

NUS Scotland

Current Policy

Women's Conferences 2014-18

nus *scotland*
CONFERENCE



Conference 2014

Committee representation for minority demographics

Conference believed:

1. Many women within the liberation groups such as LGBT, or BME groups are disempowered by underrepresentation in decision-making arenas.
2. This leaves women in those categories effectively barred from full participation in society.

Conference further believed:

1. That creating a designated committee position for women from under-represented groups would encourage those from within said demographics to engage with NUS and subsequently participate more fully in civic society; in turn encouraging other individuals from underrepresented demographics to do the same.

Conference resolved:

1. That the NUS positions at a UK level, should be mirrored across the nations.
2. That this should include a designated position on the Women's Committee for Women from all liberation and underrepresented groups, such as the LGBT, Black, Disabled, International, Mature and postgraduates students.
3. That these positions should be elected at NUS Scotland Women's conference.

Watch your language – we're women not female

Conference believed:

1. That liberation groups are at the heart of NUS Scotland's work.
2. That students who identify into cross-liberation groups are further marginalised in society.
3. Intersectionality is a key focus of all NUS Scotland liberation campaigns.

Conference further believed:

1. That the women's campaign represents all self-defining women.
2. That non-inclusive language is discriminatory.
3. That the use of the term 'female' is not an appropriate term for women students.

Conference resolved:


1. To promote inclusive language in all aspects of the women's campaign.
2. To lobby the SFC and Scottish government to change their demographic category from 'female' to 'women'.

Sex(ual) education

Conference believed:

1. In January the House of Lords voted against updating sex education. The recent vote was against an attempt to introduce age-appropriate compulsory sex education in state-funded schools (an amendment introducing sex education - including information





about sexual relationships, same-sex relationships, sexual violence, domestic violence and consent - as a foundation curriculum subject). It got voted down by 209 to 142.

2. SRE has a huge impact on women feeling it is their right to have consensual, enjoyable sexual experiences. Right now, this is not being encouraged.
3. J Halberstam talks of woman's bodies as 'trained in the interruption of desire', the way young girls are taught that their first time will hurt and probably won't be enjoyable is an example of this – and in stark contrast to boys who are encouraged and pressured to be sexual beings.

Conference further believed:

1. Educating women on sex and relationships is a key part of liberation. Knowing your own body and what it can do is extremely important.
2. Although sex and relationships education is a compulsory part of the national curriculum from year 7 onwards (in England), this is usually limited to biology and lacks inclusion of same-sex relationships.
3. This wrongly leads to a focus not only on 'sex as penetration', but ignores the clitoris as a primary sex organ.
4. If sex education was widened to focus on intimacy, pleasure and those with differing sexual orientations, it could empower women of all gender identities and sexual orientations to feel sexually enabled and explorative.

Conference resolved:


1. To write to MPs and SMPs calling for a compulsory update to sex and relationships education.

Solidarity with sex workers

Conference believed:

1. The term 'sex work' covers a diverse range of work including escort work, lap dancing, stripping, pornography, selling sex both on and off the street, adult modelling, and phone sex work.
2. The NUS Women's Campaign passed a motion in March resolving to conduct national research into student sex workers.

Conference further believed:

1. Women and other marginalised groups - including sex workers - have the right to self-organise, and their voices should be prioritised in any discussion on issues that affect them.
 2. The criminalisation of sex work has a negative impact on sex workers, forcing them into less safe working conditions, making it harder for them to organise, and increasing the stigmatisation of sex work.
 3. Research on sex work has shown that the main reason for individuals entering into and staying in sex work is financial hardship, therefore it is likely that cuts to student support have resulted in increasing numbers of student sex workers.
 4. Student sex workers have a diverse range of needs and often face barriers to accessing support for those needs.
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Conference resolved:

1. To mandate the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to work with sex worker led organisations to explore what more can be done to support student sex workers and combat 'whorephobia' at our institutions.

You cannot be what you cannot see!!!!!!!


Conference believed:


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. 74% of recent austerity cuts have come from women's pockets, while only one in four MPs and just 5% of national newspaper editors are women.

Conference further believed:

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 believed that a feminism without intersectionality is no feminism at all.

Conference resolved:

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 women-only session compulsory at all residential summer training events.
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- 3 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.

Who cares? We care!

Conference believed:

1. That women are under-represented in sabbatical officer positions as compared to the proportion of women in education.
2. That women in leadership provide an opportunity to smash patriarchy.
3. That women students are more likely to have caring or parental responsibilities.

Conference further believed:

1. That women face consistent barriers to being elected, with considerations to care responsibilities being a barrier to even considering running in elections.
2. That women in leadership should be a key element of the women's campaign's strategy.
3. That engaging children in the women's movement and political activism is a choice that women should be free to make.

