welsh students in the scheme.

#### Tuition Fees should not rise with TEF in Wales

Submitted by: Cardiff University Students' Union

##### Conference Believes:

1. Tuition fees, having been tripled in 2012, currently stand at £9000 per year for full-time UK undergraduates.
2. The Higher Education and Research Bill (HE Bill) was first read in the House of Commons in May 2016, it is currently at the committee stage in the House of Lords.
3. Within the HE Bill, lies the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).
4. TEF is a measure which ranks universities as Gold, Silver or Bronze based on metrics relating to teaching quality.
5. Official TEF Guidance confirms TEF will be in-effect for students entering education in autumn 2017.
6. TEF will allow eligible universities to raise fees in line with inflation. Inflation in the UK has risen by an average of 2.3% each year over the past 10 years.
7. Both Welsh and English Universities are participating in TEF however, only (eligible) English Universities are set to raise fees. The Welsh Government has currently pegged tuition at £9000 in Wales.
8. Recent news suggests some Welsh Universities are afraid of appearing as "second class" universities compared to those who raise fees in England.

9. The Welsh Government has only confirmed tuition fees at £9000 for the academic year 2017/18.
10. Some Welsh institutions are publicly advertising that their fees are subject to increase in future in line with government policy.
11. This could lead to an increase in tuition fees in Welsh Universities if the Government sees Welsh institutions favour it. This increase could start taking effect in the academic year 2018/19.

#### **Conference Further Believes:**

1. An increase in tuition fees in Welsh institutions means:
  - a. Students in Wales will graduate with more debt.
  - b. The advantage that Welsh universities currently have over English ones will be withdrawn.
  - c. Fees could keep on increasing with no real 'cap' since inflation has not dropped below 0% in the past 20 years.
  - d. Students from less advantaged backgrounds will be more put off going to university.
2. We must think of the next generations and how inaccessible education could become.
3. In order for our concerns to reach the Welsh Government, NUS Wales must be mandated to lobby them.

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. Cardiff University Students' Union will submit this motion to NUS Wales National Conference.
2. This motion mandates NUS Wales to lobby the Welsh government for a commitment to no rise in fees for the next 7 to 10 years.

### **Diamond; ensuring a funding system that works for Wales**

Submitted by: NUS Wales National Executive Committee

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That Wales needs an inclusive Higher Education system which everyone can access and excel in.
2. That NUS Wales must challenge the fact that education is still a privilege and not a right.
3. That the cost of living whilst in Higher Education is becoming untenable. The current costs are driving students into private debt, causing mental health issues, forcing students to live in their overdraft and constraining students to squalid housing that leads to health problems.

#### **Conference Further Believes:**

1. That the Diamond Review and the subsequent Welsh Government response has proposed a funding package that is progressive; it targets support at those who need it the most and gets to grips with the issues around the cost of living
2. That the maintenance package will enable widening access.

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To always acknowledge that the current system isn't perfect as our end goal is free education for all. We recognise that within the current economic climate the Diamond review is a progressive step forward. However, we will continue to lobby on elements of the review that we feel could be improved.
2. To ensure that the student voice is at the heart of implementing the new system
3. To ensure that NUS Wales remain the experts on student finance in Wales so that we can consistently fight for support for the students who need it the most
4. To work with Students' Unions, the Open University Student Association Welsh representative, the Welsh Government and relevant organisations to ensure that the support package for student parents, students with disabilities, care leavers and students who have caring responsibilities is one that meets the needs of these students and allows them to access HE should they wish to do so.

### **Financial Support for Mature Students (FE)**

Submitted by: Coleg Cambria Students' Union

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. The only financial support for mature FE students is the Welsh Government Learning Grant of £1500 per year.
2. Unlike England, students don't have to pay for tuition in Wales, but still are unable to return to training/study due to financial difficulties.
3. Many students in FE institutions over 19 are unable to afford to live without missing classes to work.
4. This leads to students failing or dropping out before completing their course.

#### **Conference Further Believes:**

1. All FE students over 19 should be able to train/study to improve their education and career prospects without financial restraint.

#### **Conference Resolves:**

2. To aid SUs in lobbying the Welsh Government to provide financial support for over 19s in Wales.
3. This could be done through providing maintenance loans similar to the ones provided in HE.
4. Call for SUs to lobby their institution to provide support for over 19s wherever possible.

(some £15 million per year in Wales) and apply the change across the UK, or Welsh Government to repay the costs directly to the UK Government.

## A fairer deal for student carers

Submitted by: Gower College Students' Union

### Conference Believes:

1. Carers Trust Wales estimates that there are 1,600 students with caring responsibilities who start their first year of an undergraduate course every year in Wales. That makes up around 4% of our entire HE population.
2. The most popular form of benefit received by carers "The Carers Allowance is not available to students studying for more than 21 hours a week (60% part-time intensity). Therefore leaving many student carers without adequate support.
3. Wales is the largest dependant on "The Carers Allowance" compared with other regions.

### Conference Further Believes:

1. The Diamond Review looked at how Wales would fund and support their students, it recommended that there should be a shift from student support through the tuition fee grant, to student support through maintenance.
2. The Diamond Review also recommended improving support for targeted groups: students who are parents; students with disabilities and; students with experience of care.
3. The above recommendation does not include students who provide care.
4. Student carers are not currently financially supported to cover the costs of their caring responsibilities. In our view, that is an unacceptable situation for them to be in.

### Conference Resolves:

1. NUS Wales will lobby the Welsh government to either:
  - a. Extend the new, proposed system of student finance from the Diamond Review to include student carers. At an additional cost of some £15 million per year, that would mean £3,250 available per year to student carers, assessed through Student Finance Wales.
  - b. The Welsh Government and the UK Government to extend the existing Carers Allowance to students, achieved by removing the restriction on studying full-time while claiming the Allowance. UK Government to either cover this cost itself

## Tackling Anti-Semitism

Submitted by: University of Wales Trinity Saint David Students' Union

### Conference Believes:

1. In 2016, the Community Security Trust, a charity dedicated to protecting the Jewish community, recorded 1,309 anti-Semitic incidents compared to 1,182 recorded in 2014.
2. Anti-Semitism is prevalent across the whole political spectrum.
3. Many Jewish students were at the forefront of NUS UK disaffiliation campaigns due to concerns of anti-Semitism in our movement.
4. In October, the Home Affairs Select Committee published a report into 'Anti-Semitism in the UK' that included a chapter on 'campus anti-Semitism'.
5. The Universities UK, Chakrabarti Inquiry, Home Affairs Select Committee report and recent high profile incidents highlight a need to do more to tackle anti-Semitism on campus.

### Conference Further Believes:

1. Universities have a legal obligation to ensure that students do not face discrimination or harassment as per the Equalities Act 2010.
2. NUS has a role in ensuring that safeguarding, anti-discrimination and harassment policies are present on university campuses.
3. Under current legislation, Jews are identified as members of a race as well as a religion and police record crimes against them as either racially or religiously motivated.
4. Jewish students have the right to define what they constitute as anti-Semitism, as per the Macpherson principal, which NUS upholds.
5. NUS is guided by the EU Monitoring Centre working definition of Anti-Semitism, while recent work in the UK has identified the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance as a more useful definition.
6. The recent Home Affairs Select Committee recommended that the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition be formally adopted by the UK government, law enforcement agencies and all political parties.
7. NUS Wales should be at the forefront of making the case for NUS UK to take the issue of anti-Semitism seriously, and to offer solidarity with Jewish students.

### Conference Resolves:

1. To commit to tackling anti-Semitism in all of its forms.
2. To adopt the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism, and to encourage SU's to do the same.
3. To work with UJS and CST to produce a new and updated version of 'A Student's Guide to Anti-Semitism' for the academic year 2017/18.
4. To lobby institutions to provide additional support to students during times of higher tension to ensure that campus remains a fair, open and safe space to all students irrespective of their religious, national, ethnic or racial identity.
5. To provide educational training on anti-Semitism as part of Sabbatical Officer summer training.

## Don't leave FE students stranded

Submitted by: Coleg Sir Gâr Students' Union

### Conference Believes:

1. The Welsh Government has decided to scrap the discounted travel scheme My Travel Pass which gives young people aged 16-18 a third off the price off their bus travel.
2. The Welsh Government has said that it's dropping the scheme because not many people have used it. It says that only around 7% of those eligible have signed up. But others have suggested that the problem lay in how the scheme has been advertised—and we agree.
3. We believe that everyone should be able to access education, regardless of their capacity to pay for the transport to get there.
4. NUS Wales research Pound In Your Pocket 2014 found that six in ten further education students faced costs associated with travel, and one in five faced costs of £20 or more a week.

### Conference Further Believes:

1. Transport for learners in further education is currently the responsibility of local authorities. That often means that transport policies are different depending on where you live, including the cost and level of subsidy, the eligibility criteria, and the type of transport provided.
2. Cuts to local government budgets have meant that transport for further education students is increasingly at risk.
3. Every year, college Students' Unions tell us that their students are most concerned about the cost of getting to their college campus or placement.
4. In April 2017, the minimum hourly wage for apprentices will still be just £3.50. But research by the National Society of Apprentices Wales indicates that apprentices are paying some £25 a week for travel—roughly 20% of their total income.

### Conference Resolves:

1. NUS Wales and its member Students Unions should lobby Welsh government to keep the My Travel Pass.
2. NUS Wales should offer advice on how to advertise the My Travel Pass through FE institutions.

## Putting students at the heart of the post-compulsory sector

Submitted by: NUS Wales National Executive Committee

### Conference Believes

1. That the post-compulsory education sector must have the needs of Wales and of Welsh students at its heart, not that of the institutions.
2. That Further Education colleges have seen enormous cuts in the past few years, that too many apprentices aren't being paid enough to live on and that the Higher Education budget has seen significant in year cuts.
3. That talking about parity of esteem is no longer enough; all vocational and academic pathways must be funded and supported equitably.
4. That students should truly be at the heart of shaping their education. This does not only mean representation on all boards and during key decision making process, but also that all students are given the opportunity to shape their education.

### Conference Further Believes:

1. That the Welsh Government's aim of creating one body to be responsible for managing and funding higher education, further education and work based learning will enable a holistic approach to the post-compulsory sector
2. That the competition between the further and higher education sectors for funding and support must end and that this new, overarching vision for the sector could go some way to making this a reality.

### Conference Resolves:

1. To ensure that NUS Wales has a place as an observer on the board of any new body
2. To work with Students' Unions and the Welsh Government to ensure that the new body is one that places the needs of students at its core
3. To use the consultation process as a way to campaign for increased resources and support to be given to student voice structures and students' Union, particularly in FE
4. Widening Access is a core mission for HEFCW, we must lobby to ensure that this remains a priority for the new body.

## Let's Address the Elephant in the Room

Submitted by: Aberystwyth University Students' Union

### Conference Believes:

1. That all students deserve to be receiving a high level of support for their mental health during their time in education.
2. That Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is not easily accessible in Wales, as training courses are of low availability. The high prices of the courses also mean that organisations/institutions cannot MFHA train their staff without a significant financial impact.
3. That more MHFA training should be provided as standard to all significant education staff; such as personal tutors, support staff, accommodation services, site security etc. It should be imperative for all staff that has regular and one-to-one contact with students to have training in how to correctly approach a student with poor mental health.
4. That MHFA should be considered as important as physical first aid – in the work place, it is a legal requirement for a number of team members to be physical first aid trained, but there is no such requirement for MHFA.

### Conference Further Believes:

1. In a 2011 study on the 'Grand Challenges' in student mental health, Student Minds identified the top 10 barriers that stopped students from accessing mental health support and these included: poor general understanding about mental health problems, fear of being judged, stress and finding the confidence to ask for help.
2. Student Minds also states 'Research has estimated that around 29% of students experience mental distress, however there is considerable variable in prevalence statistics.'
3. In a recent survey ran by Aberystwyth Students' Union, 72% of the students surveyed expressed that they had experienced issues with their mental health during their time at Aberystwyth University. Of that 72%, 70% said that they were not satisfied with the level of mental health support available.

### Conference Resolves:

1. For NUS Wales to lobby to make MHFA training more accessible, particularly for educational institutes and Students' Unions.
2. To lobby with both the government and educational institutions to encourage mental health support to be higher the work place agenda. Ideally, MHFA training should be a legal requirement alongside physical first aid.
3. To raise awareness about the importance of mental health support for students and to

campaign to end the stigma surrounding mental health.

## Motion to get NUS Wales to put pressure on HEFCW to get rid of the 5 credit measure as a way of measuring Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's performance

Cyflwynwyd gan: Aberystwyth University Students' Union

### Conference believes:

1. NUS Wales believes in universal education which means that all students get an opportunity to succeed in education, whatever their background.
2. We need to be optimistic with regard to Welsh medium education, and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol is essential in the development of Welsh education as a means of developing universal education.
3. According to the Government's strategy of getting a million Welsh speakers by 2050, the role of Welsh medium higher education is essential as a way of getting people to use the language and of reaching the target of a million.

### Conference further believes:

1. Measuring Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's performance with 5 credits is not a fair assessment of Welsh medium education, because there isn't a record of how institutions interpret and report on the 5 credits. Consequently, it creates higher figures than other indicators, thus creating meaningless results.
2. The 5 credit measure doesn't analyse Welsh medium education in a realistic way, as 5 credits correspond to 4.1% of what the student studies.
3. It doesn't correspond to Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's activities, with the Coleg awarding scholarships on the basis of students studying 40 credits of their studies through the medium of Welsh each year (Incentive Scholarships) and 80 credits of their studies in Welsh each year (Main Scholarships).

### Conference Resolves:

1. To express our dissatisfaction with the use of 5 credits as an indicator for Welsh medium studies with the TEF.
2. That the 5 credit measure used by HEFCW to evaluate the work of Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol is unsuitable, as it doesn't correctly measure the Coleg's performance. NUS Wales should put pressure on HEFCW to stop using the 5 credit system to evaluate the Coleg.
3. NUS Wales should consult with HEFCW with regard to measuring Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's performance, and look at the possibility of using 40 and 80 credits, which would

be more closely aligned with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's study structure.

## GCSE Motion

Submitted by: Coleg Cambria Students' Union

### Conference Believes:

1. GCSE English and Maths resits in Wales is a positive development enabling core qualifications to be gained by students
2. The overall 30% pass rate (Grade C or above) needs to be increased to enable more students to gain these qualifications
3. Specific "resit" teaching methodologies should be developed on a National basis.

### Conference Further Believes:

1. Increasing the GCSE English and Maths makes more students more employable.

### Conference Resolves:

1. to work in partnership with colleges and the Welsh Government and develop "exemplar" teaching materials and methodologies for GCSE Maths and English on a National basis.

## Access to Welsh Medium Education

Submitted by: NUS Wales National Executive Committee

### Conference Believes:

1. NUS Wales believes that education should be inclusive; that is to say that all students can access and succeed in education no matter what their background or characteristics. Therefore, in Wales, an inclusive education must be one in which students who wish to do so can study their chosen subject through the medium of Welsh.
2. In 2015 the Welsh Language Campaign conducted a survey which aimed to discover if Higher Education students thought Welsh language education was important, and if so why. The survey highlighted that a significant proportion of Welsh speaking students feel more confident when studying through the medium of Welsh. Consequently, not having access to Welsh medium education could impair their ability to engage with, and succeed within, Higher Education.

### Conference Further Believes:

1. The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (CCC) has been instrumental in developing Welsh medium provision within Higher Education institutions.
2. The CCC has invested over £18 Million in Welsh Universities since 2011 [1]
3. The number of students studying at least 40 credits a year (a third of their course through the

medium of Welsh) in higher education institutions in Wales has increased by 10% over two years and represents a record number of students studying at least 40 credits through the medium of Welsh. In addition, there has been an increase of nearly 1,000 in the number of fulltime undergraduate students studying part of their course through the medium of Welsh in Welsh universities since the establishment of the Coleg in 2011 (from 2,614 to 3,590 students). [2]

4. That the CCC also has a crucial role to play when it comes to increasing the numbers of students who are studying through the medium of Welsh.

### Conference Resolves:

1. To call for the Coleg Cymraeg's remit to be expanded to include FE as well as HE and that the CCC receive adequate resources and support to do so
2. Should the CCC have jurisdiction over HE and FE, NUS Wales must campaign to ensure that there is a parity of esteem between HE and FE within the organisation. This includes ensuring that the CCC are enabling students to shape their education and providing the same training for FE reps as they do for those in HE.
3. Continue campaigning for improvement in the provision of Welsh medium education available to students in the post-compulsory sector.

## Emergency Motion: Getting the best deal for apprentices!

Submitted by: NUS Wales National Executive Committee

### Conference Believes:

1. The leadership team of the National Society of Apprentices met in February 2017 to decide on its policy and campaigns for the year.
2. The membership of NSoA told the leadership team what they should prioritise and the leadership team turned these priorities into policy.
3. The policy that was set was split into the following areas of work; Cost of Living; Apprentice Pay; Positive interactions between apprentices, training providers and employers; and sexism and discrimination
4. The NSoA believe that apprentices should be entitled to the same benefits that students' receive and will campaign on council tax exemption; Travel Card; Healthcare costs; Childcare; Equipment costs; TU membership; and Bank Accounts
5. The NSoA believes that the apprentice national minimum wage should be abolished and will also campaign to reduce the time allowed on apprentice national minimum wage while it still exists.

6. The NSoA will restate the NSoA Charter on excellent apprenticeships and will work with partners to develop a kite mark for excellent apprenticeships.
7. The NSoA will set up NSoA Women in Apprenticeships working group to look at women in STEM apprenticeships and the gender pay gap

#### **Conference Further Believes:**

1. Although the NUS does not structurally need to adopt the NSoA platform the NSoA leadership team would like to continue its strong working relationship with NUS.

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. That NUS will continue to support the NSoA in its work and policy goals

## **NUS Scotland policy 2017**

### **Access, funding and student support**

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#### **A fairer future for all**

##### **Conference noted:**

1. It is commonly accepted that the current generation of 'millennials' will become the first generation since the Second World War to be worse off than their parents.
2. From housing to health, education to employment, tax to benefits, the current generation of young adults are increasingly expected to shoulder the financial burden of past policy mistakes.
3. Against a landscape of Brexit, and the threat of further austerity and diminished opportunities, this could only get worse.
4. People from a liberation background will undoubtedly feel the consequences of this most severely, particularly where class and liberation intersect.
5. That we cannot downplay the root causes of poverty and inequality – a system that works for the richest, while perpetuating class divides, across education and our wider society.

##### **Conference believed:**

1. That while our work on fair access has seen a renewed and high profile public and political push to open up our institutions, progress has been far

too slow and far too marginal, and a generation risks being left behind under the status quo. At the same time, college places are being squeezed, and those who deserve a place the most are the ones most at risk of missing out.

2. Those who do make it into education continue to struggle by on a student support system that is simply no longer fit for purpose and sees far too many drop out of education altogether, with the poorest students hit the hardest.
3. And for those who don't make it, continued austerity across the UK has seen young people – not least those from a working class and liberation background – hit hardest, with threats to benefits, bleak employment prospects, and an uncertain future.

##### **Conference resolved:**

1. To make our priority campaign next year focused on ensuring a fairer future for all – where the current and future generations have certainty and security of opportunities – tying together our work on fair access; student support; and, demanding the Scottish Government use the full powers available to it to deliver tax and welfare justice.
2. On student support, we will work through the current Student Support Review to ensure a system that works for students on the basis of individual need, creating a coherent system that doesn't discriminate on age, level or mode of study.
3. On fair access, we will ensure the implementation of the full recommendations of the Commission on Widening Access, with the necessary investment and places to achieve the targets set.
4. And, on tax and benefits, we will partner with other organisations to undertake a research

project exploring how the Scottish Government can use its full powers to deliver a fairer settlement long term for the young and poor, with the richest shouldering the greatest responsibility.

5. At every step of the way, this work will be underpinned by a recognition of the ways liberation interests all of these issues, with a clear response to that.

## Supporting our students after Brexit

### Conference noted:

1. EU provides countless benefits for the Scottish education sector<sup>1</sup>.
2. Through the Erasmus+ programme students benefit long term - in their future employment, and in developing an understanding and awareness of other cultures and communities<sup>2</sup>.
3. Since 2014 Erasmus+ has included UK school students, volunteers and apprentices and invests nearly £100 million each year into UK mobility in Europe<sup>3</sup>.
4. UK Universities receive an additional 15% in research funding from the EU<sup>4</sup>.
5. Since the referendum was announced we've seen a serious rise in hate-crime in Britain. In the month following the vote to leave the EU, latest figures show racist or religious abuse incidents recorded by police in Scotland increased by 41%<sup>5</sup>.
6. Scotland's higher education sector is home to 13,450 students of EU domicile at undergraduate level. They account for 8.9% of undergraduate degree students.
7. Another 5,390 EU students study at postgraduate level in our universities, paying fees to do so. EU-domiciled students account for 13.3% of postgraduate taught students and 16.7% of postgraduate research students.
8. EU graduates can stay and work in Scotland under current arrangements. By doing so they

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.universities-scotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/EU-exit-briefing-ScTechHoC.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.lse.ac.uk/study/generalCourse/PDF/the\\_benefits\\_of\\_a\\_year\\_abroad.pdf](http://www.lse.ac.uk/study/generalCourse/PDF/the_benefits_of_a_year_abroad.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [www.erasmusplus.org.uk/key-erasmus-facts-and-figures](http://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/key-erasmus-facts-and-figures)

<sup>4</sup> [www.fullfact.org/education/how-much-money-do-british-universities-get-eu/](http://www.fullfact.org/education/how-much-money-do-british-universities-get-eu/)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/559319/hate-crime-1516-hosb1116.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/559319/hate-crime-1516-hosb1116.pdf)

help meet demand for high skills and contribute to the economy.

### Conference believed:

1. EU not only enables free movement of millions of people across national borders and facilitated cultural exchange, but does so while protecting their rights within the countries they travel to.
2. Membership enables over 140,000 students to travel for study between the UK and Europe each year.
3. The rhetoric used during the EU referendum has legitimised pre-existing racism and xenophobic sentiment. We must fight the idea there's a problem with immigration and combat the rise in xenophobia.
4. UK should remain a cooperative partner with EU countries and always seek to promote universal human rights, peace, stability and free movement within the EU and around the world.
5. The Brexit vote has had a negative impact on the mental health of EU students.
6. EU students on campuses have been provided with little or no information on how Brexit will affect them, and the work that the universities and colleges are currently doing in order to support them.
7. Universities Scotland and partners have released information to the 19 Scottish institutions on Brexit support for students, however this is not been communicated to students.

### Conference resolved:

1. To lobby the Scottish Government ensuring they're calling for the best deal for students when trying to influence the Brexit process, including free movement, remaining in the single market.
2. If the UK is not able to remain a part of Erasmus+ post-Brexit, NUS Scotland must call on Scottish Government to create a scheme which will allow continuation of outward student mobility from Scotland.
3. To publically oppose and campaign against attempts to repeal the Human Rights Act and replace it with the British Bill of Rights.
4. NUS Scotland should work with Universities Scotland and sector partners to ensure that information regarding the support available to students is efficiently communicated with EU students.

5. NUS Scotland should work with Scottish universities and colleges on ensuring that a suitable student wellbeing provision is in place to support EU students.
6. NUS Scotland should encourage students' associations across Scotland to reach out to their EU Students and communicate the on campus support that is available to them.

## Generation lost

### Conference noted:

1. That in this motion, non-traditional students is set to mean students who are from widening access backgrounds.
2. That the Scottish Government commissioned a report into widening access, which was chaired by Dame Ruth Silver which gave its interim report in November 2015.
3. That although the report did not give formal recommendations as such, it did highlight that there are several barriers to education for students from non-traditional backgrounds.
4. That UWS currently has more students from a widening access background than any other university in Scotland.

### Conference believed:

1. That retention of students is often a challenge for educational institutions with high numbers of non-traditional students.
2. That educational institutions are often penalised for retention figures.
3. That educational institutions that are committed to widening access are already trying to overcome many of the barriers associated with widening access.
4. That as of yet, there is no mechanism to reward widening access within educational institutions, universities in particular.
5. That educational institutions should be rewarded for widening access with larger amounts of funding that can be ring fenced to support non-traditional students.

### Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland will lobby and campaign for extra funding for institutions that have track records of providing widening access opportunities for non-traditional students.

2. That such extra funding will be ring fenced and used by institutions to help support these students whilst studying.
3. Such funding will be set on benchmarks which will be fully explored by the Silver Commission.

## Our ability but not our money – financial assistance to international students in need

### Conference noted:

1. That international students are paying a substantially higher tuition fee compared to local or EU students.
2. That international students' accesses to financial supports are strictly limited.
3. That, when compared to the average household incomes of popular origins of international students, tuition fee alone equals 32% (USA), 225% (China), 52% (Hong Kong) and 1130% (India) of the respective annual household incomes.
4. That the high tuition fee blocks overseas students from pursuing quality education in Scotland.
5. That the rate of offer made to international students is significantly higher than that to local or EU students.
6. That the high tuition fee rate and the lack of financial support change the admission basis from academic ability to financial ability.

### Conference believed:

1. That education is a public good.
2. That international student enjoys equality in opportunities in receiving education.
3. That allowing talented students from around the world to study in Scotland would benefit the local community and the sustainable development of Scotland as a centre of education.
4. That the motive of generating profit from the provision of education would undermine the quality of international students admitted.

### Conference resolved:

1. To reaffirm that education to all students, regardless of where they are come, should not be treated as a business.

2. To lobby the Government, universities and colleges to provide more access to scholarships and bursaries to international students with financial difficulties.
3. To facilitate, in a long term, an accessible ability-based education to international students.

## Education

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### College students' associations need staff

#### Conference noted:

1. The Framework for the Development of Strong and Effective College Students' Associations says that students' associations should be sustainable "in its planning, development, and relationship with the college over multiple years?"
2. Education Scotland's new Framework How good is our college? Will be an annual review from now on instead of the previous four yearly reviews.
3. Sparqs Student Engagement Framework says that student engagement should have "Formal mechanisms for quality and governance." And that there should be "Appropriate resources and support."
4. The letter from John Kemp of the Scottish Funding Council entitled Future Development of Students' Associations says "A small college" should have between £75k and £85k for one full-time officer and one full-time staff member.
5. Student officers change every year or every other year in particular FE students who are on one-year courses.

#### Conference believed:

1. Students' association staff allow associations to embed permanent expertise in quality and to develop long-term strategy helping support elected student officers to achieve their goals.
2. That all of these documents point to the need of a long-term strategy for, and the development of expertise in quality and engagement within our students' associations.
3. That not enough students' associations have their own staff to develop these.
4. Funding cuts have made it harder to make the case for resources in students' associations.

#### Conference resolved:

1. To support college students' associations to get the staff and resources they need to properly engage with the review Framework "How good is our college?"
2. To help College Students' Association staff to network with one another and share best practice.

### Liberté, égalité, quality

#### Conference noted:

1. NUS Scotland has very little policy on education quality and teaching and learning practices, but it is a core area of work for students' associations and NUS Scotland.
2. NUS Scotland shapes the Quality Enhancement Framework and participates actively in sector-level bodies. Students' Associations do the same at a local level.
3. NUS Scotland is participating in the new College Quality Framework, and working with sparqs to support College students' associations to engage with this at a local level.

#### Conference believed:

1. High quality provision is only possible through making our education system democratic, transparent, and liberating.
2. Excellent learning is only possible where students and staff work in partnership to shape provision themselves, not where it is directed by the market logic.
3. NUS Scotland's engagement with the quality agenda should be led by Students' Associations to make sure that the needs of students are reflected at a sector level.
4. The QEF is a good framework for teaching quality, but is still highly technical and obscure.

#### Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland should continue to resist the introduction of marketisation under the guise of quality assurance (such as the UK's Teaching Excellence Framework) by strengthening alternative systems in Scotland that prioritise partnership, democracy and student involvement.
2. NUS Scotland will coordinate student and rep participation in quality arrangements at a sector level, organizing Students' Associations to

maximize impact in sector bodies that govern teaching quality.

3. NUS Scotland to support the creation of apprentice learner-voice initiatives to democratise the governance of apprenticeships.

## Making universities more inclusive of people of colour

### Conference noted:

1. The literary canon at universities is traditionally white, reflecting an ongoing history of colonialism, white-washing and institutionalised racism. University reading lists ought to reflect an ethnic diversity of scholars in humanities.
2. According to figures published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency, there have been no black academics in the elite staff category of "managers, directors and senior officials" for three years. The figures also show that universities employ more black staff as cleaners, receptions or porters than as lecturers or professors.
3. It is problematic that the Professor of Black Studies at the University of Edinburgh is white. This is just one example of the lack of inclusiveness of people of colour within teaching staff.

### Conference believed:

1. It is necessary to combat institutionalised racism in order to see a society that is inclusive of all minorities.
2. Curriculums in humanities subjects are not racially diverse. Many BME students report none or close to no people of colour in their reading lists.
3. It is currently very difficult for people of colour to enter academia in an already very white environment.
4. There are concerns from BME students that academic staff at universities are not diverse in terms of race.
5. There are concerns from students that academic staff are not equipped to deal with racism in the classroom and have experienced racism that has not been confronted.
6. Inclusivity of people of colour is vital in encouraging more people of colour to apply to Scottish universities.

### Conference further believed:

1. In recent years, only a handful of BME students have attended NUS Scotland conferences.
2. A lack of representation is isolating, silencing and discourages BME students from further involvement with NUS.
3. Increased representation is important for allowing BME students to have a voice and to influence the direction and policies of NUS Scotland.

### Conference resolved:

1. Lobby universities to be more inclusive of people of colour in two areas:
  - a. In curriculums
    - i. Making curriculums more diverse - specifically inclusive of people of colour.
    - ii. Lobby universities to create an interdisciplinary course about race relations in humanities departments.
    - iii. State the importance of all university departments and colleges to provide courses based on race, ethnicity, non-white scholars, and/or non-English speaking countries.
    - iv. Lobby universities to increase representation of people of colour in reading lists in humanities subjects.
    - v. Lobby universities to make it a requirement to include people of colour scholars when designing new courses in humanities.
  - b. In the teaching body
    - i. Lobby universities to make the teaching body and student services more inclusive of people of colour.
    - ii. Lobby universities to increase the number of non-white tutors, lecturers, professors and senior officials.
    - iii. Lobby universities to include a quota for the number of academics that are people of colour teaching courses. This should be directly related to the course being taught, i.e. Black Studies should be organised and taught mostly by people of colour.
    - iv. Lobby universities to make it a requirement for academic staffs to undergo 'Implicit Bias' training, as well

as further training to combat racism and microaggressions with the classroom environment.

2. To actively support campaigns for a Black students' officer in every union.
3. To ensure that conferences have an agenda which is inclusive of liberation issues, and provides a platform for Liberation Campaigns.
4. To ensure Liberation is a part of the Plan of Work.
5. To create a reserved space for a BME representative from each institution to NUS Scotland National Conferences.

## TEF 'AFF

### Conference noted:

1. The UK government has introduced the Teaching Excellence Framework as a means of measuring the quality of education at Universities across the UK
2. That in Scotland, we have the Quality Enhancement framework, governed by an independent body (Quality Assurance Agency Scotland) to ensure quality of education at Scottish Universities
3. That the Scottish Government has advised Universities Scotland that it has no position on the matter and will leave it up to the sector
4. That in England and Wales, TEF ratings will allow institutions to raise tuition fees
5. One of the metrics of TEF is 'non-continuation rates' which measures the retention rates of universities.

### Conference believed:

1. Scotland has traditionally been much better at quality enhancement than the rest of the UK.
2. That some of the metrics that are used to measure quality of education are inadequate as they do not measure quality but measure satisfaction through NSS data
3. That raising fees in England and Wales will have consequences for RUK student studying in Scotland.

### Conference further believed:

1. That TEF is being used in a way which will have negative consequences for all students in the UK.

2. Retention being used as a measurement of success may result in Universities being closed off to students who are from widening access backgrounds.

### Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland will actively oppose the Teaching Excellence framework being rolled out to Scottish Institutions.
2. NUS Scotland must actively speak out against the Teaching Excellence Framework
3. NUS Scotland will actively lobby the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Government and Universities Scotland to ensure that TEF is not adopted by the Scottish Sector.
4. NUS Scotland will support local campaign work by constituent members against TEF.

## Teaching placements shortage

### Conference noted:

1. The eight universities that offer PGDE courses have been struggling with placing their Education students for years now due to a mixture of: inadequate communication between universities and local authorities about the numbers of placements necessary, inadequate Scottish government data on localised supply and demand for teachers, problems inherent in the General Teaching Council's (Scotland) Student Placement System, and the general deficit of cooperation between all stakeholders to resolve this entire issue decisively.
2. Not enough is being done by GTCS, local authorities, and the Scottish Government to ensure that there are enough teaching placements available for students studying Education.
3. The current solutions to fix this problem are patchwork at best, and there is an increasing worry that the massive shortage of placements that took place at the start of the 2016/17 academic year will again occur in the next academic year.

### Conference believed:

1. The Scottish Government must act decisively to remedy this issue, treating the situation with the appropriate level of urgency so as to avoid further frustration, uncertainty and distress amongst affected students.

2. Local authorities must place more emphasis and resources on cooperating with universities both within and without SPS, ensuring that all placements are confirmed before placements begin.
4. The GTCS's Student Placement System must come under an independent review to identify and address problems that university staff are reporting hinders their ability to place students in schools.
5. The student movement must attempt to secure student representation in government and local committees dealing with student placements wherever possible, to ensure that the student voice on this issue is heard.

#### Conference resolved:

1. To lobby the Scottish government to revise its teacher recruitment strategy to become more based on local, rather than Scotland-wide demand, and to include student representatives in the planning process to identify issues as soon as possible.
2. To push for an independent review of GTCS's Student Placement System, taking into account views of all stakeholders, including teaching students.
3. To work to ensure adequate representation on both local and national level student placement planning committees and working groups.

## Communities

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### Students and workers, unite and fight: let's have apprentices in our membership

#### Conference noted:

1. NUS Scotland has supported the National Society of Apprentices Scotland since its creation, and apprentices have attended NUS Scotland Conference as NSoAS reps.
2. NUS National Conference 2016 passed [...] with the intention of bringing the National Society of Apprentices into NUS membership. Proposals to complete this will be discussed at NUS UK Conference 2017 in April.
3. The National Society of Apprentices has chosen to organize itself on a regional basis, with the National Society of Apprentices Scotland (and

the NSoAS Leadership Team) as the body for apprentices in Scotland.

#### Conference believed:

1. Apprentices are tertiary learners that should be in our membership, but many apprentices cannot be represented through existing students' associations in Scotland.
2. NSoAS is the legitimate learner-voice representative body for apprentices in Scotland, so should be part of NUS Scotland.

#### Conference resolved:

1. To mandate NUS Scotland officers to engage with NUS UK and NSoA so that NSoAS will be treated as a Constituent Member of NUS Scotland as soon as NSoA is brought into NUS membership, with equivalent arrangements for delegate entitlements etc.
2. To direct SPC to bring a change to the NUS Scotland Rules at Conference 2018 to include NSoAS in the definition of membership.

### Erasmus students are for life, not just for Brexit

#### Conference noted:

1. That the UK voted in a referendum in June 2016 to leave the European Union.
2. That the ERASMUS programme was supported by the European Union
3. That Education is fully devolved to the Scottish Government.

#### Conference believed:

1. That the European Union is of benefit to Students studying in Scotland and the UK
2. That Scottish Students benefit from the many advantages offered by ERASMUS exchanges.
3. That the UK Government has made statements which suggest that the UK government will use ERASMUS students as bargaining chips.
4. That this position is completely unacceptable to NUS Scotland and its members.

#### Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland will campaign to ensure that the ERASMUS programme will continue in Scotland after Brexit.
2. NUS Scotland to review its current engagement with ERASMUS programme and students in the

UK to provide the best possible representation to students who are here for a short time.

3. That NUS Scotland engage more with the ERASMUS programme to ensure ERASMUS students are not disadvantaged as a result of Brexit.

## Hate crimes

### Conference noted:

1. According to UKCISA, there are over 50,000 international students studying in Scotland
2. According to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Services, the number of religiously motivated hate crimes in Scotland increased 3% from 2014-15 to 2015-16. Sexual orientation motivated hate crimes increased by 20% in the same period. Hate crimes directed towards people with disabilities increased by 14%, and hate crimes towards transgender people is at its highest since hate crime legislation came into being.
3. The student population is diverse, with students from all over the world and from different marginalised communities

### Conference believed:

1. Brexit, the election of Trump and other political events have emboldened the far right and have normalised the views that give rise to hate crime.
2. Not enough is being done to prevent hate crime and to properly hold perpetrators accountable.
3. Hate crimes target the most marginalised members of our society and can have a devastating effect on the mental health of those attacked.
4. We must be working to ensure the safety of our students.

### Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland should work with its liberation campaigns to take a Scotland-wide stance against hate crime.
2. NUS Scotland FTO's should work with institutions and unions, community and activism groups and third sector organisations to coordinate a Scotland-wide campaign, with the aim of tackling hate crime and to raise awareness of reporting mechanisms (including Third Party reporting).

3. Ensure that when hate crime occurs in NUS events, it is dealt with sensitively and appropriately, and that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions.
4. NUS Scotland should provide guidance for student unions on how to tackle hate crimes in their institutions.

## Emergency motion

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### National Society of Apprentices' priorities and aims

#### Conference believed:

1. The leadership team of the National Society of Apprentices met in February 2017 to decide on its policy and campaigns for the year.
2. The membership of NSoA told the leadership team what they should prioritise and the leadership team turned these priorities into policy.
3. The policy that was set was split into the following areas of work; Cost of Living; Apprentice Pay; Positive interactions between apprentices, training providers and employers; and sexism and discrimination.
4. The NSoA believe that apprentices should be entitled to the same benefits that students' receive and will campaign on council tax exemption; Travel Card; Healthcare costs; Childcare; Equipment costs; TU membership; and Bank Accounts.
5. The NSoA believes that the apprentice national minimum wage should be abolished and will also campaign to reduce the time allowed on apprentice national minimum wage while it still exists.
6. The NSoA will restate the NSoA Charter on excellent apprenticeships and will work with partners to develop a kite mark for excellent apprenticeships.
7. The NSoA will set up NSoA Women in Apprenticeships working group to look at women in STEM apprenticeships and the gender pay gap.
8. NSoA will work to support the 6,500 apprentices effected by the recent collapse of First 4 Skills, an apprenticeship provider and current NUS member.

**Conference further believed:**

1. Although NUS Scotland does not structurally need to adopt the NSoA platform the NSoA leadership team would like to continue its strong working relationship with NUS.
2. The collapse of First 4 Skills is representative of the impacts of marketization in all areas of education, which both NUS Scotland and NSoA have pledged to resist.

**Conference resolved:**

1. That NUS Scotland will recognise the above as priorities for apprentices in our membership, and continue to support the NSoA in its work and policy goals.
2. That NUS Scotland will work with NSoA to resist marketisation in all forms of education.

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**Motions passed at NUS Scotland Executive Committee meetings were ratified**
**The Future of the Women's Campaign****SEC believed:**

1. NUS is committed to having liberation at the heart of its work, explicitly including having this as a Presidential priority campaign in 2016/17 at NUS UK.
3. The democracy and governance review has widely consulted with members across NUS Scotland and wider NUS, including those who define into liberation campaigns but also those who do not. These consultations will form the basis of the rule change being proposed at conference this year.
4. When the current president was elected in 2015, she was the sitting women's officer. It was the first time since 2004 that a woman was elected as NUS Scotland President.

**SEC further believed:**

1. Both NUS Scotland and NUS Wales have a full time Women's officer.
2. The full time women's officer role fulfils a different role than, for example, having a reserved women's place for a vice president, as it exists to pursue and progress a feminist agenda.

3. In the democracy and governance review, the autonomy of the self-defining women's campaigns in the nations must be respected.
5. We cannot play with oppression. Women are oppressed in society and in our structures, and we should never use one oppressed group to benefit another.

**SEC resolved:**

1. NUS Scotland Executive Committee should commit to protecting the full time women's officer role in Scotland, and to support NUS Wales NEC in protecting their full time women's officer.
2. NUS Scotland should fight for part time liberation officers in the nations, funded from NUS UK's budget.

**Transforming NUS Scotland****SEC noted:**

1. At NUS Scotland LGBT+ Conference 2016, delegates passed policy to lobby and campaign for a full time UK Trans Officer and Campaign.
2. Later in 2016 the NUS National Conference passed policy to create a full time Trans Officer and Campaign. The final decision of this is due to take place at the NUS Company Law Meeting.
3. In addition to the above NUS Wales has also passed policy to have a Wales Trans Officer and Campaign. Therefore NUS Trans Conference and NUS Wales Trans Conference are due to take place 2017.
4. In November NUS Scotland Trans Students Gathering debated whether NUS Scotland should have its own Trans Officer and campaign. After the debate was held Trans Gathering voted unanimously in favour of the motion. 20 for, 0 against and 0 abstentions.
5. Trans people in leadership remains low in the student movement in Scotland. 2016 was the first year we've seen representatives who are trans sit on SEC, the first ever openly trans person in an NUS Scotland presidential position and the first ever openly trans LGBT+ Officer.

**SEC believed:**

1. That NUS Scotland should have a fifth liberation campaign: an NUS Scotland Trans Officer and a autonomous NUS Scotland Trans Campaign.
2. To recognise the autonomy of trans students.

3. To respect the vote and the wishes of the Trans Gathering.
4. To understand that even though there is a lot of intersectional work between LGB+ and T, it's important to understand that there is a clear difference between discrimination based on sexual orientation and discrimination based on gender.
5. Whilst there have been many wins for LGB+ equality, trans equality has not accelerated at the same pace.
6. Trans people are the best suited to campaign for and lead work on trans issues.

#### SEC resolved:

1. The SEC should support any campaigns run by NUS Scotland LGB+ for a Scottish Trans Officer and Campaign.
2. The SEC should support NUS Scotland LGB+ in the submission of a rules revision motion or any other appropriate way to create a NUS Scotland Trans Officer and Campaign at NUS Scotland Conference 2017.

## Policy lapse

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The following policy was retained by Conference.

### Democratic transport

#### Conference noted:

1. Many students struggle to afford rail and bus travel with fares rising every year. No concessionary travel scheme is available to over 18s in full-time education. Some bus operators offer student fares, but this is only on a narrow range of routes. 16-25 Railcard offers a discount of 1/3 off rail fares but that cannot be used on journeys before 10am which is a horrendous limitation for students. Also no discounts are offered on season tickets.

#### Conference believed:

1. Affordable travel is essential to many students' ability to pursue further and higher education, and that current fares are prohibitively expensive, particularly given the inadequate level of student support available to students.
2. The minimum fare for holders of 16-25 Railcards disproportionately affects students who often

have to take the short or medium-distance trains to reach their institutions, this is unfair and the minimum fare should be scrapped. A discount should also be made available on season tickets.

3. That train companies persistently increase fares far above the rate of inflation and that this needs to come under proper scrutiny and democratic control.
4. That the privatisation of transport was, and remains, the wrong decision.

#### Conference resolved:

1. To campaign regionally and to help local students' associations campaign for cheaper student bus tickets.
2. To support and promote the campaign to scrap the minimum fare for young persons' railcards and introduce student discounts on season tickets.
3. To condemn above-inflation train fare increases.
4. To call for greater democratic control of public transport in Scotland.
5. To work with, amongst other groups, the RMT in seriously exploring the renationalisation of Scotland's railway system.

### Asylum-seeking students

1. To mandate the President and SEC to lobby the Scottish Executive and individual institutions to consider asylum-seeking students who have been resident in the UK for more than a year as EU rather than international students.
2. To mandate the SEC to develop an advice pack dealing with enquiries from potential and current students who are seeking asylum.
3. For the SEC to develop a winning the arguments campaign to enable all student unions to win the arguments at a grass roots level.

## Emergency motions

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### The EU referendum

#### Conference noted:

1. The Westminster government recently announced a referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union, to be held on 23 June 2016.

#### Conference believed:

1. The UK losing EU membership would create massive uncertainty for EU students studying in Scottish institutions, putting them at risk of losing funding and student places.
2. A UK outside the EU may see future applicants to Scottish universities from EU countries forced to pay exorbitant international student tuition fees.
3. Access to free movement and academic exchange (such as the ERASMUS programme), as well as institutional research funding, is vital for the vibrancy of Scotland's education system.
4. While the EU is by no means a perfect organisation or expression of European community, we have more to lose if the UK leaves the EU than we have to gain. The UK's membership of the EU is vital for the protection of our EU students and our education system as a whole, as well as workers and communities.

#### Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland will take a position in favour of the UK remaining a member of the EU.
2. NUS Scotland to make best use of the time between the Scottish Parliament election and the EU referendum to support students' associations to campaign in favour of a 'remain' vote, and mobilise students to vote.

### Support local unions anti-PREVENT campaigns

#### Conference noted:

1. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act forces public bodies (NHS, universities and colleges, but NOT student associations) to implement the PREVENT duty.

2. PREVENT calls on universities and colleges to have "due regard" to activity that may be classed as extremism or radicalisation, such as "having Anti British values", "seeking moral or political change", "relevant mental health issues" and vulnerable groups.
3. PREVENT involves specifically profiling students who are ethnic minorities or Muslims, and has led to further alienation of these communities.
4. Kingston University and Manchester University have publicly come out as stating how ineffective PREVENT is on their campuses, as well as UCU opposing PREVENT.
5. Since March 2nd Heriot Watt Union can confirm that their University is uncooperative with their attempts to establish exactly what prevent action is taking place on campus. HWU has experienced a recent rise in islamaphobia.

#### Conference believed:

1. That although this is a government agenda, every local resistance campaign is important in fighting to abolish this national agenda.
2. The PREVENT duty guidelines is vague, problematic, ambiguous and promotes Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism.
3. That the rise of Islamophobia cannot be isolated from PREVENT (it breeds suspicion). Examples: Glasgow Strathclyde Islamic Society have been threatened harm, London School of Economics Student Union Islamic Society have been targeted by media and public on their activities, Bradford Union were asked by police for all ISoc member names, the Staffordshire masters student who was studying Counter terrorism and was wrongly questioned by police about course related reading - this led to him dropping out of his institution, at Heriot-Watt University two fundraising ethnic minorities students, questioned by a lecturer on whether they were fundraising for ISIS.
4. This has become worse in recent weeks and has the potential of escalating further.

#### Conference resolved:

1. That NUS Scotland and NUS UK work together to combat PREVENT: as this is a national struggle.
2. That NUS Scotland shall support and work on any Anti- PREVENT campaigns locally, if local associations ask for this support.

3. To encourage all associations to ask their institutions to share their PREVENT plans, for transparency, to educate students in what this means for students.

## Support Counselling at Strathclyde

### Conference noted:

1. The Student Counselling personnel at Strathclyde University has been cut, we currently have a counsellor student ratio of 1 to 11000. The guidelines from the AUCC recommends a 1 to 3000 counsellor to student ratio.
2. When contacting Student Counselling, students are currently put on a waiting list, the current waiting time to see a counsellor is 4 weeks.
3. Strathclyde University tries to address the lack of staff with group therapy sessions, to be able to treat more students simultaneously.
4. Strathclyde University currently has no counsellors that are trained to address special counselling needs from minority groups, for example: people from the LGBTIQ community and faith groups after the Paris attacks.
5. Mental health is a big issue amongst the student population and the NHS currently also has long waiting lists for mental health services and urges students to use their universities' counselling services.