Conference resolved:

1. To produce a toolkit that gives best practice advice that SA's can use to ensure sabbatical roles are accessible to student parents and carers.
2. To actively run events where students can contribute to the women's campaign and bring their children as participants.

Balance it out – this is discrimination!


Conference believed:


1. At NUS Scotland conference in March, the six campaign conveners for SEC were elected, only one of whom is a woman.
2. Out of twenty candidates for six positions, only six were women.
3. Very few women in FE ran for SEC positions.

Conference further believed:

1. You cannot be what you cannot see.
2. Leadership "training" for women tends to focus on women becoming more masculine.
3. Women who are already in leadership roles are not who we need to prioritise.
4. We must give a hand up to the women who face barriers in becoming leaders, particularly women in FE.

Conference resolved:

1. To work with external organisations such as Close The Gap to develop a mentoring programme for our student leaders who are women.
 2. To work both internally and externally of NUS to develop a peer-led leadership programme aimed at women such as class reps, voluntary officers and volunteers – and open to any woman student who is interested.
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3. For the NUS Scotland Women's Officer to prioritise supporting and encouraging women to run for election in their unions, and at NUS Scotland & NUS UK.
 4. To work with students' associations to put safeguards into structures, i.e. constituting liberation officers, and where possible, a full time women's officer.

Conference 2015

Scottish elections

Conference believed:

1. Women's collectives ensured that women's voices were at the heart of the independence referendum. We need to ensure that representation and engagement is kept going.
2. Education is a feminist issue and we must harness the collective power of the women in our movement in order to continue our work to create a fairer society for us all.
3. The Scottish Parliament elections provide a huge opportunity for us to promote feminist politics and issues for the years ahead.

Conference further believed:


1. The priorities for the NUS Scotland Women's campaign must include:
 1. Student support that reflects rising costs of living, with a further education entitlement for further education students.
 2. Fair access to education, overturning a status quo that too often impacts most on women.
 3. Tackling gender segregation, and any gendered investment, across further and higher education.
 4. Education institutions driving forward progressive social change, with students at the heart of this.

Conference resolved:

1. To make the Scottish elections our campaign priority in 2015/16.
2. To focus on the priority areas identified, and to supplement these with issues highlighted through consultation with women officers and students to ensure our asks reflect the issues important to our students.
3. To ensure a voter registration and mobilisation campaign is part of our strategy, to encourage women students to register, and empower them to vote.
4. To have and promote women's caucuses at all NUS Scotland events, and utilise these to consult with membership on our strategy and policy asks.

Governance review

Conference noted:

1. For the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to be democratic, accountable, accessible and fair, it is essential that the governance structures reflect our values.
 2. NUS Scotland Women's Campaign has never undertaken a governance review.
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Conference believed:

1. In some areas of our rules, reference is made to rules and standing orders which no longer exist.
2. Our committee is small in comparison with the committees of other liberation campaigns, which impacts on the work the campaign can achieve.
3. Despite reserved spaces in our committee we still see under-representation of other liberation groups.
4. Our conference is in spring, but many institutions elect their Women's Officer in autumn, which means many may have been in post for a full academic year before interacting with our democratic structures, and those officers have no opportunity to guide the work of their campaign.

Conference resolved:


1. To mandate the NUS Scotland Women's Officer to undertake a review of the governance structure of the campaign in consultation with officers and students, paying particular attention to:
2. The number of committee places, their role and remit; and reserved places on the committee.
3. Delegate entitlements to our democratic events, and reserved places on delegations for self-defining members of other liberation groups.
4. Accountability of the Women's Officer.
5. The potential for a democratic event in autumn/winter.


Prison abolition is a feminist issue

Conference noted:

1. Prison does not work; 47% of prisoners reoffend within one year.
2. 53% of women in prison are survivors of sexual violence.
3. 49% of women in prison have depression or anxiety.
4. 67% of women in prison for killing somebody close to them were abused by that person.
5. 46% of women in prison reported attempting suicide at some point in their lives.
6. Trans* people are regularly incarcerated in the wrong gendered prison and/or denied hormone therapy.
7. 66% of women in prison have dependent children under 18.
8. In the last decade the women's prison population has gone up by 33%, with two thirds being in prison for non-violent offences.
9. Approximately 90% of prisoners report experiencing some kind of mental illness.

Conference believed:

1. The prison-industrial complex is a fundamentally unjust system; one that disproportionately affects and harms women, people of colour, LGBTQI+, sex worker, trans* and working-class communities.
 2. The ruling class determine what warrants incarceration; prisons do not work in our interests.
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3. Prison is about punishment, not reformation or justice.
 4. Prison is a system of brutality that attacks and takes advantage of the already vulnerable for profit.
 5. Austerity and cuts to legal aid will mean the incarceration of more people.
 6. Immigration, sex work and drug possession are key areas where people are incarcerated for crimes which pose no threat to the public.
 7. People are politically targeted by the state and unfairly incarcerated.

Conference resolved:

1. To call for the abolition of the prison-industrial complex.
2. To emphasise community and transformative justice as a replacement for state incarceration.
3. To oppose proposed regressive prison reforms.
4. To support initiatives that write letters of solidarity to prisoners.

Lad culture: let's work together

Conference noted:

1. NUS, both nationally and in Scotland, have made great achievements in working toward tackling lad culture on our campuses.
2. BUCS and Scottish Student Sport have a series of guidelines and policies around equality in sport, including para-sport and LGBT in sport.
3. BUCS has created a lad culture Working Group and this issue is now higher up on their agenda than ever before.

Conference believed:


1. The work that NUS has done around lad culture is further ahead than BUCS/Scottish Student Sport, including research documents such as "That's What She Said".
2. BUCS and Scottish Student Sport could benefit from a joint approach to look at lad culture, to enhance understanding on both sides.
3. That a joint approach would target all key players in the student movement in order to work towards creating a safer and more inclusive environment for all of our students.


Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland should actively pursue a partnered working group around lad culture with BUCS and Scottish Student Sport.
2. This working group should consist of FTO's from all organisations, but also student
3. The decisions and discussion from this group will be fed back to students' unions to provide them enhanced resources for dealing with lad culture in all its forms on campus.

Student parents: expecting the expected

Conference noted:

1. The University of Strathclyde has produced the first guidance for students relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity and adoption of a child.
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2. This comprehensively covers matters relating to academic, financial, funding, welfare, housing and advice including the development of an individual Student Support Plan for these students.

Conference believed:

1. Student parents often do not know where to turn for advice when they find themselves about to be the parent or guardian of a child during the course of their studies.
2. A comprehensive policy or guidance document can help those students and staff to ensure students know how to suspend or continue their studies where necessary, apply for all relevant financial assistance and prepare for any other changes in advance.
3. Currently the University of Strathclyde is leading the way on this issue and students at other universities and colleges should have the same opportunities to prepare for parenthood while a student.
4. Guidance of this nature is not enough without corresponding campus facilities for student parents including nurseries, baby changing, and breastfeeding areas and child friendly spaces.

Conference resolved:

1. To campaign for student parent guidance to be created in universities and colleges across Scotland.
2. To campaign for more child friendly spaces in institutions and unions across universities and colleges in Scotland.

Sex & relationship education


Conference noted:


1. Sex education in schools (where it happens) enforces heteronormative ideologies and cements societal views around gender and sexual identity.
2. Currently sex education does not talk about relationships and does not cover the importance of consent.
3. Consent affects everyone no matter your sexual and/or gender identity.
4. The experiences and issues of LGBTQI women are erased from sex education and do not take into account the diverse backgrounds of students and staff within their institutions.
5. Sexual activities affects everyone in different ways no matter your sexual and/or your gender identity.
6. Sex education should be inclusive and representative of the student body. Equipping them with the knowledge of safe and healthy sex whether in a relationship or not.

Conference believed:

1. The current system in place is insufficient and fails those students who identify as LGBTQI women.
2. The Curriculum for Excellence allows schools to ignore LGBTQI issues.
3. NUS Scotland needs to get back to doing work on 'Liberating the Curriculum'.

Conference resolved:

1. To mandate the Women's Campaign to work with the LGBT Campaign and the VP Education on their work on sex and relationship education.
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2. To mandate the Women's Campaign to support and work alongside the LGBT Campaign and the VP Education to lobby the Scottish Government to introduce legislation surrounding sex and relationship education.

Women in work: breaking down 'employability'

Conference noted:

1. The substantial gender pay gap which exists in Scotland.
2. Employability strategies are key to institutions' and students' unions' central objectives.
3. Excellent work has been carried out around women in STEM subjects in Scotland by this year's Women's Campaign.

Conference believed:

1. Employability strategies do not recognise the inherent unequal and gendered nature of employment structures in Scotland.
2. Simply achieving employment does not adequately tackle the issues that women face in work.
3. STEM subjects are not the only areas of study and work where women are marginalised.

Conference resolved:


1. We should remain to focus on women in work, but have a critical and central focus on women being in fair and sustainable employment.
2. The Women's Campaign should engage in a Scotland-wide movement towards fair and equitable working conditions, including a demand for Living Wage, an end to exploitative zero-hour contracts and a recognition of the importance of unpaid labour.
3. The stellar work that NUS Scotland Women's Campaign has done on women in STEM should be researched as to how this can be expanded to other areas which also face a gender bias.