### Conference believed:

1. Student counselling is an essential part to supporting students during their time of study.
2. Group therapy sessions should only be an addition service to individual counselling services, not a replacement.

### Conference resolved:

1. The NUS will support USSA in their campaign to increase the counselling provision at the University of Strathclyde.
2. The NUS will support USSA in their campaign to raise awareness of counselling needs in the minority groups, and to support USSA to campaign for specially trained counsellors to meet the needs of minority groups.
3. The NUS will support the walk-out to protest for better counselling provision at Strathclyde University on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

## The following policy from Conference 2011 was voted on and retained

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### Defence of the Dark Arts

#### Conference noted:

1. Occupations and student protests are taking place all over the UK.
2. Anti-Cuts Action Networks and other anti-cuts student organisations are organising many of these.
3. These events are getting a lot of media attention.
4. The sovereignty of students' associations in directing NUS Scotland's work

#### Conference believed:

1. Student activism is growing rapidly and our movement has the potential to get stronger.
2. Many of the student activists involved in protests and occupations are not getting support from their student unions in either verbal agreement with their actions or attendance.
3. Without a united movement we will not achieve our aims or successfully promote, defend or extend the rights of students.
4. These events are getting media attention that is showing a divided UK movement and we should learn from the divisions so as not to replicate this in Scotland.

#### Conference resolved:

1. To develop guidance for student unions on legal occupations and how to work with anti-cuts networks and similar groups in their institutions.
2. To work with Anti-Cuts Action Networks and similar student-led organisations and support students' associations to do the same, where that students' association is willing.

### Anti-sectarianism

#### Conference resolved:

1. To campaign and educate against sectarian and bigoted behaviour and challenge it wherever it occurs.

2. To continue to work with the STUC to challenge sectarianism and discrimination affecting students in the workplace.
3. To lobby the Scottish Executive and other organisations to address sectarianism on our campuses and in society.
4. To support students' associations when they face sectarian issues in their colleges and universities.
5. To produce campaign materials and resources for students' associations to use.

## Motions passed by NUS Scotland Executive Committee 2015-16 were ratified

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### Condolences for FOSIS President, Bashir Osman

#### SEC noted:

- The Federation of Student Islamic Societies represents Muslim students across the country through affiliated societies.
- Their President, Bashir Osman, died in an accident whilst visiting Switzerland.
- We are shocked and saddened by the sudden death of a student leader widely respected and recognised for his role in representing students across the UK.

#### SEC resolved:

- That NUS Scotland notes our condolences for Bashir Osman, and notes our thoughts for his loved ones, his colleagues at FOSIS, and the students across the country which he represented with commitment and passion.

### Free the Thai 14, supporting the Thai student movement

#### SEC noted:

- Thailand currently is ruled by a military junta which took control of the country after a coup d'état which has imposed martial law, nationwide curfew, banned political gatherings, imposed internet censorship, taken control of the media, and have arrested and detained politicians and anti-coup activists; including student movement leaders.

- The Prime Minister of Thailand, her Government, and the national legislatures have been abolished in a military coup since 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014.
- The student movement in Thailand have been leading the fight for freedom and democracy against harsh crackdowns on activism.
- The Chief of the Military has refused to release student activists which have been detailed in case they "inspire more protests and lead to problems for the nation".<sup>6</sup>
- Student activists detained in the last week will face a military court with the penalty of up to 7 years.

#### SEC believed:

- The right to freedom of expression is a human right that must transcend national barriers.
- That we all have a right to live in a society built on democracy, freedom, and fair trial.
- That students across Thailand and beyond play a vital role in shaping a better world through their collective action, and commends the work of our fellow students.
- That human rights infringements by a military junta cannot be ignored by the international community movement.

#### SEC resolved:

- That NUS Scotland will continue to oppose the harsh infringement on student activism at home and abroad.
- To support the Thai student movement in their fight for freedom and democracy.
- To publicly join calls for the release of student activists facing military court.
- That SEC will take forward this motion to the NUS UK NEC.

### Bail out the people of Europe, solidarity with Syriza

#### SEC noted:

- The people of Greece have voted for an anti-austerity platform in the recent General Election and the referendum on the international creditors proposals for more austerity in return for emergency bail-out funding.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.news24.com/World/News/Thai-junta-refuses-to-release-student-protesters-20150706>

- Greek students studying in Scotland are experiencing financial difficulty as a result of a Greek banking crisis being used as a bargaining chip.
- The International Monetary Fund has said that the Greek rescue package must include debt relief to ensure the crisis is overcome.

#### **SEC believed:**

- Austerity is damaging to society, and demands for austerity in return for bail out money actually harms the economy, further increasing the state of society and future needs for austerity-related bailouts.
- That the democratic will of the people must be absolute, and that international monetary organisations should take their steer from the public instead of enforcing policy on the public against its wishes.
- The Greek bailout packages have not bailed out the people but in fact have bailed out the banks with requirements for painful austerity that has hit those who didn't create the crisis.
- That the Greek financial crisis is a European crisis, and thus the whole of Europe, as well as citizens and organisations in Member States, must support an outcome that fixes the crisis and listens to the will of the people.

#### **SEC resolved:**

- That NUS Scotland will fight against austerity at home, across Europe, and further afield.
- That NUS Scotland will support calls for international creditors to respect the will of the people, and support an economic rescue package that supports a people's bailout.
- To call on institutions to ensure there is financial support and hardship funds in place to support international students during financial crisis.

## **People's climate march**

#### **SEC noted:**

- Climate change is the biggest threat to the future of our planet, and that serious action is needed to reverse this threat to our future.
- The People's Climate March will take place on 26<sup>th</sup> September in Edinburgh.
- The event is being co-organised by our partner 'Stop Climate Chaos Scotland'

#### **SEC believed:**

- Students should continue to be at the forefront of campaigns to save our planet.
- We should support Scottish focused movements to encourage the course to a 100% renewable energy Scotland.

#### **SEC resolved:**

- To support the People's Climate March in Edinburgh on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September.
- To promote it across our communications channels.
- To encourage students and Students' Associations to attend.

## **A demo to defend and extend free education**

#### **SEC believed:**

- At last year's Scottish Conference, our members voted for increased student support across many demographics of students to be part of a NUS Scottish Election Campaign, in combination with consulting our members at The Gathering and at Zone Conference to finalise our campaign asks.
- The UK government recently announced a budget which contained further, significant cuts to public services through the purely ideological austerity measures, which will be passed to Scotland through the Barnett consequential. Scotland's block grant is likely to decrease and could lead to cuts to devolved areas such as education.
- George Osborne has also announced that he wishes to save another 20 billion a year and has asked unprotected departments to prepare budgets demonstrating cuts of 25% and 40% which will result to even further cuts to the Scottish budget.

#### **SEC believed:**

- These budgets present further challenges to Scottish public services, particularly in Education. The results of the Scottish elections will be incredibly important to NUS and we will require an incredibly strong campaign with various actions to put forward our asks.

#### **SEC resolved:**

- On the close of the Scottish Parliament, on the start of purdah, or on any other suitable date

possible which will have the impact we need, in conjunction with other types of action, NUS Scotland will hold a demonstration and rally outside the Scottish Parliament to ensure the student voice is promoted, for parties to adopt our asks outlined by our members, and to defend and extend free education.

## NUS-USI policy 2016

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### Regular networking

#### Conference notes:

NUS-USI elected officers have an influential role in networking across the students' unions in Northern Ireland with information sharing and experience.

#### Conference believes:

A stronger connection between students' unions and NUS-USI elected officers is essential to build an accurate reflection of the cross-section of current issues faced by students.

#### Conference mandates:

Each NUS-USI elected officer to meet once per semester with each NI college/university.

### Higher education funding

#### Conference notes:

1. The Northern Ireland Executive's Department for Employment & Learning carried out what was arguably its biggest ever public consultation in relation to the future of Higher Education funding earlier this year, The 'Big Conversation'.

#### Conference further notes:

1. The student movement became a credible and legitimate voice within the 'Big Conversation', developing a robust economic argument alongside an ideological narrative to argue for publically funded higher education in Northern Ireland, opposing tuition fees and debt.

#### Conference recognises:

1. The outcome of the consultation saw an options papers published by the Department which detailed a number of potential routes to

resolving the current funding crisis within our Higher Education system in Northern Ireland.<sup>7</sup>

2. This paper included an option to abolish tuition fees entirely, and to meet the funding gap in Higher Education through increased public investment.

#### Conference believes:

1. The inclusion of tuition fee-free education as a viable option within the Department's paper would not have happened if it hadn't been for the strategic, collaborative effort of the student movement over the course of the consultation process.
2. That 'free education' does not only relate to the abolishment of tuition fee-free education, but also the need to ensure that students are funded holistically to support them financially whilst they are studying.

#### Conference resolves:

1. There is clear merit to developing factually-based arguments centred on social justice and fairness and grounded in economic literacy.
2. Given the sometimes complex nature of politics in Northern Ireland, continued constructive engagement with political parties has the potential to shape political decision-making in our favour.

#### Conference therefore mandates:

1. The NUS-USI President to continue to make the case for the abolishment of tuition fees.
2. The NUS-USI President to continue to engage in constructive political engagement as a priority, especially given the formation of the Department of the Economy which will assume responsibility for Higher and Further Education following the 2016 Assembly election.

### Maintaining our momentum

#### Conference notes:

1. NUS-USI's #OwningOurFuture campaign ahead of the 2016 Northern Ireland Assembly election has been continually shaped by students and students' unions as it has developed.
2. Much of the impact and success of the campaign can be measured by the significant increase in engagement between the student movement and Northern Ireland's political parties.

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<sup>7</sup> Securing a Sustainable Solution for Higher Education in Northern Ireland: An Options Paper: <https://www.delni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/del/HE%20options%20paper.pdf#page=38>

**Conference further notes:**

1. One of the headline asks within NUS-USI's Student Manifesto calls for the formation of an All-Party Group for students at the Northern Ireland Assembly.<sup>8</sup>

**Conference believes:**

1. The creation of an All-Party Group for students, with secretariat provided by NUS-USI provides a strategic and sustainable channel within current Government structures to lobby and influence on behalf of students.
2. The creation of an All-Party Group for students, with secretariat provided by NUS-USI should be deemed as a priority for NUS-USI following the formation of the next Northern Ireland Executive.

**Conference resolves:**

1. That the NUS-USI President should seek to make preparations to ensure that NUS-USI has the resource and capacity to support the work of an All-Party Group for Students.<sup>9</sup>
2. That the NUS-USI President should engage with political parties represented at the Northern Ireland Assembly to ensure that an All-Party Group for Students is formed as soon as is feasible following the 2016 Assembly election.

**Course costs****Conference notes:**

1. The findings of NUS-USI's Pound in Your Pocket research, published in May 2014.<sup>10</sup>

**Conference further notes:**

1. One of the most worrying sections of the research highlighted that across both higher and further education, an average of around two-thirds of students had paid for materials, activities or other costs associated with completing their programme of study
2. Within these costs, on average, just over a third of all reported costs were not known in advance.
3. Some of the most 'hidden' costs were also some of the more expensive costs.

<sup>8</sup> NUS-USI Student Manifesto for the 2016 Northern Ireland Assembly elections:

<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/nus-usi/articles/nus-usi-launch-their-elections-manifesto>

<sup>9</sup> Northern Ireland Assembly: Rules of All-Party Groups - [http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/publications/all-party-groups/apg\\_rules.pdf](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/globalassets/documents/publications/all-party-groups/apg_rules.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> NUS-USI Pound in Your Pocket summary report:

<http://www.nus.org.uk/Global/NUS-USI-Pound-in-Your-Pocket-summary-report.pdf>

**Conference believes:**

1. It is neither right nor fair that students should be expected to pay for resources and materials that are often required for them to be successful in their course, which they were not made aware of in advance of enrolment.
2. Students are already under significant pressure in relation to meeting the costs of their basic living expenses.
3. Having to pay for additional course related materials can have a significant and negative impact on students' wellbeing.

**Conference resolves:**

1. The NUS-USI President should investigate what guidance, if any, is issued to Universities and Colleges in relation to transparency of additional course related costs.
2. The NUS-USI President should lead an inclusive campaign, incorporating Higher and Further education students, as well as apprentices, to highlight the impact of hidden course costs.
3. NUS-USI should lobby the relevant Northern Ireland Executive Department and members of the relevant Northern Ireland Assembly committee(s) to work to introduce guidance to Institutions making clear that the costs of all additional, mandatory course-related resources and materials must be detailed in course prospectuses and all other relevant information available to potential students.

**Mental Health****Conference notes:**

1. For many years NUS-USI carried out significant campaigning work in relation to mental health.
2. In recent years this work ended due to lack of sustainable funding.

**Conference believes:**

1. It is of vital importance that NUS-USI continues to campaign on the issue of mental health.
2. There are a number of charities and organisations which exist within Northern Ireland that work in the field of mental health.
3. NUS-USI should take an evidence-based approach to campaigning on this issue.

**Conference resolves:**

1. The NUS-USI President and NUS-USI Welfare Officer to seek to convene a student mental health working group, comprising:
  - (i) Representatives from NUS-USI Regional Council

- (ii) Representatives from the various organisations and charities operating within Northern Ireland
  - (iii) Relevant officers from NUS UK & USI (as deemed appropriate by the President)
2. The NUS-USI President and NUS-USI Welfare Officer to seek to use the expertise of this working group to inform and structure a piece of research with the aim of examining the current state of affairs in relation to student mental health in Northern Ireland.

## Democracy week

### Conference notes:

1. Student Officers in member organisations are elected by students on an annual bases.
2. Engaging students in officer elections is extremely important to maintain strength in the student movement.
3. Many students interact with students from other institution.
4. Some member unions hold their elections around the same time of year as other member unions.

### Conference believes:

1. A coordinated approach to elections by member unions across NI would help raise the profile of officer elections.

### Conference resolves:

1. That NUS-USI explores the willingness of member organisations to aligning their election timetables.
2. If some member unions agree to align their timetables; NUSUSI should help coordinate joint efforts to promote elections.

## Fair Representation

### Conference notes:

1. That NUS-USI Conference should be as representative as possible.

### Conference believes:

1. That a large proportion of our student population are women yet women are continually under represented at all levels of

the student movement including on the NUS-USI Conference floor.

2. If the NUS-USI Conference floor is more reflective of the student population who identify as women we can begin to ensure women's issues are not neglected by the student movement.
3. Ensuring that at least 50% of NUS-USI Conference floor is made up of women students is the key next step to ensuring fair representation of women within the student movement

### Conference resolves:

1. That all delegations to NUS-USI Conference must be made up of at least 50% self-defining women, rounded down.
2. That NUS-USI produce guidance and support Member Unions on how best to apply this policy during their election of delegates for Conference.

## NUS-USI 2nd NEC position accountability

### Conference notes:

2. The National Executive Council is NUS' interim decision-making body between meetings of NUS National Conference.
3. The NUS-USI 2<sup>nd</sup> NEC Position is elected annually at NUS-USI Conference and represents students from across NI at meetings of the Council.

### Conference believes:

1. Our elected officers should be accountable to those who represent them.
2. Elected officer of NUS-USI are asked to produce a report of their work to be presented at Regional Council.

### Conference resolves:

3. That the office bearer of the NUS-USI 2<sup>nd</sup> NEC Position should produce a report detailing their work to NUS-USI Regional Council.

## SRE

### Conference notes:

1. The standard of age appropriate Sex and Relationship Education in the region is patchy and barely meets the bare minimum necessary at best, if it is even taught at all beyond a few squeamish sentences in a biology class.
2. Primarily, abstinence is taught as the only real option and scare tactics and guilt trips are used to caution teens into not engaging in sexual behaviour.
3. There is also no consideration given beyond heterosexual couples and that sex is primarily for procreation.

### Conference believes:

1. Age-appropriate sex and relationship education should form part of the national curriculum at all levels of education. This will allow a consistent building of knowledge and understanding
2. SRE should be a dialogue that continues through life during and beyond education.

### Conference resolves:

1. To lobby government to make improvements to SRE at all levels of education into the national curriculum, as age appropriate.

## Online voter registration

### Conference notes:

That, unlike the rest of the UK, the only method of registering to vote in Northern Ireland is via paper registration forms

### Conference believes:

That this is incredibly outdated and is a barrier to democracy for people here.

### Conference mandates:

The Regional Executive Committee to lobby and campaign for the Electoral Office for Northern Ireland to provide the option for online voter registration.

## Part-time officer training

### Conference notes:

That Part Time Officers play a significant role in their Student Unions and are essential to the growth, development and representative nature of the Student Movement.

### Conference believes:

That training is essential for Part Time Officers to maximise on their time as officers.

### Conference comments:

The work done by NUS-USI to ensure that Part Time Officers in Further Education Students' Unions are adequately trained.

### Conference mandates:

NUS-USI to offer training to Part Time Officers in Higher Education Students' Unions and to work with NUS and USI where relevant to deliver this training.

## Officer networking

### Conference notes:

1. The tri-lateral agreement that gives members of NUS-USI membership to NUS and USI.
2. That Conference is the often the first time in the year that Students' Union Officers across the NUS-USI membership meet and get the opportunity to network
3. That Conference is often attended by a number of officer of NUS and USI

### Conference believes:

1. That collectivism is key to the student movement and through unity we are stronger.
2. That this collectivism must be nurtured and enhanced early in the year in order for the entire membership to work together throughout the year.
3. That geographical barriers often make it hard for officers in Northern Ireland to engage with NUS and USI

### Conference mandates:

1. The NUS-USI President to organise and facilitate an event at the earliest opportunity for officers from HE & FE Students' Unions to network and build on the collective nature of NUS-USI
2. To extend an invitation to all officers of NUS and USI to this event to maximise on the potential for engagement with all of our national unions.

## Climate Change

### Conference notes:

1. Climate change presents a significant danger for the future.
2. All people and organisations should seek to be aware of their individual impact on the

environment and to adjust themselves accordingly where that impact is excessively wasteful.

#### **Conference commends:**

The work that has been done by NUS-USI and that is currently being done to ensure the organisation is run efficiently and with its impact on the environment in mind.

#### **Conference mandates:**

The Regional Executive Committee to conduct a review of the events and work of NUS-USI to determine how we can reduce the impact of the organisation on the environment.

The review should include, but not be limited to

- Assessing the impact of Conference and other events
- Initiatives undertaken by member Students' Unions to address climate change
- Assessment of the impact of how NUS-USI works

#### **Conference further mandates:**

The review to include recommendations as to how NUS-USI could better tackle issues around climate change on an on-going basis.

## **Breast ironing**

### **Vote to remove 'as a form of FGM' in title - PASSED**

#### **Conference commends:**

the hard work NUS-USI has previously done on lobbying Stormont for a change in Law on Female Genital Mutilation

#### **Conference notes:**

Breast Ironing, where hot instruments are used to mutilate a girl's chest, is becoming a growing concern in the UK, where it is believed at least 1,000 girls in are at risk. Conservative MP Jake Berry and Home Office Minister Karren Bradley want to bring the debate to Westminster to make the practice illegal.

#### **Conference further notes:**

That an emergency forward was bought to USI congress by QUBSU, where it was passed. They now a policy to support the campaign of criminalisation of FGM in all its forms, including supporting the North.

#### **Conference believes:**

FGM, no matter in what form it happens, should be illegal and awareness of these practices is vital to help both present and potential victims seek support.

#### **Conference mandates:**

The NUS-USI President and Women's Officer to campaign for the criminalisation of Breast Ironing. They are also to promote awareness of FGM, and work alongside USI in this struggle.

### **MOTION 17 – submitted by Queen's University Belfast SU**

## **Abortion guidelines for patients**

#### **Conference notes:**

Current legislation is currently being challenged in the Courts, but that recent changes to guidelines are not too dissimilar to the previous ones.

#### **Conference further notes:**

That when registering with a GP, even students from GB to not get the same access to services as they would expect.

#### **Conference believes:**

That women when registering at a GP in Northern Ireland are not fully aware of their reproductive rights. Since all the available leaflets are focused on GB rather than NI, or with very sparse detail, it is not easy to understand their rights until they happen to have a pregnancy. We believe this adds unnecessary stress and is not helpful.

#### **Conference mandates:**

The NUS-USI President and Women's Officer to lobby Stormont and associated organisations for the creation of a simple health information leaflet which outlines current legislation and guidelines that could be given to women when they register at a GP surgery.

## **Internationalisation and international students**

#### **Conference notes:**

An increasing drive in the Higher Education sector to attract a much greater number of international students, while recognising the hugely positive affect that international students have on the student body within each institution and on the movement as a whole.

#### **Conference notes with concern:**

That this drive among HE institutions is founded, not with multi-culturalism or shared learning in mind, but rather on an agenda of profiteering. Internationals students are now seen as 'cash cows' in a sector that has steadily been de-funded by government, and in an effort to drive revenue, HE institutions are actively exploiting an international 'market'.

**Conference asserts:**

That international student fees are exploitative, and do not always reflect the quality of education and support that students receive when they arrive on our shores. Further, not only are international fees extortionate, that a lack of regulation of these fees is of particular concern and should be tolerated by the student movement.

**Conference mandates, that NUS-USI:**

1. Actively lobby the Department of Employment & Learning, and all relevant bodies, for a regulated international fee system, coupled with a cap on international fees to prevent deliberate exploitation.
2. In all lobbying on student fees, that the international student perspective is included, to highlight disparities and unfairness.
3. In its fight against tuition fees and for a publically funded HE sector, that the issue of international fees remains a key point of contention.
4. Actively raise awareness of issues of international students in its campaigning; highlighting the need for all students to stand in solidarity with international students.

## International students and immigration law

**Conference notes with concern:**

The policies and actions of the Home Office under the stewardship of Theresa May in regards to international students.

That the UK Government is actively considering the inclusion of international students in net migration figures. Further, that in a recent tribunal, Mr Justice McCloskey ruled against the Home Office's forced mass deportation of students, based on very little evidence and with no right to appeal from within the UK.

**Conference asserts:**

That the inclusion of international students in net migration will actively deny those students the chance to settle-in and contribute to our society after they have completed their studies. The contribution that these students make is immeasurable, and they should have the right to stay indefinitely upon completion of their studies.

**Conference mandates:**

1. NUS-USI to work with, and actively support, NUS efforts to fight against the inclusion of international students in net migration figures.
2. That NUS-USI raise these issues at every available opportunity, and lobby DEL to make representations to the UK Government to that affect.

## MOTION 20 – submitted by Queen's University Belfast SU

### Disabled students in NUS-USI

**Conference notes:**

The work done to date by NUS-USI to raise awareness of disabled students issues and to engage disabled students in the student movement.

**Conference notes with concern:**

That the NUS-USI Disabled Students' Officer role has been vacant now for some time, and in this academic year there was no Conference for disabled students.

**Conference further notes:**

That there is a distinct lack of policy specific to disabled students. No doubt exacerbated by the lack of an Officer or an effective conference to discuss the issues and policies relevant to disabled students.

**Conference mandates:**

1. That NUS-USI work with Member Organisations (MOs) and with disabled students' to urgently look at the issues faced by the disabled student community in the North.
2. That NUS-USI work with MOs to develop disability awareness campaigns that are easily transferable across all MOs, if they wish to roll them out.
3. That NUS-USI look for innovative ways to engage disabled students, recognising that a physical Conference is not always the most accessible forum for these students.

### Disabled students' allowance and needs assessment

**Conference condemns:**

The attack on the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) by the UK Government, which will result in hardship, illness, and the death of UK domiciled students with disabilities.

**Conference notes:**

That the cuts to DSA have not been replicated by the Northern Ireland Executive, but Conference recognises the danger that the UK Government may in future try to force a further alignment of the welfare system across the UK.

**Conference further notes:**

1. That currently DEL is responsible for the administration and oversight of over £200,000 annually in DSA payments to 5 HE institutions.
2. That the current framework for Needs Assessment means that students are often not receiving the

necessary adjustments until a considerable length of time after their initial assessment.

3. That any changes to an individual student's needs assessment mid-term causes significant delays and problems, which create huge issues around student health, safety, and retention.

#### **Conference mandates that NUS-USI:**

1. Work with Member Organisations and disabled students to take an evidence based approach to the issue of needs assessment reform.
2. That NUS-USI actively lobby and raise awareness with DEL the issues of needs assessment and the effect of delays in implementing reasonable adjustment and supports for disabled students.

## **Gender neutral toilets on and off campus**

#### **Conference recognises:**

1. That Transgender and non-binary students face incredible barriers in society and in their education.
2. That transphobia is rife in our society, and that there is a lack of awareness

#### **Conference notes:**

The work of Member Organisations and the student movement on Trans\* rights to date, including work to implement gender neutral toilets on campus. Further, that these efforts are an important step towards creating an inclusive, understanding, and safe environment for all students regardless of gender identity.

#### **Conference mandates:**

1. That NUS-USI facilitate and support MOs to lobby for and implement gender neutral toilets across their campuses, not just in their SU facilities.
2. That NUS-USI work with other organisations to lobby for the implementation of gender neutral toilets across the public sector and in public places, recognising that gender identity does not begin and end at the boundaries of tertiary education campuses.

## **Legalisation of Marijuana**

#### **Conference recognises that:**

1. Criminalisation of drug users has been an abject policy failure in combating illicit drug trade. The so-called 'War on Drugs' has failed to combat criminal activity, while ruining the lives of users.
2. Legalisation of marijuana use in some States of the USA and in other nations has seen a

noticeable drop in drug-related crime and in usage.

3. A regulated system, with the necessary age and distribution restrictions, has significant economic and social benefits that far outweigh the devastating consequences of criminalising students and members of society.

#### **Conference further notes:**

That the effect of criminalising those who use drugs creates a taboo culture, and a fear of seeking necessary supports, including among our students.

#### **Conference mandates NUS-USI:**

1. To support efforts of students and other organisations to legalise the sale and use of marijuana.
2. To raise awareness of the negative effects of criminalising students who use drugs, and the pressing need for reform.

## **Fresh start agreement**

#### **Conference notes that the 'Fresh Start' Agreement:**

1. Paves the way for brutal cuts to benefits, which will not be mitigated by limited and temporary extra funding, and a stepping-up of harassment of welfare recipients, driving vulnerable people further into poverty and desperation.
2. Will see Stormont borrow £700 million to fund around 20,000 public sector redundancies, which will have a devastating impact on the economy, public services and job opportunities.
3. Aims to cut corporation tax to 12.5% by April 2018, transferring hundreds of millions directly from public services to the profits of big business and beginning an unwinnable race to the bottom.
4. Lays the basis for the sell-off of public assets and new austerity taxes as Stormont aims to meet "challenging cost reduction targets" across departments.

#### **Conference believes:**

1. That 'Fresh Start' is a bad deal for students, workers and the people of Northern Ireland in general
2. That this deal is fundamentally no better - and, in some ways, worse - than the Stormont House Agreement which provoked the public sector strike on 13th March 2015.

#### **Conference resolves:**

That NUS-USI will work with the trade union movement to rebuild meaningful resistance to cuts through campaigns, demonstrations and, crucially, co-ordinated industrial action and student strikes.

## Syria & the refugee crisis

### Conference sends:

Its solidarity to the Syrian people, who remain caught up in a protracted and bloody civil war which has claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands and forced millions from their homes.

### Conference condemns:

The reactionary barbarism and terrorism of the so-called Islamic State (IS), of which ordinary Muslims are the primary victims. Conference believes this brutal group has been able to grow due to the instability created by the Iraq war and the poverty created by the pro-capitalist policies of the corrupt regimes in the region. Conference notes the hypocrisy of the Cameron government in condemning IS while remaining allied to the Saudi dictatorship, which promotes the same fundamentalist agenda and beheaded twice as many people in the last year as IS.

### Conference believes:

That military intervention can only add to the suffering of the Syrian people and deepen the crisis they face.

### Conference condemns:

Moves by the EU and various member states to prevent refugees from entering Europe and exercising their basic right to asylum.

### Conference calls:

For all necessary support for refugees

## No drilling at Woodburn

### Conference opposes:

Plans to drill in Woodburn forest near Carrickfergus, destroying a pristine natural habitat and threatening the pollution of a major water reservoir which serves the greater Belfast area.

### Conference condemns:

1. That underhand tactics used by drilling company Infrastrata and its legal threats against peaceful protesters.
2. Heavy-handed tactics used by the police and failure of local politicians and statutory bodies to ensure that necessary planning, safety and environmental measures are rigorously adhered to.

### Conference calls:

For an immediate and outright ban on fracking.

### Conference notes:

That mass community mobilisation and direct action such as blockades defeated plans to frack near Belcoo, County Fermanagh, and believes that these tactics will be key to preventing drilling at Woodburn.

### Conference resolves:

That NUS-USI will give its full support to the community campaign to resist this development.

## Policy lapse

### Graduate Unemployment

#### Conference notes:

The totally unacceptable levels of graduate unemployment reported in recent labour market surveys, and in anecdotal evidence provided to student representatives.

#### Conference recognises:

A general right to work, and a responsibility on the part of government to ensure this right is honoured.

#### Conference believes:

That graduate unemployment is symptomatic of an unacceptable and iniquitous labour market, and further recognises the social and economic damage wrought by youth unemployment in general.

#### Conference believes:

That the national and devolved governments are not doing nearly enough to tackle, or mitigate the effects of graduate and youth unemployment.

#### Conference resolves:

That the NUS-USI and its affiliated unions must work together to measure the scope of the problem in Northern Ireland in a more systematic way.

#### Conference mandates:

The President and Regional Executive to work with member unions and NUSUK to measure the problem, develop a robust campaign centred on lobbying and media awareness and, if necessary, pursue a campaign of non-violent direct action in response to this problem.

## Postgraduate students

### Conference notes:

Postgraduate students are currently under represented, and play a significant role in the up skilling of the Northern Ireland workforce and for some occupations in the private and public sectors; these qualifications are a key pre-entry requisite.

### Conference further notes:

The funding routes to access postgraduate provision are complex and student support systems are weak.

### Conference believes:

Part-time, flexible and accessible postgraduate provision which meets the needs of students as well as employers is critical to future expansion and should be incentivised by research and funding council funding regimes. Robust equality impact assessments should be applied to postgraduate funding regimes to ensure that they promote fairness and opportunities across all the potential postgraduate student population.

### Conference resolves:

To encourage further detailed research to be commissioned to assess the mechanisms and the merits of alternative funding and student support models with the aim of developing a system that increases access to and expands postgraduate provision.

## Student Parents

### Conference notes:

Student Parents face unprecedented difficulties in both FE and HE institutions, with the levels of support varying dramatically from institution to institution. The proposed changes to tuition fees, the threat of EMA funding being terminated and complicated support funds put these students under extra pressures.

### Conference believes:

Institutions need to offer accessible and uncomplicated support structures for student parents. Many students' parents feel their needs and requirements are not being met, and would welcome more collaboration with DEL and HE/FE Institutions to ascertain how to provide adequate assistance. A lack of funding and support is a massive barrier to participation in education for student parents.

### Conference resolves:

1. For NUS-USI to instigate a review into the structures of support currently offered by DEL and the funding models used and the adequacy of these structures.

2. To work on behalf of student parents in liaising with DEL and HE/FE Institutions to improve participation and engagement.

## 'Consumer'-oriented language

### Conference notes with concern:

That students are commonly referred to as 'customers' or 'consumers' in government policy and institutional publications.

### Conference asserts:

That students are not customers, and that such language devalues the inherent value of education, and subtly reflects the unacceptable transition towards a market in education.

### Conference mandates:

The President and Regional Executive to work with member unions to erase this way of thinking from existing policy and practice.

1. For NUS-USI to make provision for a co-opted member from each organisation to participate in the executive council.

## Volunteering

### Conference notes:

The increasing competitive nature with regards to jobs for new graduates. With increased volunteer opportunities students can enhance employability skills and build life experience.

*87% of employers think that volunteering can have a generally positive effect on career progression for people aged 16-25.*

<http://www.volunteering.org.uk/News/mediacentre/keyvolunteeringfactsandfigures>

### Conference resolves:

NUS-USI to practice small scale volunteer schemes striving towards the future development of volunteer centres in each institution.

## St Patrick's Day Preparations

### Conference recognises:

The hard work put in by a number of organisations in trying to avoid a repeat of the scenes of St Patrick's Day 2009.

### Conference notes:

That a large amount of resources both physical and financial are required to ensure the day goes as peacefully as possible and there is never a guarantee that the day will pass peacefully.

#### **Conference believes:**

That these resources could be much better spent by holding some other form of event such as an open air concert in Botanic Gardens or a street carnival like Notting Hill as these events could be much easier and more effectively managed and stewarded.

#### **Conference mandates:**

The President of NUS-USI to make contact with relevant government departments such as DEL and DCAL to establish if this would be possible and how plans could be formulated to make this a reality.

## **NUS-USI policy 2017**

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### **Brexit**

#### **Conference notes:**

On the 23rd June 2016 the UK voted to leave the European Union with a 51.9% majority.

#### **Conference believes:**

Universities and FE colleges have inextricable links with the EU and there is no doubt that students and staff benefit from EU funds and projects.

The potential impact of Brexit on higher education and young people is far reaching.

As negotiation plans are being drawn up it's imperative that MLAs, MPs and MEPs are representing their constituents. It's imperative they are repeating young people and securing the best deal for students as the UK withdraws from the EU.

Voters in Northern Ireland opted overwhelmingly to maintain a position within the EU. It is imperative that public representatives reflect this view and argue accordingly for a special position within the EU for Northern Ireland.

#### **Conference resolves:**

The views of those in higher education and young people must be sought and considered, especially over the next two years.

NUS-USI should lobby decision makers to deliver a deal with the EU which:

- ensures the continuation of funding previously provided by the EU to higher education;

- allows for easy collaboration with universities in the EU for study and research;
- allows the continuation of student mobility both into and out of the UK.

### **Consent survey mandate**

#### **Conference notes:**

The Association of American Universities conducted a survey of students at 27 universities across the US and uncovered nearly 1 in 4 undergraduate women were the victims of unwanted sexual contact, either by force or because they were unable to consent due to drugs or alcohol. The survey collected responses online from 150,000 graduate and undergraduate students, approximately a 19% response rate from the 779,170 students who were asked to participate in the research. While the rates of reporting varied by institution, from a low of 17% to a high of 46%, the most common reason for not reporting it was that the respondent didn't consider it "serious enough." A third of those girls also felt "embarrassed, ashamed or [thought] it would be too emotionally difficult."<sup>11</sup> While the most extensive research has been done surveying women students sexual assaults against men and transgender students occur and are to be condemned.

#### **Conference believes:**

NUS-USI have a duty of care and a duty to educate our students. Many are leaving Secondary School without a full understanding of consent due to poor sex and relationship education. Students should have a full understanding of the importance of consent and should know how to report a sexual assault if they are the victim of unwanted sexual contact.

#### **Conference resolves:**

NUS USI should carry out a consent survey, focusing on HE and FE institutions, to gauge students understanding of sex and relationship education. NUS-USI should collate the finding and present them to government as part of efforts to lobby for the improvement of sex and relationship education in schools. The research may help shape the direction of the sexual health campaigns that some Students' Unions may undertake.

### **Housing survey mandate**

#### **Conference notes:**

Students have far too often been mistreated and taken advantage of by renting agencies and landlords. It should be noted that in NUS' Homes Fit for Study research (2870 students – UK wide),

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<sup>11</sup> <http://bit.ly/2mAPq6n>

- 61% had damp, mold, or condensation in their home
- 24% had slugs, mice or other infestation
- 52% have felt uncomfortably cold in their home.

These are unacceptable standards of living.

UUSU has experienced first-hand some of the issues relating to students not knowing their rights when it comes to renting for the first time.<sup>12</sup>

#### **Conference believes:**

Students deserve and should have a right to good quality, affordable and suitable student accommodation. NUS-USI has a duty of educating our students and lobby for improvements in the standard of housing.

#### **Conference resolves:**

NUS USI should carry out a housing survey across the region, focusing on HE and FE institutions, to find out the issues students face in renting accommodation. NUS-USI should then collate their finding and use the results to lobby for improvements to the private rental sector.

## **Trips to Israel**

#### **Conference notes:**

That each year the Union of Jewish students invite student leaders on free trips to Israel in order to campaign against and stifle Palestine solidarity activism within the student movement.

That the Union of Jewish Students has active policy, 'to oppose BDS in all its forms'<sup>13</sup>, which smears the BDS movement and is antithetical to the policies held by both NUS-USI and NUS in support of BDS.

That at the end of January 2017 the current NUS-USI president participated in one of these UJS trips to Israel with the Union of Jewish Students and that it is alleged they visited an illegal Israeli settlement<sup>14</sup>

That during the 2016-17 period, NUS-USI has a live policy 'Justice and human rights for Palestine (2017)', which resolves to adopt, implement and adhere to the non-violent and Palestinian-led Boycott Divestment and Sanctions campaign.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://bit.ly/OE5XS3>

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.ujs.org.uk/pageassets/conference/motions-2016-4\\_12.pdf](https://www.ujs.org.uk/pageassets/conference/motions-2016-4_12.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/nus-settlement-story-1306623668>

#### **Conference believes:**

That offers of fully-paid trips to Israel by organisations that advocate against furthering Palestinian human rights, liberation and justice are made specifically to student leaders because of their roles as elected representatives within the student movement in order to influence policy, undermine Palestine solidarity and promote positions that contribute to shutting down much needed Palestine solidarity activities.

That by accepting a fully-paid trip to Israel, in the context of it being with an organisation that specifically advocates for Israel, elected student officers violate the very clear guidance from the BDS movement<sup>15</sup> and the policy on file which supports BDS.

That for any clarifications and interpretations of the BDS policy on file, student officers within NUS-USI should engage directly with the BDS movement and also consult with the wider membership.

That visiting Israel-Palestine in order to learn more about the conflict is not an issue or violation of BDS; but rather the agenda underpinning free trips that are offered to students and student leaders by organisations is and thus must be carefully considered after consultation with relevant stakeholders.

That NUS-USI should encourage solidarity visits to Occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) and Israel as long as such trips ensure non-participation in activities sponsored or supported -- directly or indirectly -- by the Israeli government or any of its agencies or organisations seeking to stifle Palestine solidarity.

That trips to Israel-Palestine should, ideally, occur under the auspices of ethical organisations that do not seek to undermine Palestine solidarity and which promote genuine approaches to human rights, social justice and an end to violent conflict.

That a boycott of Israel, as defined by the BDS call and guidelines, is explicit in terms of Israel's entire oppressive regime, including all of the Israeli companies and institutions that are involved in violations of international law, and is a reasonable non-violent activity that can be taken to register opposition to such crimes.

That the Palestinian-led BDS campaign does not target anyone or anything based on identity, religious background, ethnicity or race; but is actually based solely on actions, political views and complicity in denying Palestinian rights.

That BDS is a strategy for effective solidarity, not a dogma or ideology and certainly not an attack or threat upon Jewish communities or individuals and absolutely doesn't require student officers to boycott communal Jewish organisations or the Union of Jewish Students in its entirety - only it's Israel advocacy activities.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://bdsmovement.net/call>

That it remains unclear where the Union of Jewish Students and other organisations receive their funding in order to carry forward Israel advocacy activities and trips to Israel.

That the UJS and other organisations should reveal all their funding sources publicly for transparency and accountability reasons.

#### **Conference resolves:**

That NUS-USI elected officers should not accept fully-paid trips to Israel offered by organisations that are advocating against furthering Palestinian human rights, liberation and justice.

That should those bound by NUS-USI policy mandate wish to travel to Israel and Palestine then due consideration and diligence must be taken, including consultation with the BDS movement and the NUS-USI membership.

That visits to illegal Israeli settlements on any kind of trip to Israel and Palestine cannot be perceived as an act in the best interests of the student membership, especially Palestinian students in Northern Ireland and trips to illegal settlements are not acceptable.

To condemn student executive officers accepting paid trips to Israel provided by organisations that actively advocate against furthering Palestinian human rights, liberation and justice.

That NUS-USI commends the work of the Union of Jewish students and shall continue working with the Union of Jewish Students in areas unrelated to Israel-Palestine and that elected officers should aim to draw a clear distinction of non-participation where the Israel advocacy policies of UJS are concerned.

## **March for Science**

#### **Conference notes:**

1. The election of Donald J. Trump as President of the United States of America.
2. Earth Day takes place on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>16</sup>

#### **Conference believes:**

1. The election of President Trump has invigorated a growing movement from across society to advocate for the value of science and evidence-based policymaking.<sup>17</sup>
2. This growing movement has particular relevance in light of the potential implications that the new US administration could have for global efforts to tackle climate change.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.earthday.org/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.climatecentral.org/news/scientists-march-washington-dc-21111>

3. Plans are underway to hold events across the USA and globally to demonstrate how recent policy changes have given cause for concern in terms of how seriously evidence-led policy is taken and the implications that has for global issues such as climate change.<sup>18</sup>

#### **Conference resolves:**

1. The NUS-USI President to make contact with local campaign groups, activists, scientists, researchers, civil society networks and US citizens within Northern Ireland to determine the appetite for local action in solidarity with campaigners in America and elsewhere around the world.
2. That if there is a clear appetite for local action, to work to organise such activity to coincide with Earth Day on April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017.

## **Petitions of concern**

#### **Conference notes:**

1. The petition of concern mechanism within the Northern Ireland Assembly was created under provisions within the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement specifically to protect the rights of minorities.<sup>19</sup>
2. The petition of concern mechanism was discussed as part of *Fresh Start* negotiations in 2015 but was left unchanged.<sup>20</sup>

#### **Conference believes:**

1. At its creation, nobody envisaged that any one party would ever hold enough seats within the Northern Ireland Assembly to use a petition of concern on their own.
2. In recent years the petition of concern mechanism has been used in a way which runs in contradiction to the spirit in which it was intended, such as being used to block marriage equality where there was an outright majority for it within the Assembly.

#### **Conference resolves:**

3. NUS-USI should call for the petition of concern to be reformed, ensuring there are robust protections for the rights of minorities.
4. NUS-USI should also call for enhanced checks and balances for the Assembly Speaker in

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.marchforscience.com/>

<sup>19</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/136652/agreement.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/136652/agreement.pdf)

<sup>20</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/479116/A\\_Fresh\\_Start\\_-\\_The\\_Stormont\\_Agreement\\_and\\_Implementation\\_Plan\\_-\\_Final\\_Version\\_20\\_Nov\\_2015\\_for\\_PDF.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/479116/A_Fresh_Start_-_The_Stormont_Agreement_and_Implementation_Plan_-_Final_Version_20_Nov_2015_for_PDF.pdf)

relation to the conditions that must be met before they can accept a petition of concern.

## Teaching excellence framework

### Conference notes:

1. The Westminster Government have, in the last year, sought to carry out the biggest overhaul to Higher Education in a decade.
2. Part of the reforms seek to introduce a, 'Teaching Excellence Framework' (TEF) as a means to measure the quality of education in Universities across the UK.
3. Much criticism has been levelled at the proposed metrics within the TEF as not being appropriate to effectively or accurately measure the quality of teaching and learning, and rather are being used as a smokescreen to further marketise education and allow higher levels of tuition fees.

### Conference believes:

1. At the time of writing, none of the Institutions in Northern Ireland who are eligible to take part in the TEF have currently agreed to participate.
2. In Northern Ireland we have currently secured guarantees that, should an Institution here enter the TEF, there will be no link between TEF awards and tuition fee levels.<sup>21</sup>
3. This in itself is a positive development, but the TEF in its current form is still inadequate at best and poses risks and challenges to the wider tertiary education sector.

### Conference resolves:

5. The NUS-USI Executive to carry out work to compose an alternative Teaching Excellence Framework, working alongside students' unions and UCU to determine a framework for what good quality teaching and learning means, without encouraging further marketisation of our education system.

## Implications of Brexit for the student movement

### Conference notes:

1. That on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016 a UK-wide referendum on membership of the European Union was held.
2. The UK turnout was 72.2% and delivered a 51.9% *leave* result, with 48.1% voting to *remain*.

3. Regionally, the turnout here was 62.7% with 56% voting to *remain* and 44% voting to *leave*.
4. Scotland, Gibraltar and the London region also voted by majorities to *remain* whilst the remainder of England and Wales voted to *leave*.

### Conference believes:

1. Clearly, the various regions of the UK have a different view in regards to their future relationship with the European Union.
2. NUS-USI should prioritise working to eliminate or at least mitigate the potential negative implications that leaving the European Union will have for students, for higher and further education and for Northern Ireland generally.
3. Some of the specific areas of concern relate to:
  - (i) Human Rights & Equality under the Good Friday Agreement
  - (ii) Continued access to EU funding
  - (iii) Freedom of movement for students and academics across Europe and continued access to the Erasmus/Erasmus+ programme
  - (iv) Retention of the Common Travel Area and the freedom of movement across the Island of Ireland
  - (v) The 'right to remain' for EU nationals living in Northern Ireland and throughout the UK.
  - (vi) Workers' rights, and the implications any lessening of those rights could have for students and apprentices.

### Conference resolves:

1. For the NUS-USI President and Regional Executive Committee to make use of all possible networks, within NUS UK, USI and the European Students' Union to elevate the specific and unique circumstances that Northern Ireland now finds itself in regards to the areas outlined in *Conference Believes 3. (i) - (vi)*.

## To create joint funding for Republic of Ireland students in FE

### Conference notes:

Outside of the Back to Education scheme which only applies to those over the age of 20 and with no employment for at least 9 months, Republic of Ireland students are not entitled to any funding for FE courses.

### Conference believes:

Students from the Republic of Ireland receive no financial support from either government. To use Derry as an example, if a student is living in

<sup>21</sup> <http://data.niassembly.gov.uk/HansardXml/plenary-28-11-2016.pdf>

Letterkenny and studying a full-time course in Derry they may have to pay €50.50 a week travel on the bus. This could equate to over €1,800 for the academic year. Currently, if a student moves up to Derry they will be eligible to receive housing benefit and pay subsidised rent. This service will cease to exist once the Universal Credit scheme is introduced. With such a large amount of students crossing the border, an attempt should be made by both governments to support students. EMA students only receive a small payment but it should be equalled for Republic of Ireland students. Students living in Northern Ireland would see their money spend in Northern Ireland i.e. living costs, rent. While students living in the Republic would see their money spent on transport or living costs. This is liquid income designed to alleviate pressure off parents/ the student.

#### **Conference resolves:**

FE Student Unions should meet with TDs and elected MLAs and lobby for financial support for students. To begin, a cross-border financed support fund for students from the Republic. Students receiving Back to Education or EMA should not be eligible for this fund. The fund will not cover all expenses but rather provide a small amount for students on a bi-weekly basis and should be based on attendance. The amount of £20 per week will not cover all expenses but will help relieve pressure on students struggling financially.