#FreePeriods

Conference noted:

1. Some students' associations have started to give away sanitary products for free or sell them at a subsidised price.
2. That tampons and towels are currently taxed by the Government at a rate of 5% as a 'luxury, non-essential item', and hence subject to Value Added Tax (VAT).
3. That many products are free from VAT as they are viewed as fundamental: food, prescriptions and children's clothes; but not sanitary products.
4. That some students opt to take the contraceptive pill continuously to avoid a monthly cycle and the costs that come with it, despite the warnings of health risks.
5. These issues should be taken into serious consideration in the light of NUS Scotland's campaign to end student poverty.

Conference believed:

1. That the cost of sanitary products is an unfair burden and a gendered tax on our wombs.
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2. That sanitary items are also crucial to health and hygiene – using homemade alternatives can put you at risk of infection.
 3. That it is unethical to charge for the upkeep of a natural bodily function, let alone ask people to give a contribution to the Government each time.

Conference resolved:

1. To support the campaign for #FreePeriods: calling on the Government to eradicate the cost of sanitary products, let alone the VAT.
2. To mandate Scotland's Women's Officer to produce guidance for students' associations on the costing and feasibility of distributing/selling free/non-profit sanitary products at their unions.
3. To encourage student unions to look at using sustainable and organic alternatives to sanitary products in their union shopping outlets.
4. To mandate the NUS Scotland Women's Officer to lobby the relevant Scottish Ministers over this issue.

Consent is a necessity

Conference noted:

1. National Union of Students National Women's "I Heart Consent" campaign.
2. Rape culture in the UK is still a huge concern, with one in three women being survivors of rape.
3. The correct messages around consent are critical to challenging this culture.

Conference believed:

1. The "I Heart Consent" Campaign does not promote the right message around consent.
2. The idea that we enjoy consent is furthering rape culture, rather than challenging it.
3. This rhetoric trivialises consent, rather than increasing awareness of its absolute necessity.

Conference resolved:


1. NUS Scotland Women's Campaign should put pressure on NUS UK Women's Campaign to scrap this campaign and encourage a re-brand.
2. The work of NUS UK Women's Campaign is important, but it should be held to account and encouraged to send the correct message around rape culture.
3. That work and activism around this issue should continue to be a priority, but with a more critical and applicable approach.

Black women's sub-committee

Conference believed:

1. That in both the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign, and the NUS Scotland Black Students' Campaign, black women are significantly under-represented.

Conference further believed:

1. A sub-committee for black women which is shared between the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign and the NUS Scotland Black Students Campaign should be created in order to work on addressing this underrepresentation.
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Conference resolved:

1. To mandate the NUS Scotland Women's Officer to work with the NUS Scotland Black Students' officer to create and support a black women's sub-committee.
2. For this sub-committee initially to have four co-opted members.
3. For the sub-committee to be formally adopted through a governance review, after consultation with black women students and student officers.

CW/TW: mention of sexual abuse

Bringing attention to detention


Conference noted:

1. The repeated sexual abuse and objectification of women by predominantly male guards at Yarl's Wood detention centre in England that was recently exposed in the mainstream media.
2. Serco, the company responsible for Yarl's Wood, has commissioned an independent review of its staff and culture.
3. Shadow Home Secretary has called for an independent inquiry into the conditions at Yarl's Wood.
4. There is one detention facility in Scotland, Dungavel, located in South Lanarkshire. This facility can detain up to 249 people with space for only 14 women. Sometimes only one or two women are detained alongside over 200 men.

Conference believed:

1. The experience of detention is incredibly difficult and these situations are exacerbated by experiences of violence and abuse including sexual abuse.
2. Little to no help is offered to survivors of this abuse.
3. Dungavel can be intimidating and isolating for women because they are so few in number.
4. Unwanted attention from male detainees and guards is common and not currently tackled.
5. The accommodation at Dungavel is in dormitory form, an unsettling situation for women when they first arrive often in the early hours of the morning or late at night
6. Little provisions are made for pregnant women in detention facilities.

Conference resolved:

1. To condemn the inaction to tackle the treatment of women at Yarl's Wood
 2. To call for an investigation into the experiences of women at Dungavel.
 3. To call for more female guards and better living conditions for women at Dungavel.
 4. To call for pregnant women to be held in detainment facilities only when strictly necessary and to call for adequate prenatal care to be provided.
 5. To campaign against the unnecessary detention of women when they could remain in communities.
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Right to choose

Conference noted:

1. The Abortion Act (1967) states that the maximum time limit for a woman to have an abortion in the UK is 24 weeks.
2. In May 2008, there was a failed attempt in Parliament to reduce the maximum time limit that a woman can have an abortion.
3. A General Election will take place this year with abortion being a key issue.
4. David Cameron is a supporter of reducing the 24 week abortion limit.
5. Abortion is still illegal in Northern Ireland.

Conference believed:

1. Women should continue to have the right to choose to have an abortion up to the 24 week maximum time limit.
2. A Conservative government will cut the maximum time limit for a woman to have an abortion from 24 weeks to 20 weeks.
3. The decision to have an abortion is a difficult and hard decision for many women to make.
4. Women in Northern Ireland should have the same right to abortion as other women from the UK.
5. Late term abortions are in the minority, but to prevent them will impact on the most vulnerable, such as young women and victims of rape, etc.

Conference resolved:


1. To oppose any reduction to the current 24 week time limit.
2. To work with Abortion Rights UK and other relevant pro-choice groups to protect a woman's right to choose.
3. To lobby the government to make abortion legal in Northern Ireland.


Healthier bodies, healthier minds, healthier women!

Conference noted:

1. Over 90% of anorexia sufferers are women (BEAT).
2. Eating disorders are on the increase for women.
3. Magazines targeted for women have negative articles on women's body image.
4. Scotland has one of the worst obesity rates in Europe.
5. The majority of models on the catwalk are a size zero (UK size 4).

Conference believed:


1. That eating disorders are mainly a women's issue.
 2. Women's magazines objectify women differently than that of lads' mags. However, objectification of any form is totally unacceptable. Women students need to be made aware of magazines objectifying women.
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3. Women's magazines need to accept women of all shapes and sizes and not promote body flaws, as this is a main factor in why women are increasingly unhappy with their bodies.
 4. Women students need to be educated about having a healthy and balanced diet.
 5. Size zero does **not** represent the majority of women in Britain!
 6. That every woman should be happy with how they look and their health. Everyone is different in shape in size and if we are wise about eating well and exercising regularly, body images should not matter!

Conference resolved:

1. To mandate the NUS Scotland's Women's Officer to lobby women's magazines about the unacceptable nature of objectifying women and their bodies.
2. To ensure that all institutions have healthy food options available on campus, including vegetarian and vegan food.
3. To also ensure that NUS events have healthy food available to all.
4. To inform students how important it is to "eat 5 a day", to drink 2 litres of liquids a day and to exercise regularly.
5. To raise awareness of eating disorders and obesity by campaigning through the NUS Women's Campaign.

Women's Officer position

1. The NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to fight against any moves to replace the position of Women's Officer.
 2. The NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to publicise to student unions and student officers the fact that equality does not exist.
 3. The NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to preserve the autonomy of our campaign.
 4. The NUS Scotland Women's Committee to provide materials for all colleges explaining and arguing the case for women's officers.
 5. The NUS Scotland Women's Committee to update the "Winning And Defending Women's Officer Position" briefing.
 6. The NUS Scotland Women's Committee to give advice and support to women's officers facing attack and those fighting to create new positions.
 7. The NUS Scotland Women's Officer to actively encourage female students to become involved in all aspects of NUS Scotland's work.
 8. The NUS Scotland Women's Officer to actively encourage female students to become active within their own Students' Associations.
 9. The NUS Scotland Women's Committee to encourage participation at all levels of student activities through a targeted campaign and training program.
 10. The NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to build on the successes of both the NUS Scotland Women's Day and Fife College's Indulgence Day in order to increase participation within the campaign.
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Violence against women

1. To condemn those who commit acts of violence against women.
2. To continue to highlight the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.
3. To work with the Scottish Executive and other organisations in publicising the support available for women who have experienced domestic abuse.
4. To provide a campaign pack for students' associations to help them highlight the issue of domestic abuse and provide support for survivors of domestic abuse.

Sexual harassment

1. To prioritise work around Sexual Harassment in institutions.
2. Issue Sexual Harassment Guidelines to all Women's Officers within institutions.
3. Organise briefing events for women's officers and women's groups to outline contents of Sexual Harassment Guidelines.
4. Encourage Women's Officers to campaign for Sexual Harassment Policy and Guidelines within their own Institutions and support them by helping to devise a campaign strategy.
5. Continue monitoring NUS Scotland Sexual Harassment Guidelines and update where and when necessary.

Conference 2016

Developing FEmenist Activists

Conference noted:

1. Thanks to more established and better funded students' associations, feminist activism, including liberation officers, women's groups and feminist societies, is stronger in universities.
2. For many women, colleges are the gateways back into education.

Conference believed:

1. In order for the Women's Campaign to be truly effective, we need involvement from women in apprenticeships, colleges, and universities.


Conference resolved:

1. To prioritise the development of college feminist activism structures in 2016/17.

Trigger/Content Warnings as empowerment in education

Post-traumatic responses can be with survivors for life, so informing students before discussing/showing/reading sensitive material is part of delivering education in a responsible and sensitive way.