## **Special status for Northern Ireland in Brexit negotiations**

#### **Conference believes:**

1. The majority of the population in Northern Ireland voted to remain in the EU in the referendum.
2. It is clear that we will be at the bottom of the list in the negotiations for the British exit of the EU.
3. Northern Ireland will lose £2.5 billion in funding for cross-community programs that help keep young people away from paramilitaries.
4. It could lead to a 'hard border' with the Republic, which will lead to further degeneration of relations between the unionist and nationalist communities.

#### **Conference further believes:**

1. The economy of Northern Ireland will be severely affected if not given any representation in the Brexit negotiations.
2. Funding for all institutions, including HE and FE, will be in jeopardy.

#### **Conference resolves:**

1. Campaign for better representation of the interests of the students and people of Northern Ireland in negotiations.

2. Provide information to students on the possible effects, both positive and negative of Brexit.
3. To provide students with information involved with a border poll should one be called.

## **Off-campus conduct regulations**

#### **Conference notes:**

1. The important role that our further and higher education institutions, and the student movement, play within the local community.
2. Those who commit criminal acts or are involved in anti-social behaviour should be dealt with by the appropriate statutory body and reprimanded in accordance with the rule of law.
3. That some higher educations in Northern Ireland impose draconian financial and academic penalties on students for off-campus behaviour that often far exceed the action taken by external agencies such as the Police, or the City Council, for the same, or a similar, offence.
4. These institutions have no statutory, moral, or ethical right to do so.

#### **Conference believes:**

That NUS-USI should play a constructive role in working with the Further and Higher Education institutions, local residents, and the statutory authorities to ensure that Northern Ireland is a safe and peaceful place to live, work and study.

#### **Conference further believes:**

Student activity that has taken place outside of an institution's property should not be subject to the relevant institution's conduct regulations, unless the students in question have been representing the applicable institution in an official capacity.

#### **Conference resolves:**

To mandate the NUS-USI President, and the organisation, to work with local unions to assist them in any campaigning activity relating to their institutions conduct regulations.

## **Brexit**

#### **Conference recognises:**

- That on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016, the United Kingdom voted in a referendum to leave the membership of the European Union.
- That 56% of the electorate in Northern Ireland voted to Remain in that referendum.
- That young people and students in particular voted overwhelmingly to Remain within the EU on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016, in Northern Ireland, and across the UK.

- That, as a result, there exists a democratic deficit between the north of Ireland and other regions in the UK.
- That due to this democratic deficit, there exists a possibility that the rights of students, and the values of the students' movement in Northern Ireland, may be diminished, neglected or ignored during Brexit negotiations between the UK and the EU.
- That there will also be a number of worrying ramifications for the Republic of Ireland.
- That there has already been a fall in the number of international students, particularly EU students, applying to study in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

#### **Congress is concerned that:**

- That withdrawal from the EU will have profound political, economic and social effects on our society, and on opportunities for students.
- That hugely successful initiatives for student mobility such as the Erasmus+ scheme may be severely curtailed.
- That the number of students who are from Northern Ireland and want to study in the Republic of Ireland, or vice versa, will reduce as a result of withdrawing from the EU.
- That access to healthcare via the European Health Insurance Card will be under threat.
- That the number of people from the island of Ireland who want to access reproductive healthcare in Great Britain will now face additional barriers due to withdrawing from the EU.
- That EU nationals, including students and academics, living in the UK may be used as 'negotiating capital' in Brexit negotiations and their 'right to remain' will be threatened.
- That civic society in Northern Ireland, and the needs and interests of our society and citizens will be neglected during Brexit negotiations.
- That issues of border control and immigration in Britain will have a profound impact on the Irish border and on citizens who live there, with freedom of movement curtailed, and trade on the island hampered.

#### **Congress instructs:**

- The NUS-USI President and NUS-USI Officer Board to actively campaign to ensure that the rights and values of the student movement are not diminished or ignored, and are reflected

and promoted, during Brexit negotiations between the UK and the EU, and during any negotiation between Governments in London and Dublin.

- These rights, opportunities and values include, but are not limited to:
  - o Access to EU funding and participation in EU teaching, learning, travel and research programs.
  - o Freedom of movement through Europe, especially for students and academics
  - o Protection of Equality Legislation and the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement in Northern Ireland.
  - o The 'right to remain' for EU nationals living in Northern Ireland and throughout the UK.
  - o Retaining the Erasmus+ Scheme
  - o Access to European Healthcare
  - o Retention of the Common Travel Area, and the right to unhindered free movement, across the island of Ireland
- NUS-USI President and NUS-USI Officer Board to highlight the democratic deficit that exists between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK, and to raise awareness of its implications on life for students and citizens living here.

### **Irish Language Act**

#### **This conference recognises:**

- That an Irish Language Act was promised within Annex B of the 2006 St. Andrew's Agreement but that it has still not been passed within the Assembly.
- That every other region in the UK has passed a minority language act to protect and enhance native and minority languages, and provide adequate service provision for speakers of these languages.
- The Irish language is an official EU language, is spoken, used or understood by over 180,000 citizens, including thousands of schoolchildren educated through the medium of Irish.

#### **This conference welcomes:**

- The legal decision on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March in judicial review brought by Conradh na Gaeilge which condemned the Stormont Assembly for failing in its legal imperative to legislate for an Irish Language Act.

#### **This conference calls for:**

- NUS-USI President and Campaigns & Citizenship Officer to support An Dream Dearg (alongside USI) and other civic groups and activist networks in campaigning for an Irish Language Act in Northern Ireland.
- NUS-USI President and Campaigns & Citizenship Officer to lobby local political representatives to fulfil their legal requirement and legislate for an Irish Language Act as soon as possible.

## Trade union solidarity

### This conference recognises:

- The widespread exploitation of labour and the growing casualisation of labour, particularly young workers
- That the interests and values of the trade union and students' union movement are invariably aligned, as they both seek a democratic, socially just and equal society and fight for members' rights and progressive social change
- The solidarity and support historically afforded to students' unions by the trade union movement, both domestically and internationally
- That students' unions are stronger and more effective as campaigning bodies when embedded within the wider civic struggle for progressive change, allowing them to draw on support and solidarity from allies across society.

### Conference also recognises:

- That in the context of higher education, the marketisation of HEIs has led to a proliferation of casualisation, corporate opacity, overworked staff, gender inequality in pay and promotion, attacks on academic freedom, damage to staff wellbeing and a redefinition of academia
- This attack on staff wellbeing, and the unions that represent them, threatens the quality of education received by our student members and the overall University community
- That students' union are ethically and politically obligated to oppose these attacks on the rights of academic workers
- The most effective way of combatting marketisation is building alliances with staff unions in Universities to combine the voices and campaigning resources of staff and student representatives in offering a vision of a democratic, public University.

### Conference instructs

- NUS-USI President and Campaigns & Citizenship Officer to build stronger and more formal links with the University & Colleges Union (USU) to oppose marketisation of higher

- education and to protect the rights and experiences of staff and students
- NUS-USI President and Campaigns & Citizenship Officer to build stronger and more formal links with the wider trade union movement to engage with and protect student workers and non-academic staff.
- NUS-USI Women's Officer campaign alongside the trade union movement on challenges and issues faced by women student workers
- NUS-USI President and Campaigns & Citizenship Officer to offer active public support and solidarity to the trade union movement, build on the existing agreement with NIC-ICTU, and support instances of industrial action by student workers or otherwise.

## Students and workers - Fairer PhD terms and conditions

### Conference notes:

On 21 March 2017 Ulster University Student's Union passed policy committing to working with Trade Unions on issues including PhD terms and conditions. This policy is similar to the Staff- Student Alliance policy passed by Queen's University Student's Union on 7 December 2016.

Many PhD students at Queen's University and Ulster University are in receipt of a scholarship from the Department of the Economy.

PhD Students are not classed as university employees, however many are paid to teach undergraduates. This teaching can give PhD Students valuable work experience.

PhD students at Queen's University Belfast are paid £33 per hour for teaching, and PHD Students at Ulster University are paid £15.20 per hour with some students receiving a lower £10.80 demonstrator rate. This rate is per hour of teaching an often does not include any preparation or marking time.

The UCU published a report in 2016 'Undervalued, Overworked, Taken for Granted' criticizing the rate of pay for PhD students at Queens University (<http://ucuatqub.blogspot.co.uk/2016/10/text-here-from-our-phd-student-report.html>).

PhD students pay extension fees if they submit in a fourth year. At Queen's University Belfast the fee is £290 for the fourth year, at Ulster University the extension is free for the first 4 months, the fee is £630 every subsequent 3 months.

PhD students are not entitled to any work related benefits such as statutory sick pay, paid paternity leave or shared parental leave. While there is a

provision for Maternity Leave in the Department of the economy scholarship, this is only during the funding period and not in any extension period.

#### **Conference believes:**

PhD students need the support of both their Student's Union and Trade Union to campaign for better terms and conditions. The commitment by Student's Union to work with Trade Unions as outlined above should be strengthened by action at NUS-USI level.

PhD students should be treated equally regardless of the institution that they are studying at.

When preparation and marking time are taken into account many PhD students are earning below minimum wage. UCU suggests 5.5 hours or preparation work per hour of teaching.

Punitive extension fees detrimentally impact the mental health of PhD students.

There is a disparity in the distribution of Research Training and Support funds within and between institutions.

#### **Conference resolves:**

To investigate why there is a disparity between the treatment of PhD students at Queen's University and Ulster University in relation to payment, fees, and support funding.

To lobby Queen's University and Ulster University for a fair rate of pay for PhD Students

To lobby Queen's University and Ulster University for a reduction in extension fees.

To lobby the Department of the Economy for better terms and conditions for PhD students.

To work with the relevant Trade Unions to achieve these aims, in accordance with policy passed by both Ulster University Student's Union and Queen's University Student's Union.

## **ANTI-SEMITISM**

#### **Conference notes:**

That 'anti-Semitic attacks are on the rise in Britain', with incidents such as brick attacks on synagogues, anti-Jewish graffiti and even bomb threats occurring in recent years.<sup>1</sup>

The Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 924 anti-Semitic incidents across the United Kingdom during 2015.<sup>2</sup>

Northern Ireland's only Rabbi, David Singer, told BBC Radio Ulster's Sunday Sequence on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2016 that he has received suspicious e-mails

and came across anti-Jewish graffiti in the centre of Belfast.<sup>3</sup>

The national student movement has been rocked by allegations of anti-Semitism and the concerns of Jewish students have been repeatedly downplayed by some of those in leadership positions.<sup>4</sup>

NUS motion 404 'Anti-Semitism on campus' resolved to lobby Students' Unions in order to encourage them to have clearer policies on responding to anti-Semitic incidents and situations in which Jewish students feel threatened.<sup>5</sup>

April Rosenblum, in her 2007 pamphlet 'the past didn't go anywhere: making resistance to anti-Semitism part of all our movements', expands in great detail on the nuances surrounding modern day anti-Jewish oppression and why it is absolutely vital to integrate a radical analysis of, and opposition to, all manifestations of anti-Jewish hatred and oppression into the work we already carry forward.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Conference believes:**

Regardless of whether an anti-Semitism problem exists or not on our own campuses it would still be advisable to hold a policy that addresses anti-Semitism on campus, provides a workable definition of anti-Semitism and gives guidance on what steps can be taken to combat this particularly odious form of hatred.

All forms of racism and oppression are abhorrent and should be uncompromisingly opposed with as much effort and energy as can be mustered.

Anti-Semitism is a specific form of racism, relating to Jews and Judaism.

Anti-Jewish oppression is the system of ideas passed down through a society's institutions to enable scapegoating of Jews, and the ideological or physical targeting of Jews that results from that.

The definition of anti-Semitism has been debated and disputed as a result of political influences relating to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

A workable definition of anti-Semitism can be found provided by noted scholar Brian Klug who has defined anti-Semitism as a '*form of hostility towards Jews as Jews, in which a Jew is perceived as something other than what they are*'.<sup>7</sup>

Anti-oppression ethics, coupled with a thorough understanding that multiple oppressions can manifest at one time and are often complex and multi-layered, is crucially important in our efforts to acknowledge anti-Semitism as still being a major problem in society today.

That anti-Semitism includes, but is not limited to:

- (i) Questioning the loyalty of Jews to their state of citizenship simply on the basis of their Jewish identity, which includes claims that Jews as a collective or a community engage in efforts to subvert or mislead the general population, as well as the claim that Jews are more loyal to the state of Israel than their country of citizenship, is an anti-Semitic position to hold;
- (ii) Claiming or making any effort to create a reality in which Jews do not have the same rights as any other religious, cultural or ethnic group, including the right to free speech, free practice of religion, free use of native languages (i.e. Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino, etc.) and self-determination;
- (iii) Denying, trivializing and misconstruing the Nazi Holocaust. This includes denying the fact, scope, method, or motivation for the genocide of six million Jews at the hands of the National Socialist regime. It also includes the accusation that Jews or the state of Israel have fabricated, cause or over-exaggerated the Holocaust;
- (iv) Calling for, aiding or justifying the killing or harming of Jews for the sake of their Jewish religion, ethnicity or identity;
- (v) Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as Jews or for being Jewish. This includes accusations of Jewish control of the world, of our political structures and government, the media, as well as blaming Jews collectively for imagined and real atrocities;
- (vi) 'Equating Jews or maliciously equating Jewish organisations and the polity of the state of Israel with the Nazi Regime. This includes, but is not limited to equating Zionism with Nazism and claiming that 'History is repeating itself' with regards to the Nazi Holocaust and the state of Israel. This also includes using Jewish symbols and religious imagery alongside Nazi symbols and imagery. However, this does NOT necessarily include reasonable analogies between historical events';
- (vii) Using Jewish symbols to antagonize, harass, and intimidate Jewish students.
- (viii) Assuming that because a person is Jewish that they will automatically hold particular political views and positions regarding Zionism and Israel;
- (ix) Demanding a Jewish person or group of Jews collectively to present an opinion or position on the Israel-Palestine conflict and

- where those demands are often aggressive, intimidating and harassing;
- (x) Labelling Jews that hold differing political positions on Zionism and Israel as 'kapos', 'self-hating Jews' or 'traitors';
- (xi) Deliberately using terms 'Zio' and 'Zionist' as pejorative terms of abuse in order to isolate and attack Jewish students and members of Jewish communities.

Criticism of the Israeli government, its policies and actions are not inherently anti-Semitic and neither is reasoned criticism of Zionism and its impact in Palestine and upon the Palestinian people.

#### **Conference resolves:**

NUS-USI is mandated to publicly oppose actions on campus that are anti-Semitic based on the aforementioned definitions.

NUS-USI be mandated to publish a bi-annual report detailing all incidents of racism, including anti-Semitic incidents and instances of anti-Jewish oppression.

NUS-USI executive should communicate and engage with the Jewish Community in Northern Ireland - particularly the Rabbi and the Belfast Synagogue in order to discuss issues affecting them and also Jewish students in Northern Ireland.

NUS-USI is mandated to work with relevant educational institutions in order to address racism and anti-Semitism on campus and methods to alleviate it.

The work of organisations such as Jewdas<sup>8</sup>, NUS, Jewdents<sup>9</sup>, Community Security Trust (CST) and the Union of Jewish Students is to be consulted when developing work against anti-Semitism so as to ensure resources are provided to help Students to understand the nuances and fully comprehend these policies.

The pamphlet of April Rosenblum<sup>10</sup> is viewed as a key resource and must be made available (once permissions have been sought and granted) for students and relevant parties to access on the NUS-USI Website, under a section specifically designed to tackle all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism, in order that the NUS-USI might better promote and enhance legitimate debate regarding the morality, problems and human rights issues surrounding international conflicts whilst also remaining resolutely committed to opposing the manifestation of illegitimate and illegal acts of anti-Jewish oppression on campus.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/israelqaza-conflict-rise-of-antisemitic-attacks-in-uk-as-crisis-rages-in-the-middle-east-9631174.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2016/02/04/cst-antisemitic-incidents-report-2015-published-today>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-37533746>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-37489745>

<sup>5</sup> <https://nusdigital.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/document/documents/24818/Welfare Live Policy 201417.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.buildingequality.us/prejudice/antisemitism/rosenblum/the-past.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> See Brian Klug, 'The collective Jew: Israel and the new Anti-Semitism', *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2003, 117-138.

<sup>8</sup> <http://jewdas.org/how-to-criticise-israel-without-being-anti-semitic/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://facebook.com/jewdents/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.buildingequality.us/prejudice/antisemitism/rosenblum/the-past.pdf>

## Policy Lapse

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### NI Assembly

#### Conference notes:

This year has been a turning point within the politics in Northern Ireland. This year NUS-USI lobbied each party to ensure that Further and Higher Education is the top of each of the party's agenda.

#### Conference also notes:

Primary Education has been at the forefront of educational debates in recent years.

#### Conference notes with concern:

That Top up Fees were introduced in Northern Ireland with direct rule and that our education system, students and economy will now suffer under a system which is clearly not right with evidence of a drop in applications and little opportunities for our graduates here in Northern Ireland.

#### Conference mandates:

The President and NI Executive to continue to lobby the political parties and make them stand up and invest in an education where everyone in Northern Ireland will benefit.

The President should set up a forum where education spokesperson and policy heads communicate with the student body.

Extra resources are put into place to empower the student leaders in the students' unions around the region to use their voice.

The President should lobby for representation on committees that can raise concerns at executive level.

## Community Relations

#### Conference notes:

The University of Ulster Students' Union, in conjunction with the Queen's University of Belfast Students' Union, has worked hard to improve relations between students and residents living side by side within the community.

#### Conference further notes:

The Unions have worked closely with the Media/Press to promote the community relations work they have engaged in, and to address the negative perceptions that many people have of students living within local communities.

#### Conference mandates:

The NUS-USI President to work with the universities and colleges throughout the region on a campaign to further promote and enhance good relations between students and long term residents in the community.

Conference mandates NUS-USI to set up a working group to ensure the continuation of the good work of the students' unions in the area of community relations.

## Student Support Funds

#### Conference notes:

The rapidly increasing cost of living and the worsening economic conditions in Northern Ireland.

#### Conference further notes:

The contribution that the DEL Student Support Funds make to supporting students who get into financial difficulty or other hardship during their courses. In both HE and FE, vulnerable students benefit immensely from this.

#### Conference directs:

NUS-USI to campaign to ensure that the Support Fund budget is not cut, or negatively affected in any way by a changeover of departmental responsibility for HE and FE.

## Governance in Further and Higher Education

#### Conference notes:

The publication of the recent review into education institution governance in Scotland, and the opportunities that has provided for making education in Scotland more democratic, with more opportunities and representation for students.

**Conference also notes:**

The anomalies and problems arising in Higher & Further Education governance in Northern Ireland – particularly the Education Order (Northern Ireland) 1996, which omits all the legal protections offered to students' unions provided in the Education Act 1994 in England & Wales.

**Conference further notes:**

The serious repercussions this is having at some institutions, and how this could disadvantage other students' unions in the future.

**Conference resolves:**

To call for a full review of Further & Higher Education Governance in Northern Ireland by the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly.

## Justice and human rights for Palestine

**Conference notes:**

1. That the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the State of Israel and occupied Golan Heights is progressively worsening in terms of equality, justice, human rights and sustainable peace for all.
2. The discussion surrounding the Israel - Palestine conflict is often polarized, with the radical viewpoints espoused usually given precedence, resulting unhelpful propaganda battles being fought which moves focus away from human rights and political focussed progressive debate.

**Conference believes:**

1. Israel is currently occupying Palestinian territory in the West Bank and Gaza strip.
2. That Israel is in breach of International law in respect to its obligations as an occupying power which are stipulated within the 1907 Hague Regulations (arts 42-56) and the Fourth Geneva Convention (GC IV, art. 27-34 and 47-78), as well as in certain provisions of Additional Protocol I and customary international humanitarian law.
3. Israel is using an oppressive regime which fits the legal definition of Apartheid as stipulated within the 2002 Rome statutes and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid
4. Israel follows a policy of home demolitions and forced relocations to effectively control the demographics of those deemed undersirable by the state.

5. Israel does not allow Palestinian refugees or their descendents to return to the territory from which they were expelled in 1948 by Israeli forces both before and after the existence of the Israeli State.
6. The refusal to accept responsibility, or permit a viable solution to the refugee crisis which Israel itself created, is an obstacle to a just peace in the region.
7. A diverse range of Palestinian and Israeli organisations have called for a policy of boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel pertaining to goods, services, economic ties and any other activities which assist the Israeli government in the continued oppression and occupation of Palestine.
8. The National Union of Students - Union of Students Ireland has so far held no policy in support of the growing movement to support Palestinian & Israeli human rights.
9. That there is no excuse or justification for the abuse of human rights and international law.
10. Terrorism, in all its forms, must be fully condemned and organizations which are defined as terrorist do not hold the principles or interests of the basic rights of Palestinian and Israeli people as a priority and cannot be said to represent the population of the region as a collective whole.
11. Palestinians have a right under international law to resist occupation and to democratically determine their own future.
12. Settlements built by Israel or Israeli citizens within the Occupied Palestinian territories are illegal as stipulated within the 4th Geneva convention and other relevant international law.

**Conference resolves:**

1. That support should be given to individual students and student groups within Northern Ireland that work in a progressive, human rights based manner to ending the Occupation of Palestinian territories deemed occupied by the International community in 1967
2. Where "support" is to be taken as meaning: The facilitation of events, speakers, positive engagement, debates, nonviolent direct action that is within the law and support for student members of NUS-USI within Israel - Palestine itself.
3. To demand freedom for Palestine, calling for an end to the military occupation of the Palestinian territories and the right to return for refugees who chose to exercise that right.

4. That a progressive adoption of the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions campaign should be implemented and promoted with a focus on the educational aspects so as to Boycott goods made in Israel's illegal settlements and divest from any company which is complicit in the abuse of Palestinian human rights and the occupation of Palestinian territories.
5. To implement the BDS campaign using a progressive approach that utilizes an assessed look at companies and products to determine if they fit the Palestinian call to BDS.
6. To use the much needed educational approach that sends a clear message as to why there is a BDS campaign along with what it is and is NOT about.
7. That we must support Israeli and Palestinian Human Rights NGO's such as that of B'tselem. Organisations such as these are typically demonised and attacked by the Israeli government in an undemocratic way.
8. Strongly condemn Israel's activities and policies which allow for continued human rights abuses and the perpetuation of a conflict based status quo that allows for such things as home demolitions, evictions and the brutal use of military power to put down nonviolent demonstrations for civil and human rights.
9. To support the Palestinians right to education by building links with Institutions of Education such as Bethlehem University and other such educational Institutions.

## Internationalisation of Students in Northern Ireland

### Conference notes:

There are an increasing number of international students coming to study at FE and HE level in Northern Ireland.

### Conference further notes:

There is a lack of integration between international and local students.

### Conference believes:

Internationalisation of students within Northern Ireland will not only be beneficial to the international student experience but also help submerge our home students in a more diverse range of cultures and experiences.

### Conference resolves:

For NUS-USI to promote and raise awareness of the benefits of internationalisation within our institutions and community.

## Internationalism and Europe

### Conference notes:

1. When students come from abroad to study within the UK from outside the EU, they are expected to pay huge fees in order to study.
2. These fees are extremely high when talking in terms of British pounds and even higher when these figures are converted into most currencies.
3. International students who do not have access to loans have difficulty paying these fees. Along with living expenses this puts a huge burden on these students.

### Conference believes:

These financial burdens stop people from abroad coming into the UK to study.

### Conference resolves:

NUS-USI to put pressure on government to review this.

## Recreational Sporting Activities

### Conference notes:

Student sport is an integral part of student life for many of our members.

### Conference further notes:

Sport has many benefits for students for both personal development and physical wellbeing.

### Conference believes:

By increasing recreational sport within member institutions we can not only get more students involved in our unions but also promote a healthy lifestyle amongst students.

### Conference resolves:

NUS-USI should develop a campaign to promote student sport focusing on recreation, social and health benefits to students

## Sport

### Conference notes:

Due to the pressure of finding time for all lessons there is not much time available in many colleges

when all students are free to participate in clubs and societies.

#### **Conference believes:**

That a time on the timetable should be made when all students are free.

#### **Conference further believes:**

1. That this free time can also be used for Tutorials, Student Union and Class Reps Meetings.
2. That if the same time, such as Wednesday afternoons, was made free throughout colleges this would allow colleges to compete with each other.
3. This would improve students' lives at FE colleges.
4. This would provide equality for all students as they would all have access to participating in all clubs and societies.
5. This would also provide many health and social benefits.
6. This would also help in developing the students' union clubs and societies.

#### **Conference resolves:**

That NUS-USI puts pressure on DEL to enforce that every college has a time slot on Wednesday afternoons when all students are available to participate in clubs and societies.

## **Course Reps**

#### **Conference notes:**

That student reps are an invaluable group amongst the student body. Conference also notes that Student's Unions have limited resources to support these students.

#### **Conference believes:**

That student reps are at the heart of our institutions. Conference also believes that there is a need for additional resources and support to improve how effectively we represent our students.

#### **Conference hereby mandates:**

The Regional Executive to lobby, and support our Student's Unions when they lobby, both their institutions and government for more funding to support student reps.

## **Street Reps and Community Funding**

#### **Conference notes:**

The inception of the Street Reps Scheme at Queen's Students' Union, which connects students more closely with their local neighbourhoods and improves community relations.

#### **Conference also notes:**

The wide range of funding that is available for community groups and community initiatives from various agencies.

#### **Conference resolves to:**

Work to expand the Street Reps scheme to other institutions and to use NUS-USI's influence to push for funding to improve the initiative.

## **Private Rented Sector Tenants' Association**

#### **Conference notes:**

The poor state of private rented sector accommodation in Northern Ireland – way behind the rest of the UK and Ireland. Damp, cold and poorly maintained student accommodation is rife and often peddled by unscrupulous landlords.

#### **Conference further notes:**

That the NI Housing Executive expects the private rented sector to continue to expand, and if that is to happen, tenants need a dedicated representative body to represent their interests to the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive and

#### **Conference resolves:**

To support the efforts of the Housing Rights' Service to establish a Northern Ireland Tenant's Association.

## **Suicide Awareness**

#### **Conference notes:**

There has been an increased level of work on mental health campaigns amongst the student population.

#### **Conference further notes:**

Suicide awareness is key to suicide prevention.

#### **Conference believes:**

By training students beyond the regional executive will help our message to reach a wider range of students who may not necessarily engage with their students' union.

#### **Conference resolves:**

That NUS-USI provides a platform for suicide awareness training to larger groups of students within the various institutions.

## Campaign for More Sexual Health Clinics

### Conference recognises:

The importance of sexual health clinics in providing testing for sexual transmitted infections, information on sexual health, and contraception and specifically the positive impact this has in women student's lives.

### Conference notes with concern:

The worryingly small number of sexual health clinics across Northern Ireland and the reduced funding for provision of this key service, particularly on campuses in rural areas.

### Conference resolves:

To lobby local government and to campaign for more funding in this area, in order to provide more sexual health clinics across Northern Ireland.

## Student Mental Health

### Conference notes:

1. Students are faced with increasing financial and academic pressures coupled with part time work commitments.
2. In their attempts to balance all these pressure, their mental health and well being is affected.

### Conference notes with concern:

A recent MORI poll illustrates that year-by-year more students are experiencing stress.

### Conference mandates:

The NUS-USI to continue their student mental health campaign in partnership with local Unions and to help coordinate mental health campaigns on an annual basis in all member colleges

## Mental Health

### Conference recognises:

That it is commonly referred to that young members of the LGBT community are at a higher risk of suffering from mental health issues.

### Conference is disgusted:

By the lack of actual research undertaken on this issue.

### Conference mandates:

NUS-USI to undertake a national survey on the mental health of LGBT Students.

## Reproductive Rights

### Conference notes:

That it is only legal to perform an abortion in Northern Ireland, if the mother's physical or mental wellbeing will be endangered as a result of the pregnancy.

### Conference recognises:

That abortion is an extremely stressful process; and having to visit Great Britain or other European countries in order to have access to safe abortion procedures, adds to this stress. This is coupled with the stigma associated with abortion that may leave many women in Northern Ireland unable to talk to their family or friends about abortion for fear of judgement and thus have to go through everything alone. This may lead to serious mental health problems which could last a life time.

### Conference believes:

That on these grounds, the Abortion Act 1967 should be extended to Northern Ireland, and adequate provision be made to ensure women's safety and mental health needs are met throughout any choice regarding pregnancy termination.

### Conference mandates:

The NUS-USI President and NUS-USI Women's Officer to continue to lobby the government and campaign for women's right to choose, under medical guidance, to terminate a pregnancy without having to leave Northern Ireland and to support the sentiments of the Pro Choice movement.

## LGBT Rights and Israel

### Conference notes:

1. That the State of Israel engages in Human Rights abuses against its minorities and those it occupies in the Palestinian Territories and Golan Heights
2. Israel partakes in the phenomena known internationally as "Pink Washing" which is the calculated flaunting of LGBT rights in an area, region or State that is designed to cover up or "wash" human rights abuses.

### Conference believes:

1. LGBT rights are a fundamental part of any equal and diverse Society
2. That LGBT rights in Israel or the Occupied Palestinian Territories should not be

detremented because of the Palestinian cause however LGBT rights should also not be used to hide Israel's Human Rights abuses.

3. The State of Israel's LGBT Rights record should be commended and celebrated.
4. Israel uses malicious and manipulative rhetoric to shift focus from the plight of the Palestinian people in order for the International community to focus on the LGBT rights record of the Palestinian Authority and Terrorist Organization Hamas which is then used to create a false judgement of the Palestinian people as a whole.
5. Use of "Pinkwashing" for any purpose should be condemned, particularly in regards to the Israel - Palestine conflict

#### **Conference resolves:**

1. To declare solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine and work with Al Qaws (the rainbow) for gender and sexual diversity in Palestinian society.
2. To oppose the use of "pinkwashing" by the Israeli State and Foreign Ministry.
3. Condemn the abuse of LGBT rights within the occupied Palestinian territories by the so called "Palestinian Authority" and the Terrorist organisation Hamas
4. Progress a dialogue to discuss the merits of Israel's LGBT rights whilst maintaining a firm stance against the Human Rights abuses of the State of Israel.

## **Engagement with LGB and T People**

#### **Conference notes:**

There are an increasing number of transgender people studying in Northern Ireland.

#### **Conference further notes:**

There is a lack of understanding between LGB and T people.

#### **Conference believes:**

That transgender student issues are different to mainstream LGB issues, as it is gender orientation, not sexual orientation.

#### **Conference resolves:**

For NUS-USI to promote and raise awareness of transgender issues and recognise the need for transgender student peer support with in LGB and T societies.

## **Flexibility in assessment**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That students in FE and HE are required to complete assessments in their respective courses, which could include examination, coursework, group work or other;
2. That different students have different preferences for learning and can work better under certain circumstances;
3. That the majority of courses only offer a singular form of assessment, universally applied to students;
4. That certain kinds of assessment may be an incompatible option for disabled students;
5. That students perform better academically in certain kinds of assessment, and poorer in other kinds;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That students should be allowed to choose an assessment which offers the student flexibility and preference;
2. That colleges and universities should be expected to provide a learning experience, including assessment, that meets the needs of students;
3. That institutions rarely actively promote the alternative forms of assessment that are available to students, unless they are registered with their disability services;
4. That it would not be overly logistically different for academic staff to offer different kinds of assessment;
5. That choosing from a list of options would lead to better student satisfaction and better academic results;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To work with institutions to ensure students receive an education which is fit for purpose, which then allows them to be assessed in a way which is suited to the needs of the student;
2. To encourage academic staff to offer multiple options for any assessment to allow the student choice;
3. To do this at an early stage in the module to minimise additional stress;

## **Ramifications of PIP**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That Disability Living Allowance (DLA) was ended, and replaced with Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in Great Britain and later extended to Northern Ireland;
2. That this has led to a number of reassessments for disabled people;
3. That a large number of disabled people have either not applied because of changes, or had their applications rejected;

4. That thousands of people have had their cars or wheelchairs and equipment taken away from them

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That these reforms have been incredibly damaging for disabled people;
2. The application process and assessment process is deeply stressful and harmful for disabled people;
3. Disabled people are being unfairly attacked by the Government;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. That Disabled Students Campaign write to the Minister for Communities and the Executive Office expressing their disapproving and condemnation of reforms to PIP;
2. To emphasise that the Government has a duty to provide proper, adequate welfare to disabled people and PIP does not currently provide this;
3. To express solidarity to any protests against PIP;

## **Promotion of Institutional Disabled Support for International & GB Students**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That disabled students from Great Britain or International countries are not entitled to Disabled Students Allowances (DSA);
2. That because of the reforms to DSA in Great Britain, institutions in Northern Ireland are now required to pay for any support for GB disabled students from their own internal sources;
3. That some institutions only have ad-hoc provision for international disabled students, determined on a case-by-case basis
4. That whilst the Equality Act 2010 does not extend to Northern Ireland, Institutions must provide reasonable adjustments for their students and staff;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That all students, home and international, should receive access to the same levels of support;
2. That institutions should provide information about support they are eligible to at all stages of the student's course;
3. That institutions should have written policies on the support they will provide for all disabled students;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To encourage Institutions to have specific policies on disabled student support services for home and international students;
2. To ensure this information is widely circulated to all students who may need it;

## **Guidance on benefits for Students**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That some students are unaware that they may be eligible for some benefits, including Housing Benefit and Employment Support Allowance, depending on their circumstances;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That students should be provided with accurate, up-to-date information on their eligibility for social security benefits;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To produce guidance which outlines in a clear and accessible format what benefits students may be eligible for, particularly those who already receive student finance;

## **Disabled people in leadership**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That the number of elected representatives who are disabled is extremely low;
2. The Stormont Assembly does not reflect the diversity of Northern Ireland including gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, or disability;
3. Disabled people face a huge number of barriers for being in positions of leadership;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That disabled people should not be prevented from being in positions of leadership;
2. That programmes and initiatives which support and mentor disabled people are extremely useful in addressing the systemic barriers;
3. That diversity in positions of leadership leads to better decision-making;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To develop a workshop or similar event which specifically looks at and endeavours to address the underrepresentation of disabled people in positions of leadership;

## **Extending the Equality Act 2010 to Northern Ireland**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That the Equality Act 2010 does not extend to Northern Ireland;
2. That our equality laws are made up of a series of acts and regulations;
3. That these series of laws are now weaker than that of Great Britain's laws;

4. That section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 does not extend to schools;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That our Equality laws should consist of one single, comprehensive act which strongly protects the rights of individuals, including disabled people;
2. That this law should apply to all public and private sector organisations, including schools;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To lobby all MLAs, especially the Executive Office and Department for Communities to extend the Equality Act 2010 to Northern Ireland, or create a law which is just as robust, if not more robust, than GB's Equality Act 2010.

## **Ratification of UNCRPD in Ireland**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That Ireland is the last member state in the European Union to not ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
2. That this important document protects the rights and dignity of disabled people internationally;
3. That Ireland has had over a decade to ratify the convention;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That Ireland has already signed the Convention, but now must ratify it;
2. That the Irish Government must be held accountable for failing to ratify the Convention, despite making promises that they would;
3. That the rights enshrined in the Convention would dramatically improve the quality of life and protection for disabled people in Ireland;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To lobby Irish TD's and the Taoiseach to ratify the UNCRPD in 2017 as soon as possible;
2. To make a strong statement to support the provisions and ethos of the UNCRPD;

## **Accessible Housing**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That much of the housing in Northern Ireland, particularly in student areas is inaccessible for a number of reasons;
2. That disabled students find it difficult to find housing which is suitable for them in meeting their needs such as accessibility, budget, and location;
3. That it can be of greater financial cost to disabled students to find accommodation which is suitable for them;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That disabled students deserve to live in accommodation which is accessible and of a decent standard;
2. That there is currently very little regulation for landlords to make their housing more accessible;
3. Disabled students should not be exploited nor used as a cash cow for rent costs;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To campaign for more availability for accessible housing for disabled students;
2. To write to councils in Northern Ireland demanding stronger regulation and scrutiny of the accommodation landlords provide to tenants;

## **Accessible Activism**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That activism is something which is to be welcomed from citizens and a great way to express a political viewpoint;
2. That the student movement has a proud history of being at the forefront of effecting change for social issues;
3. That this activism tends to take the form of marches, rallies, or speeches;
4. That this can be inaccessible for disabled people;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. Activism which is accessible should be promoted;
2. Disabled people should be allowed to lead and participate in activism without any barriers;
3. That activist events being organised by others should be mindful of those with disabilities;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To have an appointed access officer for NUS-USI's activist events;
2. To campaign on making activism accessible to everyone;

## **Repeal the 8th and Abortion Rights on the island of Ireland**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That women & trans men are not permitted access to abortion in the North and South of Ireland, except for very limited circumstances;
2. That Article 40.3.3 of the Irish Constitution prevents a woman from accessing reproductive healthcare;
3. That the Abortion Act 1967 does not extend to Northern Ireland;

4. Dozens of women travel every day to other countries in order to access healthcare;
5. That people are being harassed outside healthcare clinics by anti-choice protestors;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That abortion should be free, safe, and legal;
2. That the Government should not be limiting the bodily autonomy of its citizens;
3. That forcing women to travel to another country to access healthcare is physically, emotionally, and financially difficult
4. That the Irish Government should hold a referendum on repealing the 8th Amendment;
5. That the Stormont Assembly should allow bodily autonomy to its citizens;
6. That people should not be abused, harassed or intimidated by anyone for accessing healthcare;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To support access to abortion;
2. To stand in solidarity with those who have been prosecuted for accessing reproductive healthcare;
3. To publicly campaign and support for free, safe and legal access to abortion;
4. To publicly campaign and support for the creation of legal buffer zones, which would protect people for entering healthcare facilities without fear of harassment;

## **Protection of Rights of Disabled People in a Post-Brexit Society**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That the United Kingdom voted in a majority to leave the European Union;
2. That Northern Ireland and Scotland both voted to Remain, whilst England and Wales voted to Leave;
3. That the European Union currently provides a number of rights for disabled people;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That the democratic wish of the people of Northern Ireland should be respected and upheld in any Brexit negotiations;
2. That if we are forced to leave, the rights of disabled people will be fully protected;
3. That there cannot be any dilution of the rights and protections disabled people currently receive;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To publicly lobby all MLAs, MPs, and other key stakeholders to protect the rights and protections of disabled people in a Post-Brexit Society
2. To monitor the effects of any Brexit and ensure politicians and decision-makers are held to account for any unsatisfactory effects;

## **Accessible Public Transport**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That Disabled people are required to give 24 hours' notice for wheelchair access;
2. That wheelchair users should receive priority access as a result of the UK Supreme Court judgment;
3. That public transport in Northern Ireland can be at sporadic times with many difficulties for disabled passengers;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That the 24-hours' notice requirement is hugely inconvenient and inaccessible;
2. Disabled passengers should not be discriminated against by public transport companies or its employees;
3. Disabled passengers should be permitted the same flexibility with travelling as any citizen;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To write to Translink NI calling for a more robust framework for disabled passengers;
2. To lobby for passengers to be more considerate and accommodating of those with additional access requirements;

## **Student Support for Disabled Students**

#### **Conference Notes:**

1. That Disabled students face an additional number of barriers to access to FE and HE;
2. Many of these barriers are financial in nature, including hidden course costs, additional costs to living, transport, and bills;
3. HE Institutions currently do not publish a detailed summary of hidden course costs for prospective and current students;
4. The Competitions & Markets Authority (CMA) have outlined that Universities are required to produce a list of hidden course costs;
5. DSA does not cover many of the financial elements of studying as a disabled student. Of the few that do, it is based upon expenditure and reimbursement, which can be overly administrative for disabled students;

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That education should be a public good, including disabled students;
2. That education as a disabled student should not be hindered by the financial implications;
3. That students should be able to make an informed choice based on any hidden course costs;
4. This information should be easily accessible and clearly written;

5. That Universities and Colleges should be required to support their disabled students financially and pastorally;

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To make NUS-USI lobby for a student access bursary for Disabled students;
2. To inform Universities and Colleges to produce a detailed list of their hidden course costs, including but not limited to, additional expenses, books, other learning materials, materials fees, specialist equipment, uniforms or other clothing required for work placements, field trips; accommodation and travel costs;

## **Policy passed by Liberation campaigns since National Conference 2016**

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### **LGBT+ campaign policy**

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#### **Committee Resource Pack**

##### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. There is a lack of resources for societies and campaigns to draw upon for inspiration for weekly meetings and on-campus campaigns.
2. Clubs can struggle to find new ways to engage their members and the wider campus population.
3. Committee members are often trying to balance their studies, extra-curricular activities and personal commitments which means they may not have time to make new resources for campaigns and meetings.
4. The current online campaigning toolkits (<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/winning-for-students/lgbt/campaigning-toolkits>) are limited and often not known about.

##### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. If a resource was made with a pool of ideas ranging from discussions, socials, and events, committees will feel more supported and more able to make a difference on campus.
2. Pooling ideas is a useful way to increase productivity.

##### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. That the national committee will create a resource pack for committees to use.
2. The resource pack will include ideas for weekly meetings including but not limited to: formal meetings, social meetings, and discussions; as well as ideas and resources for external campaigns.
3. The resource pack will be an online resource that can be easily accessed on the website and advertised to all clubs.

## **Educate to liberate: Creating training and educational materials**

##### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. Current live policy for the LGBT+ and Trans Campaigns references 'training' over 60 times throughout the policy document<sup>2223</sup>.
2. Many pieces of live policy along with the NUS report 'Education Beyond the Straight and Narrow' recognise the importance of education and training on LGBT+ issues for spreading awareness and preventing ignorance<sup>24</sup>.
3. That currently sex and relationship education within the mandatory education system does not include compulsory LGBT-inclusive sex and relationship education<sup>25</sup>.
4. Currently NUS does not have a set of coherent, unified educational and training resources that are readily available to students and institutions.

##### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. That the 'Campaign toolkits' and 'Research' arms of the LGBT+ campaign provide a good framework on which to build such training and educational resources.
2. That any educational and training resources should be accessible and adaptable enough to be utilised in a number of different situations, from FE to HE, and from training and informing elected officers and students in general to educating workers in academic institutions.

##### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

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<sup>22</sup> [www.nusconnect.org.uk/winning-for-students/lgbt](http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/winning-for-students/lgbt)

<sup>23</sup> [www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/lgbt-students-campaign-live-policy-2014-17](http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/lgbt-students-campaign-live-policy-2014-17)

<sup>24</sup> [www.nus.org.uk/Global/lgbt-research.pdf](http://www.nus.org.uk/Global/lgbt-research.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> [www.pinknews.co.uk/2017/01/11/tories-vote-to-block-compulsory-lgbt-inclusive-sex-education-but-promise-reform/](http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2017/01/11/tories-vote-to-block-compulsory-lgbt-inclusive-sex-education-but-promise-reform/)

1. For the NUS to establish a working group to develop a set of training and education materials in relation to LGBT-inclusive sex and relationship education, gender and sexual Identity, trans issues, and LGBT+ issues and their intersection with other liberation issues.
2. For these materials to be used within the NUS' Officer Development Programme.
3. For the NUS to make these materials readily available so they can be used freely by students, institutions and educators.

## What about the nations

### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. Nations refers to the politically autonomous counterparts of NUS UK, including: NUS Wales, NUS Scotland, and NUS-USI (Northern Ireland)
2. Each nation has an equivalent LGBT+ campaign with at least one LGBT+ Officer, but all are part-time, unpaid positions
3. Each nations LGBT+ officer sits on the national NUS LGBT+ committee

### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. Although each nations LGBT+ campaign differs in its budget , none are large enough to carry out the intentions of the campaign when also having to pay for:
  - a. Travel
  - b. Accommodation
  - c. The conference costs
2. Currently all LGBT+ committee meetings take place in London , which is exceedingly difficult for nations officers to make due to distance, accessibility, academia and any other associated barriers
3. Nations committees are comparatively smaller than national committee , meaning the amount the committee and officer/s can logistically accomplish is less, due to financial issues, delegation, and available resources

### LGBT+ Conference Resolves

1. To ensure the translation of all UK LGBT+ Campaign resources so that they can be used in the nations
2. To mandate elected NUS National LGBT+ officers to ensure committee meetings vary in location
3. To assist nations officers where possible, including
  - a. Helping out with motions/campaigns they are unable to complete alone
  - b. If not able to physically help, financially supporting the different nations' campaign
  - c. Ensuring the national committee support nations campaigning, either through social media or presence at

events

- d. Ensuring nations needs are not comprised for campaigning issues around location and distance
- e. That the elected national officers visit and help out at each nation at least once per year

## We like being loud, though sometimes we need quiet

### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. LGBT+ students are more likely to have disabilities than students who are not, as well as health problems and neuroatypicalities which can increase the chance of sensory overload.

### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. Many LGBT+ students do not feel safe on campus, including because campuses can be too loud.
2. Having quiet spaces on campus is conducive to student welfare.

### LGBT+ Conference Resolves

1. In all guidance on how to make spaces more accessible for LGBT+ students, to recommend the creation and maintenance of accessible and clearly signposted quiet spaces.
2. At all events at which NUS LGBT+ shall be present, to argue for the creation and maintenance of accessible and clearly signposted quiet spaces.
3. For all nighttime socials facilitated by NUS LGBT+ to have a quiet option.

## And That's What gets Results!

### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. That Currently Universities and Colleges are required to monitor the recruitment, retention and Attainment (RRA) of students.
2. This data is generally required to be broken down by Age, Race, Sex, Disability and Ethnicity.
3. That most institutions make no effort to monitor the RRA of LGBT+ students because they are not required to.
4. That many LGBT+ students face significant barriers to accessing and succeeding in education.

### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. That it is always easier to argue a position when clear statistics exist to support it.

2. That it is vital that institutions become places where LGBT+ people have as much chance of accessing and succeeding in them as their Heterosexual, Cisgender counterparts.
3. That many institutions will not realise a problem exists until they do begin to monitor it.

#### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To encourage institutions to begin to independently monitor the RRA of LGBT+ students through the inclusion of voluntary questions at enrolment and include the data in their Equality and Diversity plans.
2. For the Officers to work with organisations such as the Equality Challenge Unit, the Association of Colleges and Universities UK to encourage the monitoring of the RRA of LGBT+ students as best practice.
3. That the campaign shall encourage NUS UK and other organisations to recognise institutions that work to improve the RRA of LGBT+ Students.

## **Welfare and Student Rights**

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### **HIV and AIDs at University**

#### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. That HIV and AIDs is an on-going battle in the LGBT+ community
2. That attending University or College with HIV and/or AIDs is a difficult experience
3. That starting as an apprentice in a new work/study environment with HIV and/or Aids is a difficult experience
4. That there is a significant amount of stigma that surrounds HIV and AIDs, even in university and "safe spaces"
5. That more can be done to combat this stigma, and enough is not being done
6. That stigma associated with HIV and AIDs has links to mental health
7. That mental health is a growing concern in the LGBT+ community, with Stonewall finding that 22% of gay and bisexual men are currently experiencing moderate to severe levels of depression, and half of gay men saying they have felt at times life to not be worth living.
8. That people suffering from HIV and AIDs are twice as likely to have depression
9. That HIV-Associated Neurocognitive Disorders (HAND) are the range of mental health and neurocognitive disorders that affect people with HIV and AIDS. There are three main types of HAND – including HIV-associated

Dementia. Whilst rare, these disorders are a concern for our community.

#### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. That a reduction in stigma whilst studying – and in the wider society – would go to great lengths to reduce these mental health issues and greatly improve the quality of life of HIV-positive students and students with AIDs
2. That institutions are not currently doing enough to combat stigma, and offer support that does not adequately tackle the mental health implications that a life with HIV and AIDs entails
3. That this lack of support needs to be tackled

#### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. That the NUS LGBT+ Campaign should conduct a thorough investigation into the ways that this stigma can be tackled, and how mental health associated with HIV and AIDs can better be dealt with at universities, colleges and other places of learning
2. That the NUS LGBT+ Campaign should report its finding to conference, and publish a guide to send to universities, colleges and other places of learning on what they can do to help improve the lives and experiences of their students who may be affected by HIV and AIDs.

### **University sports should be accessible for trans and intersex students**

#### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. that trans and intersex students should be able to train and compete in whichever sports team best fits their gender identity;
2. that external associations, which some university sports clubs choose to affiliate with, should revise their policies to work towards complete inclusion for trans and intersex students; and
3. that trans and intersex students should not be asked to disclose their legal gender or personal medical information to participate in university sport, including details regarding hormone replacement therapy. These demands act as barriers and can make sport inaccessible for trans students who choose not to medically transition and can alienate and prevent those who are medically transitioning from partaking in sport. Furthermore, intersex students can feel unwelcome in gendered sports teams altogether.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. that the policies produced by BUCS, the FA, and the RFU regarding trans and intersex athletes are not suitable for higher education, due to their outdated language and exclusionary demands for medical information and gender certificates from students<sup>26</sup>;

## **Online Harassment**

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. Social media is a significant part of our lives, and is used every day by a significant proportion of students.
2. Because of the extensive use of social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, students are more at risk of suffering from online harassment.
3. Twitter in particular has become a platform for those who want to harass individuals online.
4. In 2013, research showed that one in twenty lesbian, gay and bisexual people said they have been the target of homophobic abuse or behaviour online in the last year, including seven per cent of those aged 18-24.
5. About 2,000 crimes related to online abuse are being reported to the police in London alone each year, according to figures released in 2013.
6. Research in the United States found that 40% of all internet users have experienced harassment online, but only one in five victims chose to report the perpetrator to the website or online service.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. Online harassment and hate crimes are under-researched in the UK because it is difficult to monitor and record the vast-swathes of online abuse that exists.
2. Because of the emergence of social media in recent years, abusive individuals may have

become emboldened because of the potential anonymous nature of Twitter, Facebook and other social media sites.

3. Students' Unions and Associations have a duty of care and protection to all their members' safety both on and off campus, including on social media.
4. As with all forms of harassment and hate crimes, there is a problem of under-reporting. It is possible that this problem is pronounced online.
5. Online harassment has been seen to have a severely negative impact on individuals' mental health and wellbeing, and in the case of students, negatively impacting their studies.

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To provide recommendations for Students' Unions and Associations to tackle online harassment.
2. To lobby the government to implement legislation on online harassment and cyberbullying.
3. To work with the other liberation campaigns to produce a campaign to tackle online harassment that signposts the number of different ways to report it.

## **An ACE-ceptional campaign**

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. Ace refers to those identifying on the asexual and aromantic spectrum. This includes but is not limited to: asexual; demisexual; gray-asexual; aromantic; demiromantic; and gray-aromantic.
2. At least 1% of the population identifies as asexual<sup>27</sup>
3. Ace-identifying individuals often feel excluded from LGBT+ spaces due to lack of education of LGBT+ individuals believing that ace individuals are not included in the LGBT+.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. A motion unanimously was passed through NUS Wales LGBT+ Conference in April 2016 to create an ace-inclusive campaign and thus NUS UK LGBT+ Conference should follow suit.

<sup>26</sup> See "Transgender Policy":

<http://www.bucs.org.uk/page.asp?section=18783&sectionTitle=BUCS+Policies>

See "The FA Policy on Trans People in Football":

<http://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/policies/equality/lgbt-football>

See "RFU Transgender and Transsexual Policy":

<http://www.englandrugby.com/about-the-rfu/rfu-inclusion-programmes/gender/>

<sup>27</sup> [www.independent.co.uk/life-style/love-sex/asexuality-when-life-isnt-all-about-sex-10371135](http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/love-sex/asexuality-when-life-isnt-all-about-sex-10371135)

2. Ace Awareness exists to address the issue of invisibility of ace individuals, but it is not enough
3. Many ace individuals are subjected to both discreet and indiscreet acephobia, often based on the validity of their sexual and/or romantic orientation.

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. Mandate the LGBT+ committee to ensure resources and campaigns are available to unions for use during Ace Awareness Week
2. Create an ace-inclusive NUS UK LGBT+ campaign that includes
  - a. Definitions and fluidity of identity
  - b. Myth busting of stereotypes aimed at ace-individuals
  - c. Encouragement to be an advocate of ace folk
  - d. Creation of an ace-inclusivity toolkit
3. Encourage the implementation of this campaign across all affiliated unions
4. Support unions to encourage LGBT+ spaces to include ace-identifying individuals
5. Encourage all NUS campaigns passed through liberation and national conferences to be ace-inclusive, specifically:
  - a. Including ace-identities when discussing LGBT+ issues
  - b. Reflecting on how sex and relationships differ for ace individuals, particularly in reference to sex positivity focused work
  - c. Discussing how ace-individuals struggle in drinking events
  - d. When stating intersections of identities, ensure ace-identities are covered

## **Violence Against Women**

CN: Rape, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. A US Centre for Disease Control (CDC) report from 2013 found that 46.1% of bisexual women have been forcibly raped, in comparison to 14.7% of straight women.
2. One in two transgender people are sexually abused or assaulted at some point in their lives.
3. In 2008, Stonewall found that one in four lesbian and bisexual women have experienced domestic violence in a relationship.
4. 49.3% of bi women experience severe physical intimate violence.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. That while research has been carried out in the United States around the violence lesbian, bisexual and trans women face, little research has been done surrounding this in the UK.
2. Bisexual women have the lowest rates of support after disclosing an incident with many counselling services being ill-equipped to deal with bisexual women survivors.

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To commission research into the violence which lesbian, bisexual and trans women face.
2. To campaign against the cuts to LGBT+ women's services.
3. To work with organizations attempting to create LGBT+ specific refuges across the UK.
4. To provide students with a list of LGBT+ specialist counselling services from across the UK.

## **Health research into experiences of LGBT+ students**

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. Research by Stonewall, GMFA and GIRES establishes that LGBT+ people are more likely to experience ill health. This research also establishes that QTPOC, bi+ people and disabled LGBT+ people are more likely than the overall LGBT+ population to experience health difficulties.
2. Research also establishes that LGBT+ people often have poor experiences with healthcare providers.
3. No specific research has yet been completed in relation to the health of LGBT+ students in the UK.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. Health should be understood holistically and sympathetically. Mental health, sexual health and long-standing health problems are all examples of health which should be taken seriously.
2. NUS research into the experiences of students is nation-leading, and plays an important role in shaping government, university and SU policy.
3. LGBT+ students' experiences are not static. As people 'come out' and/or transition, their health experiences change and as such limited snapshots as attained by individual surveys are

limited in what they tell us about LGBT+ experiences.

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. That the NUS LGBT+ Officers and Committee in conjunction with relevant staff will design and carry out a medium term longitudinal study into the health (as defined above) experiences of LGBT+ students, the results of which shall be published at the conference at which this policy shall lapse.
2. Updates on this research shall be communicated to the membership at least twice a year until publication, including at least one NUS LGBT+ Conference and one NUS LGBT+ Committee meeting.

## **Intersectional Victim and Survivors Support Services**

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. That many LGBT+ people will be the victims of crime whether related to their being LGBT+ or not.
2. That many LGBT+ people are not just LGBT+ but also belong to other marginalised groups.
3. That many services set up to support victims and survivors of crime and abuse either fail to consider these intersections or have no understanding of how to deal with a service user who is a member of multiple marginalised groups and some may even be deliberately exclusionary (Domestic Violence services excluding trans Women for example).

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. That all victims and survivors of crime and abuse have the right to support services that respect the whole of their identity.
2. That a lack of understanding of one part of a persons identity may lead to a great deal of harm and significantly hamper their ability to work with that service as well as being detrimental to their recovery.

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To work with other Liberation campaigns to encourage victim and survivor support services to develop their commitment to recognising the intersectionality of the people they support.

2. To provide guidance for students and officers seeking to make victim and survivor support services in their institutions and areas more understanding of LGBT+ issues
3. To celebrate victim and survivor support services that make a commitment to supporting LGBT+ people.

## **Sensible Drug Policy**

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. Many students will use or try recreational drugs during their time in education<sup>28</sup>.
2. LGBT+ people are more likely to engage in substance abuse (which includes currently legal drugs such as alcohol as well as illegal drugs) than their straight/cis peers.
3. Use of (illegal) recreational drugs is higher among LGBT+ people than their straight/cis peers
4. Unsafe use of drugs or use of contaminated drugs can be deadly, even with infrequent or first-time use.
5. Practices such as chemsex mean that many gay and bi men are more exposed to more risky sexual practices, health and social problems associated with the use of drugs such as GHB and crystal meth, as well as incarceration and losing employment as a result of said drug use. Black people and other people of colour are more likely than white people to be arrested and prosecuted for the possession and usage of currently illegal drugs.
7. The Royal Society for Public Health and the Faculty of Public Health have both argue for the decriminalisation of illegal drugs.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. Students aren't always aware of the risk that drugs carry with them.
2. Fear of criminalisation, expulsion from a course, stigma, or simply lack of access to testing might put people off getting their drugs tested for safety. It can also cause people to feel like they aren't able to ask for help if drug use intertwines with mental health, either because their drug use negatively affects mental health, or vice versa if drug use is caused by mental health issues.

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3. The criminalised nature of many recreational drugs currently is destructive and ultimately does more to fill our prisons with non-violent offenders (especially people of colour) than actually promote the wellbeing of drug-users.
4. Health problems that come with drug use aren't solved by more stigma or criminalisation.
5. Policy should always prioritise the safety of the students. Rather than making a moral standpoint about whether or not students should take drugs, it is more effective to keep in mind that students take drugs
6. While the safety of legal highs is often overestimated, there has also been a great push by the media to demonise those who make use of legal highs.
7. Drug use isn't always recreational, and can be used to deal with (among others) chronic illness and/or pain and/or trauma.
8. The War on Drugs in the UK (and in many other countries) has failed to overall increase the health and wellbeing those at risk of substance abuse.

#### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To argue that drug usage and substance dependence should be treated as (if the substances harm the individual) a health and social care problem.
2. Support unions in the adoption of sensible drug policies that prioritise the safety of the students, rather than the fearmongering around drug use. This includes prioritising policy that might lead to an increase of safe drug use over policy that drives drug use down but makes it unsafe.
3. For relevant communication on drug policy to argue for the decriminalisation of the possession and usage of all currently illegal drugs.
4. Support unions in lobbying their institutions to include a drug-testing service, where students and the wider community can get their drugs tested confidentially, freely, and without fear of persecution.
5. Support unions in lobbying their institution to include information on safe drug use in their Freshers week. This should include, but is not limited to: the effects that different drugs have, the danger of mixing different drugs, the dangers of mixing drugs and alcohol, where to get help if someone suspect they (or a friend) might be addicted, and how to know if the drugs one buys are safe.

6. To advocate that LGBT+ student organisations on campus run regular non-alcoholic social events, including in the evening, as well as welfare support for those engaged in substance abuse.
7. To work with Students for Sensible Drug Policy.
8. Make unions aware of the importance of sensible drug policies to liberation groups.

## **Society and Citizenship**

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### **Say No To Pinkwashing Part 2**

#### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. That the motion 'Say No To Pinkwashing' is part of live policy.
2. That this motion mainly details the situation of Israel's pinkwashing to attract LGBT+ tourism and investment, and doesn't account for the rest of the world.
3. That over the course of the past few years, racist far-right demagogues have been on the rise in the US and Europe.
4. That these demagogues use the imagery of the LGBT+ community to increase their appeal, while simultaneously attacking minority ethnic and/or religious groups, People of Colour, migrants and refugees or anyone perceived as such.
5. That this further erases the existence of LGBT+ People of Colour, LGBT+ Muslims, LGBT+ Jews, LGBT+ refugees and LGBT+ migrants (and those who are perceived as such, and/or fall into multiple of the aforementioned categories).
6. That if this increase in xenophobia and racism wasn't enough, this pinkwashing doesn't even always translate into legislation that helps LGBT+ people.

#### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. That while the past motion is still relevant and important, it has increasingly become clear that it is necessary to look at pinkwashing in the US and Europe as well.
2. That marginalised groups shouldn't be played out against each other.

#### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To continue the work outlined in the 'Say No To Pinkwashing' motion.
2. To ask LGBT+ officers and LGBT+ societies to share the statement on pinkwashing that went live on 30 November 2016, and show solidarity with those groups affected. This shouldn't just be done in the abstract, but rather should be shown through the consistent countering of any narrative that

- aims to divide racial/ethnic/religious groups from LGBT+ groups.
3. To oppose the creation of any division between racial/ethnic/religious groups and LGBT+ groups by popular media or political parties.
  4. To compile information about groups or organisations across Europe and the US that provide help and support for LGBT+ people who are targeted by right-wing extremism (in particular Muslim people, Jewish people, People of Colour, refugees and migrants), and make this information accessible on the NUS website.

## Let's Stop the Hate

### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. On 25th June, the day after the EU Referendum result, there were 289 incidences of hate crime in England and Wales.
2. Following the two weeks after the EU Referendum result sexual orientation related hate crimes rose by 29% and trans identity motivated hate crimes rose by 41%.
3. Not enough information and/or assistance is provided or advertised adequately at UK Higher and Further Education institutions.
4. Victims of hate crimes often do not report the crime as they feel ashamed or think it wasn't serious enough to report. As found in research conducted by NUS in 2010.

### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. No student should experience discrimination, prejudice, violence or hate crime because of who they are or what they believe.
2. All students should be able to have safe and equal access to education.
3. All students should be able to get immediate support.
4. Student unions are vital in providing that much needed support and advice to victims
5. Hate crime, both offline and online, can no longer be seen as separate. They are intrinsically linked and must be tackled together.

### LGBT+ Conference Resolves

1. To encourage clear advertisement by unions of the support that is available for victims of Hate Crime.
2. To support unions that want to develop third party hate crime reporting centres.

3. To work with organisations like Galop to tackle LGBT+ specific hate crime and provide support who those who have experienced it

## Action for United LGBT+ Movement across Europe

### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. On 20th of June 2016, the UK voted to leave the European Union. There are many EU students currently in the UK who will be impacted by Britain leaving the EU, total of 124,575 students was reported in the academic year 2015/2016<sup>29</sup>.
2. The UK consistently ranks the highest on the ILGA rainbow index for its successful upholding and implementation of LGBT+ rights and freedoms<sup>30</sup>.
3. While many European countries enjoy similar positive approaches, many still remain regressive in their protection of LGBT+ (and especially Trans) rights and freedoms.
4. Many LGBT+ migrants from countries with more regressive attitudes, including EU migrants, come to Britain in order to enjoy more rights and feel safer.
5. So far the UK government has refused to guarantee the rights of EU migrants living in the UK after Brexit.

### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. The Brexit campaign and vote was a disgraceful showcase of fearmongering and misinformation that gave rise to xenophobia (both international and anti-EU) and xenophobic attacks especially against Muslims and people of color<sup>31</sup>.
2. The xenophobia and xenophobic attacks disproportionately affect EU/international

<sup>29</sup> [institutions.ukcisa.org.uk//Info-for-universities-colleges--schools/Policy-research--statistics/Research--statistics/International-students-in-UK-HE/](http://institutions.ukcisa.org.uk//Info-for-universities-colleges--schools/Policy-research--statistics/Research--statistics/International-students-in-UK-HE/)

<sup>30</sup> [ilga-europe.org/resources/rainbow-europe/2015](http://ilga-europe.org/resources/rainbow-europe/2015)

<sup>31</sup> [www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/post-brexit-racist-attacks-soar-hate-crimes-reported-to-police-increase-57\\_uk\\_57714594e4b08d2c5639adcb](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/post-brexit-racist-attacks-soar-hate-crimes-reported-to-police-increase-57_uk_57714594e4b08d2c5639adcb)  
[www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-racism-uk-post-referendum-racism-hate-crime-eu-referendum-racism-unleashed-poland-racist-a7160786.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-racism-uk-post-referendum-racism-hate-crime-eu-referendum-racism-unleashed-poland-racist-a7160786.html)

LGBT+ people, especially those whose home countries don't enjoy the extent of rights and freedoms available in the UK.

3. All LGBT+ students, no matter their religion, nationality, or race, deserve their rights and freedoms.
4. It is our responsibility as a movement to uphold and fight for these rights. The UK has come a long way in its fight for LGBT+ rights and has a long way to go still, however, it is one of the most accepting countries to date. And from this position of privilege it is our responsibility to share our experiences and help, where the help is needed.
5. The best way to denounce xenophobia and hate is by forming closer bonds among the LGBT+ community in Europe, and internationally.
6. The best way to show support to EU LGBT+ students affected by the results of the Brexit referendum is by taking action.
7. Free movement of people is essential to protecting the rights of LGBT+ migrants and makes it easier to organise across borders.

#### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To work with ILGA<sup>32</sup> and IGLYO<sup>33</sup> and build better communication channels among activists in Europe
2. To look into a possibility of organizing a conference (in cooperation with IGLYO, and other European student movements) for student activists from different countries to meet, network, share experiences and resources.
3. To work with the International Officer to form a platform (possibly online) where student activists from the UK and Europe can share experiences and exchange resources. This platform should be accessible so that individual Student Unions (or their international alternatives) can participate.
4. To campaign for the rights of migrants in the UK to be protected in Brexit negotiations.
5. To defend freedom of movement across Europe and campaign for it to be extended beyond Europe.

## **LGBT+ and Interfaith**

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. That LGBT+ people are often pushed to the outskirts or away entirely from communities of faith.
2. LGBT+ narratives have little or no presence in many mainstream communities of faith.
3. Many faith communities and offshoot organisations such as Liberal Judaism's "Twilight People" in recent years have engaged in the gathering and conservation of the identities and practices of LGBT+ people of faith.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. That the LGBT+ student community has a duty to project and empower the individuals of its community who are of faith and also those who are in the process of losing or have lost their religious beliefs
2. That educational environments should be centres fostering interfaith dialogue and communication.
3. The work done by organisations such as Imaan, Keshet, Metropolitan Community Church, LGBT Humanists etc. is invaluable.
4. That the process of losing religious beliefs and/or community can for some people be difficult.
5. That often discussions of LGBT+ people and religion focus on supporting people in reconciling their sexuality and religion, and do sufficiently emphasise the need to support LGBT+ people in the process of losing or who have recently lost their religious beliefs.

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To facilitate at least one LGBT+ interfaith discussion event in the next academic year.
2. To approach LGBT+ faith organisations and LGBT Humanists for their potential presence at future NUS LGBT+ events.
3. To campaign for increased awareness of the identities and experience of LGBT+ students of faith.
4. To compile a written resource on LGBT+ faith communities for unions.
5. In all of the above discussions, campaigns, and resources to consider and support LGBT+ people in the process of losing or who have recently lost their religious beliefs. The LGBT+ interfaith discussion event should consider include at least one such person.

<sup>32</sup> [ilga.org/](http://ilga.org/)

<sup>33</sup> [www.iglyo.com](http://www.iglyo.com)

## Defend and Extend Freedom of Expression and Organisation!

### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. Freedom of expression and the right to organise politically on campuses face many threats, including:
  - a. The government's Prevent policy, targeting Muslim students and political activists, and government pressure on universities to ban speakers that would be legal elsewhere.
  - b. Senior managers wanting to keep controversial discussions and political campaigning off campus for their corporate image.
  - c. Senior managers at many institutions also taking hostile and draconian action against dissents, both students and staff.
  - d. Police disproportionately harassing and assaulting black and LGBTQ+ people, and repressing progressive political activity. In some countries there are laws preventing police from entering campuses without special permission from students and staff.
  - e. Academic freedom and diversity in both teaching and research are increasingly limited as Higher Education is geared to serve the interests of big business.
  - f. Successive governments imposing antidemocratic laws restricting the activities of student unions and trade unions.
  - g. Many student unions themselves becoming bureaucratic and corporate in style, shutting down political organising and anything that smells of controversy.

### LGBT+ Conference Resolves

1. To oppose the different threats to freedom of expression and of organisation discussed above.
2. To combat regressive and bigoted political ideas using argument and protest.

## Rules Revision

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### Implementing Ambassador Talks

#### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. NUS LGBT+ Conference includes caucuses for those who identify into marginalised groups within the NUS LGBT+ Campaign, as established by the Standing Orders.
2. Some student organisations outside the NUS hold ambassador talks during caucuses for students who don't identify into those groups.
3. If one isn't a member of these groups, then large passages of time can pass before one is required to engage as a delegate on certain days of the conference.

#### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. Having a variety of caucuses is a strength of the Campaign.
2. Many delegates are in positions of responsibility at their CMs, and as such having an educative programme would enrich the experiences of a variety of delegates and help make our campuses better.

#### LGBT+ Conference Resolves

1. To add to the standing orders: "22.m For all of the above caucuses, ambassador talks will be held for those that don't identify into the group.

### Ensure Campaigns Support LGBT+ Students Who Care

#### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. Over 375,000 young adults identify as having a caring role, a carer is: anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.
2. Many young adult carers cannot access higher education despite 84% of carers expressing a wish to go, 30% of young adult carers believed their caring role could impede access and performance in higher education.
3. No reliable statistics exist on the exact number of students with caring responsibilities let alone the number of LGBT+ students who may also care.

4. As of September 2017 students will be asked if they identify, as a carer through UCAS- this information will then be passed onto individual universities.
5. Currently 7 universities within the UK have dedicated provisions and services for carers.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. For universities and colleges to ensure clear measures and provisions exist within the access agreement for student's carers prior, during and at the immediate aftermath of their education. Such measures should include:
  - a. Financial support.
  - b. Targeted information including for student open days
  - c. Career, employment and further education (including access to higher education, postgraduate and PhD studies) guidance
  - d. Mandatory training on carer awareness for teaching and support staff.
  - e. Having a carer support plan.
  - f. A named representative within the institution to work towards equality and diversity issues for students with caring responsibilities.
  - g. For university and college unions to ensure clear and specific provision for supporting students with caring responsibilities through issues including: governance, representation, welfare and social engagement.
  - h. Universities, colleges and unions should engage with organisations that support carers such as Carers Trust and engage with their campaign (Going Higher) to encourage more carers to pursue and complete further and higher education<sup>34</sup>

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To action the LGBT+ officers to conduct research into the number of LGBT+ student carers attending UK colleges and universities.
2. To explore what provisions already exist for students with caring responsibilities within UK colleges and universities.
3. For the NUS LGBT+ Students Campaign to network with other liberation campaigns and

NUS leadership in addressing the needs of students with caring responsibilities.

4. To recognise carer's week and carer's rights day within the liberation calendar.
5. To create a toolkit with and for Students' Unions to help them create an inclusive environment for students with caring responsibilities
6. NUS to highlight issues, case studies and best practice in relation to students with caring responsibilities so that Students' Unions are more likely to organise around those issues.
7. To create a student with caring responsibilities representative to sit on NUS LGBT+ Students Campaign Committee that is to be elected by the member of the Students with Caring Responsibilities caucus.

## **Polyamory People**

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. Polyamory (Polyamorous) describes someone who can have more than one relationship at a time, usually romantic, although not limited to that. There is no limit to the number of relationships a person can have besides what they feel comfortable with.
2. It is important to remember that polyamory is not related to gender Identity/orientation and a person who is polyamorous can be of any orientation.
3. Polyamory is not polygamy nor should it be considered cheating. A polyamorous relationship can be built on openness, trust, understanding and cemented rules (The same as monogamous relationships).
4. Polyamorous relationships can come in many different forms, different people have different kinds of relationships, with varying levels of attachment and varying numbers of people, however all these relationships have had negative portrayals in the media, not unlike being Bi or Pan as greedy or non-committal.

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. Polyamorous people face discrimination and oppression. This discrimination can affect a person's choice to be a parent, as current laws only give two parents legal standing with a child/children. This can have repercussions on polyamorous people who wish/choose to be parents.
2. A polyamorous person faces legal barriers in relationships, as they are unable to marry more than one partner. This can lead to

<sup>34</sup> Carers Trust, 2015. Going Higher | Carers Trust [WWW Document]. URL <https://carers.org/going-higher>

situations where if a partner dies they will encounter legal issues with finances, estates, children, etc.

3. When considering moving in together, a huge barrier can be landlords/other tenants. As Polyamorous couples, can be forced into hide their identity to avoid harassment, isolation from other tenants and possible eviction.
4. Because of these reasons, it is important to normalise polyamorous relationships just as a monogamous relationship are treated.
5. The abbreviation of Poly erases people of Polynesian descent and another alternative be used for Polyamory in official documentation<sup>35</sup>.

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To create a Polyamory Rep for students who define under Polyamory and those who have multiple consensual relationships.
2. That the Polyamory Rep be voted in at conference in the Polyamory Caucus.
3. To run a Polyamory awareness campaign.
4. To not abbreviate Polyamory to Poly and erase the identities and struggles of Polynesians.
5. Poly to be used as an alternative abbreviation for Polyamory.

## **Bye Bi, Welcome Bi+**

### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. If a person experiences any form of attraction to more than one gender identity, they fall under the Bi+ umbrella.
2. If a person falls under the Bi+ umbrella they may attend the Bi caucus
3. That students who fall under the Bi+ umbrella are represented by the Bi rep

### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. That a person does not have to experience all forms of attraction (sexual Romantic, sensual, aesthetic or platonic) towards multiple gender identities to still fall under the Bi+ umbrella
2. The standing orders define Bi as 'students who identify as bisexual, pansexual, polysexual, omnisequal, queer (and attracted to more than one gender), bi-romantic, pan-romantic, poly-romantic, and Omni-romantic.'

### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To change the title of the Bi representative to Bi+ representative.

2. The Bi caucus will be renamed Bi+ caucus.
3. All documents use Bi+ instead of Bi to show our inclusion of other identities we already include under the definition shown in the standing orders.

## **Education**

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### **Let me choose who I am**

#### **LGBT+ Conference Believes**

1. As of September 2016 there were 371 FE institutions in the UK
2. The skills funding agency fund skills training in all FE institutions in England
3. It is currently required by the skills funding agency for Further Education students to declare their legal sex

#### **LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. A student in FE/HE should be able to change their gender and or sex on official documents, without retribution as this would alleviate dysphoria
2. In doing so, it will make a large different to anyone who experiences gender dysphoria or is uncomfortable with the sex and or gender written on official documents
3. This should extend to anyone who falls into the category of Trans, including gender non-binary. The chosen defining identity will be left to the discretion of the person
4. This includes attendance records and especially qualification certificates. The process to changing this should be done without a GRC, as not all students can either afford or are not able to come out to the person who provides them with finance i.e. parents or other family member.
5. Learners under 20 cannot have completed the GRC process as this takes two years to complete and can only be started once a person is 18 years of age.
6. This causes extreme distress to LGBT+ students across the UK
7. If a name can be changed on a certificate, the same should be true of the identifying gender markers

#### **LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. Create a campaign to highlight and combat the issue
2. Use the aforementioned campaign to raise awareness of the issue presented and how it affects trans students
3. To raise awareness of how this issue may have trans students feeling they do not wish to gain a further education due to dysphoria

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<sup>35</sup> [www.guerrillafeminism.org/poly-means-polynesian-not-polyamorous-lily-stone/](http://www.guerrillafeminism.org/poly-means-polynesian-not-polyamorous-lily-stone/)

4. To campaign for the skills funding agency to amend their policy of the disclosure of legal sex to gender identity.

## Queering the Life Sciences

### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. That the life sciences (especially in the late 19th century and early 20th century) played a critical role in constructing the categories of 'homosexual', 'bisexual' et al.
2. That the life sciences are not currently as politicised as non-STEM subjects.

### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. Many people believe (and are wrong in believing) that the life sciences are value-neutral and have little impact on the discourse surrounding the lives of LGBT+ people.
2. Often the dialogue around liberating the curriculum doesn't take into account the specific challenges that are found for life sciences students who are a part of marginalised groups and in life sciences overall.

### LGBT+ Conference Resolves

1. To consult with LGBT+ students who study life sciences in creating any additional materials relating to liberating the curriculum and other related campaigns.
2. In promoting 'liberating the curriculum' campaigns to include messaging on the impact of cis and heteronormativity in life sciences curricula.

## Not Lost in Translation

### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. That for many students it is mandatory for them to spend time abroad as part of their course
2. That even where it is not mandatory spending time abroad as part of a course can be an invaluable learning experience.
3. That nobody should be barred from studying in abroad or penalised for declining to travel to certain countries because they are an LGBT+ student.
4. That Institutions have a duty to keep students safe and students have a right to be treated fairly and equally both at home and abroad.

### LGBT+ Conference Further Believes

1. That there are many countries where being LGBT can be dangerous due to the status of LGBT+ people legally and/or socially.
2. That even in countries with other good LGBT+ rights and acceptance there can still be discrimination towards LGBT+ people and that these instances will be even more isolating and harmful to students without support networks or with less knowledge of how to access help.

### LGBT+ Conference Resolves

1. To work with institutions so that LGBT+ students on mandatory time abroad should be able to specifically request not to be sent to countries or areas with poor LGBT+ rights records.
2. To work to ensure that LGBT+ students studying abroad are protected by the same legal rights as their non LGBT+ counterparts (especially with regards to insurance coverage, next of kin rights, access to medical treatment, etc.)
3. To work create a best practice agreement for institutions and their partners to guarantee the safety and security of LGBT+ students as far as possible including matters such as:
  - a. The right to safe and secure housing.
  - b. A clear and detailed process for LGBT+ students to raise issues prior to, during and after their time abroad.
  - c. A dedicated and trained staff liaison in the host and home institutions for LGBT+ Students studying abroad.
  - d. Providing information to LGBT+ students on LGBT+ support groups and services in their host country as well as on accessing services such as sexual health and trans health facilities.
  - e. Where students have a choice of destination: providing information on the status of LGBT+ people in the institution, the local area and the country.

## Boycott the NSS

### LGBT+ Conference Believes

1. The government's May 2016 White Paper outlined extensive reforms to higher education.
2. The flagship reform, the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), will rely on data from the National Student Survey (NSS) and Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey.
3. Institutions which score highly in the TEF will be able to raise fees in line with inflation from 2017-19, followed by even higher level fees in 2019-20.
4. NUS is mandated to organise a national boycott of NSS and DLHE as part of a strategy against the reforms.

**LGBT+ Conference Further Believes**

1. The HE reforms fundamentally attack the idea of education as a public service.
2. Education geared towards private profit of institutions and the needs of big business rather than as a public service disproportionately harms already marginalised groups such as LGBTQ+ people.
3. There are many reasons to oppose NSS, e.g. that it systematically discriminates against BME academics.
4. Boycotting NSS and DLHE will disrupt the introduction of TEF, giving us leverage.

**LGBT+ Conference Resolves**

1. To support a boycott of NSS and DLHE, including:
  - a. Refusing to promote NSS or have any pro-NSS material;
  - b. Working with UCU to discourage NSS promotion by academics and encourage academics to actively promote the sabotage instead;
  - c. Promoting the boycott through social media especially when the survey is released;
  - d. Taking part in national actions and demonstrations linked to the NSS boycott.

## Policy Lapse

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### Action for trans\* health

**Conference believes**

1. That all trans\* people have the right to access the healthcare they need.
2. That non-binary trans\* people, trans\* people with atypical gender presentation and/or non-heterosexual sexualities, intersex people, and disabled people are routinely denied both transition related healthcare and healthcare for unrelated issues.
3. That healthcare should be free and accessible to everyone.
4. The Action for Trans\* Health network is an organisation established by Manchester Students in order to:
  - fundraise in order to provide small grants to trans\* individuals so they can access healthcare;

- educate health providers on trans\* issues and how to better engage with trans\* patients;
- campaign for the expansion of services offered on the NHS;
- Engage with the trans\* community on healthcare issues (i.e. organising sexual health workshops for trans\* people).

**Conference further believes**

1. That the current state of healthcare for trans\* people is unacceptable.
2. That refusing or providing inadequate healthcare to someone because of their gender identity is unacceptable.
3. That NUS LGBT should fight for access to fair and comprehensive medical treatment for trans\* people.

**Conference resolves**

1. To affiliate to the Action for Trans\* Health network and support their aims through provision of officer and staff time. There is no fee for the NUS LGBT Campaign to affiliate to Action for Trans\* Health.
2. To help publicise Action for Trans\* Health through the NUS LGBT campaign, and support constituent members in setting up Action for Trans\* Health chapters.
3. To organise for a session on trans\* health to be ran by Action for Trans\* Health at regional activist training days.

## Mental Health

**Conference notes**

1. We have seen an increase in public discourse of mental health and a shift towards mental health sharing parity with physical health.
2. The Time to talk pledge has started the ball rolling with fighting mental health stigma.
3. Youth chances survey found that LGBT young people report significantly higher levels of mental health issues, such as self-harm, anxiety and depression. And that Trans\* young people face the greatest level of discrimination and disadvantage.
4. Mental health services in the UK are chronically underfunded, accounting for

28% of NHS demand and receiving 13% of the NHS budget<sup>36</sup>.

5. Funding for mental health services was further cut by NHS England from April 2014<sup>37</sup>.

### Conference Believes

1. There is a mental health crisis in the LGBT community.
2. LGBT people suffer mental health difficulties as a result of being oppressed in a heterocentric and ciscentric society.
3. LGBT people require specialist community based treatment as a result of that oppression.
4. LGBT students are at a higher risk of interrupting their studies, dropping out, self-harm and suicide.
5. LGBT students may have mental health care needs that straight, cis students do not. For example, LGB students may require consideration of how societal homophobia affects their mental health, and trans students may require consideration of how dysphoria affects their relationship with their body.
6. Trans students may find it difficult to access NHS mental health care at the same time as pursuing NHS medical transition without compromising one or both treatment paths.
7. Full student access to services that can meet these needs is conditional on these services existing and receiving adequate funding.
8. In order to improve access to appropriate mental health care for LGBT students, it is necessary to fight for increased mental health service funding and to oppose cuts to mental health services.

### Conference Resolves

1. To campaign for institutions to have a targeted mental health care for LGBT students.
2. To produce resources about LGBT mental health.
3. To work with the disabled student's campaign to end the stigma around mental health.

4. To oppose cuts to mental health services and to oppose cuts to NHS services as a whole.
5. To fight for increased funding for mental health services, both within our institutions and in the wider community.

## Body Positivity

### Conference Believes

1. Body image problems affect a wide variety of people, but gay, bi, and/or trans men are affected disproportionately highly, in comparison to their heterosexual counterparts.
2. Reasons why gay, bi, and/or trans men are disproportionately affected include homophobia, misogyny, isolation, and stereotyping of the gay, bi, and/or trans community.
3. Whilst acknowledging that generally women are faced with a far greater content of media instructing them to change their bodies, gay, bisexual and trans men nonetheless are faced with a wide variety of types of media instructing them to alter their bodies in some way, and implying that their current bodies aren't good enough.
4. The gay male media promotes specific body types, damaging to men who do not fit those stereotypes.

### Conference Further Believes

1. Discussion about body image problems for gay, bi, and/or trans men is very poor.
2. Body image problems are very poorly understood, especially regarding the gay and bi community.
3. Access to resources on body image problems for gay, bi, and/or trans men is extremely difficult, if not impossible.
4. Many people are reluctant to search for help on body image problems, possibly out of embarrassment or not wanting to appear weak.
5. Body image problems are often intimately linked to a person's sexuality, making it increasingly difficult to talk about body image problems if gay, bi, and/or trans men are not out.
6. Online resources are an effective way to reach a large number of people.

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/mar/12/risks-deep-cuts-mental-health>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/mar/12/mental-health-funding-changes-lives-risk>

**Conference Resolves**

1. To raise awareness of body image problems in the gay, bi, and/or trans community.
2. To create a series of online videos and information packs relating to body image problems.
3. To work with organisations who specialise in body image problems.

**No Transphobes in NUS LGBT****Conference Believes:**

1. That the NUS LGBT campaign has a duty to protect and promote the rights of all its members
2. That some cisgendered LGBT people act in ways which are actively transphobic and hurt the wellbeing of trans people
3. These actions are damaging regardless of whether they are said by LGBT or not
4. Providing or sharing a platform with transphobic people hurts trans students
5. The NUS Women's Campaign has passed policy in the past to no platform transphobic feminists
6. This has been shown to make both the NUS Women's Campaign and events the campaign has been involved in safer for trans students

**Conference Resolves:**

1. For NUS LGBT to refuse to give or share a platform with transphobic speakers, even if these speakers are LGBT
2. To condemn transphobia even when coming from LGBT people
3. To create a resource pack to inform campaign members about the activities of transphobic people
4. To work with other NUS liberation campaigns to combat transphobia in the student movement

**Celebrating fluidity and recognizing diversity****Conference believes**

1. Romantic and sexual attraction can exist as two separate and fluid entities.
2. An individual may experience romantic and/or sexual attraction towards a variety of gender identities.
3. Some individuals may experience romantic attraction towards a different range of gender identities than the range

of gender identities to which they experience sexual attraction.

4. Romantic and Sexual attraction are not mutually exclusive, and an individual may, or may not, experience one or either form of attraction.

**Conference further believes**

1. Language use should seek to further encompass the complexities of an individual's experience with attraction.
2. Limitation and prescription of the LGBT community's language can only limit the expression of the full spectrum of sexualities and gender identities.

**Conference Resolves**

1. To celebrate the diversity and fluidity of sexual/romantic orientation and gender identities experienced by the LGBT community.
2. To adopt language that is inclusive to those that experience romantic attraction differently to sexual attraction. (Bi-romantic, Homo-romantic, Les-romantic, Aromantic, Grey-romantic, Demi-romantic).
3. To make LGBT student activism an inclusive place for those that experience fluid attraction and/or gender identities.

**An Accessible Campaign****Conference Believes**

1. As a campaign we should be maximising the amount of opportunities for students to get involved with the campaign
2. No student should be unable to participate because of finance
3. We cannot be an effective, inclusive campaign if we are not expanding where events are hosted
4. The campaign should be looking into hosting events such as training days in regional locations to ensure that every student who wants to get involved can
5. Where groups are being identified as regularly unable to attend NUS LGBT events, NUS LGBT should be looking to find alternatives to ensure that as a campaign they are not being neglected

**Conference Resolves**

1. For NUS LGBT to start hosting regional training days
2. For NUS LGBT to host local meet-ups for LGBT groups where possible

## LGBT Students and Unemployment

### Conference Believes

1. That the unemployment rate is around 7.1%, which is seen to be a drop in the rate
2. However casual, part time and insecure employment is on the rise, as well as underemployment, where people are applying for and getting jobs that are under their skillset.
3. Recently the Office of National Statistics (2012) stated that the unemployment rate for young black men was around 55.9% are unemployed and according to recent statistics around 1.12 million women are unemployed, but of those employed many are struggling to fit childcare or caring responsibilities around full-time work.
4. That most HE and FE institutions do not collect data on sexual orientation or gender identity so cannot ascertain the experiences and/or routes of LGBT students.

### Conference Further Believes

1. In times of economic recession it is often the most vulnerable in society who bear the brunt of job losses and job insecurity
2. Currently most LGBT organisations focus is on discrimination in the workplace and overlooks the discrimination faced by LGBT people as they try to enter work.
3. The Higher Education Academic Record is an extra-curricular achievement record which is seen go alongside degree classification, it states clubs, and society involvement as well as any positions held within the union.
4. LGBT students face being 'outed' on their CV or HEAR record due to involvement in their LGBT society
5. Trans people are at risk of discrimination at multiple levels in the employment market, from name discrepancies in application forms to being mis-gendered or discriminated against at interview.
6. A watering down of employment rights, from tribunals to proposed changes in the right to strike, means that LGBT people in work are more vulnerable
7. Changes to job seekers allowance means that LGBT people are being forced to

apply for jobs they may not feel comfortable in, or face losing their benefits

### Conference Resolves

1. To work with the Trades Union Congress to develop stronger links with trade unions, and develop research into LGBT people's experience of the employment market
2. To lobby for an 'opt in' HEAR option for those who don't wish their LGBT society to appear

## Womens Campaign Policy

### Zone: Welfare and Student Rights

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### Gendered Hate Crime

#### Conference Notes

1. In the last year there has been an increase in racially, and religiously, motivated hate crimes in the UK, particularly online and on social media.
2. There has been a particular rise in online harassment of women of faith, including current Member of Parliament for Liverpool Wavertree, Luciana Berger, who described the messages as "pornographic, sometimes violent, and often very misogynistic."
3. NUS NEC members have often been the target of anti-Semitic, racist, or Islamophobic online abuse that often has misogynistic elements to it.
4. Tell MAMA outline that anti-Muslim hate is clearly gendered. They state in their 2015 Annual Report that "Muslim women are more likely to be attacked than men in most settings".
5. The same report recorded 468 victims in 437 incidents. 61% of victims (287) are female. 55% of all victims were visibly Muslim, but 75% of all female victims

were visibly Muslim.

6. In their 2015 Annual Report, the Community Security Trust received a description of the gender of the victim or victims in 511 (55%) of the 924 anti-Semitic incidents reported to CST during 2015. Of these, the victims were female in 134 incidents (26%) and groups of males and females together in 48 incidents (9%).

### Conference Believes

1. Women of faith encounter specific challenges that are still yet to be addressed. The NUS Women's Campaign should aim to address these.
2. The NUS Women in Leadership Conference, and the work around it, has empowered women from different faiths and backgrounds to become engaged in the work of the NUS Women's Campaign.
3. Jewish students do not directly identify into any of the NUS Liberation Campaigns and therefore it is important that the NUS Women's Campaign facilitates discussion around faith and belief.

### Conference Resolves

1. To work with Universities UK and faith-based organisations, such as UJS, FOSIS and National Hindu Students Forum, to assess what further work needs to be done in relation to online harassment and hate crime.
2. To work with social media providers, specifically Twitter and Facebook, to look at ways to prevent online harassment against women of faith that is often misogynistic in tone.
3. To produce guidance for HE and FE Students' Unions on gendered discrimination in order to support them in tackling it.
4. For the NUS Women's Campaign to run a 'Women of Faith' Campaign that raises awareness of the challenges that face women of faith and celebrates their contributions to their faiths.

5. To increase the number of spaces that women of faith have to discuss the discrimination and the challenges that they face in a safe space.

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## Student Survivors Deserve Better

### Conference Notes

1. Recent research has highlighted the problem of abuse and harassment by staff towards students, and faced by, particularly junior, women staff<sup>38</sup>;
2. Sussex University allowed a senior lecturer to continue working despite allegations of abuse and police investigation<sup>39</sup>. At Goldsmiths, Sara Ahmed, the former head of the Centre for Feminist Research, publicly quit her post, citing ongoing and endemic harassment<sup>40</sup>.
3. In November Universities UK (UUK) published the findings of its taskforce on campus sexual violence, alongside guidance replacing the outdated Zellick Report;

### Conference Believes

1. That we welcome this work and is happy to see that survivors will no longer be forced to report incidents to the police before receiving any support from their universities;
2. However, that the guidance and report did not adequately consider harassment and abuse perpetrated by staff, and indeed, that staff themselves face, is a serious failing;
3. That the abuse and harassment endemic in higher education cannot be understood without seeing it in the context of marketisation and

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<sup>38</sup>

[www.theguardian.com/education/2016/aug/26/sexual-harassment-of-students-by-university-staff-hidden-by-non-disclosure-agreements](http://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/aug/26/sexual-harassment-of-students-by-university-staff-hidden-by-non-disclosure-agreements) and <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/oct/07/scale-of-sexual-abuse-in-uk-universities-likened-to-savile-and-catholic-scandals>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/sussex-university-lecturer-student-girlfriend-criminal-conviction-beat-up-assault-lee-salter-a7183391.html>

<sup>40</sup>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/london-university-goldsmiths-professor-quits-sexual-harassment-female-students-staff-a7072131.html>

cuts. These make it harder for survivors to speak out, fearing for their future careers;

4. That the NUS Women's Campaign has already begun working with the 1752 Group to launch a research project into student-staff misconduct, but that there is no active policy to mandate the campaign to do so;
5. That sexual assault can happen to any person, at any level of education. This means that Further Education students in colleges face this too;

### Conference Resolves

1. To stand in solidarity with students and staff who have faced harassment and abuse and challenge institutional cultures which enable and mask abuse;
2. To produce resources to support students facing and wanting to campaign against sexual violence perpetrated by staff, and to offer our support to existing campus campaigns;
3. To demand that universities record and make public their data on sexual violence, including that faced by staff;
4. To work closely with the 1752 Group to carry out research into experiences of student-staff misconduct and produce a report at the end of the research.
5. For the Women's Campaign to launch research into what sexual harassment reporting procedures and structures are like, and the experiences of student survivors in Further Education colleges;
6. Off the back of that research to work with FE Students' Unions to develop a framework of structures for reporting harassment and for survivor support, and to lobby FE institutions to adopt this;
7. To work with the National Society of Apprentices to ensure survivor support structures are in place for apprentices in their colleges and/or their work place.

## Solidarity with Northern Ireland's Abortion Crisis

### Conference Notes

1. The Abortion Act 1967 has never been extended to Northern Ireland;
2. The foundation of NI abortion law remains the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 which makes it a criminal offence to have an abortion or perform one on another person. The 1861 Act is still in effect in England and Wales;

3. The introduction of the Abortion Act 1967 did not decriminalise abortion in England and Wales: it allowed exceptions to the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act under which the obtaining or performing an abortion would be lawful;
4. An abortion will be lawful in NI if performed:
  - a. To save the life of the pregnant person; or
  - b. Where continuing the pregnancy would risk permanent and serious damage to the physical or mental health of the pregnant person;
5. In the past, people have been arrested for trying to procure an abortion (be it through a GP, travelling to England to obtain an abortion or through backstreet/ self-induced abortions)
6. On 4 April 2016, a 21-year-old woman was given a three month suspended sentence for procuring an abortion with pills purchased online. She had been reported to the PSNI by her housemates;
7. International students and students from elsewhere in the UK may understandably arrive in Northern Ireland under the false impression that because Northern Ireland is part of the UK, abortion will be legal and accessible on the local NHS;
8. However, this is not true when registered with a GP in Northern Ireland, you no longer have access to abortion;
9. Students who are Northern Ireland nationals studying in other parts of the UK do not qualify for abortion on the NHS

### Conference Believes

1. Access to reproductive healthcare is a student welfare issue: students do face crisis pregnancies which have an adverse effect on their university lives;
2. The unavailability of safe and legal abortion in Northern Ireland places an undue burden on these students in an already distressing situation;
3. If an international student falls pregnant unexpectedly while living in Northern Ireland, they will likely not be able to extend their study visa to accommodate their pregnancy or maternity, nor can they access abortion services in Northern Ireland unless they meet the very strict criteria;

### Conference Resolves

1. This motion is in itself a statement of solidarity with those for access to free, safe and legal abortion in Northern Ireland;

2. For the NUS Women's Campaign to release a formal statement of solidarity with those in Northern Ireland;
3. That the incoming Women's Officer and NUS Women's Campaign continue to support pro-choice activists and pro-choice resistance in Northern Ireland
4. To lobby the Government to make exceptions for students from Northern Ireland who are studying in other parts of the UK to have access to abortion on the NHS.