Conference noted:

1. Trigger warnings make people aware that sensitive material will come up which enables those who have a strong/damaging emotional response to certain material to mentally prepare for what may come up.
 2. Trigger warnings do not prevent the exploration of sensitive material/ideas or mean censorship in education, they allow everyone (that is able to) to participate by giving them the necessary time to prepare (or come back to the material when they are in the right emotional state to do so).
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Conference believed:

1. "The exploration of sensitive material does not need to come at the consequence of the mental well-being of survivors"¹
2. Making informed choices about your education and the material you wish to be in contact with as a survivor of traumatic events is crucial to empowerment.
3. Students Unions/Associations should be empowered and supported in lobbying for Trigger/Content Warnings in their institutions.
4. That the Education and Women's Campaigns should collaborate to empower students on our campuses to make informed choices about the material they are exposed to in their education.

Conference resolved:

1. That the Women's Campaign will work with the Education Campaign on the issue of trigger/Content warnings in education.
2. For a toolkit on campaigning for Trigger/Content Warnings for student unions/associations to be prepared as part of the NUS Scotland Plan of Work 2016-17.
1. Ross, J. 2015, , On Trigger Warnings in Academia. Available: <http://www.gender-focus.com/2015/05/23/on-trigger-warnings-in-academia/#sthash.ebouC3xi.dpuf>


Women in leadership in Scotland

With the number of women full time officers – particularly women Presidents – falling, it is more important than ever that we invest in women leaders in the student movement in Scotland.

Conference noted:

1. The student movement in the UK is not reflective of the demographics of students in further and higher education. Women make up 56.4% of HE students, 55.3% of postgraduates, 64% of undergraduates and 46% of FE students in the UK. However, 45% of student officers are women and only 38% are presidents²
2. Without a strong support network/mentor women may struggle with the elections process as they are more likely to face cultural and structural barriers.
3. NUS UK has produced guidance for women in leadership workshops for elections and holds Women in Leadership conference every year in January. Provision of this is ultimately the responsibility of unions/associations.

Conference believed:

1. A national mentoring system in Scotland for women standing in students' union/association elections would provide unique and valuable support to a woman who is standing for a position for the first time.
 2. Women in Leadership conferences can be highly valuable experiences for women leaders but the distance and expense of travelling to the UK for another conference is a lot to ask of women officers in Scotland.
 3. That NUS Scotland must take action to support unions/associations in making our movement more reflective of the students we represent.
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Conference resolved:

1. The NUS Scotland Women's Campaign will establish a national mentoring scheme for women running in students' union/association elections modelled on NUS UK's I Will Lead and recruit experienced women officers to be mentors. Mentees and Mentors will be matched according to their sector and areas of interest if possible.
2. Formal Women in Leadership events and network opportunities should be established in Scotland to allow women full-time officers/future women full-time officers to meet and support each other.

Conference 2017

Equal Access to Safe Abortions

Conference noted:

1. Scotland has a significantly lower threshold for late term abortions than the UK legal limit.
2. Women across Scotland have to travel hundreds of miles to access safe abortions at any term <http://www.abortionrights.org.uk/scottish-women-face-significant-barriers-access-to-abortion-in-scotland/>
<https://www.guttmacher.org/journals/psrh/2014/04/access-and-experience-later-abortion-accounts-women-scotland>

Conference believed:

- a. Women should have equal rights to safe abortions in Scotland.
- b. Women should be able to receive the same treatment no matter where they live.

Conference resolved:

1. To campaign for a national minimal requirement to safe abortions
2. Lobby Scottish parliament to reinforce the current legal limit for late abortions

Availability to Medical Examiners

Conference noted:

1. Rape victims in some areas of Scotland have to travel more than 12 hours to reach a medical examiner.
2. During this time, they are not allowed to drink, eat or shower in case evidence is comprised. <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/sp/?id=2017-01-24.4.0>

Conference believed:

1. The lack of examiners causes an extremely traumatic experience to be even worse.
2. Survivors of rape should not have to leave family, friends or their own home to be heard.

Conference resolved:

1. Campaign for more training of Medical Examiners.
2. Lobby for better policies around availability to Medical Examiners.

Where are all the women?: Supporting our Officers on the ground





Conference noted:

1. That the majority of students' associations have a Women's Officer.
2. The Women's Officer is there to represent the women students at that institution and run relevant campaigns.

Conference believed:

1. That the position of Women's Officer is often challenged.
2. Women's Officers often have to justify the need for their officer role.
3. That it can be difficult for Women's Officers to receive support from fellow officers.

Conference resolved:

1. To create a welcome pack available to all Women's Officers when they take up post, to introduce them to the NUS Scotland Women's Officer and Campaign.
2. For the NUS Scotland Women's Officer and Committee to create and deliver workshops, at our institutions, aimed at empowering women students
3. To create an easy to access toolkit that will support Women's Officers and women's sabbatical officers to help justify the need for their position.

Liberation in the Nations


Conference noted:

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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

Conference 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.
4. 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.

Conference 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 nation with designated staff support specifically for liberation funded from NUS UK's budget.
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Harassment and Abuse

Conference noted:

1. Violence against women is on the rise and students are one of the groups most at risk
2. NUS research show that one in five students surveyed last year reported being a victim of sexual harassment in their first week of term

Conference believed:

1. The justice system makes it difficult for persecution therefore many perpetrators walk free
2. Women don't always report the crime therefore the perpetrator doesn't face justice.
3. This has led to on many occasions' victims having to be in college/university with the offender or sometimes worse, sharing classes!

Conference resolved:

1. Campaign for institutions to have standardised policy on reporting structures and for institutions to have information and guidance on what is available
2. To have support in place for those who are victims.
3. Campaign for better reporting systems so that students feel safe in the knowledge that the institution take reports seriously and act on them accordingly
4. Campaign nationally for the overhaul of the justice system so that when an offence is reported, victims are kept safe.

Abortion


Conference noted:


1. Reproductive rights incorporate the right to bodily autonomy and integrity, to reproductive choice and healthcare, and to legal, safe abortion. Access to safe abortion is fundamental to women's economic and social rights, to women's autonomy, employment, education and access to resources, and therefore to women's equality.
2. Abortion is vital, routine healthcare that around one in three women will experience in her lifetime.
3. The devolution of abortion law as part of the Scotland Act 2016 also provides Scotland with the opportunity to develop a Scottish approach to women's reproductive rights, incorporating improved, modernised and standardised service provision underpinned by a progressive devolved legal framework.

Conference believed:

1. The Scottish Government could use this opportunity to address a number of issues that would improve Scotland's abortion care service
2. Reproductive rights include basic rights around fertility and reproductive decision-making, and access to the information and healthcare services which enable this

Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland should use the joint report with Engender Scotland to lobby the Government to ensure the recommendations from the report are implemented.
 2. Continue to promote the pro-choice campaign to ensure women have the right to choose.
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3. Should have abortion rights as one of the campaign priorities and should ensure that people living in the UK have access to safe and legal abortions in Scotland.

Fair marking for all!

Conference believed:

1. That women are under-represented in academia.
2. That women are significantly disadvantaged when they are not anonymously marked.
3. That in 2009 the National Student Survey showed that only 65% of students were satisfied with their quality of assessment.

Conference further believed:

1. The last NUS anonymous marking briefing used figures for the University of Wales showed that whether anonymously marked or not 42% of men achieved a 2:1 or first. However before anonymous marking only 34% of women achieved a 2:1 or first compared to 47% after anonymous marking.
2. That similar problems are faced by other liberation groups, for example black and minority ethnic students.
3. That despite this briefing from NUS college and university unions and students' associations are still struggling to get their institutions' academic staff to comply.

Conference resolved:


1. To produce a guide to winning the argument for anonymous marking.
2. To actively promote anonymous marking in all NUS Scotland training events.
3. To work with other liberation campaigns in order to ensure that we include all liberation groups in this campaign.
4. To support students' unions to challenge institutions who will not use anonymous marking.


No to victim blaming, yes to safe campuses for women

Conference believed:

1. The NUS Hidden Marks report found that one in seven survey respondents had experienced a serious physical or sexual assault during their time as a student.
2. The report also showed results that 'more than one third of respondents reported they sometimes felt unsafe when visiting their university or college buildings in the evening'.
3. That every woman has the right to feel safe on their college or university campus.

Conference further believed:

1. That even with positive action taken by students' associations across Scotland, there are still instances of sexual assaults on campuses.
 2. A fifth of the broad cross-section of the Scottish population (700 interviewees) who took part in research carried out by Progressive on behalf of Rape Crisis Scotland in August 2007 believed that women contribute to rape if they wear revealing clothing.
 3. That all too often, campaigns focusing on safety can place much responsibility on the victim of a sexual attack and not the perpetrator.
 4. That victim blaming perpetrates a culture in which women do not feel supported enough to report sexual offences.
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5. That the NUS Women's Campaign must take action to tackle the abhorrent culture of victim blaming.

Conference resolved:

1. For the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to launch a priority campaign focusing on busting rape myths and tackling the victim blaming that is endemic on our campuses.
2. For the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to produce briefings for all officers so that they feel enabled and confident in tackling these issues in a college and university environment that is often dominated by men.
3. For the NUS Scotland Women's Officer to ensure there are strong links between institutions, student unions, the police, the NHS, and special voluntary services, and to support student unions in building these links.