## The Price of a Period

### Conference Notes

1. Sanitary products control and manage menstruation
2. Sanitary products are currently subject to 5% VAT

### Conference Believes

1. Sanitary items are not a luxury.
2. Sanitary products are expensive, and when living on a tight budget they can be difficult to access.
3. That students are facing a cost of living crisis.
4. Most homeless shelters can't provide sanitary products, so for homeless people with periods accessing these essential items is even harder.
5. Although some food banks have begun distributing sanitary items, many still do not.
6. Homelessness is a hidden problem among students

### Conference Resolves

1. To work with NUSSL (National Union of Students Services Limited) to encourage them to get tax free sanitary products available for Students' Unions, and to reduce the overall cost of sanitary items.
2. To create a toolkit on running tampon drives, creating period packages, and linking up with local organisations, charities, etc.
3. Work, where possible, to support Students' Unions to get free sanitary products available for students.
4. To work with the Further Education members on the Women's Committee and the self-defining Women on the Further Education Zone Committee to ensure this policy in practice works for FE Students' Unions.

## Reproductive Justice

### Conference Notes

1. Reproductive rights activism, like the feminist movement, has often been exclusive and focused on white, cisgender, able-bodied, middle-class women.
2. People of colour often face abusive and coercive reproductive medical practices, such as: forced sterilisation of women of colour across the globe; the use of experimental and dangerous contraception like Norplant, etc.
3. Disabled people also face risk of sterilisation due to ableist beliefs about their ability and a faux concern for their welfare or children's welfare.
4. Many people cannot access adequate reproductive healthcare due to cost, cuts to their healthcare services, or geographical location.
5. Reproductive rights activism has focused on contraception and abortion, but ignored other barriers to people's reproductive capacities such as access to welfare, healthcare, childcare, poverty, and many other factors.
6. Women of colour in America developed the theory of Reproductive Justice to challenge the dominant narrative and make reproductive rights campaigning inclusive.

### Conference Believes

1. Whilst the NUS supports and promotes Pro-Choice activism, it must be recognised that the ability to have choice is a privilege. Someone people do not have choice or their choice is taken away from them due to their circumstances and oppressions.
2. The framework of Reproductive Justice promotes this idea and a comprehensive and inclusive approach to reproductive rights.

### Conference Resolves

1. To mandate the NUS Women's Campaign to create a toolkit on Reproductive Justice to allow a narrative on reproductive rights that ensures campaigning is inclusive of ALL - not just cisgender, straight, white, able-bodied, middle-class women.

## Zone: Society and Citizenship

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### Securing an Institutional Wide Approach to tackling Sexual Violence through prevention and support

#### Conference Notes

1. NUS and the Women's Campaign has focused on tackling Sexual Harassment and Violence for a number of years. Collecting data, publishing reports and creating toolkits which have been a great resource for Student Unions.
2. One in seven women experience sexual violence or harassment at University as outlined by the Hidden Marks campaign and reiterated in a recent study<sup>41</sup>.
3. Consent workshops have been delivered by Students Unions during this time.
4. Films and documentaries such as "The Hunting Ground" have brought to light these kinds of behaviours in American institutions and therefore, these concerns are more prevalent in society across the US, Australia and the UK<sup>42</sup>.
5. "High rates of unreported sexual violence, along with the serious harms caused is of fundamental importance in contributing to the argument for the need for university communities to enact their civic duties in both improving the prevention of sexual violence and also ensuring that those reporting sexual violence get the appropriate support along with respondents." - Graham Towl (Tackling sexual violence at UK universities: a case study)<sup>43</sup>.
6. NUS Women's Campaign are currently working towards developing bystander programmes and training.

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<sup>41</sup>

[www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/Spotted\\_-\\_Obligations\\_to\\_Protect\\_Women\\_Students\\_Safety\\_Equality.pdf](http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/data/files/Spotted_-_Obligations_to_Protect_Women_Students_Safety_Equality.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Hunting\\_Ground](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hunting_Ground)

<sup>43</sup>

[www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21582041.2016.1260764?journalCode=rsoc21](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21582041.2016.1260764?journalCode=rsoc21)

#### Conference Believes

1. Bystander intervention programmes have been identified as a key area in the protection of female students at University
2. Unions are not currently adequately supported to deliver bystander intervention campaigns; institutional partnership should be encouraged and supported in order to aid the delivery of such campaigns - such as the current proposed partnership between Keele SU and Bradford College. For information about the city wide work currently taking place at Keele and Staffordshire University<sup>44</sup>
3. Research undertaken by Public Health England and Universities UK states that more support is needed in getting Sexual Violence Policy embedded in Unions and Institutions and that this must be institution wide.
4. It is important and imperative that NUS continues to work to tackle sexual violence in both FE and HE institutions and that Students' Unions and Union Officers are empowered and equipped with knowledge and support to drive change in their institutions.
5. The University of West England has had major success in embedding this into their curriculum demonstrated through the research commissioned by Public Health England.

#### Conference Resolves

1. NUS will help Students' Unions and Officers establish Institutional Wide Approaches to tackling Sexual Violence through prevention and support.
2. NUS Women's Campaign will produce guidance alongside relevant organisations on how Students' Unions can get training and support on dealing with Sexual Violence cases. This guidance will be to benefit Student Union Advice Centres, Officers, staff and internal structures.
3. NUS will launch a campaign on Bystander Intervention including aims that encourage HE institutions to partner with FE institutions to target behaviours and share resources in a community wide approach.
4. NUS Women's Campaign will launch a toolkit on Bystander Intervention to include campaigning, training and partnership
5. NUS will work and lobby to secure Bystander Intervention Programmes in FE and HE Institutions.

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<sup>44</sup> [www.keele.ac.uk/activebystanders/](http://www.keele.ac.uk/activebystanders/)

## Raising Awareness of Gendered Islamophobia

### Conference Notes

1. In August 2016, the government released a report into the Employment Opportunities for Muslims in the UK (following an enquiry)<sup>45</sup>
2. Muslim women face the greatest pay gap of 22.4 per cent (the greatest pay gap in the whole of the UK);
3. The report also concluded that Muslim women face a "triple penalty": being women, being BME and being Muslim
4. Unemployment rates for Muslims are more than twice that of the general population (12.8% compared to 5.4%).
5. 41% of the Muslim population in the UK are economically inactive, compared to 21.8% of the general population. The disadvantage is greater still for Muslim women: 65% of economically inactive Muslims are women;
6. Incidents of anti-Muslim abuse (Islamophobia) rose by 326% in 2015;
7. The vast majority of Islamophobic incidents that occur in the UK are directed at those perceived to be "visibly Muslim": Muslim wearing the hijab, niqab, abaya and so forth;
8. According to research Islamophobia is causing a "chill factor", whereby the perception and fear of discrimination or even hostility of colleagues is putting Muslim women off applying for certain jobs.

### Conference Believes

1. The report in question found that reasons behind these discrepancies to be varied and complex;
2. They can include: discrimination and Islamophobia, stereotyping, pressure from traditional families, a lack of tailored advice around higher education choices, and insufficient role models across education and employment;
3. The NUS Women's Campaign has already launched a survey into the experiences of Muslim women on campuses and colleges, but there is no policy mandating the campaign to do so;

4. That gendered Islamophobia (and Islamophobia in general) is a student issue because Muslim women are targeted on campuses e.g. at King's College London
5. Prevent is more likely to be targeted to Muslim (or those perceived to be Muslim i.e. those who are visibly Muslim);
6. Far right activity is sweeping across Europe and America, and is likely to have further implications on Muslim women's livelihood;

### Conference Resolves

1. To mandate the NUS Women's Campaign to issue a statement of solidarity with Muslim women students;
2. To create a toolkit for Student Unions to challenge gendered Islamophobia on Campus;
3. To work with Black Students' Campaign to campaign against the Prevent legislation

## Motion 203: Support Migrant Reproductive Rights!

### Conference Notes

1. The government's current policy does not allow International students who may get pregnant while studying the ability to give birth in the UK.
2. They and any dependants will normally need to leave the UK, then apply for new Tier 4 entry clearance in order to return to the UK and resume their studies.
3. In the event that they do give birth in the country, if they then leave they are not allowed to return with their dependents.
4. Migrant women may also be subject to show their passports at maternity wards before giving birth.

### Conference Believes

1. All of these policies are deeply xenophobic and racist, and promote a worrying culture of nationalism, individualism and disregard human rights.
2. At a time of increased racism and fascism where migrants are facing attacks upon their civil liberties, we should ensure that they have access to adequate reproductive healthcare.

### Conference Resolves

1. To mandate the NUS Women's Campaign and Officer to work alongside the NUS International Students Officer to actively campaign against this regressive policy.

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2. To mandate both the NUS International Students Officer and Women's Officer to create a toolkit on Reproductive Rights that is inclusive of International students and migrants.
3. That both the NUS International Students Officer and Women's Officer should campaign for the right for all international students, regardless of nationality to be able to either give birth or get an abortion in the UK
4. That the NUS International Students Officer and Women's Officer should lobby the government to reexamine the current policy and adopt a new one that will allow international students to either give birth or get an abortion in the UK

## Zone: Education

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### Campaign on Sexual Assault as Mitigating Circumstance

#### Conference Notes

1. That the NUS Hidden Marks survey/report conducted in 2011 found that 16% of respondents had experienced unwanted kissing, touching or groping during their time at university.
2. That 7% of respondents to this survey had been subjected to a serious sexual assault during their time at university<sup>46</sup>
3. That 4/10 of the survivors of serious sexual assault surveyed had told nobody about the assault
4. That one in four victims of serious sexual assault that responded to the Hidden Marks survey said that their studies had been affected
5. That 49% of respondents that had suffered serious sexual assaults reported issues with their mental health
6. That 13% of respondents that had suffered serious sexual assaults had contemplated leaving their course
7. That the US organisation RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) found that 33% of

- women who are raped contemplate or have contemplated suicide<sup>47</sup>.
8. That 13% of women who have been raped had attempted suicide.
9. That 40% of a survey of women surveyed with severe mental health issues had suffered rape or attempted rape in adulthood.
10. That transgender students are at higher risk of sexual violence (21% of transgender, genderqueer, nonconforming (TGQN)) have experienced some form of sexual violence while studying compared to 18% non-TGQN females and 4% non-TGQN males).
11. That Sisters Uncut found that 4 in 5 BME women are turned away from domestic violence services<sup>48</sup>.

#### Conference Believes

1. That Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence are serious issues affecting students.
2. That these issues have a detrimental impact on students' lives and studies.
3. That more needs to be done to support victims of sexual assault and domestic throughout their academic studies.
4. That in many cases the conditions for mitigation fail to fully take into account serious issues such as sexual assault and domestic violence.
5. That a national campaign that includes Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence as mitigating circumstances is necessary.
6. That any campaign conducting around the issue of sexual assault and domestic violence needs to be inclusive of the diverse demographic of students affected.

#### Conference Resolves

1. To launch a national campaign for the inclusion of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence as mitigating circumstances.
2. To support unions that are running similar campaigns or have already implemented this into their academic procedures.
3. To ensure that any campaign ran will be fully inclusive of all students, including but not limited to: Women of Colour, disabled women, queer women, trans women, non-binary people and people of faith.
4. To conduct research on the impact of suffering from domestic violence whilst at university.

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<sup>46</sup>

[www.nus.org.uk/global/nus\\_hidden\\_marks\\_report\\_2nd\\_edition\\_web.pdf](http://www.nus.org.uk/global/nus_hidden_marks_report_2nd_edition_web.pdf)

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<sup>47</sup> [www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence](http://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence)

<sup>48</sup> [www.sistersuncut.org/press/](http://www.sistersuncut.org/press/)

# Policy Lapse

## Society and Citizenship

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### A Woman's Right To Protest

#### Conference Believes:

1. Protest has played a significant role in bringing about social and political change for women.
2. Protest takes a diverse range of forms, be it industrial action, civil disobedience, boycotts, occupations, marches, petitions or direct action.
3. Women do not just take part in "women's actions", we are also a vibrant and vital part of broader protest movements.
4. Many women students report feeling disempowered and shut out of 'traditional' forms of protest, as masculinist modes of protest dominate and women are undermined and written out of protest histories and organising spaces.
5. Women's role in protest is frequently demeaned by those within protest movements; such as the sexism behind 'Hot Chicks of Occupy Wall Street' and the belittling of older women involved in Occupy.
6. We are facing increased attacks on our right to protest during a time of unprecedented austerity measures. These include the routine use of kettling, indiscriminate batoning by police, excessive charging of protesters and sentencing in courts, as well as educational institutions collaborating with the Police and Government to shut down our democratic rights.
7. Brocialism and Manarchism unfortunately thrive. NUS and left-wing women students have been at the front of tackling misogyny in our own movements, providing much needed solidarity and challenging our own organisations to take women's political voices seriously.
8. There should be zero tolerance of any infringement that is degrading and contrary to the dignity of women, and in particular when it affects physical and mental health.
9. That the wave of repression against student activists (mass arrests in London and Birmingham, suspensions at Birmingham and Sussex, heavy-handed policing of demos etc) should be a matter of serious concern for our movement

10. That contrary to police propaganda, extensive police presence on campuses is not the way to guarantee women's safety
11. That we should fight for 'Cops off campus' by campaigning for
12. A law that prohibits police presence on campuses/university property without the permission of both university management and the students' union;
13. Universities to agree, and write into regulations, that they will not invite police onto campus without the permission of the SU
14. There have been incidents of violence against women at student protests such as the the protests at the University of London

#### Conference Further Believes:

1. Women are disproportionately affected by the Government's devastating austerity agenda – it is vital that women are supported and empowered to lead the way not only on engaging in protests, but in shaping their narratives. In representing over 4 million women, NUS Women's Campaign has a unique role to play here.
2. Women students are part of their local, national and global communities. Our campaigns should be working together with women in community groups and across the women's sector, with LGBT, black and disabled campaigning organisations, to develop multifaceted collective calls for action that strengthen our voices and push for our liberation.
3. There is no one right way to protest. As a campaign we must champion and offer a diversity of tactics and methods, bringing our communities together to make change.
4. We must champion and support the excellent work that women students are doing to tackle women's exclusion in protest spaces, from organising facilitation training for women to empower them to lead inclusive meetings, to organising to dismantle rape culture in leftist organisations.
5. That it is well-established that both mounting student debt and cuts are having a disproportionate effect on women
6. That we should demand free education and a living grant for every student, oppose all cuts, and demand taxation of the rich, taking control of the resources of the banks etc, to restore and expand public services

#### Conference Resolves:

1. NUS Women's Campaign will develop tool kits and action packs to support women students to lead their own protests and campaigns with their local communities.
2. NUS Women's Campaign will provide opportunities for women students to discuss

their role in protest around tactics and women's place on the left for example, providing much needed spaces for women students to self-organise.

3. NUS Women's Campaign will continue to stand firmly against misogyny in our own movements.
4. To unite with other women's groups to campaign against human rights abuses, including that of rights and freedom to protest and freedom of association.
5. To campaign against police repression of student activists and campaign for 'Cops off campus' on the basis set out above
6. To produce a briefing including explanation of how this policy relates to our campaigns for women students' safety on campus
7. To campaign for free education, against cuts, and for the restoration and expansion of public services on the basis set out above
8. To oppose security and police violence against women at UoL during protests and to support Cops off Campus and encourage a spaces for women students to protest without the fear of police brutality.

## Start Tackling with Training

### Conference Believes:

1. Education is a key way to tackle sexism and lad culture within university.
2. The issue of 'lad culture' at university has been getting a lot more attention since the recent Women's Campaign report: 'That's What She Said'.
3. 'Lad Culture' can be present in any student group: society, sports, etc.
4. All student groups have committees that should be provided with some form of committee training by the student unions to ensure they are a functioning committee.

### Conference Further Believes:

1. Committee training often does not include the principles of zero tolerance or gender equality.
2. Many people need to be educated in what can actually contribute to sexual harassment.
3. Committee training is a good place to educate key members of student groups.

### Conference Resolves:

1. For the NUS Women's Campaign to push for the addition of gender equality and

'what constitutes as sexual harassment' (zero tolerance) training onto the committee training agenda of all societies/sports clubs/student activities in all student unions.

2. For the NUS Women's Campaign to create a pack of information to help unions provide the correct information within these training sessions.
3. There must be systems invoked for confidential reporting. Statistics must be kept to review processes, progress and outcomes of investigations, and addressing policy changes needed.

## Women in leadership

### Conference Believes:

1. Women make up the majority of the student population, but are underrepresented in positions of power and decision making in the student movement.
2. The fact is that there are far too few women in positions of leadership in our universities and colleges, but also in our students unions, and civil society. Only 22% of professors in UK universities and only 17% of our Vice Chancellors are women.
3. 56% of students in tertiary education are women, and yet only around a third of our students' union presidents are women.
4. That we should be inspired not by women who have risen to the top of businesses or the capitalist political system by proving their willingness and ability to enforce exploitation and oppression on other women (and men), but by women fights against exploitation and oppression
5. That the International Women's Day events organised by (low-paid, precarious, mostly migrant) women in the IWGB Union to celebrate working-class women's solidarity and expose the anti-worker and anti-feminist role of women managers and bosses is the kind of thing we should support as part of fighting for 'Women in Leadership'

### Conference further believes:

1. Currently the default image of a leader is a white non-disabled heterosexual cis man which means that people seeking election or influence and define into a liberation group face disadvantage and prejudice in seeking to be a decision maker

2. Issues of women's inequality and underrepresentation can't be addressed just by getting more individual women into positions of leadership. Women in leadership is fundamentally about radically altering the structure of power, how we conceptualise power, and how it is used.
3. The gendered nature of power under a system of patriarchy means that women face barriers to accessing and challenging power when power is normalised as male.
4. In order to be successful, campaigning on women in leadership must focus on all 3 aspects of the work: individual capacity (public speaking workshops, confidence building etc.), structural barriers (reserving places for women in democratic structures in order to reach critical mass) and changing organisational culture (tackling lad culture and sexist norms).
5. Black/lgbt/disabled women are particularly underrepresented and should always be targeted and prioritised in our work to change what we understand as leadership.
6. In particular, black women's marginalisation in the feminist movement has been a shameful stain on the feminist movement with many white women who are recognised as feminist leaders claiming to reject intersectionality and refusing to check their white privilege. The NUS women's campaign rejects any marginalisation of black women under the name of feminism and believes that a feminism without intersectionality is no feminism at all.

#### **Conference resolves:**

1. To support student unions in improving their democratic legitimacy by improving both the number of women in key leadership positions as well as crucially the diversity of women in leadership
2. For nus to continue to run women only sessions at summer training courses and make a woman only session compulsory at all residential summer training events
1. To continue to develop the I will lead the way coaching scheme with a particular focus on providing black, LGBT and disabled women with coaches
2. To produce a pamphlet and exhibition for SUs celebrating the struggles of women fighters against exploitation and oppression through history and today – "Women leading in the struggle."
3. To create a guide for student union offers on how to deliver women in leadership workshops on campuses to encourage more women from different backgrounds to run in campus elections.

## **Welfare and Student Rights**

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### **Anti-FGM**

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. Since 1985 it has been a serious criminal offence under the Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act to perform FGM or to assist a girl to perform FGM on herself. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 tightened this law to criminalise FGM being carried out on UK citizens overseas.
2. There has been an increasing awareness of the issue of female genital mutilation in England, with national newspaper articles and documentaries on Channel 4.
3. MPs are probing the issue of Female Genital Mutilation in the UK, with a select inquiry probing why since FGM was made a crime in 1985, it still occurs and there have been NO prosecutions.
4. Campaigners estimate that there are 66,000 women living in Britain who have suffered FGM with a further 24,000 girls aged 11 or under thought to be at risk.

#### **Conference Further Believes:**

1. FGM is abuse. Although it can happen within families who do not see it as such.
2. FGM is a criminal act which causes severe physical and mental harm to victims both in the short and long term and for this reason it cannot be condoned or excused.
3. Much more needs to be done to support victims of FGM.
4. Much more needs to be done to prosecute those who 'cut' or arrange for FGM.

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. For the NUS Women's Campaign to write a model letter to MPs asking for them to push for more to be done surrounding the issue of FGM, for activists to use.
2. For the NUS Women's Campaign to lobby the government for more support for victims and to stop being "politically correct" and tackle the issue head on.
3. For the NUS Women's Campaign to support and take direction from grass-roots survivor-led anti-FGM Organisations in regards to supporting any further anti-FGM legislation that passes through the UK
4. Men to be asked and made aware of supporting the campaign against FGM. This is crucial where in any circumstances anyone is intending to perform, and/or actually aid, assist, encourage or be coerced in performing an act of FGM.

## Prioritising campaigning on student carers

### Conference Believes:

1. A student carer is a student of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without this help. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems.
2. Student carers are under-represented in further and higher education. The difference is particularly stark for women aged 16–24; 10 per cent of women carers in that age range who care for more than 50 hours per week are in education, compared to 17 per cent of men carers.
3. The NUS women's campaign produced 'learning with care' in 2013 which was the first ever comprehensive research into the experiences of student carers in the UK
4. Only 36 per cent of student carers felt able to balance commitments such as work, study, and family/relationships, compared to 53 per cent of students without caring responsibilities.
5. More than half of student carers (56 per cent) had seriously considered leaving their course, compared to 39 per cent of students without caring responsibilities.
6. Student carers had experienced varying degrees of support from their institutions, but in all cases there was a lack of coordinated, systematic support.
7. Two thirds of student carers (67 per cent) regularly worry about not having enough money to meet their basic living expenses. Many student carers have had to sacrifice all or some of their social life in order to study and provide care
8. Student carers who were in receipt of Carer's Allowance did not feel the benefit was adequate, but the fact that full-time students are not eligible for Carer's Allowance was considered unfair and contributing to their financial hardship.
9. Student carers were three times as likely to have taken on high-risk debt as students without caring responsibilities, even though they were less likely to have taken out low-risk debt.

### Conference further believes:

1. Access to education is a key social justice issue for women and it is important that within the context of austerity cuts which are decimating public services including support for carers that women who care are not denied or deterred from entering apprenticeships, further and/or higher education
2. That due to patriarchy, the nature of caregiving in the UK is gendered, with women expected to be the primary caregivers and as with other areas of work

which are dominated by women this work is devalued in society

### Conference resolves:

1. That the NUS women's campaign should continue to campaign for the recommendations in 'learning with care' to be implemented locally at colleges and universities
2. That the NUS women's campaign should campaign nationally for the collection and use of monitoring data and a replacement of the unpaid carers allowance for student carers in full time education
3. That the NUS women's campaign should make campaigning on student carers one of the priority campaigns for the academic year 2014/2015
4. To campaign against cuts to services and benefits, and for taxation of the rich to restore and expand publicly-provided social care services, provide living benefits, and create jobs on a living wage.

## Women Studying Abroad

### Conference Believes:

1. Studying abroad as part of a course is already recognised as a fantastic opportunity by both educational institutions and NUS.
2. Anti-sexism safe-guards manifest differently in educational institutions around the world.
3. Educational institutions and study abroad programs have a legal and moral obligation to safeguard their students who they send on study abroad programs.
4. Students on study abroad should not be restricted in opportunities, whether educational or informal, based on their gender.
5. Students on study abroad are often unable to report sexism and sexual harassment as they do not know where to report it.
6. Students on study abroad are sometimes unable to report sexism and sexual harassment as the institution abroad and study abroad program have no place to report incidents.

### Conference Resolves:

1. To lobby institutions, erasmus and other study abroad schemes to provide comprehensive information about where students can go to report sexism when they are on study abroad.
2. To lobby institutions, erasmus and other study abroad schemes to provide a system of support for students who face sexism on study abroad programs.

## Improving the lives of student sex workers

### Conference Believes:

1. The term 'sex worker' includes people working in escort work, lap dancing, stripping, pornography, selling sex (on or off street), webcams, adult models and phone sex work.
2. Research on sex work has shown that the main reason for entering into and staying in sex work is due to financial hardship. For instance, 93% of sex workers in New Zealand reported financial need as their reasons for entering the industry.

3. Financial reasons, and any criminal record gain due to the criminalisation of sex work, are also cited as the main reason for staying in sex work.
4. The current regime of cuts to services and support has disproportionately affected women and women's services, putting more women students into financial hardship.
5. The increasing cost of rents, household bills and energy bills leave many students with not enough money their funding for other expenses, including enough money to properly feed themselves.
6. The NUS Women's Campaign passed a motion in 2011 resolving to conduct research into student sex workers and since 2012, the NUS Wales Women's Campaign has been conducting national research in Wales on the National Student Sex Work Project
7. Sex work is work. We should all be free to choose what we do with our time, labour power and our bodies. Under neoliberal capitalism how 'free' any of us are, regardless of what work we undertake, is debatable.
8. Sex work, like domestic labour, is gendered, classed and raced. Women's work is undervalued and undermined, and disabled, LGBT and black women face further complex oppressions and exploitations that further devalue and control their labour power.

#### **Conference further believes:**

1. The cuts, combined with tuition fees, has likely increased the number of student sex workers, increasing demand on services and the number of people who need additional support.
2. Sex workers have a diverse range of needs in addition to and different from other students, and face more barriers to accessing support for those needs.
3. Stigma against sex workers increases the risks for all people involved in the sex industry, and makes sex workers less likely to seek out help and support.
4. Sex workers often do not have proper union representation or membership, and do not have access to adequate sick pay, holiday pay or pensions.
5. There has been a lack of research focusing on student sex workers themselves and their needs in the UK, leading to a lack of understanding of the needs they face.
6. Local projects are currently running in different areas of the country, such as Swansea and Leeds; however there has been no national research aimed specifically at sex workers. The NUS Women's Campaign is uniquely placed to conduct this research.
7. The lack of easily accessible methods of funding post-graduate education highly increases the likelihood of women to use sex work to fund their education.
8. NUS Women's Campaign doesn't just represent students – it stands for social justice and we stand with all sex workers whether in education or not.
9. Raids on brothels mostly target businesses where undocumented workers are suspected, resulting often in physical and sexual abuse of sex workers.

Migrant workers are further vulnerable at the hands of the state, which uses racist narratives of 'protection' to justify their deportation, exploitation and criminalisation.

10. Research has shown that migrant sex workers in Britain consider regularisation of their status to be the single thing most needed to protect themselves from abuse and exploitation (Mai, 2011)
11. Sex workers are already part of the trade union movement and we champion this. They have the right to unionise, full labour rights, and full human rights.
12. Students and work is a priority for NUS. Those working in informal economies, including sex workers, should be as much a part of this as anyone else

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To conduct research into student sex workers and their needs in the UK
2. To make the results of this research the basis of further work by the NUS Women's Campaign to support student sex workers.
3. To make this research a priority campaign of the NUS Women's Campaign.
4. To work with sex worker led organisations, such as the English Collective of Prostitutes, Sex Worker Open University and National Ugly Mugs to improve the lives of sex workers.
5. Support the International Union of Sex Workers, and champion sex worker's right to form and join unions, and to receive the same benefits as other workers.
6. Work with sexworker-led organisations to produce specialist training for student-facing support staff on the needs of sex workers, including peer support where students can organise with other student sex workers in a safe - and if necessary anonymous - environment.

## **Online Accountability**

#### **Conference Believes:**

1. That social media is a huge platform to share information and promote our campaign
2. On occasions social media is being used detrimentally to the wellbeing and safety of students
3. There is not a consistent, effective means of accountability when dealing with all forms of online harassment and the objectification of women in educational institutions
4. Students have a right to dignity at study and this should extend to an online presence
5. Institutions have a responsibility to ensure the wellbeing and safety of its students, extending to online material
6. Women students are being degraded, objectified and harassed by new surges of websites and social media (e.g. spotted, confession pages, ratemash.com)
7. This encourages some to not see the crime in harassment and violation on the internet as

they are not being held accountable for their actions

8. Women are disproportionality victims of online harassment through websites and social media
9. Institutions need clearer guidelines and stricter policy on how to manage and tackle online harassment

#### **Conference Resolves:**

7. That the Women's Campaign carry out research into the detrimental effects of this use of online media alongside the three other liberation campaigns
8. To create a report and guide for students to take back and put into effect on their campuses
9. To support and encourage all unions/institutions to tackle this issue on their campuses
10. To assist Unions in developing local policy and regulations with their partner institutions which ensures that online harassment is dealt with as an offence

## **Black Students campaign policy passed in 2016 (Held after National Conference 2016)**

### **Anti Racism Anti Facism**

#### **Black Students Conference Believes:**

1. Racism is on the rise, with Black people facing institutional and structural barriers and well as a resurgence of far-right activity in society.
2. The government and media manipulate perceptions of issues such as austerity, the refugee crisis and global political violence, to legitimise racism against Black people.
3. These are reflected on-the-ground in society: the refugee crisis has reinvigorated anti-migrant fascists, emboldened by the xenophobic rhetoric of the government against refugees and migrants.
  - a. Political violence and the emergence of groups such as ISIL are being used to justify oppressive and Islamophobic counter-terrorism laws targeting primarily Muslim and Black communities, such as PREVENT.
  - b. Far-right mobilisations are on the increase, with newer groups such as PEGIDA and Britain First emerging in the vacuum left as the EDL and BNP fade away.
  - c. Campuses are being targeted by groups such as National Action, spraypainting racist/Islamophobic and anti-semitic messages.

5. The Black Students' Campaign has always worked to combat all forms of racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism
6. The ongoing refugee crisis means suffering for thousands.
7. The refugee crisis is being used to sow racism, fear and division across Europe.
8. The United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights recently said current rhetoric surrounding the crisis is worryingly comparable to language used in the 1930s, when countries refused to take in Jewish people fleeing Hitler's Nazi Germany.
9. The European Union referendum has been toxic as politicians and the media relentlessly spread fear about immigration.
10. 25th March is marked the International Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.
11. Britain played an active role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade for centuries, the ill-gotten gains of which formed the basis of much of its wealth and industrial advances today.
12. Britain's role – including those of our institutions – is often underplayed and omitted from the curriculum; the discussion here more often centres the role of the now-USA.

#### **Black Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. One way in which the government upholds its racist practices is through divide and conquer between Black communities.
2. Far-right groups are responding in like with a more 'respectable' face of racism.
  - a. For example groups like PEGIDA claim to be opposed to the "Islamification of Britain", masking the fact that far-right/fascist groups ultimately pose a threat to all Black people, as well as Muslims, Jewish people, LGBT+ communities and more.
3. It is for this reason that unity between Black communities, and solidarity with other oppressed groups, is crucial.
4. The tactic of 'No Platform' was designed by communities to stop the growth of fascist groups in society by denying them the 'oxygen' which they need to flourish and normalise their views.
5. We continue to support No Platform for fascists on this basis.
6. Stand Up To Racism has successfully united anti-racist, Black communities, trade unionists, and pro-migrant campaigners with large demonstrations in Glasgow, Cardiff and London marking UN Anti-Racism Day.
7. Stand Up To Racism's rallying call of 'Refugees Welcome Here – No to racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism' has secured national media coverage, put pressure on decision-makers,

provided engaging materials and training and provided solidarity and aid to refugees.

8. There is strong undercurrent of apologetics and historical amnesia regarding Britain's role in the Slave Trade and colonialism.
9. This forced amnesia and revisionism has allowed for a resurgent nostalgia for British imperialism – a recent YouGov poll found 44% of respondents as being 'proud' of Britain's history of colonialism, with 41% believing it to be a 'good thing'.
10. This is despite British imperialism and the Transatlantic Slave Trade representing among the greatest – if not the greatest – atrocities in human history.

### **Black Students Conference Resolves:**

1. Work with Movement Against Xenophobia and International Students' Campaign to challenge anti-migrant rhetoric and hatemongering.
2. Reaffirm our support for No Platform for fascists.
3. Work with the Antifascist Network to combat fascist activity on campuses and in communities
4. Continue to campaign for PREVENT to be scrapped.
5. To affiliate and work with the Stand Up To Racism campaign as chaired by Diane Abbott MP to challenge racism in all forms - in politics, the media and across society.
6. To encourage SUs to commemorate International Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.
7. To campaign for greater acknowledgement of the roles of British universities in the Slave Trade and colonialism.

## **Faith in Unity!**

### **Black Students Conference Believes**

1. That building strong interfaith links between religious groups, and educating the wider community on different cultures and religions, will help to bring about long-term change, both on and off campus, which in turn will bring about a and more tolerant society which seeks to understand differences.
2. Surrounding the period of Holocaust Memorial Day 2015, campuses were targeted with Nazi imagery and graffiti which was daubed on campus walls, including at Birmingham.
3. Students unions, academic institutions and university security have a duty of care and protection to all their members' safety, both on and off campus.
4. The NUS has a long-standing precedent for standing up to fascist and racist groups that

seek to divide students on racial, religious or ethnic lines.

6. That it has a responsibility to ensure that university campuses remain an open, tolerant and safe space for all ethnic and religious minorities and groups.
7. Colleges/universities often fail to confront racism within their campuses.
8. For the sake of maintaining a façade of multicultural harmony, institutions will more often downplay incidents than risk highlighting issues facing Black students.
9. Recent incidents include a Black woman at Warwick who found racist slurs written on a banana in her accommodation, a Muslim woman at KCL having her niqab pulled off and recurrent incidents at Birmingham of Islamophobic graffiti on campus.
10. In all the above cases, Black students criticised their universities' slow or non-existent responses.
11. Hate crimes often go underreported, including hate crimes at colleges/universities.
12. Students may be unwilling to report incidents to their institutions out of a lack of faith that anything positive will come of it.
13. They may be unwilling to report incidents to the police due to mistrust of the police – which is particularly understandable in the case of Black students.
14. Lack of an evidence base allows for institutions to downplay the prevalence of hate crimes, including racist and Islamophobic, LGBT-phobic, ableist, sexist, anti-Semitic or other crimes, on their campuses and leave them unwilling to implement institutional change.
15. Social media platforms have allowed for a new way of interacting with students, especially those identified as 'hard-to-reach'.
16. Social media has become an integral part of campaigning for student elections.
17. It has, unfortunately, also become a way for people to bully and slander people behind the cloak of anonymity – sometimes to the point of harassment, incitement and criminality.
18. This has been exemplified by a number of cases in the student movement recently, with candidates, NUS liberation officers and liberation conferences being targeted by online abuse en masse.

### **Black Students Conference Further Believes**

1. In many cases, Black students' only recourse to any type of accountability is online.
2. For Black students afforded very little social capital within their institutions, naming-and-shaming becomes the currency with which they can force their colleges into action.
3. In many cases students campaigning against incidents are muzzled/brushed off by their institutions – Birmingham's BME students'

association was threatened with disciplinary action by their SU for campaigning against a student active in far-right politics on their campus, and criticised by their university.

4. Black students affected by hate crimes may instead seek support from Black student groups or officers within their SUs, which may remain under-equipped to deal with these effectively.
5. Students should be able to access independent/3rd party, non-police mechanisms for reporting incidents of hate crime.
6. Hate crime reporting mechanisms should be available 24/7.
7. SUs are often well-positioned to serve this function.
8. These attacks can be especially pronounced for people from liberation backgrounds.
9. Black, Women, LGBT+, Disabled students and students of faith have found themselves inundated with abuse on social media to the point of deterring these students from running in elections.
10. Social media abuse is actively preventing the most marginalised students from engaging with/seeking representation within their unions.
11. The 'It Stops Here' campaign, initiated at KCL, aims to 'combat the rising phenomenon of online harassment'.

#### **Black Students Conference Resolves**

1. To celebrate and value the diversity of our members and create an environment where the cultural, religious and non-religious or similar philosophical beliefs of all are respected.
2. To create a positive environment through education and awareness raising of cultures and religion or similar philosophical beliefs and will actively promote tolerance within its community.
3. To actively challenge racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and fascism.
4. To reaffirm NUS' No Platform for Fascists policy and continue to campaign for its full implementation within NUS and all Students' Unions.
5. Reaffirm our support for NUS organising an annual Anti-Racism/Anti-Fascism Conference and providing adequate resources for this work.
6. Continue to work with unions and anti-racist organisations to mark UN Anti-Racism Day.
7. To investigate the idea of students' unions acting as hate crime reporting centres
8. To ensure NUS remains committed to fighting hate crime on campuses and to work with liberation and faith groups to achieve this.
9. To ensure that long term, sustainable mechanisms exist to ensure that no student is targeted or harassed for their religious, national or racial identity.

10. Provide educational training on antisemitism for all committee members and interested members
11. To lobby institutions to provide additional support to students during times of higher tension to ensure that campus remains a fair, open and safe space to all students irrespective their religious, national, ethnic or racial identity.
12. To work with universities and students unions to improve hate crime reporting procedures
13. Campaign alongside students pushing their institutions towards more robust anti-racist practice.
14. Support students facing threats/victimisation for exposing incidents of racism, or poor responses from their institutions.
15. Support SUs in developing hate crime reporting mechanisms or becoming reporting centres.
16. Encourage HE unions to work with under-resourced local FE Unions in implementing cross-campus reporting mechanisms.
17. To work with the It Stops Here initiative to combat cyber abuse
18. Work with the other liberation campaigns on developing best practice on addressing online harassment around student elections.

### **Gendered Islamophobia**

#### **Black Students Conference Believes:**

1. Islamophobia is on the rise throughout society.
2. This represents a resurgence of one of the oldest forms of racism in the modern day.
3. Muslim women face the sharpest manifestations of overt Islamophobia, particularly visibly Muslim women, facing verbal and physical assaults, and constant attacks on their choice of clothing.
4. The state's relationship with Muslim women is also fraught and inconsistent.
5. They are often used as a vehicle for furthering the government's counter-terrorism agenda – based off orientalist assumptions about Muslim women being inherently more "moderate" within their communities.
6. Meanwhile, they also find themselves the object of that same agenda, accused of fostering a climate of "extremism" within their family homes.
7. In the eyes of the state, Muslim women are somehow both 'traditionally submissive' and 'the enemy within'.
8. This has further damaged the trust between the state and Muslim women.
9. Ofsted's Chief Inspector has supported restrictions on the niqab/veil for Muslim women at schools and encouraged the down-marking of schools by inspectors in certain circumstances where they permit the niqab.

#### **Black Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. Islamophobia is legitimised through the categorisation of the 'good Muslim' - i.e. the passive, unquestioning subject - vs the 'bad Muslim' - those seeking to challenge state oppression.
2. These dichotomies have emerged within NUS and the student movement this year, with individuals picking and choosing which Muslim organisations are 'acceptable' to work with.
3. In tackling Islamophobia, we should never seek to legitimise racist binaries, or adopt the language of the oppressor.
4. Incidents of Islamophobia often go un-reported, due to (understandable) mistrust between Muslim communities and the police/state.
5. Research into the experiences of Muslim women in education, and the Islamophobia they face, is similarly lacking.

### **Black Students Conference Resolves:**

1. Work with the Women's Campaign to highlight and campaign against the gendered aspects of Islamophobia.
2. Work with the Women's Campaign, FOSIS and relevant Muslim student groups to conduct research into the experiences of Muslim women in education.
3. Campaign against any measures seeking to restrict Muslim women students' right to choose the niqab, hijab, or other articles expressing their faith.

## **Prisons are Obsolete! Abolish Them Now!**

### **Black Students Conference Believes:**

1. In 2015, there were 238 deaths in prison in England & Wales.
2. This year already, 27 deaths have occurred, with six of those yet to be categorised.
3. Since 1990, an estimated 3,807 people have died in prison.
4. There is yet to be a single conviction for any of these deaths.
5. Prison does not work; 59% of prisoners re-offend in less than 12 months.
6. 53% of women in prison are survivors of sexual violence.
7. Trans\* people are regularly incarcerated in the wrong gendered prison and/or denied hormone therapy.
8. Approximately 90% of prisoners report experiencing some kind of mental illness.
9. African and Caribbean people in prison represent 12.1% of the overall prison population despite making up only 2.9% of the population in society.
10. Those racialised as other than white (i.e. Black people) are only 10% of the UK's population,

whilst making up one quarter of all people in prison.

11. The UK government has recently unveiled plans for the opening of a new supermax prison in Wrexham, North Wales costing £250 million.
12. The government pushes for greater criminalisation of drugs and substances, even in the face of opposition of sector experts and evidence, criminalising swathes of people.
13. The forthcoming implementation of the Psychoactive Substances Act – described as 'unforceable' - underlines this trend.
14. Research by Release and LSE show that drugs policing dominates stop and search practice, and thus fuels the active overpolicing and harassment of Black people.
15. Over 50% of stop and searches are for drugs, with Black people vastly more likely to be stopped & searched and/or arrested for drugs, be prosecuted and receive harsher sentences for drugs possessions than white people – even for low level drug offences.

### **Black Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. Suicide rates in prisons raise huge concerns about level and quality of mental health care in prisons.
2. Prisons are not hospitals or a "place of care", and those who would be sectioned under the Mental Health Act should be transferred to NHS care at a secure hospital.
3. Prisons are sexist and racist.
4. The NUS Women's Campaign and the NUS LGBT+ Campaign have policy to campaign on the issue of prison abolition, and the Black Students Campaign must join them
5. An increase in the prison population is driven by systematic discrimination and the pursuit of profit, not a rise in crime levels.
6. In comparison to their more rights-based/education-based approaches towards potentially risky activities like alcohol consumption or sexual activity, colleges/universities often operate rigid, 'zero tolerance' approaches to drug possession/consumption by students.
7. Zero tolerance approaches, criminalisation and/or prohibition do nothing to reduce harmful effects of drug use, or decrease use – they simply drive the practice underground.

### **Black Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To call for the abolition of the prison-industrial complex.
2. To campaign on the issue of prison abolition using a variety of tactics including, but not limited to, direct action.
3. To support initiatives to write letters to prisoners, including political prisoners.
4. To produce a campaign briefs for Black students on this issue.

5. Work with Release and Students for Sensible Drug Policy in campaigning for evidence-based drug policy.
6. Push for education-based approaches around drug consumption among students and for decriminalisation/against zero tolerance approaches by colleges/universities.

## Expanding the Campaign Against Prevent in FE

### Black Students Conference Believes:

1. The Black Students' Campaign has long campaigned against the racist PREVENT agenda and the newly-statutory Prevent duty.
2. The 'Students Not Suspects' campaign that has developed over the past year has emerged as a leading force in the campaign against PREVENT.
3. It has also helped normalise and embolden opposition to PREVENT, and over 30 SUs now have policy against PREVENT and the duty.
4. The NUT voted unanimously to call for the Prevent duty to be withdrawn from teaching at their annual conference this year.
5. The UN's Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association has described responses from civil society as being 'overwhelmingly negative' towards PREVENT and likened it to 'Big Brother'.
6. That pursuing PREVENT-related initiatives like the RICU propaganda programme show how disconnected the government is from public perception of their policies.
7. PREVENT's reputation has been irreparably damaged, and whilst the government looks to redouble its plans on the strategy, PREVENT is closer to collapse than ever before.
8. A new Extremism Bill is due to be unveiled during the Queen's Speech on 18th May.
9. The Bill is set to include provisions making it easier to shut down premises 'used to promote hatred', to ban organisations that 'draw people into extremism' as well as expanding Ofcom's regulatory powers over broadcasting content.
10. It will build on recent literature like the Counter-terrorism and Security Act to further scale back civil liberties under the guise of countering so-called 'extremism'

### Black Students Conference Further Believes

1. The campaign against the Prevent duty has remained primarily focused on PREVENT in HE.
2. FE colleges and unions face a unique set of problems in tackling the Prevent duty and require extra support.
3. This include the fact that FE SUs, unlike HE SUs, often do not exist as legally independent or

autonomous bodies from their parent institutions.

4. Thus the Prevent duty may apply to FE SUs, whereas HE SUs are not bound to it.
5. Other FE-specific issues include imposing 'fundamental British values' as part of the pedagogical practice in FE.
6. The target of the Extremism Bill has been identified as primarily 'extremist' Muslims.
7. The Bill is intended to be central to David Cameron's 'legacy programme' of legislation.
8. Despite the mass and growing resistance to policy like PREVENT, the government seems intent on pushing ahead with more anti-democratic, Islamophobic legislation unabated.
9. This highlights a government on the brink of losing control and no longer able to manage dissent democratically.
10. The Extremism Bill must be opposed.

### Black Students Conference Resolves:

1. To expand the campaign against PREVENT, whether through NUS or under the Students not Suspects banner, to cover PREVENT in FE.
2. To work with the VPFE to lobby for the decoupling of British values from teaching provision in FE.
3. Working with the NUT and relevant organisations towards this.
4. Conduct research to map out the effects of the Prevent duty in FE.
5. Develop advice tailored for FE unions in legally enacting policy in opposition to PREVENT.
6. To campaign against the progression of the Extremism Bill into law.
7. To support unions in lobbying against the progression of the Extremism Bill.
8. To co-ordinate creative direction action to stop the progression of the Extremism Bill

## Housing is a Black Problem

### Black Students Conference Believes:

1. That social housing is being directly attacked and destroyed by government-endorsed corporations and private companies.
2. That poor Black communities are disproportionately affected by gentrification and the decline of social housing, and are overrepresented in homelessness statistics.
3. That Black people in affected areas, particularly in London, are disempowered and disenfranchised by these attacks on their homes and businesses, negatively affecting community self-image and autonomy.
4. That vulnerable members of our communities, including LGBTQIA+ folk, single mothers, survivors, disabled people, and recovering addicts are among the most affected by the annihilation of social housing.

5. That gentrification is a contributing cause to the aggressive over-policing of these newly “regenerated” areas.
6. That evictions are on the rise due to these issues, shipping whole families out of cities and destroying Black communities.<sup>1</sup>
7. That we will have no communities to defend, should they all be priced out of and evicted from our cities.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/over-50000-families-shipped-out-of-london-in-the-past-three-years-due-to-welfare-cuts-and-soaring-10213854.html>

#### **Black Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. Black Students deserve the right to good, safe, affordable, and clean housing

#### **Black Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To more publically endorse, support and encourage attendance of events and workshops held by radical housing groups: including (but not limited to) Architects For Social Housing, Squatters and Homeless Autonomy, Kill The Housing Bill, Radical Housing Network, Housing Action Southwark and Lambeth, etc.
2. To include these issues more visibly in our campaigning and dialogue – including in the Black Student Handbook.
3. To include information on tenants’ rights and housing resources in the Black Student Handbook.
4. To encourage and attend demonstrations against evictions and the Housing Bill.
5. To join radical forces that are lobbying to save social housing, create more homes, and fighting against cuts to housing benefit.

## **Trans Students’ Conference policy 2017**

### **Welfare and Student Rights**

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#### **Trans Healthcare Mega Motion**

##### **Trans Conference Believes**

1. Gatekeeping is a widespread procedure used in the Gender Identity Clinics’ process to stop trans people from receiving the healthcare they want.
2. In order to receive the appropriate healthcare such as hormones, hair removal, or surgery, service users often have to fulfill stereotypical expectations of femininity or masculinity. This disproportionately affects non-binary people.

3. Many patients have been denied healthcare due to mental health problems, which disproportionately affect trans people due to dysphoria and transphobia throughout society.
4. Despite trans people often receiving the worst healthcare experiences, trans issues are erased when talking about “LGBT(+) Health”. In particular, trans issues are erased when it comes to “LGBT+ Sexual Health”, with the high proportion of HIV+ transfeminine people not being recognised in the provision of services to those at high risk of being HIV+.
5. Practitioners in university and college counselling services often have no training on trans issues.

##### **Trans Conference Further Believes**

1. Trans people should not be expected to conform to gender stereotypes in order to access treatment.
2. Gender Identity Clinics should not hold the power to withhold or threaten access to healthcare for any of the reasons named above.
3. Trans people know best what treatment they want for themselves, and the only role the Gender Identity Clinic should play in the provision of treatment should be based on physical health concerns, such as pre-existing blood conditions.
4. The positive impact of counselling (and other forms of health and social care) can often be reduced if trans patients are subject to invasive questioning on the basis of their gender identity and unprofessional behaviour overall.
5. The long wait lists for gender identity clinics means that many trans people have to wait months, if not years, for simple forms of medical care. Bridging prescriptions for hormones should be more widely used until wait lists shorten following the tranvolution (trans revolution).

##### **Trans Conference Resolves**

1. To campaign for more trans identifying representatives on the steering boards of GICs and GIC networks.
2. To campaign for trans healthcare to run under an “informed consent” model: Meaning that after going through the medical risks of transition (including specific risks depending on the individual’s health) with GIC staff, it is

- up to the trans person to decide whether they want to undergo treatment or not.
3. To campaign for a de-pathologised informed consent model of trans healthcare with no gatekeeping
  4. To campaign for a de-centralised trans healthcare system so trans people do not have to travel far to centralised Gender Identity Clinics
  5. To work with trans organisations in Wales to build for a local gender identity service in Wales
  6. Advocate for higher funding and staffing levels (both clinical and administrative staff)
  7. Lobby for a review of administrative procedures - too many letters "lost in the post"
  8. Work with organisations like Action for Trans Health and the Trans Equality Legal Initiative to help advocate for the needs of trans patients.
  9. Affiliate the Trans Campaign to Action for Trans Health
  10. Support policies that would move towards greater patient involvement and control of trans healthcare.
  11. Work with the British Medical Association, GP Federations and Clinical Commissioning Groups to ensure that GPs and secondary care providers understand that referrals to GICs/equivalents and entering into a shared care agreement is part of their primary care contract
  12. Work with the British Medical Association, GP Federations and Clinical Commissioning Groups to ensure that GPs are trained in the work of trans healthcare.
  13. Lobby medical schools to include trans healthcare on the curriculum
  14. Work with groups like Sex:pression, Medsin, etc. to train healthcare students on the needs of trans patients.
  15. Provide a toolkit to LGBT+ Societies and local trans campaigns on how to teach medical school students about trans healthcare.
  16. Campaign for breast augmentation, facial feminisation surgery, body contouring to be included as part of core services within NHS gender identity care
  17. Request an equality impact assessment of gender care specifications to ensure that they are not transmisogynistic from NHS England, and equivalent bodies in the Nations.
  18. Campaign for a higher number of sessions of epilation to be available on the NHS as part of core services
  19. Campaign for gamete storage to become a core service of the NHS gender specification, this is a reproductive justice issue.
  20. Lobby the Human Embryology and Fertilisation Authority for greater training to its providers on trans issues
  21. Encourage the provision of speech and language therapy for trans patients that does not conform to ableist and classist notions of what people sound like.
  22. Lobby for greater inclusion of nonbinary people's healthcare needs as part of upcoming changes to gender care specifications
  23. Work with sexual health providers to ensure best practice on treating trans patients
  24. Lobby for hormone blockers to be provided at any age as appropriate, rather than just 16+
  25. Provide a toolkit explaining how students can navigate the trans healthcare system.
  26. Organise advocacy training sessions in unions and colleges to teach trans students how to advocate for themselves and their friends within the healthcare system.
  27. Offer trans training to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service.
  28. To lobby for information on HIV prevention and living with HIV to be inclusive of trans people, in particular transfeminine people and trans people of colour.
  29. To lobby for for sexual health clinics to assess the impact of sex segregated clinics on trans and non-binary patients.
  30. To lobby for counselling services at universities and colleges to be trans-inclusive.
  31. To campaign for bridging prescriptions to be made more widely available to trans students who are self-medicating with third-party obtained hormones or are at risk of doing so.

## All Landlords Are B\_\_\_\_\_

### Trans Conference Believes

1. Rents are predicted to rise by 20% over the next 5 years, whilst the number of renters will increase by 25%
2. Student halls and private student lets are often let out at above market rents for properties which are often less than fabulous.
3. Often rents are set higher than student loans.
4. Between 2010 and 2014 alone, the social housebuilding budget was slashed from £2.3 billion to £1.1 billion, yet the government spent over £115 billion on subsidising the profits of private landlords through tax breaks, build-to-let schemes and housing benefit

5. Trans people face higher levels of estrangement from families, and higher levels of unemployment
6. Students in London and across the UK have been involved in successful rent strikes against dodgy landlords.
7. Trans people living in halls often feel uncomfortable with shared showers. En suite accommodation is usually more expensive, increasing costs trans people may need to pay for housing.

#### **Trans Conference Further Believes**

1. Every person should have access to safe and affordable housing
2. That one of the most prescient sources of anxiety for trans students in halls are transphobic flatmates

#### **Trans Conference Resolves**

1. To actively build support for student rent strikes across the country
2. To work with Student for Cooperation and other relevant organisations to organise for trans student housing cooperatives
3. Work with the Radical Housing Network and similar organisations to help challenge landlord malpractice and resist evictions
4. To provide a toolkit for SU Officers responsible for housing to facilitate Trans 101 training for students in halls.
5. To lobby for staff who work in student accommodation i.e. administrative staff, security, cleaners, resident assistants to be trained in trans-inclusion
6. Campaign for an increase in the budget for genuinely affordable social housing
7. Campaign for student halls providers to provide trans students with en suite accommodation at the same price as non- en suite accommodation as a reasonable adjustment
8. To provide guidance to university and college accommodation services advising against trans students being placed in single sex/gender accommodation without their explicit blessing, especially if they are placed in accommodation with students of a different gender.
9. To advocate for trans and/or LGBT+ students to be given the choice of living in trans and/or LGBT+ only accommodation in university and college halls.

## **Ensure Campaigns Support Trans Students Who Care**

#### **Trans Conference Believes**

1. Over 375,000 young adults identify as having a caring role, a carer is: anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.
2. Many young adult carers cannot access higher education despite 84% of carers expressing a wish to go, 30% of young adult carers believed their caring role could impede access and performance in higher education.
3. No reliable statistics exist on the exact number of students with caring responsibilities let alone the number of Trans students who may also care.
4. As of September 2017 students will be asked if they identify, as a carer through UCAS- this information will then be passed onto individual universities.
5. Currently 7 universities within the UK have dedicated provisions and services for carers.

#### **Trans Conference Further Believes**

1. For universities and colleges to ensure clear measures and provisions exist within the access agreement for student's carers prior, during and at the immediate aftermath of their education. Such measures should include:
  - a. Financial support.
  - b. Targeted information including for student open days.
  - c. Career, employment and further education (including access to higher education, postgraduate and PhD studies) guidance
  - d. Mandatory training on carer awareness for teaching and support staff.
  - e. Having a carer support plan.
  - f. A named representative within the institution to work towards equality and diversity issues for students with caring responsibilities.
  - g. For university and college unions to ensure clear and specific provision for supporting students with caring responsibilities through issues including: governance, representation, welfare and social engagement.
  - h. Universities, colleges and unions should engage with organisations that

support carers such as Carers Trust and engage with their campaign (Going Higher) to encourage more carers to pursue and complete further and higher education<sup>49</sup>

### Trans Conference Resolves

1. To action the Trans officer to conduct research into the number of Trans student carers attending UK colleges and universities.
2. To explore what provisions already exist for students with caring responsibilities within UK colleges and universities.
3. For the Trans Students Campaign to network with other liberation campaigns and NUS leadership in addressing the needs of students with caring responsibilities.
4. To recognise carers week and carers rights day within the liberation calendar.
5. To create a student with caring responsibilities caucus within the NUS Trans Students Campaign.
6. To create a toolkit with and for Students' Unions to help them create an inclusive environment for students with caring responsibilities.
7. NUS to highlight issues, case studies and best practise in relation to students with caring responsibilities so that Students' Unions are more likely to organise around those issues.
8. To create a student with caring responsibilities representative to sit on NUS Trans Students Campaign Committee that is to be elected by the member of the students with caring responsibilities caucus.

## For a Sensible Drug Policy

### Trans Conference Believes

1. 24% of respondents to the Scottish Trans Mental Health Study said that they had taken drugs listed in the Misuse of Drugs Act.
2. Of those respondents, 5% and 18% felt their drug use was problematic or sometimes problematic respectively.
3. Testosterone preparations are listed under the Misuse of Drugs Act as a Class C drug when used without a prescription, meaning that some trans people who self medicating my face legal action.

<sup>49</sup> Carers Trust, 2015. Going Higher | Carers Trust [WWW Document]. URL <https://carers.org/going-higher>

4. Young people and students have much higher levels of drug use than their older and non-student counterparts.
5. There is very little data on trans drug use.
6. Students for Sensible Drug Policy is an organisation which campaigns for harm reduction and de-criminalisation of drug use.

### Trans Conference Further Believes

1. The criminalisation of drug use disproportionately harms trans communities.
2. The criminalisation of drug use is not an effective means of countering addiction or abuse within these communities.

### Trans Conference Resolves

1. To commission research into trans student's drug use.
2. To work with Students for Sensible Drug Policy to encourage harm reduction across campuses and colleges.
3. To campaign for decriminalisation of drug use.
4. To lobby Clinical Commissioning Groups, the British Medical Association, Royal Pharmaceutical Society to encourage doctors and pharmacists to carry out bridging prescriptions and to increase training on bridging medications.
5. To lobby the government for an equality impact assessment on the Misuse of Drugs Act.

## Strong and Active Unions

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### Educate to liberate: Creating training and educational materials

### Trans Conference Believes

1. Current live policy for the LBGT+ and Trans Campaigns references 'training' over 60 times throughout the policy document<sup>50</sup>.
2. Many pieces of live policy along with the NUS report 'Education Beyond the Straight and Narrow' recognise the importance of education and training on LBGT+ issues for spreading

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/lgbt-students-campaign-live-policy-2014-17>

awareness and preventing ignorance<sup>5152</sup>

3. Sex and relationship education does not include compulsory content on same-gender attraction, bisexuality (and other forms of multi-gender attraction) and ace-spec experiences.
4. Gender identity is currently not well covered, and not all aspects of gender identity and education on gender issues fit neatly under sex and relationship education.
5. Current NUS LGBT+ Resources (which includes resources for trans-inclusion) can be found on the NUS website, but NUS Connect is often difficult to navigate for visitors not used to using it

### Trans Conference Further Believes

1. That the 'Campaign toolkits' and 'Research' arms of the LGBT+ campaign provide a good framework on which to build such training and educational resources.
2. That any educational and training resources should be accessible and adaptable enough to be utilised in a number of different situations, from FE to HE, and from training and informing elected officers and students in general to educating workers in academic institutions.

### Trans Conference Resolves

1. For the NUS Trans Campaign to work with the other liberation campaigns to lobby the Department of Education, large academy chains, local authorities and the National College for Teaching and Leadership to do the following:
  - a. Lobby for sex and relationships education in secondary schools to be inclusive of same-gender attracted people, bi and pan identities, ace-spec identities as well as being free of cissexism.
  - b. Lobby for PSHE classes in secondary schools to have content of different views of gender (including gendered inequalities)

that are inclusive of the existence of trans people.

2. For the NUS to establish a working group to develop a set of training and education materials in relation to:
  - a. Healthy sex and relationships education on campus including same-gender attraction, multi-sexual attraction and ace-spec experiences and how there are specific intersections with different liberation groups.
  - b. The impact of gendered inequalities and different experiences of gender, which is inclusive of trans and non-binary issues.
3. For the trans officer to encourage use of these materials within the NUS' Officer Development Programme.
4. For the NUS to make these materials readily available so they can be used freely by students, institutions and educators.

## Society and Citizenship

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### No Pride in Prisons

#### Trans Conference Believes

1. There have been a number of recent deaths of trans prisoners who were being held in prison facilities that do not match up with the trans prisoner's gender.
2. Many trans prisoners do not have access to gender affirming healthcare such as hormone treatment / surgeries, or access to gender appropriate clothing / wigs / prosthetics.
3. The Conservative government are pursuing a campaign of building 5 new mega-prisons. One in Wrexham has just been constructed, and Manchester's is in its planning stage. These prisons will be large factory-prisons.
4. The recidivism rate for jail leavers is currently 47.2%
5. The cost of new prison places stand at £119,000. The cost of housing an individual prisoner is in excess of £40,000 annually.
6. Data is not collected nationally on prisoner's trans status. However, it is likely that trans people are disproportionately policed and

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.nus.org.uk/Global/lgbt-research.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/winning-for-students/lgbt>

imprisoned as they are disproportionately represented in groups at risk of imprisonment.

7. The Trans Equality Legal Initiative is a collective of lawyers and trans activists which seek to deliver access to justice for trans people, and often support trans prisoners.
8. Action for Trans Health have a prisoner specific fund which gives small grants to trans prisoners to help them access healthcare and gender affirming clothing, etc.
9. The Bent Bars Collective run a pen pal scheme for LGBTQ prisoners.

#### **Trans Conference Further Believes**

1. Denying trans prisoners access to healthcare or the right to gendered expression is a cruel and unusual punishment which punishes trans prisoners for their trans status and not any crimes they may have committed.
2. Trans liberation cannot happen within a prison society.
3. The "Justice" System is not power neutral. People from marginalised communities are more likely to end up in jail. Any extra space gained through prison expansion will be filled with trans, queer, BAME, disabled and working class prisoners.
4. The prison system is expensive and ineffective. Reparative justice offers a cheaper and less anti-social alternative to punitive justice.

#### **Trans Conference Resolves**

1. To work with the Trans Equality Legal Initiative, Action for Trans Health, and the Bent Bars Collective where appropriate to advocate and support trans prisoners.
2. To campaign against the expansion of the prison system, including the proposed Manchester mega-prison, and for an increase of funding into reparative justice and other alternatives to prison.
3. To adopt prison abolition as an official stance of the NUS Trans Campaign
4. Advocate for trans prisoners in accessing primary and secondary healthcare.
5. Campaign for halting and reverse cuts to benefits and mental health care in order to reduce recidivism and the need for policing.

## **Gender has no borders**

#### **Trans Conference Believes**

1. Trans asylum seekers, when detained in a removal centre, are often placed in the wrong gender estate or kept in solitary confinement

against the recommendations of the Shaw Report

2. Many trans asylum seekers come from home countries where trans healthcare is not available.
3. For immigration purposes, the Home Office uses outdated and Eurocentric terms to discuss trans identity

#### **Trans Conference Resolves**

1. To provide practical support for trans asylum seekers where possible
1. To campaign against the deportation of trans asylum seekers using a variety of campaign tools such as social media, direct action, lobbying relevant authorities, etc.
2. To encourage the UKBA to not detain trans asylum seekers in removal centres as per the recommendations of the Shaw Report
3. To lobby the Home Office for a review of language and immigration policy related to trans people
4. To campaign for no borders.
5. Work with the Trans Equality Legal Initiative to support and promote appropriate legal action which would be helpful for trans asylum seekers.

## **No Pride in the Police**

#### **Trans Conference Believes**

1. The police disproportionately target trans people, along with sex workers, working class communities and communities of colour for policing, leading to an increase in those groups in the prison population.
2. Many trans people have faced mistreatment and violence at the hands of the police.
3. The criminal justice system as currently constituted has many negative impacts on trans people, including but not limited to:
  - a. Trans people being charged under the wrong names
  - b. The transphobic practice of prosecuting 'sex by deception' when trans people do not reveal their gender assigned at birth to prospective sexual partners.
  - c. The state harassment of sex workers, a group which trans people (in particular trans women) disproportionately belong to.

#### **Trans Conferences Further Believes**

1. Justice must be conceptualised as being outside the state-sanctioned criminal justice

system, as the state can 'justly' inflict a great deal of legal harm on trans people.

2. Trans people are often the victims of hate crime. When it is reported to the police, which many trans people do not due to the chance of transphobic harassment, often it is not taken seriously.

#### **Trans Conference Resolves**

1. To not work or collaborate with the police.
2. To encourage Prides to not have a police presence as part of parades, especially Pride events organised by students unions.
3. To support and organise actions against police presence at Prides.
4. To campaign to abolish the transphobic practice of prosecuting 'sex by deception' cases where trans people have chosen not to reveal their birth assignment to prospective sexual partners.

## **Disabled Students' Campaign policy 2017**

### **Welfare and Student Rights**

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#### **Stop the Privatisation of Statutory Psychiatry Services**

CW: Suicide

#### **Disabled Students Conference Notes:**

1. The psychiatry service for 16-25 (up to 35 in cases involving psychosis) year olds has been privatised in Birmingham, being merged into a 0-25 service called "Forward Thinking Birmingham" (FTB)<sup>53</sup>.
2. This model of psychiatric healthcare is a pilot programme which is planned to be rolled out across the UK.
3. Some of the partners involved in the service are for-profit health care providers<sup>54</sup>.
4. As of November 2016, there has been at least one suicide associated with failings from the

<sup>53</sup> [forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk](http://forwardthinkingbirmingham.org.uk)

<sup>54</sup> [www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch\\_public\\_board\\_pers\\_29.11.16\\_v2.pdf](http://www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch_public_board_pers_29.11.16_v2.pdf)

new service, particularly their home care and crisis teams.

5. There have been reports of people being treated as inpatients outside of the Greater Birmingham area.
6. One of the key concerns highlighted in service user feedback is that of high waiting times.
7. Issues around low-term sickness of staff members in FTB has been noted, particularly around stress related issues<sup>5556</sup>.
8. There has been extremely high rates of PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) complaints, with a 71% increase from 12/15-12/16. There have also been multiple instances of patients being verbally abused by FTB staff because complaints have not been kept confidential<sup>5758</sup>.
9. That there has been grassroots opposition to the process of privatisation of psychiatry services in Birmingham, both from local activists and disabled students' groups.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. The privatisation of public services is a symptom of austerity.
2. The policies of austerity are leading (directly or indirectly) to the deaths of thousands of disabled people, through benefit cuts to the privatisation of the NHS.
3. The NHS, and the services it provides, should stay in public control, and should not be privatised and outsourced to for-profit companies.
4. Statutory mental health care is a necessity to the lives of disabled students, particularly when HE and FE counselling services are underfunded and under resourced.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. That the Disabled Students' Campaign lend its solidarity and support to the activists in Birmingham in their campaign – helping to plan and carry out actions such as lobbying MPs and forms of direct action.
2. That the Disabled Students' Campaign be mandated to campaign to stop the introduction

<sup>55</sup> [www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch\\_public\\_board\\_pers\\_20.12.16\\_v2.pdf](http://www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch_public_board_pers_20.12.16_v2.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> [www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch\\_public\\_board\\_pers\\_26.1.17.pdf](http://www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch_public_board_pers_26.1.17.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> [www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch\\_public\\_board\\_pers\\_20.12.16\\_v2.pdf](http://www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch_public_board_pers_20.12.16_v2.pdf)

<sup>58</sup> [www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch\\_public\\_board\\_pers\\_26.1.17.pdf](http://www.bch.nhs.uk/sites/bch/files/bch_public_board_pers_26.1.17.pdf)

of similar privatised psychiatry services in other parts of the UK.

3. That the DSO works with the VP Welfare to oppose the continuing privatisation of mental health care across the UK.

## Put down the magnifying glass and look at the bigger, more inclusive picture

### Disabled Students Conference Notes:

1. NUS is the self-professed national voice of students, with around 600 affiliated students' unions
2. NUS members include higher education institutions, further education institutions and apprenticeship providers. Within our members are specialist institutions including Derwen College, a specialist residential FE college for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
3. NUS liberation campaigns are at the heart of our work, fighting for liberation from oppression
4. NUS this year has continued to develop the training programme – FE Leaders – developed specifically for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and has made an effort to begin to address inclusive practice

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are entitled to a voice within our structures, entitled to have their views listened to and their voice heard
2. NUS prides itself on access awareness, but, despite some raised awareness, still falls short for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Our campaigns and national conference remain inaccessible to this group
3. NUS has a continuing duty to ensure that all members are able to understand processes, to make an informed decision and choice. However, if learners with learning difficulties and disabilities cannot understand or interpret the information provided by NUS, then this is a barrier to participation
4. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are very limited in their choices for further education, and it is essential that their rights are promoted, defended and extended
5. Whilst some valuable work has been ongoing within NUS on addressing accessibility issues for this group of learners a more dedicated and

consistent programme of training and a considerable organisation wide cultural shift is required

### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. For the disabled students officer to ask the VPFE to further develop, maintain and deliver the FE Leaders programme developed specifically for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
2. For the Campaign to make a further call for the VPFE and VPUD to work with the Disabled Students' Officer to review NUS information, seek and undertake relevant training and produce accessible versions
3. For the Campaign to make a further call for the NUS Disabled Officer, VPFE and VPUD to visit Derwen College Students' Union and other specialist providers to gain an understanding of how specialist colleges function to ensure that training is relevant to need

## Nationwide student survey into mental health

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. The number of students experiencing mental health problems has grown over the last decade
2. In 2013, NUS found 20% of students in higher education considered themselves to have a mental health problem, while 13% reported that they have suicidal thoughts<sup>59</sup>.
3. 78% of respondents in further education said they believe they have experienced mental health problems in the last year, (whether diagnosed or undiagnosed)<sup>60</sup>.
4. NUS research has shown course deadlines, exams and financial difficulties are key triggers of mental distress<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Mental Distress Survey Overview

<https://www.nus.org.uk/Global/Campaigns/20130517%20Mental%20Distress%20Survey%20%20Overview.pdf>

<sup>60</sup> Mental Distress Survey Overview

<https://www.nus.org.uk/Global/Campaigns/20130517%20Mental%20Distress%20Survey%20%20Overview.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> Mental Distress Survey Overview

<https://www.nus.org.uk/Global/Campaigns/20130517%20Mental%20Distress%20Survey%20%20Overview.pdf>

5. Mental health problems can be a contributing factor to students not completing their studies
6. Mental health and suicide provision needs to be a high priority of this government

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. For the disabled students officer to carry out a national survey on mental health in students so that we can hear from them what they would like support in.
2. For the disabled students officer to provide activists guidance on how to lobby their institution for increased counselling provision.
3. For the disabled students officer to work with Universities to expand pre-existing mental health campaigns so that they are intersectional and reach more students
4. For the disabled students officer to work with the VP FE and National Society of Apprentices to ensure that the survey reaches all Unions.

## **Mandatory Provision of Dyslexia Screenings**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Notes:**

1. In the UK it is estimated that 10% of the population are dyslexic<sup>62</sup>.
2. An estimated 4% of students enrolled at all higher educational levels (including undergraduate and postgraduate) had Specific Learning Difficulties in the 2011–2012 academic school year (SpLDs being the umbrella term for Dyslexia, Dyspraxia / DCD, Dyscalculia, A.D.D / A.D.H.D)<sup>63</sup>. Many students are not included in the statistics because they have not been assessed.
3. Although students with dyslexia are entitled to the Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) they are required to complete an assessment with a specialist teacher or an educational psychologist first. This can cost up to £600 and

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<sup>62</sup> About The British Dyslexia Association:

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/about>

<sup>63</sup> Higher Education Statistics Agency [HESA] 2011/12 first year students by disability:

<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/publications/students-2011-12>

the student is often expected to contribute to or pay the entire cost for this<sup>64</sup>.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. There may be many students who are struggling with undiagnosed dyslexia without the means to access an initial screening or further support.
2. It is unreasonable to ask disabled students, who are already likely to have little money, to pay in order to receive assistance with a learning disability.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. The NUS Disabled Students Campaign is to lobby universities and the government to make the provision of dyslexia screenings mandatory for Higher and Further Education institutions.
2. The NUS Disabled Students Campaign is to lobby universities and the government to provide financial assistance towards Full Diagnostic Assessments.

## **Students Deserve Better Doctor's Notes**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Notes:**

1. Students with Disabilities are more likely to have to engage health services, with people with disabilities making up around one third of NHS users<sup>65</sup>. This means they are more likely to engage with mitigating circumstances procedures.
2. A 'fit note' is used to provide evidence of a patient's condition and the advice the doctor has given them and is provided free of charge. Currently employees must give their employer a doctor's 'fit note' if they're off sick for more than 7 days in a row<sup>66</sup>.
3. Students who are going through mitigation are often required to obtain a doctor's letter or

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<sup>64</sup> Assessments:

<http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/services/assessments>

<sup>65</sup> Doncaster and Bassetlaw hospitals, Disability equality Scheme 2009-2012, (Providing a Context, p7), Online, Available at: [http://www.dbh.nhs.uk/Library/HR\\_training/Disability%20Equality%20Scheme%202009-2012.pdf](http://www.dbh.nhs.uk/Library/HR_training/Disability%20Equality%20Scheme%202009-2012.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> When do I need a fit note?:

<http://www.nhs.uk/chq/pages/1062.aspx>

health records, which is charged for. Sometimes a simple 'fit note' is more appropriate and free.

4. Currently there is a large disparity in the level and quality of information being provided for students as evidence for mitigation.
5. For a copy of health records on a computer, GPs can charge a maximum of £10; for hand written and computer records they can charge a maximum of £50<sup>67</sup>.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. That if fit notes for employers are free, then medical notes for educational institutions should also be free.
2. That there is not enough government regulation on these fees, and doctors have the freedom to choose what they charge.
3. That students already face a struggle to balance finances with studies – this is particularly difficult for disabled students who may be unable to work.
4. Disabled students are disproportionately affected as they may require mitigation more often; if they are required to provide a doctors letter every time then the costs would add up.
5. People with long-term fluctuating medical conditions that they have learnt to manage themselves may not require the attention of a doctor every time their condition worsens. It is unreasonable to expect someone who is not well enough to attend university or meet deadlines to be able to go to the doctor just to get evidence.
6. That it is immoral for a doctor to charge an unwell person for a note simply so that they can get an exam or coursework extension or deferral.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. For the NUS Disabled Students Campaign to lobby universities to accept 'fit notes' when appropriate instead of expensive medical notes.
2. For the NUS Disabled Students Campaign to lobby universities to provide funding / reimbursement to students who have no other option but to pay for a doctor's letter.
3. For the NUS Disabled Students Campaign to lobby universities to allow students with a disability or a long-term medical condition to

request mitigation without the need for evidence for every individual instance.

4. For the NUS Disabled Students Campaign to campaign for the government to abolish or lower charges for students who need medical notes and to develop a set of standard guidelines to ensure all medical notes are of the same quality.

## **Sexual and Domestic Violence**

CW: This motion contains statistics of how prominent sexual and domestic violence is within the disabled community. This motion only will include phrases domestic/sexual/physical violence or abuse and stalking.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Notes:**

1. Disabled people experience disproportionately higher rates of domestic abuse<sup>68</sup>.
2. More than one in three people with mental health conditions have experiencing domestic abuse in the past year and one in 20 people with mental health conditions have experienced sexual violence in the past year<sup>69</sup>.
3. In England, disabled people experience twice the rate of sexual assault, domestic abuse and stalking than non-disabled people<sup>70</sup>.
4. Adults with disabilities are 1.5 times more likely to be a victim of violence than those without a disability, while those with mental health conditions are at nearly four times the risk of experiencing violence<sup>71</sup>.
5. Disability is one of the characteristics most closely associated with domestic abuse<sup>72</sup>.

<sup>68</sup> Public Health England, 2015, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/480942/Disability\\_and\\_domestic\\_abuse\\_topic\\_overview\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/480942/Disability_and_domestic_abuse_topic_overview_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> Public Health England, 2015 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/480942/Disability\\_and\\_domestic\\_abuse\\_topic\\_overview\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/480942/Disability_and_domestic_abuse_topic_overview_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>70</sup> Public Health England, 2015, [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/480942/Disability\\_and\\_domestic\\_abuse\\_topic\\_overview\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/480942/Disability_and_domestic_abuse_topic_overview_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>71</sup> World Health Organisation, 2012, <http://www.who.int/disabilities/violence/en/>

<sup>72</sup> Flatley, 2016, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/compendium/focusonviolentcrimeandsexualoffences/yearendingmarch2015/chapter4intimatepersonalviolenceandpartnerabuse>

<sup>67</sup> What are the fees for accessing medical records (health records)?:

<http://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/2635.aspx?CategoryID=68&SubCategoryID=160>

6. That a loophole in legislation exists than allows carers to abuse the person under their care, for example not allowing Trans disabled people to transition, sexual abuse of learning disabled people<sup>73</sup>.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. Disabled people are disproportionately vulnerable to violence and our needs have been neglected for too long.
2. There are barriers to disabled students accessing support in ability to access services, accessibility of reporting structures and stigma relating to disability and mental illness.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. For the Disabled Students Officer to create resources for disabled student officers to help support students who may have experienced domestic and/or sexual violence.
2. For the Disabled Students Officer to work with other third party organisations such as Disabled Survivors Unite and Winvisible and other DPOs.

## **Strong and Active Unions**

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### **Disabled Students and Accessibility at NUS Demonstrations**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Notes:**

1. In previous years, disabled students have faced barriers in getting to, or otherwise participating in demonstrations called by the NUS.
2. The NUS has a commitment to accessibility and against disability discrimination, not just at democratic events, but in all their forms of protest and lobbying<sup>74</sup>.
3. The #Wecantmarch hashtag used to highlight the problems disabled people faced in being

included in direct action, with ways to make direct action more accessible<sup>75</sup>.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. DSC has current policy on the importance of free, funded and accessible education<sup>76</sup>.
2. DSC also has policy which calls "for a campaign of escalating direct action with the goal of preventing these cuts" regarding Conservative cuts and their austerity programme<sup>77</sup>
3. The barriers faced by disabled students in getting to and participating in the demonstrations can include:
  - a. Inaccessible/expensive transport
  - b. Inaccessible routes
  - c. Non-disabled students telling them they are "too disabled" to go/be useful
  - d. A lack of tasks or activities available/advertised to disabled students making them feel they do not have a valuable role within our movement
4. Despite these barriers, disabled students have gone on demonstrations and this should be facilitated.
5. Disabled students who can't march can take part in a wide range of other activities leading up to, and on the day. Such as: arrestee support, graphic design, press work etc.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. DSC should send out to SUs information about why it is important disabled students are involved in NUS demonstrations, and how to put in measures to ensure disabled student's involvement.
2. That there are certain requirements for any route chosen, which include:
  - a. Stewards are clearly marked by wearing florescent bibs.
  - b. Stewards are to be trained and able to inform/direct on:

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<sup>73</sup> The Mental Capacity Act outlines that carers must act in the "best interests" of those they care for, but this can be influenced by prejudice and allow the abuse of service users.

<sup>74</sup> [http://s3-eu-west-](http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/nusdigital/document/documents/21531/NUS_Articles_Rules_January2016.pdf)

[1.amazonaws.com/nusdigital/document/documents/21531/NUS\\_Articles\\_Rules\\_January2016.pdf](http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/nusdigital/document/documents/21531/NUS_Articles_Rules_January2016.pdf) "Equal Opportunites

<sup>75</sup> [anticuts.com/2015/05/25/wecantmarch-on-may-27th-wecantmarch.wordpress.com/2015/05/11/what-is-wecantmarch](http://anticuts.com/2015/05/25/wecantmarch-on-may-27th-wecantmarch.wordpress.com/2015/05/11/what-is-wecantmarch)

<sup>76</sup> [https://nusdigital.s3-eu-west-](https://nusdigital.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/document/documents/16791/Disabled%20Students%20Policy%20201316.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJKEA56ZWKFU6MHNQ&Expires=1472143894&Signature=918fEqHLa%2Bkhzzs%2BcGPaab%2FY3A%3D)

[1.amazonaws.com/document/documents/16791/Disabled%20Students%20Policy%20201316.pdf?](https://nusdigital.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/document/documents/16791/Disabled%20Students%20Policy%20201316.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJKEA56ZWKFU6MHNQ&Expires=1472143894&Signature=918fEqHLa%2Bkhzzs%2BcGPaab%2FY3A%3D)

[AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJKEA56ZWKFU6MHNQ&Expires=1472143894&Signature=918fEqHLa%2Bkhzzs%2BcGPaab%2FY3A%3D](https://nusdigital.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/document/documents/16791/Disabled%20Students%20Policy%20201316.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJKEA56ZWKFU6MHNQ&Expires=1472143894&Signature=918fEqHLa%2Bkhzzs%2BcGPaab%2FY3A%3D), Motions from 2015, 102+103

<sup>77</sup> Ibid from point 1, Motions from 2015, Emergency Motion: From Election to Austerity

- i. Accessible toilets at the start of the march, and along the route.
    - ii. Dropped curbs at the start and end of the route and where the leaving points are.
    - iii. Leaving points marked by stewards allowing people to leave.
  - c. The first bloc on any demonstration should be the Disabled Students' Bloc, so they are able to set the pace of the demonstration.
  - d. That there be an accessible area for disabled people to listen to speakers during rallies, and that the stage itself is accessible.
3. That there be an accessibility sub-committee for the planning of the NUS demos, in regards to the march and the route itself. This committee should be made up of the DSO and at least 2 other people from the Disabled Student's Committee, so that people with different impairments are consulted.
  4. That a "Demo HQ" be set up and facilitated by the NUS, along with the Disabled Students' Campaign, so that students who can't march can still participate in demonstrations, doing tasks that are essential to direct action.

## Clear Accessibility information available for Student Union events

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. Accessibility information for union events nationwide are generally not available in a clear and accessible way. The lack of information regarding accessibility, particularly with the use of smoke machines and flashing lights, is endangering the lives of students with respiratory problems or photosensitive epilepsy.
2. The lack of accessibility information on event webpages can result in disabled students feeling excluded from all events or putting themselves in unnecessary danger. Unions don't understand the gravity of this problem and how easy it would be to solve it.

### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. NUS Disabled Students Campaign should publish clear guidelines facilitating Student Unions putting on accessible events, with an emphasis on making information about the use

of smoke machines and strobe lighting available on online events pages in a way that is straight-forward, reliable and easy to access.

## Rules Revision

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### Make NUS Events Accessible to Disabled Students

#### Disabled Students Conference Notes:

1. Access needs of disabled students are disregarded/overlooked in terms of conference member behaviour and NUS structures.
2. Safety and wellbeing of disabled students is compromised.

#### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. Lack of accessibility within NUS is a huge barrier to participation of disabled students<sup>78</sup> as the diversity of students' disabilities is not taken into consideration.
2. Members of conference are consistently violating the code of conduct through ableist<sup>79</sup> behaviours with no repercussions<sup>80</sup>.
3. The culture surrounding disabled students and their access needs will not improve unless there is an active move to take disciplinary action against individuals breaking the code of conduct with regards to safety and inclusion of disabled students.
4. The failure of NUS to its disabled members is in direct contrast to the core value of NUS.
5. Lack of thorough vetting of venues for its accessibility exemplifies NUS's lack of commitment to its disabled members.

#### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. To allow disabled student to bring enablers to all NUS DSC events<sup>81</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> In the NUS 2014 governance review it stated that the most common reason for lack of attendance at DSC was the inaccessibility of going alone and we would stipulate that this is a barrier to attendance at all NUS events.

<sup>79</sup> [www.stopableism.org/what.asp](http://www.stopableism.org/what.asp)

<sup>80</sup> NUS code of conduct states that discipline action may take place if there is a breach, which includes:

*"Acting without due regard for the safety of others; and infringement of equal opportunities, safe space, safeguarding, no platform or staff protocol policy"*. The open letter above outlines examples of breaches at national conference specifically.

2. Ensure access breaks, lunch breaks and food for all dietary requirements provided at all DSC events
3. Ensure an accessible registration queue is available at disabled students conference, and to make delegates aware of this
4. To reinforce to all delegates the requirement for adhering to practices to ensure committee meetings/disabled students conference are accessible to all, including;
  - a. Reduced cheering or unnecessary loud noises on conference floor, including whooping and clapping
  - b. Consequences for those who ignore this requirement
5. For NUS to evaluate whether it's practices make events inaccessible, including:
  - a) No food suitable for those with dietary requirements
  - b) Long days affecting those with chronic illness causing physical symptoms
  - c) Unfulfilled access needs
  - d) Unsuitable accommodation
  - e) Lack of publicity for accessible check ins
6. To actively implement consequences for individuals breaking accessibility practices
7. To ensure all DSC videos have audio captions and British Sign Language
8. Accountability questions are put on the projector in rounds of 3 and alternative formats provided for those with visual impairments or learning differences.
9. To ensure microphones be used at all times at disabled students conference
10. To ensure that accommodation for each conference/meeting;
  - a. Meets accessibility standards
  - b. Where possible, that delegates requiring an accessible room are not isolated from the rest of delegates and are close to the conference/meeting venue
11. For DSC to work with elections committee to advise the chief returning officer on setting

and enforcing guidelines for campaign teams, including;

- a. areas they are not allowed to campaign in
  - b. receiving consent before giving out material to delegates
12. For DSC to work with elections committee to advise the chief returning officer and to include all liberation campaigns and sections in how to make election procedures and conduct more inclusive and accessible.
  13. To seek feedback on accessibility of events.

## Give Nations the Vote We All Thought They Had

### Disabled Students Conference Notes:

1. The Nations are integral parts of NUS Disabled Students' Campaign
2. Representation is key in all the work we do
3. Nations Officers are vital in the work NUS DSC does

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. Nations' Disabled Student Officers should be full voting committee members of NUS Disabled Students' Campaign.
2. NUS DSC Standing orders should be updated and changed to reflect this.

### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. To change DSC Standing Order 101 Part D "The Disabled Student Officers for each of the nations; Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will act as observers for the nations they represent on NUS Disabled Students Committee."  
To:  
"The Disabled Student Officers for each of the nations; Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will be full voting members for the nations they represent on NUS Disabled Students Committee"

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<sup>81</sup> Disabled students have been refused enablers at a number of NUS events including NEC and liberation campaign committee meetings.

## Society and Citizenship

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### Support for disabled students entering the workplace

#### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. There is a lack of support and information available to help disabled students who are entering the workplace
2. Disabled students often find it harder to find employment after leaving education
3. Many interview processes make it challenging for some disabled students to demonstrate their abilities effectively.

#### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. For the Disabled Students Campaign to work with charities like project 100 to support disabled students to make the best applications they can.
2. For the Disabled Students Campaign to lobby the government to put more programmes of support in place for disabled students who are entering the workplace
3. For the Disabled Students Campaign to lobby big companies and corporate organisations to adopt straight to interview programmes for disabled students to make the process fairer
4. For NUS Disabled Students Campaign to create a series of guidelines for placement officers/career services on how to provide support, run services and give information specifically tailored to disabled students applying, interviewing and going on placements.

### Disability and Sex and Relationship Education

#### Disabled Students Conference Notes:

1. Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is an essential part of education and development.
2. Disabled people can have fulfilling sexual and romantic relationships.

#### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. People with developmental, social or intellectual disabilities have less (if any) access to SRE than non-disabled peers.
2. That inclusive SRE is something that all unions should be providing.

3. Access to inclusive SRE for disabled people is further impacted by their intersections such as being LGBT+, Black, Trans, a student of faith
4. Due to de-sexualisation of disabled people and exclusion from SRE, it is an area poorly researched
5. Over 50% of people with a disability do not have any sexual relationship at all

#### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. NUS DSC will provide information to unions on how to advise disabled students on matters relating to sex and relationships (such as the existence of adaptive equipment).
2. NUS DSC to create resources on educating student carers or service users (whether under social care or cared for by family/friends) on the legalities surrounding carers and sex, with specific emphasis on rights of LGBT+ and Trans service users
3. NUS DSC to ensure that the work of other campaigns are doing on SRE are disability inclusive
4. NUS DSC to be open to working with 3rd parties i.e. Sexpression in promoting DSRE (Disabled Sex and Relationships Education)
5. NUS DSC to encourage NUS Extra to work with companies such as Lovehoney who sell adaptive equipment enabling mobility impaired people to have fulfilling sexual relationships.

## Education

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### Make Course Assessments Accessible for Everyone

#### Disabled Students Conference Notes:

1. The disabling impact of current assessment methods means that disabled students cannot fully access their courses in the same way as their non-disabled peers and that courses do not meet with the Equality Act 2010's guidelines of reasonable adjustments. (Novotney 2014)
2. That assessments which do not work for students can have a negative effect on academic performance and health (DRUK, 2017).
3. Some Courses/Modules offer a single point of assessment for students (Glasgow University 2016).

4. Prescriptive assessment dates and multiple assessment dates close together (Durham University 2017) can impact on the mental and physical health of students, especially disabled students, and also not fit around existing health needs/medical appointments (Novotney, 2014).
5. That the main motion makes important points regarding the accessibility of assessments in general but fails to recognise that for many courses, especially in FE, institutions do not have the final say on the assessment methods used as they are more likely to be bound by certifying boards, professional bodies and government.
6. There are a wide variety of adaptations and systems for accessing these adaptations from institution to institution which can, in itself, be inaccessible to students as they transition to different institutions and have to relearn systems.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. Those on courses/modules with one point of assessment consequently have no other opportunities to rectify their marks if their performance is affected because of illness due to no resits/other assessments.
2. Assessments on courses and modules should be used to measure the knowledge and understanding of course content rather than how a student can present it. As such, the method of assessment should not matter if the aims of the module and/or assessment are being met.
3. Students should be able to choose from a variety of assessment formats with regards to how they are assessed and institutions should provide this option to the level of standard.
4. Universities are not making 'reasonable adjustments' with regards to assessments and are therefore breaking the guidelines of the Equality Act 2010.
5. Mitigating/Extenuating Circumstances (M/EC) for disabled students should be easier to apply for, as access needs of disabled students either do not change or worsen, however medical evidence is still required, you can only apply, if you fail, complicated by the presence of a "Student Support Plan".
6. 'Accessible Assessments' should be a universal process.
7. In order to make assessment truly inclusive the Disabled Students Campaign must work on a national level to persuade

government departments, professional bodies and qualification providers to improve and standardise their rules around assessments and provision of adaptations.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. For NUS Disabled Students Campaign to work with VPs Welfare, FE, HE to create a campaign for 'accessible assessments'.
2. For NUS Disabled Students Campaign to collect case studies of students who have both benefitted from having the choice of how they are assessed and also of those who have had their studies affected by prescribed assessments, single assessment points, or no re-sits.
3. For NUS Disabled Students Campaign to create a campaign toolkit which can be distributed to unions in order to build this campaign.
4. For NUS Disabled Students Campaign to carry out research into the impact of single point of assessment/no re-sits/assessment dates and times/prescribed assessment methods on courses to gain a better insight of its impact.
5. For NUS Disabled Students Campaign to create a set of guidelines highlighting inclusive practice for all new courses/modules as well as reviews on current courses/modules at all institutions.
6. For NUS Disabled Students Campaign to encourage unions to hold institutions to account when 'accessible assessment' methods are not upheld.
7. For NUS Disabled Students Campaign to campaign to make mitigating/extenuating circumstances universal and easier to access for disabled students e.g. self-certification
8. To use the evidence gathered in CR2 of the motion to lobby and work with relevant bodies, groups and government departments to create standardised best practice on diversifying assessment methods and the processes for students to access these processes that balances the need for rigour and preserving/developing standards with fairness, accessibility and transparency.

## Emergency Motions

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### NUS Volunteers Should be Allowed Enablers

#### Disabled Students Conference Believes

1. In prior years, NUS Group volunteers at NEC, National Conference, liberation and sections conferences and committee meetings have been allowed enablers if they required them.
2. Some NUS Group volunteers (on committees and steering) have been told they are not allowed to take enablers to NEC and National Conference due to the "Access Budget" not being able to afford it.
3. It is not clear where this change in policy has been made, or whether it was passed democratically.
4. At least one volunteer had to go to A&E after an NUS event where they were not allowed to take an enabler, due to the amount of stress and pain they were in.
5. Under the Equalities Act 2010, volunteers for an organisation must be granted reasonable adjustments in the case of disability.

#### Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:

1. Disabled students should be able to participate in NUS democracy and events to the same degree as their non-disabled counterparts.
2. NUS should uphold its responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010, including but not limited to reasonable adjustments such as enablers for disabled NUS Group volunteers.

#### Disabled Students Conference Resolves

1. To mandate the Officer to lobby for all disabled NUS Group volunteers should be entitled to have an enabler for NUS democratic events.
2. To mandate the Officer to lobby for the NUS "Access Budget" to be expanded to account for any enablers a disabled student may need.
3. To mandate the NUS Disabled Students' Committee to further the aims of this motion and seek to make it policy across the NUS Group.

### #SaveKelechi

#### Disabled Conference Believes:

1. Kelechi Chioba is a young woman, and keen volunteer for the National Union of Students (NUS) Disabled Students Campaign and Black Students Campaign.

2. She is currently placed in home office accommodation in Derby who has asked for asylum on the grounds that she fears ill treatment from her parents and family members in Nigeria because of her disability.
3. Kelechi suffers from polio, is wheelchair bound and suffers from mental health problems. In Nigeria, she is regarded as a curse and a source of shame upon her family, due to her disability. She has suffered severe abuse at the hands of her family, including verbal abuse, beatings and attempts to end her life.
4. She came to study in the UK as a postgraduate student, having paid for her visa and fees herself through work. She was sexually abused in the workplace, which led to her attempting suicide in desperation.
5. She came to the UK to escape the abuse, her mental health and disability worsened. Her brother and sister, who arrived in the UK before her have been caring for her, however she fears that returning to Nigeria would mean they would succumb again to the societal pressures and strong influence of culture and kinship in Nigeria that discriminates against disabled individuals.
6. Having to cover the costs of the wheelchair herself, financial hardship meant she could not complete her course. This made it impossible to apply for extra leave when her student visa ran out. Seeking help from the advice bureau on how to remain permanently, they told her she would need to give up her student status and make a fresh application that would now need to be made from Nigeria.
7. Kelechi made a human rights' appeal for her case for fear of prosecution and discrimination, which was rejected by the Home Office.

#### Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:

1. It is a human right that no one shall be subject to torture or inhuman treatment, and that everybody's life should be protected by law.
2. It is reprehensible that the government can say 'there was nothing sufficiently serious in the family or private life circumstances that could possibly outweigh the need for immigration controls to be enforced'.
3. If she returns, Kelechi fears that she will face further abuse, and be put in a psychiatric home. Having witnessed patients in psychiatric care being chained up and forced to take medication, she fears for her life.
4. We should not have an immigration system which devalues the lives of those facing oppression such as Kelechi. We have an urgent responsibility, as one of the world's richest nations, to ensure that those fleeing oppression and discrimination wherever they come from, get the same right to a quality of life in the UK as any UK citizen.
5. Whilst in the UK, despite disability and difficulty, Kelechi has worked and volunteered to better the lives of others and it is shameful

that the UK government refuses to protect her from the oppression she unfairly receives because of how and where she was born.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To mandate the Officer to write to Home Secretary and the Home Affairs team, demanding a meeting on Kelechi's case.
2. To mandate the Officer to ask all NUS Officers write to the Home Secretary in support of Kelechi's asylum application.
3. To mandate Committee to promote the fundraising and petition websites in support of Kelechi, by sharing on social media and circulating in the NUS jiscmail lists.
4. To reaffirm our support for migrants' rights, against borders, and for an end to cruel detention and deportation policies
5. To extend our solidarity with Kelechi, and all those in detention and facing threats of deportation.

## **Policy Lapse**

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### **A Disabled Students Officer on Every Campus**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. That representation at a campus level is often the most effective way of dealing with specific issues affecting students on a daily basis
2. Many NUS affiliated institutions have little or no representation for disabled students
3. There are still some unions whose disabled students officers are not reserved for students self-defining as disabled
4. That often students unions struggle to engage disabled students and have unfilled disabled students officer positions
5. Many students, officers and Unions generally are unaware of the need for self-organised disabled student campaigns
6. Disability and difference must be embraced, supported and promoted within any inclusive organisation.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. NUS Disabled Students Campaign stands firmly by the value that disabled people know best about our own liberation - 'nothing about us without us'
2. It is vital that disabled students voices are heard and that they are not spoken for by non-disabled people
3. That NUS needs to do more work supporting students unions in securing disabled representation in their democratic structures

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To produce a 'why have a disabled students officer' resource that supports students unions in the arguments to increase disabled students representation by the development of disabled students officer positions
2. Provide support and guidance to students unions struggling to engage disabled students in democratic structures
3. Produce information about what disability is, the social model of disability, self-definition and examples of impairments that could fall within the campaign
4. DSO and Committee to work with local Unions to identify the numbers of disabled students locally, both using institutional figures, HESA (or equivalent in FE), and promote this to decision-makers within institutions and Unions – covering activities, academic quality/examinations and the facilities/estate.
5. Brief Unions on the spectrum of disabilities and the diversity of disability both generally and locally within a student body.
6. Support local Unions in their strategy to communicate clearly and accessibly with their disabled constituency.
7. To assist Unions in reaching out to their disabled part-time students and older students who are attending College or University for the first time, and to arm Unions with factual information about the general lifecycle of a disabled student, including mature and part-time disabled students.

### **Requests for resources and sharing of best practice**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. Student unions all across the country are doing incredible things for disabled students
2. Currently this best practice is not collated or documented anywhere

#### **Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. The NUS is in a unique position to connect and collate the work of students unions from across the country
2. NUS could be doing more to share the wealth of knowledge from within the student movement

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. NUS Disabled Students should be developing regular briefings for students unions about best practice across the movement this should include but not limited to:
  - a. Anti-cuts work
  - b. Mental health campaigns

- c. Time to Change Pledge
- d. Education policy such as mitigating circumstances, fit to sit, exam process
- e. Making campuses accessible

## Low Cost Disabled Sport

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. That HE and FE unions often provide a range of sports
2. That some of these sports are more accessible for people with different impairments than others
3. That not all unions provide sports accessible to all disabled people
4. That there are not always standard disabled sports near to all unions
5. There are several organisations including English federation of disabled sport, British Universities and colleges sport, GB wheelchair basketball, UK athletics, English institute of sport and UK sport, that are already promoting and working on initiatives to get more disabled people involved in sport.
6. Those organisations are finding it difficult to get institutions involved.

### Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:

1. Sport has become an important part of being at university and of the "student experience"
2. Many disabled students are cut off from being able to take part in sports because their union does not provide anything accessible to them
3. Students should have access to sports at their union
4. HE and FE Unions are often low on money
5. That students should have access to 'standard' disabled sports teams even if they're a distance away.
6. DSC to continue working with BUCS to improve training and participation of people in disabled sport within institutions and the wider student sport movement.
7. DSC to make available to all members the research conducted by EFDS and published in Autumn 2013 about participation in sport for disabled people.

### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. That we should work within our own unions with the support of the DSO to make sure that accessible sport is available for all when they want it
2. To remember that our needs as disabled people will be different from those of other disabled people and support all students who come to us and want access to sports
3. The DSO to conduct research into low cost options for sports that people with different

disabilities can participate in, whether serious sports or fun sports

4. To include in this research a questionnaire in order that disabled students can share their experience with adapted sports and offer information
5. The DSO to make the result of this available online and email it to all SUs so that they have a clearer idea of how to organise sport accessible to people with different disabilities
6. The DSO to produce a model motion regarding mandating our union to pay travel costs where practical for disabled students to sports teams that meet their needs
7. DSO to support unions who wish to write a motion to mandate their unions to assist with their disabled students accessing sport.

## Accessible Freshers' Events

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. Many of our Constituent Members work hard to ensure accessible freshers' events with some being exemplars of best practice.

### Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:

1. Whilst many of our Constituent Members work hard to ensure accessible freshers' events, NUS should be encouraging them to continuously improve year on year.

### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. To encourage Constituent Members to evaluate and improve freshers' events in relation to disabled students' participation.
2. To gather and share best practice with Constituent Members on accessible freshers' events.

## Full time of paid part time disabled students officers

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. It is very difficult to know the exact percentage of disabled students in FE/HE institutions as there is no clear way to collect this data, not all disabled students claim DSA, not all those that do inform their institution, etc
2. Few FE but many HE institutions have one or more full time elected sabbatical officers
3. That the number of sabbatical officers responsible for a specific liberation group is rising

4. That disabled people are underemployed with relation to the general population

#### **Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. That disabled students face specific needs socially and educationally during their time in education
2. That sadly the needs of disabled students are often sidelined and marginalised within our own unions
3. That having a full time sabbatical officer responsible for disabled students, where the budget exists, would help mean that the needs of disabled students did not get sidelined and marginalised within our own unions and keep our needs central to the running of the unions
4. That often this is not possible
5. That it can be very difficult for disabled students to find work, due to the extra amount of time our studying can take us, and due to how hard it can be to find employment
6. That as a result we are often given a choice between working for money where possible, or doing unpaid work within our own unions

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To campaign for full-time disabled students' officers within our unions where possible and practical
2. Where it is not possible and practical to campaign for paid disabled students' officers on a part time basis
3. The disabled students' officer to do research into the plausibility of full time and of paid part-time disabled students officers in general in order to formulate arguments for this
4. To contact unions with these arguments in the hopes of engaging in discussion with them about this
5. To support disabled students' officers campaigning along these lines and give them resources and information to help them in doing so where possible

## **Renewal of the Access Challenge**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. That NUS runs an Access Challenge in collaboration with Attitude is Everything
2. That the Access Challenge provides students unions with an easy and supported way to improve the access within students unions

#### **Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. Inaccessible students unions, clubs and societies and venues are often cited as a huge barrier to engagement for disabled students
2. The Access Challenge has helped numerous students unions across the country to improve their services and facilities; in turn this has improved the lives of many disabled students
3. Over the last two years the Access Challenge has not been promoted as much as it should have and seems to have dropped off the agenda

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To increase the publicity that this campaign has, encouraging and supporting students unions to engage with the resources that are available to them.
2. Aim to get another 15 students unions running the Access Challenge in the next academic year.

## **Anti-Cuts on Campus**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. That the austerity agenda is infringing on the support services offered by universities and colleges.
2. It is often peripheral support services such as disabled support office, counselling services and occupational health which are the first to be cut when finance pressures occur this can result in services being decreased or even closed

#### **Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. That these cuts are having a disproportionately negative effect on the lives and achievements of disabled students.
2. Campaigns against cuts and closures should be specific and targeted.
3. That campus level representatives are best placed to tackle threats at their own institution, but that they require support from the national campaign.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. NUS should carry out and publish research into the services and facilities most commonly under threat of downscaling or closure and measure the impact this has on the lives and achievements of disabled students.

2. NUS should Map the closure of support services e.g. disability support offices, counselling services at institutions across the country.

3. NUS should collate the best practice from the student movement in fighting cuts and implement a system whereby the strategies and tactics of similar campaigns can be shared by different universities and college.

4. To mandate the DSO to produce and distribute resources to aid campus representatives in their endeavours.

5. To mandate the DSO to pursue an anti-cuts agenda at a national level, including publicising the problem, collaborating with useful allies and co-ordinating synchronised action particularly around; a) ATOS b) DWP c) changes to benefits d) workfare e) shut down of remploy factors f) bedroom tax

## No privatization

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. Privatisation of services disadvantages the most vulnerable members of society.
2. Privatisation of services, particularly counselling services, has been proven to have a negative impact on students.
3. That disabled students often suffer from the impacts of privatisation.

### Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:

1. That the privatisation of services is wrong.
2. The privatisation of services will further discriminate and disadvantage disabled students.
3. That these services are essential to the welfare of students, especially disabled students.

### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. To lead the campaign against privatisation of services.
2. To support officers and students in their individualised local campaigns relating to this.
3. To lobby the NUS to campaign on a national and political level against the privatisation of public services.

## Accessible accommodation off campus: Let's Investigate

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. Kent Union, alongside the Canterbury council, Christ Church Union and Canterbury College have run a successful housing accreditation scheme, which rates local landlord's attitudes and quality of housing.

2. This accreditation scheme not only helps students pick the most suitable accommodation and corresponding landlords, but it also inspires landlords to improve their practices and property in order to earn good reviews on the scheme and, in turn, attract more student tenants. All this creates a healthy cycle that gradually improves the quality of off-campus student accommodation.

3. Until this year, Canterbury housing accreditation scheme had not included any focus on accessible housing for disabled students off-campus. Kent's disability campaign has now pushed for a focus in this area with great success.

4. For many disabled students, there are extra, unsupported or additional costs that draw down on our budget for off-campus accommodation.

5. The effect of this can mean that accessible accommodation – private, social or University-managed – is located in a place that many not be best for travel to class, or for daily essentials (shopping, post office, pharmacy/GP or the veterinary surgery etc), is unsafe/poorly lit or in some other way doesn't pay for accessible, safe and homely housing that one could rent without the "disability premium" being sliced off our budget.

### Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:

1. Finding accessible off-campus accommodation is a major problem for a disabled student. The chances of finding a suitable place are disproportionately narrowed considering they have to find 1) accommodation on a student budget and 2) one that suits their particular and specific needs.

2. The ratio between housing that is accessible for those with disabilities and housing that is not is extremely minimal to the former.

3. This disproportionately is exacerbated, due to the transitory nature of student life in general, disabled tenants are likely to only want to live on short term leases and live in the property for a couple of years at most, and so they will likely need any adaptations already fitted into the property before committing to a lease, as they will not have the time to establish a long term relationship with their landlord and build up their unique preferences gradually.

### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To investigate how many disabled student tenants actually prefer off campus housing to that of on-campus across the UK in HE and FE institutions.
2. To investigate the possibility of other institutions across the UK' having housing accreditation schemes, or something similar, with an accessible housing focus in order to discover good practice and ways of improving the system across the UK.
3. To investigate how to advise other institutions across the UK who may not have established systems on how to best implement and maintain them.
4. To have all of this information collected in an accessible format by next Conference and made available to all delegates so we can look into pursuing this issue further by taking action.
5. This research will be carried out with regards to the following statements:-
  - a. Not all disabled students need the same type of accommodation: wc, solo with ensuite, shared, carer or guide dog accompanied, ground floor, charging points, car park needed, scooters storage and so on
  - b. Some institutions have no on campus accommodation to offer students, this is a typical trait of FE institutions but HE institutions cannot be ruled out either or cannot provide on campus accommodation that is suitable for disabled students, which forces the student to look for accommodation in the local area.
  - c. Some universities have policy for guaranteed accommodation for disabled students. The University of Aberystwyth, for instance, provides accommodation around the local area and guarantee accommodation for disabled students for the entirety of their course.
6. DS Campaign to link up with the Welfare Zone to provide tools and information for our SU advice centres and officers, to better the campaign for accessible and affordable safe student accommodation by all providers.
7. To calculate the "disability premium" of expenses not supported by maintenance or benefits across the spectrum of disability, and to engage with sector organisations in raising this with the relevant Ministers across the UK and elected City Mayors/Provosts/Cynghorau lleol/OFMDFM.

## **Accessible Universities**

### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. Institutions do not always take accessibility into account when building new institution builds;
2. Disabled students deserve complete accessibility to all institution buildings as a whole;
3. Complete accessibility is defined as when disabled students can fully access anywhere within the intuition grounds.
4. That some institutions fall short of legal requirements relating to disability access

### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To request the inclusion and consultation of disabled students in the planning for new buildings/refurbishments of existing buildings.
2. To campaign for institutions to ensure that accessibility is a top priority for any new buildings or refurbishments.
3. To campaign for institutions to fully incorporate the definition advertised above.
4. To campaign for institutions and their planners to adhere to accessibility law
5. To apply this policy to all forms of Higher Education and Further Education institutions
6. To adapt campaign strategies in cases of listed and temporary buildings in order to be as efficient as possible in as many cases as possible

## **Access based on needs**

### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. Many disabled students find it difficult to navigate and travel across campuses' nationwide.
2. The Equality act clearly states ... reasonable and adequate provisions.

### **Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. That no student should be discriminated against.
2. That adequate adjustments should be made to improve accessibility on campus across the United Kingdom.

3. That pre-existing provisions in institutions be reviewed periodically to reflect the standards of the NUS Access Challenge.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. The NUS Disabled Students Campaigns will lobby for a review of accessibility provisions on campus every three years, to ensure that standards are upheld.
2. The NUS Disabled Students Campaign will support officers and students in this campaign by providing the appropriate documents and materials.

## **Prescription Costs**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. Prescriptions cost £7.85 per item and £15.70 per item of elastic hosiery in England.
2. Many disabled students are discriminated against in relation to medical care.
3. Many disabled students are then disadvantaged financially because they require regular prescriptions.
4. People receive free prescriptions in the rest of the United Kingdom.
5. Many disabled students enter further and higher education part-time, and any policy or campaign relating to prescriptions, prescription costs and access, must include fighting for part-time students too.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:**

1. All students regardless of age, in HE and FE, should be entitled to free prescriptions.
2. That disabled students should not be disadvantaged financially because they require regular prescriptions.
3. That students on a low income and with savings of less than £16'000 can apply using an HC1 form for help under the NHS Low Income Scheme
4. Those people who receive income-related Employment and support allowance already have an entitlement to free prescriptions.
5. All students aged 16, 17 and 18 are entitled to free prescriptions whilst they are in education.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. That DSC send a motion based on this motion to national conference so that NUS, as a whole, can campaign for all students to receive free prescriptions and more help with health costs.

2. DSC will support all students who wish to run campaigns to get free prescriptions and more help with health costs.

3. DSC will make information about the NHS Low Income Scheme available to all unions so students know how to apply.

4. Part-time students to be actively included in the representation and campaigning work of NUS on prescriptions and prescription costs.

5. Campaign and lobby decision-makers in government and in quangos to allow and promote widespread availability of longer-term prescriptions.

## **NHS Prescriptions**

#### **Disabled Students Conference Believes:**

1. The length of time needed when switching GPs does not accommodate persons who require regular medication;
2. This is disruptive to students who are changing location and have to acclimatise to a lot already.
3. Transferral methods of records differ throughout the United Kingdom and for students from outside the UK it can be even more complex.

#### **Disabled Students Conference further believes:**

1. Not all students change their GPs when they move to prevent a disruption to their care.
2. Transferral of records does not always happen for related health services, including wheelchair services and specialist health care.

#### **Disabled Students Conference Resolves:**

1. To lobby the NHS to have a faster system of transferring records.
2. To provide guidance for those wishing to run a campaign to improve services at their institutions
3. To provide guidance to those wishing to campaign to the NHS in their area to improve the speed that records are transferred.
4. To look at where systems are effective in this regard and lobby for systems that have been proved to work to be implemented elsewhere
5. To increase the awareness the possibility of being a temporary patient in a surgery where applicable and encouraging such practice where not applicable

## Mental Health – Away from awareness, towards action

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. This year the Mental Health Summit brought together for the first time students' union officers and staff, external mental health and health practitioners, institutional academic and support staff to discuss mental health and how we can improve it for students.
2. Audre Lorde was quoted as saying 'Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation and that is an act of political warfare.'
3. Trade Unions fought for the right to have an 8-hour work day.
4. Being healthy makes you happier and more productive.
5. Mental health problems cost £26 billion across the UK economy (<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/NSF/Pages/Mentalhealth.aspx>)

### Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:

1. NUS should be striving to create positive change around mental health
2. The Time to Change campaign has been a huge success in changing the rhetoric around mental health and supporting campaigning to move from awareness to action
3. That discussions from the summit provided some exciting suggestions for creating this change
4. Self-care is a political act.
5. Self-care is about trying to be more self-aware. Noticing when you are over-whelmed, ill, stressed or exhausted and making changes to your routine and lifestyle that will help to improve your wellbeing.
6. Being a disability activist or Disabled Students Officer can sometimes be an isolating role.
7. Continuously campaigning for the rights of disabled people can sometimes be upsetting, mentally and physically draining and have implications on people's health.
8. Activism is often based in a very macho culture.
9. Disability campaigning is about community and collectivism, as a group we can achieve much more than as an individual.

10. Disabled Students Officers and campaigners are more effective when they feel supported and not attacked by the rest of the movement.

11. As a campaign we need to be better at articulating the difference between accountability and bullying, publishing the appropriate channels for accountability whilst at the same time empowering officers to tackle bullying and harassment.

### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. To develop ways that mental health support and understanding can be embedded into the structures of students unions by supporting unions to:
  - a. Lobby for relevant and appropriate training for all staff
  - b. Ensuring that academic policies do not cause undue additional mental distress for students experiencing mental health issues
  - c. Ensuring support services and institutional policies are clearly advertised at recruitment and pre-arrival stage and that disclosure of current or previous mental health problems is actively encouraged at application stage
  - d. integrate mental health into the widening participation agenda, both nationally and locally by providing outreach to people who may not have continued in education as a result of their mental health problems and including mental health in OFFA agreements
2. Help students unions to win on achieving well-supported, appropriate services for students, which are responsive to the feedback of students and service users and flexible to students needs both in terms of the type of service (i.e. not a one size fits all, counselling for everyone approach), but also the nature of the service (i.e. number of sessions available, services available in the evenings where possible)
3. Support students unions to develop joined-up approaches across institutions and external services
4. NUS Disabled Students Campaign will develop both informal and formal support networks for women's officers across the country.
5. Steps will be taken to ensure self-care is embedded in the work and culture of the campaign and student movement.
6. Self-care will be promoted out too members with practical tips and advice on how to improve self-care for activists.

7. NUS will provide information and advice about bullying and harassment within the role.
8. The Disabled Students Campaign will promote the NUS activist mental health guides to the membership.
9. The Disabled Students Campaign will continue to promote the Time to Change Pledge which involves unions developing an action plan to improve the support they give to employees around mental health.
10. NUS will provide information and advice around best practice for policies and procedures that improve the support that is available to staff and volunteers e.g. access to support services, TOIL, mental health policies, sick leave/pay, management mental health training and bullying policies.

## Erasmus Years and Years Abroad

### Disabled Students Conference Believes:

1. Erasmus years or years abroad are mandatory in some degrees
2. These can generally be done through studying or working
3. If a large part of your degree is a modern language and you do not spend a year abroad studying or working this can put you at a significant disadvantage in your final year
4. These are often also available to students who are not studying a language degree

### Disabled Students Conference Further Believes:

1. Disabled students are often dissuaded from doing a year abroad because it is believed to be too dangerous or difficult medically or practically
2. Whilst for some students this might be true, for others it might not be, and the student themselves best placed to know whether a year abroad is possible
3. When undertaken they can be an amazing period of self-discovery and a wonderful experience
4. Disabled people are often under-employed and may find it difficult to access work during their year abroad making study the better option

### Disabled Students Conference Resolves:

1. That giving disabled students access to a year abroad is critical
2. To work with our institutions and language departments on this topic to ensure that no more

disabled students are left at a disadvantage because their department has decided that in their opinion the year abroad could be too difficult or dangerous, and to help them treat disabled students as individuals with regard to this

3. The DSO to place some information on the NUS Disabled Students webpage regarding Erasmus years and years abroad and disabled students for students to consult when considering an Erasmus year or year abroad

4. This should include a list of important things for the student to consider or research such as the cost of medical treatment in different countries, flight times, whether they are in work or studying, the accessibility of the place they intend to go to, whether the place they are going to has additional support for them to access etc, in order that students are empowered to inform themselves about their year abroad

5. The DSO to ask for submissions of blogs from disabled students who took Erasmus years and years abroad for the website, and place these on the website

6. The DSO to contact Students' Unions regarding the way disabled students are dissuaded from taking Erasmus years sometimes and urge them to contact the departments that organise Erasmus years and years abroad and that there is support and advice available for disabled students who wish to consider this

## Mature and Part time students' conference resolutions 2016

### Reasonable Adjustments for Student Parents

#### NUS Believes

1. Many mature and part-time students study alongside full time employment and/or additional caring responsibilities.
2. Many institutions do not have policy on student parents and do not have provisions for reasonable adjustments to be made for students with children regarding assessments and placements.

#### NUS Further Believes

1. Students who have parenting responsibilities should be supported by their Universities and Students' Unions the same way as they would be if they were an employee.
2. That childcare can be costly, particularly if University hours or placements have been rearranged or cancelled.
3. That student parents who are breastfeeding should give provision and support so they can maintain

breastfeeding whilst returning to studies such as time to express milk.

4. That student parents should have allowances for when their children are sick.

### **NUS Resolves**

1. To campaign and lobby to ensure Universities and Students' Unions support and implement reasonable adjustments for student parents.
2. To campaign for provisions on campuses for breastfeeding mums.
3. To maximise the flexibility for student parents.
5. To provide resources and materials to support students' unions to work with universities to develop student parent and care giver policies.

## **Great Expectations**

### **Conference believes**

1. That very often an institution's expectations of students and the work they submit can be unclear.
2. Notes one example as the use of Harvard referencing, which whilst a component of some public examinations, is not a component of all and is unlikely to have been a component of examinations sat by students who have been out of education for a number of years.

### **Conference further believes**

1. It should be considered best practice for institutions to signpost and clearly explain what is expected of students, whether covering in lectures, tutorials, handouts or virtual learning environments.

### **Conference resolves**

2. To instruct the mature and part-time students' campaign to further such best practice.

## **Part-time students and their health**

### **NUS Believes**

1. That for students who have health problems, institutions can advise or offer to transfer them from full-time to part-time study.

### **NUS Further Believes**

1. That while the flexibility of study is important, simply offering this option is not the end of an institutions responsibility.
2. That institutions should be ensuring that if students choose to switch to part-time study they should be following up with those students to ensure that the appropriate support is being given

### **NUS Resolves**

1. To give guidance to Students' Unions on what support their institutions should offer
2. To help Students' Unions work with their institutions to ensure flexibility is available, particularly for those with health concerns

## **Better Childcare**

### **Conference believes**

1. That the level of government childcare funding available has decreased in recent years.

### **Conference further believes**

1. That childcare provided by institutions is often unsuitable to the needs of student parents.
2. That other teaching environments, such as schools, have far more suitable childcare provision.
3. That often university reading weeks and half terms do not align, so childcare should also be available during half terms for students who have to attend university.

### **Conference resolves:**

1. For NUS to support students' unions in lobbying universities for more adequate childcare provision.
2. For NUS to lobby the government for increased childcare funding available for student parents.

## **RESPECT Motion (Resources, Equity, Sensitivity, Pastoral care, Engagement, Child care, Time flexible)**

### **Conference believes**

1. That Colleges and Universities should take measures to raise awareness and increase sensitivity and understanding of the concerns of mature students.
2. We intend to accomplish this goal through education to
3. Raising awareness and increase sensitivity for the concerns and needs of Mature and Part-time students
4. Challenge stereotypes and taboos concerning Mature and Part-time students
5. Provide friendly, open, and supportive spaces for Mature and Part-time students interact and have their concerns addressed.

### **Conference further believes**

1. Each College and University in the UK should provide a budget for the execution of Mature and Part-Time pastoral needs and/or activities
2. Each College and University in the UK should engage in a minimum of one Mature and Part-Time student awareness campaign per year.
3. Universities should encourage flexible academic time schedules to accommodate the needs of Mature and Part-Time students as much as is feasibly and reasonably possible.
4. Each College and University in the UK should make subsidized child care available for Mature and Part-Time Students who are in need of these services. Child care provisions should also be available to Mature and Part-Time Students during school holidays.
5. Each College and University in the UK should conduct a survey of Mature and Part-Time students
6. Each College and University in the UK should provide ample opportunities for meeting and

addressing issues of intersectionality among students who are Mature and Part-Time, women, ethnic minorities, international, and LGBTQIA+

7. Each College and University in the UK should ensure that student welfare services are equipped to accommodate the concerns of Mature and Part-Time students

### Conference resolves

1. NUS will provide a tool kit for student unions to lobby for increased funding for Mature and Part-Time student activities. The tool kit should have information on how to provide child care services, make academic time schedules more flexible, conduct a Mature and Part-Time student survey and staff student welfare services
2. NUS will encourage consideration of Mature and Part-Time student concerns in future mental health welfare provisions
3. NUS will encourage student unions to have adequate support resources for Mature and Part-Time student activities

## Working 9 to 5, then I can't get to the Library

### NUS Believes

1. Many mature and part-time students study alongside full time employment and/or additional caring responsibilities.
2. Universities are still geared to 18-24 year old undergraduates with no additional caring responsibilities.
3. The opening hours of computer rooms and libraries and lack of online resources are demonstrative of the fact that Universities aren't designed for students who aren't the 'traditional' student.
4. The price of core textbooks is a prohibitive barrier to some MPT student's achievement in higher and further education.
5. The core textbooks are often not available in our institution libraries.
6. That student achievement increases when students are granted unlimited access to digital or physical versions of all core texts.
7. Mature and part-time students need year round access to both facilities and services.
8. Limited access is detrimental to student productivity and achievement.

### NUS Further Believes

1. That more online resources would allow mature and part-time students to access education
2. More flexible and longer opening hours of academic services would ensure that students could access resources around their needs and timetables.
3. Core textbooks are a hidden course cost that many students are unprepared for.
4. These additional costs are unacceptable.
5. Access facilitates the inclusion of Mature and Part-time Students within the University community.

6. Mature and Part-time students are more likely to need to access services around other people's schedules (spouses, children, bosses, etc.)

7. If services are open year round it will provide more employability options for students.

### NUS Resolves

1. To provide resources for Students' Unions to make the case for extended and more flexible provision of educational resources.
2. For NUS to campaign for access to core texts be an inclusive or at least transparent element of student fees.
3. NUS should campaign for 24 hour physical & digital library access year round.
4. NUS should campaign for year round access to all support services, which should be provided around the clock.

## Adult Learning budgets – cutting FE harms HE

### NUS Believes

1. That since 2010 there has been a 40% cut to adult learning budgets in further education.
2. That since 2010 there has been a steep decline in mature students attending higher education.

### NUS Further Believes

1. That FE adult learning should be protected regardless of the effects on HE as a commitment to the value of lifelong and adult learning.
2. That cutting adult learning budgets in FE will only further damage mature students participation in Higher education.

### NUS Resolves

1. To ensure that the case for adult learning is made.
2. For the FE and HE zone to work with the MPT committee to tell the stories of what lifelong learning means.
3. That NUS creates a consistent narrative through Further and Higher education zones to protect adult learning throughout tertiary education.

## Mature & Part Time Inductions

### Conference believes

1. That many mature & part-time students report that they are facing difficulty integrating into student communities.

### Conference further believes

1. That induction weeks are not accessible for mature & part time students.

### Conference resolves

1. For NUS to produce a tool kit for students' union to create induction weeks which are inclusive for mature & part-time students.
2. For NUS to facilitate student unions sharing best practice on mature & part time inductions.
3. For NUS to initiate an evidence gathering exercise on what mature & part-time students expect from academic and non-academic inductions.

## SFE shouldn't place Mums (& Dads) in Poverty

### Conference Believes

1. That Student Finance should exercise a duty of care when processing mature student finance applications.
2. Mature students often have greater financial responsibilities, such as dependents and households to fund.
3. Currently finance applications are processed in the same way as the usual demographic of students, 18 – 21 year olds, this is with a 6 week turnaround for evidence to support their claim to be processed. This delay can be extended for each piece of evidence. This is unacceptable for mature students with different financial responsibilities to the usual student cohort.
4. This can create unacceptable barriers to learning for Mature Students. This can create household bill problems for mature students and difficulties with paying rent or mortgages.
5. Children would not be allowed to be put in this financial situation by any other government body and should not be put in this situation because their parent or parents are mature students.

### Further Believes

1. Student Finance to process mature student finance applications with a duty of care.
2. Duty of care should change the way these applications are processed.
3. Duty of care should speed up the turnaround for the processing of evidence.
4. Duty of care should allow new avenues of communication between applicants and Student Finance assessors, to speed up this process.
5. Duty of care to students with dependents should mean a 3 week turn around on all applications.
6. Duty of care to students with mortgages should mean a 3 week turn around on all applications.

### Conference Resolves

1. NUS should lobby for SFE to show duty of care to students with dependents.
2. NUS should lobby for SFE to show duty of care to students with mortgages.

3. NUS MPT NEC places must work with the VP Welfare to ensure that these points are raised during the 2016 – 2017 policy cycle.

## Practice makes perfect

### Believes

1. Competent teachers who are flexible and supportive to the needs of mature and part time students has a positive impact on the learning experiences of these groups.
2. Timely feedback is essential to the learning and development of all students.
3. Mature and part time students can't always be available to access tutor office hours if hours are set and not flexible.
4. There is often an expectation on mature and part time students to be able to deliver more and be more knowledgeable, which often puts these students at a disadvantage.

### Resolves

1. Produce resources for students' unions to lobby for PhD students who teach to be trained and supported adequately to teach by the institution, specifically concentrating on assessment and feedback.
2. Produce guidance for institutions on what timely, good and descriptive feedback should be.
3. To support students' unions to lobby for accessible office hours policies for mature and part time students to access their tutors.
4. Support students' unions to lobby for anonymous marking on exams and course work where possible.
5. Produce a best practice guide on lecture and seminar capture so lecture notes are accessible to mature and part time students when they can't access class.

## MPT Students are people too!

### NUS Believes

1. Students' Union activities are mainly aimed at 18-21 undergraduate students.
2. Having an active social student community is essential to a successful student experience.

### NUS Further Believes

1. Students' Union should actively include all students in its activities, events and opportunities.
2. Students' Unions should view activities as 'suitable for' and 'not suitable for' families.
3. Students' Unions should 'flip the question' and ask why events aren't suitable for families.

### Resolves

1. Lobby Students' Union to consider MPT students in all of their activities, events and opportunities.
2. Lobby Students' Union to provide more inclusive events.
3. Lobby Students' Unions to provide specific funding for these student activities, events and opportunities.

## Best Practice for MPT Students

### Conference believes

1. Representation of MPT students is currently patchy or non-existent at many students unions.
2. Many students unions are unclear as to how to relate to their MPT student community, and may not have had sufficient guidance from the NUS.
3. Some unions are strongly oriented towards younger full time students in terms of their budgets and activities, despite representing large MPT student communities.

### Conference resolves

1. All students unions should elect a mature and part time students officer with a seat on the student council. This role should only be open to mature and part time students.
2. The NUS should create a briefing for students unions laying out best practice in relation to mature students. This should include:
  - a. Mature and part time students should be given additional flexibility on timetabling to help them work around work, caring and childcare commitments
  - b. At least one academic advisor / personal tutor in each department should be designated to mature and part-time students, and given specific training on supporting their needs
  - c. Standard training given to sabbatical officers in students unions should incorporate material on the issues facing mature and part time students

## PLACING MPT STUDENTS AT THE HEART OF NUS

### Conference Notes

1. NUS is undertaking a governance review at present
2. This is code named Project 100

### Conference believes

1. That the MPT campaign is seriously under resourced.
2. That a committee of volunteers may not be the best way to organise MPT students.
3. That any governance review should acknowledge and implement previous policy passed by the MPT conference in relation to governance, including a full time MPT Officer.

### Conference resolves

1. That the question of a full time section officer for the MPT campaign be included in the NUS governance review.
2. That alternative models may be considered to make MPT campaign more effective

3. That MPT student's campaign be placed at the core of the governance review, reflecting the diversity and intersectionality of the campaign.
4. That the consultation on changes introduced by the governance review be consulted far and wide, including at least 100 MPT students in direct consultation.
5. That the governance review incorporates.

## Where do you want to go?

### Believes

1. Mature and Part time students have more complex transport needs.
2. Mature and Part Time students need better transport facilities.
3. Rail cards and bus passes are often time prohibited.
4. Park and ride and parking services are insufficient for the demand.

### Further Believes

1. Mature and part time students are likely to have busier schedules and require more flexible transport facilities.
2. Current facilities are insufficient and often overpriced.

### Resolves

1. NUS to lobby universities to provide more plentiful and affordable parking spaces.
2. NUS to lobby universities to work with local authority public transport for better services.
3. NUS to encourage universities to develop and fund care sharing schemes.
4. NUS to lobby universities to provide connected campuses to ensure safe viable routes around campus.

## Fossil fuels

### Conference Believes

1. That university divestment from fossil fuel companies is crucial in the fight for climate justice. To grossly underestimate the power of symbolism in positive rhetoric regarding divestment from fossil fuel companies by an organisation of the size and stature of the NUS would be a tragedy.

### Conference Resolves

1. The NUS should actively encourage individual student unions to use their powers to lobby their Universities to divest from fossil fuel companies.
2. Motion 16: It's Time for a Full time Mature & Part-time Students' Officer
3. Submitted by: NUS Mature & Part-Time Students' Committee

4. It's Time for Full Time Mature & Part-Time Students' Officer

5. Submitted by: NUS Mature & Part-time Students' Officer

**Motion 16: It's Time for a Full time Mature & Part-time Students' Officer Conference Believes**

1. There is a disparity, both nationally and locally between how different groups of students are represented.
2. Mature and Part-time Students collectively make up one of the largest student demographics in the UK.
3. Many Unions in HE focus purely on the 18-21 year old demographic, targeting their marketing efforts solely at this group.
4. NUS needs to consider its Mature and Part-time Students as it develops policy, just as it considers the liberation campaigns.

**Conference further believes**

1. This image should be challenged.
2. The issues faced by mature and Part-Time students' need proper handling at a national level.
3. Mature and Part-Time Students', being such a large demographic, need full time representation.
4. This image should be challenged.
5. The issues faced by mature and Part-Time students' need proper handling at a national level.
6. Mature and Part-Time Students', being such a large demographic, need full time representation.

**Conference Resolves**

1. To submit the following text to NUS National Conference 2016:

**Conference Believes**

1. There is a disparity, both nationally and locally between how different groups of students are represented.
2. Mature and Part-time Students collectively make up one of the largest student demographics in the UK.
3. Many Unions in HE focus purely on the 18-21 year old demographic, targeting their marketing efforts solely at this group.
4. NUS needs to consider its Mature and Part-time Students as it develops policy, just as it considers the liberation campaigns.

**Conference Resolves**

1. Amend 924 to read "In the case of the Mature and Part Time Students committee, the Mature and Part-time Students' Officer."
2. Insert 928 "The Mature & Part-time Students' Officer shall be a Full Time Officer."
3. Amend 934 "The Mature and Part Time Students Conference shall annually elect a Mature and Part-time Students' Officer whose terms of office shall be approved by National Conference and the committee shall then select from its own number an additional member of the National Executive Council. In the event that the Officer is a Mature Student the additional National Executive Council member must be

Part-time and vice-versa.

4. These positions shall be elected at the first available opportunity which shall be the 2016 Sections Conference.

**Better Representation for Sections at NUS National Conference**

**Conference Believes**

1. That at the 2014 National Conference policy was passed mandating constituent members to have 50% of their delegations comprised as women.
2. Mature and Part-Time Students make up a vast number of the membership.
3. Mature and Part-Time Students are often underrepresented in constituent member's delegations at national conference.
4. Postgraduate Students make up a large portion of the membership.
5. Postgraduate Students are often underrepresented in constituent member's delegations at national conference.

**Conference Further Believes**

Mature and Part-Time Students should be properly represented and present at the National Conference.

Postgraduate Students should be properly represented and present at the National Conference.

Recommendations on delegation composition is fair and valid.

**Conference Resolves**

1. To submit the below text to NUS National Conference 2016: Better Representation for Sections in this Room Submitted By: NUS Mature and Part-Time Students' Committee

**Conference Believes**

1. That at the 2014 National Conference policy was passed mandating constituent members to have 50% of their delegations comprised as women.
2. Mature and Part-Time Students make up a vast number of the membership.
3. Mature and Part-Time Students are often underrepresented in constituent member's delegations at national conference.
4. Postgraduate Students make up a large portion of the membership.
5. Postgraduate Students are often underrepresented in constituent member's delegations at national conference.

**Conference Further Believes**

1. Mature and Part-Time Students should be properly represented and present at the National Conference.
2. Postgraduate Students should be properly represented and present at the National Conference.

3. Recommendations on delegation composition is fair and valid.

### Conference Resolves

1. The equality monitoring forms at all NUS Conferences shall include an option for indicating a student's status as being either: Mature, Part-Time or Postgraduate.
2. Insert 334 "All delegations to National Conference must include at least one student who is either a mature student, a part-time student, or a postgraduate student. This does not apply if a union only has one delegate."

## Policy Lapse

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### Housing for mature students with dependents

#### Conference believes

1. When mature students move to study they may need to bring dependents and maintain a family home.
2. Education institutions and local authorities do not take sufficient account of this matter and offer no support to mature students maintaining a family home.
3. Situations like these may have implications for bedroom tax liability.

#### Conference resolves

1. To continue the work to make available accommodation for students with dependents.
2. To take a more aggressive approach to lobbying institutions and local authorities to make appropriate accommodation provision for students with dependents who need to maintain a family home.

### Financial support for mature students

#### Conference believes

1. That bursaries and grants are being offered to students in the form of tuition fee waivers or accommodation waivers.
2. Often bursaries and grants are not given at the start of the year.
3. For students who live off-campus and/or have caring responsibilities, this is problematic.
4. Use of POLAR2 as an indicator of deprivation does not always capture individual circumstances of economic need.
5. Applying for Access to Learning funds is bureaucratic and complicated.

#### Conference resolves

1. Gather examples of best practice in the distribution of discretionary financial support to support unions to make the arguments for fairer distribution of financial support at institutional level.
2. Lobby HEFCE, OFFA and like bodies in the Nations to reform guidance and regulation around disbursement of discretionary financial support.

#### MPT4 Induction

#### Conference believes

1. HE and FE institutions usually hold inductions during the traditional work week when mature and part-time students are less likely and available to attend.
2. Institutions often fail to fully communicate the available support service to mature and part-time students.
3. NUS is coordinating research into induction including on the experience of mature and part-time students of induction.

#### Conference resolves

1. To lobby institutions to make hard copy an e-copy accessible information about support services especially having to do with liberation and caring responsibilities available well prior to the start of the course.
2. To use the NUS research to develop and lobby on best practice for the induction of mature and part-time students and students with caring responsibilities.

### Fairness in Council Tax

#### Conference believes

1. It is democratically unfair that part-time students (including postgraduates) are still liable for council tax.
2. That all students should be treated equally regardless of level of study or length of study. That council tax implications are not communicated effectively to postgraduate and part-time students.
3. This causes greater financial outlay for these students.
4. There are several definitions of part time students this should be clarified in relation to council tax.

#### Conference resolves

1. NUS to lobby for part-time (inc postgraduate) council tax exemption.
2. NUS to look into sourcing of funding regarding the payment of council tax.
3. NUS to produce a report on the impact paying council tax has on part time (inc postgrad) students and their ability to succeed in study.
4. For Part Time & Mature sections committee to collaborate with Postgraduate sections committee to ensure both groups of students are supported on the issue around council tax.

## Access to institutional services for PT and Mature Students

### Conference believes

1. Universities do not provide sufficient support services for PT and mature students
2. Current support services at most universities are geared towards FT students
3. Access to most students' union services are geared to FT students
4. Most inductions are inappropriate for PT and mature study
5. It is difficult for many students' unions to access data on their mature and PT members

### Conference resolves

1. Produce guidance for officer training on the issues for MPT students, to be made available to students' unions.
2. To lobby for NUS to include information on issues for MPT students in its officer training programme.
3. Support students' unions to gain access to data on their MPT students and to provide greater information about the services available to MPT students.
4. Work with NEC to encourage students' unions to identify opportunities for extended access outside of 9-5 hours and to otherwise realign services to be more appropriate for MPT students.
5. To produce a communications model to help students' unions identify different student groups and the communication styles that are most appropriate for them.

## 'Building an MPT officers' knowledge network'

### Conference believes

1. The NUS Section Conferences are an extraordinary enabling opportunity for officers to share information with one another.
2. That officers are at their best when operating as part of a connected, dynamic network.
3. That officers do not currently utilize fully the opportunity to connect, communicate and share existing institutional information and practice.
4. That the MPT Conference would benefit from a source of wider information and practice sharing all year round.
5. MPT students are underrepresented within student unions and universities
6. Student union rep training is mainly undergraduate focused and therefore is useless for MPTs who deal with very different issues
7. MPT students often are considered as being an extension of Undergraduates and are not recognised for having a unique student experiences.

8. The majority of sabbatical officers are undergraduates and this means that it is a challenging for effective representation of MPT due to a gap in knowledge

9. Due this, and the fact that students' unions are mainly focused on UGs, they can often fail to prioritise MPT issues fairly

10. Many students' unions don't feel equipped to deal with MPT issues effectively.

11. One consequence of this is that volunteer MPT officers are either not effectively supported or not in existence.

### Conference resolves

1. For the NUS MPT Executive Committee to create an MPT officers' Virtual Information Sharing Space (VISS) facilitating the sharing of information and best (and worst) practice from within institutions.

2. To encourage and support MPT officers and students' unions to use the VISS proactively.

3. To provide key information generated from the delegates in advance of future MPT.

4. To facilitate one-to-one delegate-NEC sessions in conference and other workshops to raise, and seek advice on, specific issues from within delegates' individual institutions.

5. That NUS develop a toolkit for MPT students' representation within institutions.

6. That NUS works with rep trainers to develop a training tool unique for MPT students.

7. That SUs should develop policy MPT representation.

8. That Student Unions should develop policy for MPT representation.

9. That students' unions should have MPT officers where possible.

10. To support students' unions to develop ways to be more relevant activities to MPT students.

11. That NUS develop and promote practical tools for students' unions to gather information that will better help students' unions to serve their MPT community.

12. To develop training tools for students' unions to train their MPT representatives.

13. To facilitate MPT students and their representatives to share practice and the impact of that practice on engaging postgraduates and effective campaigning.

14. To support and encourage students' unions to develop different ways of continuing activities beyond the undergraduate academic calendar

## Post Graduate Students' Conference Resolutions 2016

### Union Development

### Postgraduate Representation

### Conference Believes

1. Students' Unions are working to improve their representation structures to ensure that we are representing students from both Undergraduate and Postgraduate
2. At National Conference 2015 the HE Zone put forward policy to talk about the needs of Postgraduate research students
3. The short length of many PGT courses mean that the PGT community is often less involved in their Students' Unions, particularly if it is not immediately apparent where/if there is a place for them
4. That postgraduate students aren't sufficiently engaged, supported and represented in student unions.
5. The structures and activities of students unions are often designed with undergraduate students in mind.
6. This needs to be addressed directly and proactively in order to mobilise postgraduate students consistently on a national scale.
7. That many student bodies do not have dedicated, full-time postgraduate representation.

### Conference Further Believes

1. NUS is best placed to act as a hub for best practice on the representation of PG students
2. If Students' Unions are seeking to improve both their structures and methods of representation NUS should be supporting these actions.
3. NUS to establish a student-led platform for student unions to access and share best practice and support each other in challenges in relation to postgraduate representation. This would enable slicker handovers to new postgraduate officers, as they have an immediate support network and national postgraduate community.
4. NUS recognises the unique needs of the PGT and PGR communities without maintaining a hierarchy of needs and experiences.
5. NUS has a duty to encourage student unions to create more postgraduate representative posts to ensure representation reflects the size and location of the postgraduate community.
6. That student officers, elected to sabbatical position and elected to represent all students, often have no or limited working knowledge of the postgraduate experience and priority issues for postgraduates.
7. That it is the responsibility of each student union to provide suitable representation for all students across all levels of education at their institution.
8. That NUS has a duty to assist Student Unions in preparing elected representatives to suitably represent all students across all levels of study. This is particularly pertinent for postgraduate and mature students, who often have very different issues than that of undergraduates.

### Conference Resolves

1. To produce a resource of case studies of best practice of PG representation

2. To assist Students' Unions in developing their PG representation structures to better meet the needs of PG students.
3. To mandate postgraduate campaign to ensure NUS coordinates training and/or suitable supplementary supporting documentation for newly elected student officers, which will provide them with information concerning key issues, germane to representing postgraduate students.

## Empowering postgraduate students

### Conference believes

1. There is a low level of engagement of postgraduate students in union activities.
2. There is a lot that postgraduate students have to offer their unions in terms of experience and abilities.
3. Postgraduate student representative roles have limited time and capacity to boost engagement with union activities.

### Conference further believes

1. Postgraduate reps should be empowered with resources to boost engagement of postgraduate students in union activities.
2. Students' unions democratic activities tend to be shaped around the experiences and preferences of undergraduate students.

### Conference resolves

1. To campaign to make the postgraduate representative position in unions a sabbatical one.
2. To ensure that NUS equips students unions with the resources they need to widen engagement with students' unions.

## An action plan to organise a grassroots, campaigning NUS Postgrad Section next year

### Conference Believes

1. This year the PG conference has been ruled too small to representatively elect a committee, and is only electing 2 NEC reps.
2. Postgraduate taught and research students need an effective, powerful national body through which we can fight to defend and extend our student rights.
3. The NUS Postgrad Campaign can and should be that body. We have had significant successes, but we could also be doing much better. We should aim to be a more outward-facing campaign; engaged with, owned by, and helping to build up, students organising for change on each campus; and bringing them together to be a national platform to take action too. At present, for a lot of the time the Postgrad Campaign is too limited, functioning as a small committee of volunteers working in relative isolation, that checks in with a conference once a year.

### Conference Resolves

1. For the NEC reps we elect to convene an open working group of postgrad reps and students who want to help collectively organise activity in the NUS Postgrad Campaign
2. This working group and the reps should convene regular open forum events through the year, which are free and open to postgrad reps and students from all campuses. These should be places to discuss the issues facing us and our campaigning strategy, and plan practical campaigning action to achieve our goals.

### Establish clear communication strategies between the student unions and postgraduate academic faculties.

#### Conference Believes

1. Postgraduates are disengaged from university events and lack awareness about the resources, social events and opportunities available for them.
2. Their main points of contact are the academic faculty members and advisors due to workload and time constraints.

#### Conference resolves

1. Appointing and liaising with specific members of staff to have consistent and periodic communication with the postgraduate officers and representatives of the student union in order to be informed about the postgraduate events, opportunities and general important updates.
2. This would help engage students who are generally deemed as inactive or disengaged, where Course Directors will have additional information for the students depending upon request and need.

### Motion 5: NUS Governance Review motion

#### Conference Believes

1. That the Postgraduate Campaign is under-resourced
2. That a committee of volunteers may not be the best way to organise postgraduate students

#### Conference Further Believes

1. There may be alternative ways of setting the governance of the section
2. This may or may not involve a full-time Postgraduate Section Officer

#### Conference Resolves

1. That the question of a full-time section officer for the Postgraduate Campaign be considered in the NUS Governance Review 2017
2. That alternative models may also be considered to make the Postgraduate Campaign more effective

3. That the consultation for this is wide and as expansive as possible

## Education

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### No Title

#### Conference Believes

1. City University London offers studentships to its PhD students, which involve a compulsory amount of teaching hours (which vary wildly across and within Schools).
2. A recent campaign of CUL PhD students points out that the conditions of these studentships are not transparent, inconsistent and do not adequately represent their workload.
3. This situation is not an isolated one.
4. At Sussex University PhD students campaigned for their teaching, which is part and parcel of their studentship programs, to be recognised and remunerated.

#### Conference Further Believes

1. The case of CUL is not an isolated case.
2. Little information about these cases is available.
3. PhD students should have the ability to choose whether they want to teach or not in the context of their studentship.
4. All work, whether as part of a contract or a studentship, should be properly remunerated

#### Conference Resolves

1. To research trends in the terms and conditions of studentships across the UK.
2. To lobby against the practise of institutions attaching compulsory teaching to PhD studentships.
3. To campaign for the full remuneration of any teaching activity (including preparation, marking, student contact hours and any associated activities) undertaken by PhD students on a studentship, as is the case with current campaigns for fair pay for PGR students who teach.

## Postgraduate Research Supervision

#### Conference believes

1. That postgraduate research supervision is undertaken by multiple academics, usually with one taking the lead as primary supervisor, which can lead to a one to one relationship.
2. This relationship takes on a number of roles including introduction into the chosen academic field of the student, educational mentor and personal mentor.
3. That sometimes, for a number of different reasons, these relationships are difficult and sometimes destructive.

### Conference further believes

1. That students often feel unable to challenge the breakdown in these relationships because of a lack of anonymity, potential of further damage to studies or future career damage.
2. That institutions often have no, or inadequate processes to deal with these issues.
3. Institutions have a duty to their students that they are able to challenge these relationships when there is a breakdown.

### Conference resolves

1. To work with UCU and sector bodies to put together guidance to institutions on suitable processes for complaints and resolutions of supervision issues.
- Motion 8: Provision of consistent desk and office space is inconsistent for postgraduate researchers across institutions and departments

### Conference believes:

1. Lack of office or desk space compromises students' feelings of inclusion within departmental communities
2. Lack of office or desk space creates obstacles to academic working practice

### Conference resolves:

1. Work with Students' Unions to lobby Universities to ensure consistent office and desk space for full-time PGRs
2. Work with Students' Unions to lobby Universities to ensure additional provision for part-time and non-campus-based PGRs

## PG Support

### NUS Believes

1. Postgraduate students in any form of study are often engaged in additional activity outside of their thesis but directly related to their studies or their obligations as a Postgraduate in their department or faculty.
2. In particular, commonly Postgraduate students are either contracted to, or a part of their role quickly becomes, delivering, leading and/or supporting the teaching of undergraduate students.
3. Postgraduate students do not necessarily engage in Postgraduate study to become a member of the academic faculty with associated teaching responsibilities.

### NUS Further Believes

1. Levels of teaching quality are highly variable across institutions regardless of if the member of staff is a Postgraduate student or not.
2. There is no minimum standard or qualification to deliver teaching in Universities nationally, which as a result means little support may be available for these students.

3. The additional burden of delivering teaching and learning to other students can add a considerable amount of stress to an individual, as well as demands on factors such as availability of time to engage in research.
4. Postgraduate students often also highlight that they receive unequal or unfair reward for the additional responsibilities which they take on.

### NUS Resolves

1. Work with Students' Unions to develop best practice in the design and implementation of offers for Postgraduate study to students.
2. Work with Research Councils to develop best practice in regards to Postgraduate study and provision.
3. Work with UCU to ensure the effective implementation of Postgraduate Student/Staff charters (or the development

## Action to #StopTheHEReforms!

### Conference Believes

1. The proposed reforms presented in the government's Higher Education Green Paper comprised a fundamental attack on education, redrawing our universities against the interests of students and education workers.
2. We are now waiting for a revised version of the reform package to be announced

### Conference Further Believes

1. There are extensive problems with the proposed metrics. In particular some of the proposed metrics fail to recognise, and perpetuate, sexist, racist, socioeconomic and other disadvantages. Research has shown that the ethnicity of lecturers affects NSS scores. And given pay gaps and the biases in the job market, the use of graduate employment statistics will punish universities for accepting more women, black students, disabled students and those from poorer backgrounds.
2. We can and should campaign against particularly problematic metrics. However, we also need to campaign against the whole attempt to use any one-size-fits-all metrics to quantify the "quality" of education and the idea that it can be improved by forcing universities to compete in a league-table-driven market.
3. The Government is proposing a structure which sets some public universities up to fail and close in order to make way for private businesses, to the detriment of students, staff, and wider society. The proposed reforms actively facilitate this process.
4. We also need to defend Freedom of Information powers applying to universities, and the autonomy and campaigning activity of our unions.
5. We should campaign against the HE reforms as a whole, and argue instead that universities and teaching can be improved by decent public funding, reversing marketization, and increasing the democratic

control over education by students, education workers, and communities.

### Conference Resolves

1. To make campaigning to stop the HE reforms, in collaboration with education trade unions, a major priority for the next year
2. To try to engage postgrad students at the grassroots and use local and national lobbying, protest and direct action.
3. To explore the possibility of an Autumn 2016 campus tour, hopefully in collaboration with other parts of NUS, to raise understanding of the reforms and build the campaign.
4. To support the concrete proposals for action going to NUS national conference:
  - a. Organising a protest at Parliament running up to any debate or vote on the reforms
  - b. calling a national demonstration in Autumn that brings the whole student movement together to tell the government: #StopTheHEReforms, #GrantsNotDebt, and #StopCollegeCuts too
  - c. From 2017 boycotting the National Student Survey and Destinations of Leavers from HE Survey unless and until the government agrees to stop the reforms. Because these are crucial tools of the government's marketization and management of Higher Education and they are central to the TEF, boycotting them gives us massive leverage.

## PGT fees

### NUS Believes

1. We are already committed by existing policy to campaigning for free education, funded by taxing the wealthy.
2. This autumn, PGT loans come in.
3. That the £10,000 government loan is welcome, and is a result of years of campaigning by the NUS Postgraduate Committee and NUS Officers.
4. That the #CapsOff campaign was a success. Loans are extended to those over 30.
5. Loans are a step in the right direction; however marginalised groups (e.g. BME) may still be priced out of Postgraduate education.
6. Living costs are on average £12,000 per PG student outside London and £13,500 inside London

### NUS Believes

1. There is a real risk institutions will see loans as a licence to raise PGT fees.
2. Loans are a great step forward but we cannot rest here.
3. We must try to take control of the political narrative from the government and sector managers, not let them define our horizons, and campaign publicly for free education funded by taxing the rich. There is a real opening for this as free education re-enters the political mainstream.

4. As a result of £10,000 loans, Universities will see this as an opportunity to raise their postgraduate course fees, which sets a dangerous precedent in what is already an unregulated price market.
5. This will negate the intended impact on postgraduate education that the loan wishes to bring.
6. That the loans system does not take into account the high living costs that PG students face while studying.
7. That there needs to be some sort of fee regulation.

### NUS Resolves

1. To help equip students and student unions on the ground to campaign with lobbying, protest and direct action to halt local PG fee rises. We need to help SUs to start public campaigning as soon as the prospect of fee rises comes up, in order to empower negotiations, not wait until negotiations break down or consultations close to begin
2. Nationally we should make every effort to put onto the public political agenda, the abolition of tuition fees and the decent funding of education by taxing the rich.
3. That the NUS and NUS Postgraduate Committee campaign against fee inflation in postgraduate courses everywhere.
4. NUS to lobby government and relevant sector bodies on the issue of fee inflation and propose, as a temporary measure, regulation and/or capping of PG tuition fees to prevent above inflation increases.
5. To review access data after the first year the loans system comes into effect.
6. To ultimately build a system whereby those from widening participation and liberation (BME, lower socio-economic groups, LGBT, women, Disabled) are not priced out of postgraduate education for both local and international students.
7. To work with Universities, Government and Students' Unions to alleviate impending cost crisis for PG students and make sure fees are regulated.
8. Provide advice and support to students' unions that are in negotiations with their institution over potential fee increases.
9. That this be done to achieve the wider goal of Free Education.

## Welfare

### No title

### Conference Believes

1. In order for PG students to receive optimal benefit from support mechanisms available from their institutions, students should be made aware of available support at their point of entry.

### Conference Further Believes

1. University and department inductions should promote awareness of available support mechanisms

2. The timing of inductions is not consistently aligned with points of entry

### **Conference Resolves**

1. To work with SUs to ensure that university inductions are aligned with PG points of entry.
2. Where possible, SUs should be integrated into the university's PG inductions to promote awareness of additional support mechanisms available from that institution and the SU.
3. NUS to issue guidance to SUs on the importance of promoting awareness of available support mechanisms at students' entry.

### **No title**

### **Conference Believes**

1. The provision of contracts for university-managed accommodation is inconsistent across HE institutions outside of the undergraduate entry period, which disadvantages postgraduate students which enter at a different point in the year.

### **Conference Resolves**

1. Work with Students' Unions to encourage the adoption of more flexible accommodation allocation strategy suitable for compulsory postgraduate entry dates.

## **Leave of Absence for International Postgrads**

### **Conference believes**

1. That students have the right to take leave of absence from their studies if they face a problem which will prohibit their ability to study.
2. That International Postgraduate students have their visa stopped if they take leave of absence over four weeks in duration.

### **Conference further believes**

1. That it is unfair that international students have their visa stopped if they take leave of absence over four weeks.
2. That this further effects students who have to leave their accommodation.
3. That universities encourage students to take leave of absence rather than extensions via mitigating circumstances as this affects the ranking of the university, but leave of absence does not.
4. That being made to leave the UK further exacerbates problems that students with mental health problems face.
5. Students with children and families are made to uproot their families in this process.

### **Conference resolves**

1. That NUS should lobby, and support students' unions in lobbying, the government to change the

legislation in regards to leave of absence for international students, in particular regarding health reasons, to allow universities to keep sponsoring students' visas over their period of leave.

2. That NUS should start a petition to the government regarding this matter.

## **Society and Citizenship**

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### **No title**

### **Conference Believes**

1. That university divestment from fossil fuel companies is crucial in the fight for climate justice. To grossly underestimate the power of symbolism in positive rhetoric regarding divestment from fossil fuel companies by an organisation of the size and stature of the NUS would be a tragedy.

### **Conference Resolves**

1. The NUS should actively encourage individual student unions to use their powers to lobby their Universities to divest from fossil fuel companies.

## **Tax the Rich – Save our NHS**

### **Conference Believes**

1. The National Health Service, similar to the Education sector, is something that is beneficial to the public good but is under attack from our Conservative Government.
2. In particular, the enforced junior doctor contract and removal of NHS maintenance grants are two current egregious examples of this.
3. The junior doctor contract is unsafe and unfair.
4. The attacks on the NHS will undermine the quality of the service that is provided to the public and set it further along the path to privatisation, run for profit and the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few and not for the benefit of the many.

### **Conference Resolves**

1. To support Student Unions and student activists to show solidarity, and offer practical help, with those defending our NHS (including local BMA branches, "Save our NHS" societies and self-organised groups of students who currently receive the NHS maintenance grants)
2. To campaign for all reversal of privatisation within the NHS and to properly fund the NHS through taxation of the rich.

## Policy Lapse

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### Don't Go Breaking My Arts

#### Conference Believes

1. The postgraduate students' campaign should work with the higher education zone in upholding the policy on protecting and defending arts education in the UK. We should articulate the particular contribution of postgraduates to the creative sector.

#### Conference Resolves

1. Lobby the government on eliminating the potential dangerous changes including but not limited to exam and curriculum reform across all levels of education.

### Safeguarding The Mental Health Of Postgraduates

#### Conference Believes

1. Postgraduates face a specific range of issues that can seriously impact on their mental health, welfare and wellbeing, particularly isolation.  
2. We don't have a good understanding of the impacts of postgraduate study on mental health, welfare and wellbeing.

#### Conference Resolves

1. To work with existing campaigns on mental health, welfare and wellbeing to ensure the postgraduate dimension is taken account of.  
2. To provide advice and best practice to students unions to support them to safeguard the mental health, welfare and wellbeing of their postgraduate students.  
3. To confirm our opposition to Fit to Sit policies and support unions to campaign against these.

### Postgraduate Perspective Of The Post-Study Work Visa

#### Conference Believes

1. There are aspects of the removal of the post-study work visa that particularly affect postgraduates.  
2. International postgraduate students make enormous contributions to the UK's knowledge economy, public policy, communities and society.

#### Conference Resolves

1. The postgraduate students' campaign should work with the international students' campaign to ensure that particular postgraduate issues are equally addressed in any and all campaigning work done on this issue.

## Representation Motion

#### Conference Believes

1. There are problems of representation in universities, unions and elsewhere.  
2. Liberation groups are often under-represented at many levels. This is felt particularly among PG students, and the problem is particularly sharp in some disciplines.  
3. There are particular difficulties that postgraduate students from liberation groups face.  
4. NUS should actively fight for representation of liberation groups.

#### Conference Resolves

1. To organise a campaign to highlight the problem of under-representation of liberation groups among postgraduates.  
2. To integrate campaigns to overcome structural barriers that students from liberation groups face into our postgraduate campaigns.

## International students campaign policy 2016

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### Society & Citizenship

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### Extend EU Matters and General Elections suffrage to EU Citizens living in the UK

#### Conference Notes:

1. On 20th February 2016, PM David Cameron announced the date for the EU referendum: it will be held on 23rd June.  
2. Background: 2.3 million EU citizens are resident in the UK1.  
3. EU citizens are allowed to vote in the UK for devolved Parliaments and Assemblies, local authorities and European Parliament2. They can register to vote if they have been residing in the UK for 12 months or more.  
4. British living abroad (emigrants) can vote in all British elections up to 15 years after they left the UK3.  
5. Qualifying Commonwealth and Irish citizens are allowed to vote4.

#### Conference Believes:

1. The democratic participation in EU matters (including the 2016 Referendum) of EU Citizens residing in the UK is critical. The outcome of the such elections and referenda could bear potential life-changing consequences and serious implications on their future lives. We find it deeply unfair that the outcome of these elections will directly affect millions of people who cannot express their views democratically.

2. EU citizens hold a diverse range of opinions about the EU but they will not be able to express them as they are not allowed to vote, regardless of how long they have been living in the UK. Non-British EU citizens will be most affected by the outcome of these elections (including the 2016 Referendum).

3. Whereas the extension of suffrage to 16 and 17 year olds has already been discussed nationally, the issue of EU citizens living in the UK being excluded from voting in the upcoming Referendum and future EU consultations has not been addressed sufficiently.

4. EU citizens residing in the UK benefit from state services; contribute to the UK's economic growth, cultural diversity and intellectual expertise; have the right to vote and stand as candidates in a number of elections (refer to Background point 2) and locally govern. This is a clear indication that EU citizens should be allowed to vote in the General Elections.

5. European migrants contribute immeasurably to the UK and its education system in a number of ways.

6. International EU students make up an important component of the UK education system and the student movement.

7. The date for the referendum on the UK's membership in the EU has been set for June 23 2016.

8. The result of the EU referendum could impact the access of European students to European educational institutions.

9. NUS has policy to campaign for the UK to remain in the EU.

1 <https://euobserver.com/social/123066>

2 <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/faq/voting-and-registration/who-is-eligible-to-vote-at-a-uk-general-election>

3 [http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/journalist/electoral-commission-media-centre/news-](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/journalist/electoral-commission-media-centre/news-releases-campaigns/uk-expats-dont-miss-out,-you-may-be-able-to-vote-in-the-eu-referendum?)

[releases-campaigns/uk-expats-dont-miss-out,-you-may-be-able-to-vote-in-the-eu-referendum?](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/journalist/electoral-commission-media-centre/news-releases-campaigns/uk-expats-dont-miss-out,-you-may-be-able-to-vote-in-the-eu-referendum?)

4 <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/faq/voting-and-registration/who-is-eligible-to-vote-at-a-uk-general-election>

10. The ERASMUS exchange programme has provided opportunities for over 3 million student across over 30 countries to study abroad, an opportunity which would not be available for UK-based students were the UK to leave the EU.

11. EU international students should have the choice to contribute to a referendum that could greatly impact their movement, involvement and choices to study or work in the UK.

12. International students are not aware of their voting rights and political rights

13. Because of the differences in the international political system, international students are not always of the impact their vote has

14. Engaging more widely with international students, especially with students who can vote in UK, will give the national international student voice more weight when lobbying government for our issues

15. An attitude of political apathy in international student communities is widespread and problematic

#### **Conference Further Believes:**

1. There has not been a proper debate about the implications and repercussions on EU citizens' lives were the UK to leave the EU or to reform the terms of membership with the EU.

2. Crucial questions remain unanswered were the UK to leave the EU: e.g. the retrospective application of restrictions to benefit access; imposition of Tier 2 working visas (with the consequent £35,000 minimum income threshold5).

#### **Conference Resolves:**

1. To campaign and to pressure the Government to extend the right to vote to EU citizens residing in the UK in current and future EU matters (including the 2016 EU Referendum).

2. To campaign and pressure the Government to extend the right to vote to EU citizens residing in the UK in future General Elections.

3. To ensure that elected officers in SUs include EU students in debates, campaigns and student consultations in the run up to elections regarding EU matters (including the 2016 EU Referendum).
4. For NUS to lobby and campaign to change the regulations around entitlement to contribute to the referendum vote, to include EU students and citizens.
5. For NUS to issue resources to unions on how to engage and campaign around this issue.
6. To take collaborate with the International Students' Campaign and namely EU-international students on conducting NUS' campaign to remain in the EU, in the lead up to the referendum.
7. Encourage unions to have accessible polling stations on campus
8. Raising awareness with international on UK political system
9. Engaging with local councils to make voting more accessible
10. For NUS to engage proactively to address political apathy in international student communities

## Refugee Rights are Human Rights

### Conference believes

1. Over a million refugees reached Europe in 2015 alone, fleeing war and persecution.
2. The UK government only agreed to accept 20,000 refugees by 2020.
3. Refugees and asylum seekers in Britain are facing prejudice, discrimination and racist comments from far-right groups, the media and government ministers.
4. Asylum seekers currently do not have the right to work, travel outside the United Kingdom, benefits, or recourse to any public funds no matter how long they have been in the country, and must live on state support of just £5 a day plus accommodation.
5. Refugees and asylum seekers are classed as international students, and are charged higher fees than home students. They also have no access to student loans.

### Conference further believes

5 <http://www.workpermit.com/news/2015-07-07/uk-tier-2-visa-immigrants-must-earn-35000-to-settle-from-april-2016>

1. Asylum seekers should be able to stay in the UK, have access to housing, healthcare, jobs and education.
2. The anti-migrant narrative is fueled by nothing but racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia.
3. Education is a right and should be free for everyone, regardless of citizenship status.
4. Current funding system leaves many refugees and asylum seekers with no access to Higher and Further Education.

### Conference resolves

1. To lobby the government to accept many more refugees to the UK and to work with the other EU members states for an EU wide initiative to allocate refugees.
2. To campaign for the government to better financially support asylum seekers once they have arrived in the UK and allow them to work.
3. To condemn and fight the racist and xenophobic narrative surrounding refugees.
4. To continue working with Student Action for Refugees on the Equal Access campaign, and make it a priority.
5. To campaign for free access to Further and Higher Education for refugees and asylum seekers.
6. To encourage and provide resources for students' unions to campaign for scholarships for refugees and asylum seekers.

## Fight EU – Turkey agreement

### Conference Believes

1. The EU agreement with Turkey to stop migrants crossing the Mediterranean is a threat to people's lives.
2. It also gives legitimacy to an oppressive regime and is demeaning to any ideals of the EU.

### Conference Resolves

1. The NUS should condemn the UK and the EU for proposing and potentially signing this pact.

2. The NUS should use established networks (including student unions across the country and student movement groups) to campaign against the agreement and put pressure on elected representatives to stop it.

3. The NUS should express its unlimited support for volunteers working to save lives and improve circumstances for persons crossing the Mediterranean into Europe.

## Education

### Bursaries and scholarships

#### Conference believes

1. There is currently a lack of bursaries and scholarships available for international students.

#### Conference further believes

1. That those bursaries and scholarships that are available to international students are not currently offered in a fair manner.

2. That there should be financial support for international students that are offered on the basis of both need and merit (in accordance with performance in academic studies, sports or the arts or achievement in extra-curricular or co-curricular activities).

3. That bursaries and scholarships should be available to any international student, regardless of nationality.

#### Conference resolves

1. That NUS international students' campaign should rigorously encourage institutions to introduce a wider range of financial support for international students.

2. That NUS international students' campaign should compile a list of all bursaries and scholarships offered to international students in further and higher education.

3. That this should be made available to all prospective students.

### No title

#### Conference Believes

1. Over the last 5 years there has been a £40 million cut to ESOL

2. These cuts have meant that large numbers of staff have been made redundant.

3. This has resulted in poor teaching and learning for students.

4. ESOL students in FE are not entitled additional learning support, even if they are disabled students.

5. Cuts to ESOL courses disproportionately affect minorities.

6. Cuts to ESOL isolates people from their communities and stops the development of disadvantaged groups and communities.

#### Conference Resolves

1. To work with the Further Education Campaign in supporting Action for ESOL, which is campaigning to Mayoral candidates in London.

2. Support a coalition of other interested allies to organize a national campaign to increase ESOL funding and to get better representation of ESOL students' voices nationally.

3. To campaign for ESOL students to have access to additional learning support if they need it – especially if they are disabled learners.

### Stop the Increase of International Tuition Fees

#### Conference Believes

1. Tuition Fees are higher for International Students than for Home Students.

2. Tuition fees for International Students are not fixed and increase year on year.

3. There are a disproportionate number of international students that dropout of University. These students are often backed by their Government Scholarship/Loans and will have to pay this back if they do drop out.

4. International Students do not benefit from Access Agreements like home students do, and no similar regulation on how these increased fees are spent exist.

5. International students find it harder to get part time work due to Visa regulations.

#### Conference Further Believes

1. As there is no evidence of International Students getting any more for their money whilst they are at University, it is not fair they should pay more.

2. The lack of transparency is disgraceful and International Students should know where their fees are being spent.
3. International Students face many barriers in education in the UK, from Visas to housing contracts, which will not only affect the mental health of the students here now, but also damages the reputation of the education sector in the UK.
4. The government needs to intervene with the setting of International fees and stop free market persuasion on tuition fees.
5. The government needs to create Access Agreements for International fees as they have done with home students and enforce transparency within Institutions and Nationally.

#### **Conference Resolves**

1. The government must be lobbied into taking action for providing a clear, transparent and standardised international tuition fee system.
2. The NUS needs to support Students' Unions as they campaign for fairer tuition fees within their Institutions.
3. International students need to be empowered to question where their tuition fees are going.

### **International Students Careers Network: A diverse career network for international students**

#### **Conference believes**

1. A list of employers who have ability to sponsor international students beyond studies is not widely available/accessible
2. There are not many employers who are able to willing to employ international students
3. International students find it exceptionally hardtop be able to find employment beyond studies
4. With the new changes to Tier-2 salary threshold, this has now become more difficult
5. International students' career aspirations vary from UK Home students, as they are accustomed to international travel and 'displacement' for work and studies.

6. Current employers who have the ability to sponsor/employ international student, are still under pressure and scrutiny from the home office, and have to justify their employment of this individual over EU or UK options of employees.
7. International students need to locate a sponsor if they are to find work beyond studies.
8. This sponsor must have a license to issue certain types of visas
9. These companies need to be ethical and comply to NUS regulations

#### **Conference resolves**

1. For NUS International Students Campaign to compile a list of employers that have tier 2 sponsorship status
2. Establish an International Students Career Network
3. Work with university career services to develop a list of employers willing to employ international students
4. Set-up CV working seminars which are international students specific – especially with converting international qualifications
5. Set-up network of alumni and individuals who have been able to navigate the system to advise students who want to gain this working experiences in the UK
6. For NUS to challenge the attitude of the Home Office in putting pressure on employers to not take international candidates.
7. Set up a working group to overlook and engage with this issue
8. To run the first international students job fayre with representatives from organisations that have Tier 2 sponsorship status
9. Run it in October/November time?

### **Welfare**

#### **Improve Mental Health Support amongst International Students**

##### **Conference Believes**

1. Mental health (MH) is a crucial component to the wellbeing of all students including those who are international.

2. The experience of international students can be incredibly isolating due to a variety of factors including trying to navigate a new culture whilst becoming accustomed to their own identity within the new culture.

3. University counselling services aim to support students' MH but international students are a very broad group of students with cultural aspects that affect their MH and the kind of support that they receive.

4. The cultural differences represented by international students also affects the way they think about receiving support and their anticipations of how support can help them. With MH already a highly-stigmatised area, the additional stress of navigating therapy in a new culture can be tremendous.

5. Improving the diversity and cultural awareness of university counsellors would be a good place to begin improving the support provided to international students.

#### **Conference further believes**

1. That international students are faced with a big change when they reach a new country.
2. That universities do not provide sufficient support for the mental wellbeing of newly arrived international students.
3. That there is a disparity in the level of provision of mental health services specifically aimed at international students across the UK.
4. That all international students should be made aware of mental health support services as soon as they arrive at their institution.
5. That student advisors/mentors should be well trained and knowledgeable about the wellbeing problems international students' face when they come into a new country.
6. That short term exchange and Erasmus students find it particularly hard to access mental health support that is suitable for them.
7. That peer to peer support is an excellent source of international student mental health support.

#### **Conference Resolves**

1. Create and distribute survey to international students asking about their experience with MH

support services at their universities as well as their knowledge of what is available.

2. Work with unions and organisations such as Students Against Depression to address specifically the areas of concern highlighted on the survey to improve the MH support available to international students.

3. Consult with organisations such as Students Against Depression and other national representatives of university counselling to create a model for training counsellors that will highlight the fact that international students have different expectations and perceptions of counselling and MH support. In the model, also include emphasis on the extra pressures that international students are under including financial strain, pressure to excel and maintain academic standards.

4. Work with university counselling services to include counsellors from a range of countries, BME backgrounds, and different languages.

5. Organise a campaign in conjunction with Students' Unions targeted at international students across the nation that would seek to de-stigmatise the discussion of mental health which is taboo in many cultures.

6. Encourage unions to create a safe space for international students to talk openly with one another about their experiences particularly MH and the way they are coping with it and to hold workshops to better educate and equip staff and students to deal with MH issues.

7. Support the wellbeing of international students by encouraging unions to provide a platform where students can showcase their cultures to improve the student body's appreciation of diversity and minimise the "us vs them" mentality between home and international students.

8. That NUS ISC should conduct research into how international students are affected by mental health problems throughout their time at college/university, in particular how this affects Erasmus students

9. That NUS ISC should support students' unions in making international students aware of the mental health support that is available on their campus.

10. That NUS ISC should work with students' unions to discover and share best practice across the UK in international student mental health support and to produce a resource for unions to use.

## NHS exemption university scheme

### Conference believes

1. From 2015 NHS charges were introduced for Non-EU International Students
2. NHS costs for international students is a hefty/unreasonable expense to seek healthcare in the UK
3. Access to healthcare is human right, and access to the NHS should be free for all
4. International students income currently have to cover
5. This additional cost can create major barriers for international students to access essential healthcare, including access to hospital care
6. These changes can inevitably affect the welfare of international students as they may feel they cannot afford hospital care
7. Universities have a duty of care towards their students
8. Retention is also now high in on the HE policy agenda, and this issue will impact this does not impact

### Conference resolves

1. Set up working groups for universities to creating options for footing the cost for international students NHS fees
2. This working group will ensure that universities uphold their duty of care, and do not impose additional costs for international students who come under their exemption scheme

## Union Development

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### International Student Identity Card and NUS Extra

#### Conference Believes

1. International Student Identity Cards (ISIC) are available to students to gain access to discounts around the world.
2. An ISIC currently costs £12, the same amount as an NUS Extra card

3. That to gain access to discounts both in the UK and abroad students currently have to purchase both an NUS extra card and an ISIC
4. For a number of years international students have been calling for NUS to develop an NUS card that is also an ISIC
5. From the 1st March 2016 NUS will be launching an NUS extra and ISIC double sided card

#### Conference Further Believes

1. ISIC and NUS extra being on the same card is beneficial for any student that travels abroad but particularly for International students who may spend more time out of the country during holidays to visit family and friends
2. That having both NUS extra and ISIC in the same card means that nobody has to purchase two cards, saving money for students
3. That NUS extra and ISIC on the same card could cut costs for international student

#### Conference Resolves

1. For NUS marketing of the NUS extra and ISIC joint card to put a focus on the benefits for international students
2. For a focus for additional deals to be beneficial to international students, in particular deals that help international students deal with the costs of study and travel
3. To inform Students' Unions of the additional benefits for international students so they can effectively communicate with their students.

## Losing My Religion...

### Conference Believes

1. Commonly, International students are associated as being the predominant group of faith based students (regardless of which faith group they identify with).
2. Faith provision on campuses is highly varied, and whilst in some circumstances is reflective of the profile of the student body, on others can be highly problematic.
3. Institutions have a responsibility to ensure appropriate facilities are available for their students to

practice their faith, regardless of the facilities which may be available under the sliding definition of 'local'.

### **Conference Further Believes**

1. Students decisions on what college or university to attend are often swayed by a population of other students that identify within the same faith group
2. Populations of students of faith will never grow if the facilities are not available to support the practice of faith
3. Students of faith often define into other marginalized groups, contributing to further issues of lack of representation in the student community
4. Students' Unions whilst autonomous organisations are explicitly interdependent on their institutions, including in the availability and support of facilities.

### **Conference Resolves**

1. Work with Students' Unions to develop guidance on lobbying institutions to improve, enhance and develop faith facilities
2. Work with representative faith groups to engage local faith groups with students of faith on their campus
3. Develop guidance on enhancing cross faith collaboration in the use of space and facilities.

## **Getting to know international students**

### **Conference Believes**

1. International students officers often find it hard to contact and reach out to international students
2. This makes it hard to properly represent international students on our campuses, as our ways of contacting them is difficult and time consuming
3. It is important for international students' officers to get information about who their international students are, but also what they care about.
4. Most international students' officers are volunteers and so this is an added challenge.
5. That many international students are not aware of NUS and how it can positively impact their studies and their stay in the UK.

6. NUS gives you access to knowledge, insight, advice and networks that they can benefit from.

7. We want more international students to be involved in NUS.

### **Conference Resolves**

1. To provide guidance to international students officers about how they can work with their university to share information about their international students.
2. To provide individual support for local international students officers who are having trouble accessing this information.
3. To find ways of sharing knowledge about what is important to international students and their experience in the UK.
4. To build and proliferate the International Activist Students' Network.
5. To support local international students' officers to understand and promote the work of NUS and the international students' campaign.

## **International student officers in students' unions**

### **Conference Believes**

1. Not all students' unions have an international officer.
2. This doesn't reflect their student bodies, and so some international students are not being represented by their students' union.
3. Having an international students officer ensures that the union is more diverse, inclusive and can focus on the specific issues that international students face.

### **Conference Resolves**

1. To campaign about the benefits of having an international students officer in a students' union.

## **No title**

### **Conference Believes**

1. "International students have opportunities to understand NUS and attend NUS National Conference."

### **Conference Resolves**

1. We should campaign for special places for international students to become delegates of NUS National Conference.
2. NUS National Conference has much information contains difference areas, it a good opportunity for delegates to understand NUS and obtain new views of policies. However, international students may find it hard to win a place through election.
3. If NUS can communicate with each union to leave one or two places for international students as NUS National Conference delegates, according to the number of international students in each university, it may good for international students to understand NUS more.

## Support the running and establishment of national international student unions (international societies unions)

### Conference Believes

1. National unions of students from different countries (e.g. National Union for Students from Brunei) have existed in the UK to bring together international students from certain countries together.
2. These unions are integral in the grassroots support of international students when they come from different parts of the world.

### Conference Resolves

1. Encourage the establishment of national unions for student nationalities that do not yet exist.
2. Create a working group to support the international students committee to run this initiative.
3. Use NUS resources to spread the word (e.g. comms and jisc mail)

## Visa regulations for International Sabbatical Officers

### Conference Believes

1. In order to have free and fair elections in unions, international students must be able to engage fully with these elections
2. The new changes to the visa renewal regulations have created a real barrier for international students

### Conference Resolves

1. International student campaign and NUS to lobby home office to create more leeway for international sabbatical officers when it comes to visa renewal.
2. For NUS to put out guidance on this issue
3. To lobby individual unions to support officer by loaning money
4. For unions to actively spread the word on the support available

## Conference opposes raising Tier 2 New Entrant salary thresholds to £23,000

### Conference believes

1. The NUS should campaign for the re-instatement of a 2-year Post Study Work visa. However, it recognises that proposed imminent changes to the Tier 2 (New Entrant) visa category will adversely impact on current and future International Students in the UK
2. The UK Government is presently considering implementing the recommendations of a report produced by the Migrant Advisory Committee (MAC) published in December 2015 (title of the report: "Reviewing Tier 2: Balancing Migrant Selectivity, investment in skills and impact on UK productivity and selectiveness")
3. In practice, this report recommends raising the minimum salary threshold for "New-Entrant" (ie. Graduate) Tier 2 migrant workers from £20,800 to £23,000
4. This increase in threshold disproportionately impacts on graduates seeking careers in professions that require a pre-reg year/period of training in order to practice professionally, and whose pre-reg/training salaries are fixed by national bodies
5. Graduate pharmacists and nurses are particularly affected by this raise in threshold. It also impacts upon professions where it is standard practice for employers to deduct training/examination fees from a graduate's salary (solicitors, accountants etc.)

### Conference further believes

1. The adoption of such recommendations will make it less likely that a large number of current international students will be able to receive professional accreditation upon graduation, despite the fact that this was one of the major reasons that they chose their particular course

2. This will, in turn, will have a negative impact on student recruitment, presenting a real danger to course viability that may impact on all categories of student

#### **Conference resolves**

1. To support SUs in campaigning against the government adopting the recommendations of the MAC's Dec 2015 report
2. To lobby MPs – particularly those representing constituencies containing universities whose flagship courses will be particularly effected – to raise the issue in parliament and challenge it
3. To target in particular decision makers and advisers in the Dept. of Business and Innovation that are known to be sympathetic to such cases
4. To seek to establish a coalition of student associations, departments, professional associations and accrediting bodies to oppose the introduction of the MAC's recommendations

## **International Students in Further Education**

#### **Conference believes**

1. Removal of 'established presence' means that many international students who come to study courses IELTS, foundation or access courses must leave the country before they can reapply for other courses.
2. This can be extremely expensive and not accessible for international students
3. The right to work has been removed from international students in FE
4. Because of limited recourses in FE colleges for their students unions, engagement of international students in FE is very problematic

#### **Conference resolves**

1. Start a campaign to allow international students to be able to renew their visas whilst in the UK
2. Campaign and lobby to reinstate the right to work
3. Engage more specifically with the experiences of international students in FE and deliver these stories/experiences to the Home Office

4. Make sure that NUS has bursaries available specifically for further education delegates to come to international student events

## **No title**

#### **Conference believes**

1. Home Office has scraped the 10 hours working allowance for International Students studying in FE.
2. This leads in International Students choosing HE over FE and eventually colleges face more funding cuts and redundancies.
3. International Students in FE are forced to leave the country before they can apply for a higher education course or a job.
4. This will limit their capacity to volunteer or undertake course-based work placements.
5. A NUS survey shows 50.7 per cent of non-EU students surveyed think that the Government is either not welcoming or not at all welcoming towards International students. 19.4 per cent of non-EU students would not recommend the UK as a place to study for a friend or relative.

#### **Conference Resolves**

1. International Students in FE should be entitled to as many working hours allowance as International Students in HE.
2. International Students should be able to apply for a HE course or jobs from within the country
3. International Students' campaign to work with other FTOs and relevant organizations to lobby on getting the right to work part-time during their studies and apply for HE progression and jobs from within the country.

## **Providing visa- applicant students with a temporary ID**

#### **Conference believes**

1. When non-EU students are applying for visas, they are required to send all their documents, such as passports, national IDs etc.
2. Students are therefore left with no valid Identification.

3. This might pose a problem when dealing with the NHS, the police and buying over 18 products, amongst other things.

#### **Conference resolves**

1. Students should not be left with no ID, they should be provided with a formal temporary identification card which is nationally recognized, other than a student card.

### **NUS Immigration Information Hub Immigration awareness on campus**

#### **Conference believes**

1. Immigration policies in the UK impact all international students greatly
2. Each students union chooses to engage with the current immigration issues in different ways
3. Certain types of immigration issues impact some groups of international students more than others
4. There are many great campaigns and work that different unions do all around the country that do engage with international students issues, but this good practise is not widely disseminated
5. There is not widespread knowledge on campus of how the UK immigration system impact different student communities

#### **Conference resolves**

1. NUS International Students Campaign should support unions to develop widespread knowledge on campus on the impact of current UK immigration policies.
2. Creating awareness on how the policies have impacted fellow international students will naturally develop support campaign networks that consist of diverse students from the campus communities.
3. Make a campaign through sustainable policies that will ensure the development
4. NUS giving a platform for SUs to pool their resources and globalise all their campaigns
5. Create a hub where all this information is centralised, 'International Students Information Bank'
6. Mandate the international students officer to manage this network/initiative

7. Strongly engage with SUs to proactively engage with this initiative

8. NUS to develop policy document for SUS to pass in union council

### **Defend Migrants: Another Europe is Possible**

#### **Conference believes**

1. On the 23rd of June will be the referendum on the UK's EU membership, and David Cameron has already renegotiated the terms of Britain's membership, undermining important rights and attacking migrants.
2. We should fight to defend the guarantee of freedom of movement for EU citizens (including students travelling to study), and fight to extend it to those currently locked out of "Fortress Europe".
3. Despite some progressive policies, the current state of the EU protects the interests of the rich and powerful. It is undemocratic and bureaucratic, and enforces austerity and privatisation.
4. But the UK state is no less a tool of the rich and powerful. Leaving the EU would only boost anti-migrant racists and strengthen barriers against free movement and international solidarity.

#### **Conference further believes**

1. NUS rightly already opposes Brexit. At the same time, we cannot ignore the EU's problems. We must argue to stay in as part of a fight for a genuinely democratic and socially just Europe with better rights for migrants.
2. The big Britain Stronger in Europe campaign is dominated by Tories and business leaders. It's their campaign to defend the EU as it is now, and so can't be a voice for the kind of Europe we want. The Another Europe is Possible (AEIP) campaign has been set up to organise a progressive, anti-austerity, internationalist opposition to Brexit.

#### **Conference resolves**

1. Campaign for the UK to stay in the EU, but on our own basis as above, for:
  - a. international student and workers' solidarity
  - b. levelling up of wages, conditions, services and rights across the EU
  - c. democratisation of the EU

d. freedom of movement and an end to "Fortress Europe"

2. Campaign against David Cameron's renegotiations undermining migrant rights, workers' rights and human rights.

3. To work independently from the Tory- and big-business-dominated "Britain Stronger in Europe", instead promoting a positive vision by working with progressive campaigns, student unions and trade unions across Europe.

4. Put migrants' rights and freedom of movement at the heart of our campaign.

## Fight Deportations

### Conference Believes

1. Deportations are unnecessary and inhumane.
2. Deportations destroy lives and communities, remove vulnerable students from their support networks, stop them from finishing their studies, and can have a disastrous effect on their physical and mental health.
3. At the moment the amount of support that students facing deportation receive from NUS is often dependent on their personal networks and relationship to NUS.

### Conference Resolves

1. To oppose and fight against deportations.
2. To establish a part of the International students' campaign that is able to effectively help any student facing deportation immediately. This should include but is not limited to: a list of recommended immigration lawyers who NUS establish a relationship with; a legal fund; a campaign toolkit to support students running grassroots campaigns; a visible and well promoted point of contact for pastoral support and (non-legal) advice.

## Open borders

### Conference Believes

1. NUS should be not only a supporter but a champion of open borders: it's symbolic, it might not happen

within our lifetimes, but is important to be bold and talk about it.

2. In our increasingly globalised world, the validity of the nation-state is less and less obvious.

3. Globalisation benefits multi-national companies and capital, while the movement of people is still often restricted by borders.

4. As the current refugee crisis proves, borders cost lives.

5. That we should not buy into the rhetoric of "deserving" and "undeserving migrants." Freedom of movement is a fundamental right.

6. That students, students' unions and NUS should actively participate in debates about migration.

### Conference Resolves

1. To challenge the idea that the nation state has the right to control its borders when representatives of the campaign are invited to speak on public platforms.
2. To work with progressive organisations such as Movement for Justice that campaign on freedom of movement.

## Setting up a National Tenancy Union

### Conference Believes

1. NUS ISC should make great leaps yearly to protecting its members right to decent housing
2. Universities should make sure that any letting agency endorsed by them or charged with this duty to be checked in other to meet a basic level of standards for international students and low income students
3. If the university continues to promote letting agencies which do not meet the students' unions' approval then the SU has the right to actively criticise, and demonstrate, both against the university and also letting agencies which exploit students vulnerable financial position and their need for housing with support from NUS ISC
4. NUS ISC have a responsibility to support Students' Unions to pressurise City Councils over issues like housing that effect students and the wider community. The mismanagement of the housing sector only leads to animosity between International students and landlords

### Conference Resolves

1. To mandate the NUS international students campaign to bring up this complaint to the main NUS for action.
2. To actively educate students about NUS' policies and the legislations concerns, including via the Ready to Rent training programme
3. To support demonstrations/protests by individual SUs, the form these take can be discussed between interested parties and the NUS ISC, against letting agencies that offer unfair or discriminatory fees and practices to students with the goal of publicly embarrassing poor landlords and affecting their income from the exploitation of other students as well as raising awareness of these issues.
4. To mandate NUS ISC to support SUs to build a wider movement, alongside a National Tenants Union and local resident groups, in a bid to pressure the city councils to regulate housing agencies.

## **Name of Motion: International Students in Accommodation**

### **Conference believes**

1. International students' welfare is an essential part of the student experience
2. International students should be provided with adequate security and this should be at the forefront of universities' agenda
3. International students with lower and middle-range budgets may be excluded from student accommodation, either provided by the institution or private providers
4. International students should be provided accommodation as a priority and should be eligible to access all available accommodation options
5. Students from EU and non EU countries should also be treated as students and not customers in residences.
6. Contracts between universities and external providers need to be monitored to ensure international students expectations are met
7. More measures need to be put in place to ensure students from EU and non EU countries get value for money in their accommodation

8. Affordable accommodation with flexible contracts (short term, family accommodation Erasmus students) should be made available.

### **Conference Resolves**

1. International students campaign should lobby for the introduction of systems for regulating student accommodation providers to ensure that different types of accommodation is provided (for families, short term contracts) and ensure that anonymised security/ incident logs are shared with SUs to allow the SU to be aware of serious incidents and support students who may have been affected
2. International students campaign to support SUs to challenge universities on the provision of welfare services for international students, so they have parity with home students, for example equal access to hardship funds
3. NUS ISC to lobby for staff members to have mental health first aid training to support students' welfare.

## **Right to Rent about Right to Rent**

### **NUS Believes**

1. The Right to Rent policy contained in the 2015 Immigration bill, which comes into effect nationally on 1st February 2016, puts an onus on landlords to check that prospective tenants have the right to rent in the UK.
2. Landlords that rent to those who don't have a right to rent property in the UK could incur a penalty fine of up to £3,000.
3. Right to Rent has the potential to discriminate against minority ethnic groups as fines will make private landlords reticent to rent to those whom they perceive to not have British National status.
4. In the initial discussions about the policy, it was found that 80% of UK landlords did not support Right to Rent because they have no expertise or experience in immigration policy, which could increase discrimination against international students.
5. The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) conducted a piece of research that found that 42% of landlords are unlikely to rent to those without British passports, and over 25% would be "less likely to rent to someone with a foreign name or foreign accent". They found that Right to Rent checks were

not being undertaken uniformly but were instead “directed at certain individuals who appear ‘foreign’”.

6. The research also found that landlords discriminated against individuals with the legal right to rent but with an unclear or complicated immigration status, in addition to those who cannot provide documentation immediately, including BAME tenants and British citizens.

7. In areas with low housing stock, high competition for beds impacts international students, as landlords will see renting to British Nationals as the path of least resistance. International students will therefore be less likely to secure a tenancy when in competition with British National students, forcing them into sub-standard housing.

### **NUS Further Believes**

1. International students already have significant weight on them in terms of the efforts, paperwork and monetary costs required of (particularly non-EEA) international students to secure their visas.

2. This move is part of a xenophobic campaign codified into government policy, creating an increasingly hostile environment for migrants and BAME & international students.

3. Rent to Rent will negatively impact international students, especially in areas of low housing stock, as it will make landlords reluctant to rent to those who they perceive could pose more hurdles than British Nationals, and try to avoid incurring a penalty by renting to those who could show any indication of having a migrant status.

### **NUS Resolves**

1. To mandate NUS release a statement outlining the discrimination international students face as a result of Right to Rent.

2. to mandate NUS to conduct a piece of research after the implementation of Right to Rent, particularly in areas of low housing stock, looking specifically at its impact on the experiences of international students renting in the private sector, including how it affects the attitudes of landlords.

3. To release the findings of this research to all Constituent Members, with guidance on how Students’ Unions can attempt to neutralize the negative impact of Right to Rent legislation on international students.

4. Campaign to support Students’ Unions in providing information and guidance to local landlords about international students’ immigration status’ and how they are affected by Right to Rent.

## **Policy Lapse**

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### **We Are All Immigrants**

#### **Conference believes**

1. As international students we ARE immigrants. We oppose the immigrant being framed as a negative. We are proud to be migrants.

#### **Conference resolves**

1. We want to fight the perceptions of society and abolish the dichotomy of resident and immigrant.

Mature and Part time students’ conference resolutions 2016