Conference 2018

Tackling Sex for Rent

Conference noted:

1. Homelessness has a significant impact on young people in Scotland, with over 3500 homeless applicants under the age of 25¹.
2. A BBC investigation has found that young, vulnerable people are being targeted with online classified adverts offering accommodation in exchange for sex.
3. This is particularly affecting young women, members of the LGBT+, and those who are estranged from their families, who for a variety of reasons are experiencing financial difficulty.
4. It has been evidenced that these arrangements can result in coercive and abusive behaviours by landlords.
5. Homeless charity Centrepont and MP Peter Kyle have begun to call for these arrangements to be criminalised.


Conference believed:


1. Sex work covers a diverse range of work, sex for rent can be included. Students IN SEX WORK HAVE A DIVERSE RANGE OF NEEDS AND OFTEN FACE BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SUPPORT.
2. Unaffordable housing, cuts to benefits and insufficient student funding has placed many young people and students into financial difficulty, research has shown this is the main reasons for entering into sex work.
3. The criminalisation of "Sex for Rent", much like the criminalisation of sex work will have an adverse impact on women in particular, trapping them in abusive and exploitative conditions.

Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland Women's Campaign should work with students, sex workers activists' groups and homelessness charities to gain a better understand and document student participation in the Sex for rent.
2. NUS Scotland should work to raise awareness and support students who may be forced to participate in sex for rent because of financial difficulty.

¹ https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/housing_policy/key_statistics/homelessness_facts_and_research



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3. NUS Scotland should challenge the criminalisation of sex for rent and sex-work more widely, and combat slut shaming and whorephobia at our institutions.
 4. NUS Scotland should campaign for a better funded Education and Housing systems, and should support campaigns against the hike in rent prices

Women in Leadership

Conference noted:

1. The Scottish Funding Council's Gender Action Plan (GAP).
2. The NUS Scotland Women's Campaign #InspireHerFuture.
3. The NUS Scotland Women's Campaign Report "The Bairn Necessities".

Conference believed:

1. The gender balance in politics is still predominantly male, despite the rise in women leadership in Scotland in the past few years.
2. Young women are dissuaded from entering politics due to stereotyping.
3. NUS Scotland has had one woman President in the past ten years.
4. Student Association Presidential Elections have a higher percentage of male candidates.
5. The proportion of candidates who define into multiple liberation groups standing in elections is even lower.

Conference resolved:


1. For the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to run "Women in Leadership" training aimed at Student Association class reps, and first term officers to encourage more women to stand for the President post.
2. For these campaigns to be carried out regionally to ensure maximum accessibility to these events.
3. To work with Students' Associations in encouraging involvement in their institutions Gender Action Plans, to include election work in the GAP.
4. For the Women's Officer to engage with the NUS Scotland Liberation campaigns to encourage all under-represented women to stand for election.


No to racialised and gendered hate crime

Conference noted:

1. Scottish government have issued a consultation to add gendered violence to its definition of hate crime.
2. The number of hate crimes against people of colour have increased exponentially over the last few years, women and non-binary people, particularly those racialized as Muslim have been the main targets of such attacks.
3. Many student unions across Scotland that work to tackle sexual harassment and sexual assault, however many of these policies do not acknowledge the impact of race on people's experience of these crimes.

Conference believed:

1. Hate crime attacks on women and non-binary people happen as a result of their entire politicised and racialised identity, not just their gender identity. So, the way we tackle hate crime should also take into consideration the intersectionality of people's identities.
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2. Women and non-binary people who are racialised have the right to safeguarding and support that takes into account their sometimes unique circumstances and needs.
 3. NUS Scotland, Student Associations, Universities and colleges should actively tackle and prevent racialized gendered hate crime and consider the unique circumstances and needs in this context. There is also the duty to raise awareness of, and prevent other manifestations of gendered racism, including microaggressions, under-representation and institutional biases.

Conference resolved:

1. NUS Scotland should lobby the Scottish Government to change existing definition of hate crime to include attacks on women and non-binary people, with special consideration to intersectional needs.
2. NUS Scotland Women's Campaign should commit resources whether financial or otherwise to work with the Black Women's sub-committee Student's Associations to raise awareness of, and prevent racialized gendered violence and sign-post support for survivors.

Repeal the 8th

Conference noted:

1. The Eighth Amendment, voted into the Irish Constitution by a referendum in 1983 states "the state acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right" thereby prohibiting abortion in all cases except where doctors believe the woman's life is at risk.
2. Everyday an approximated 12 people in Ireland will have an abortion – between 9- 10 will travel to the UK whilst 3 will risk a 14-year prison sentence by taking illegal abortion pills.
3. In September 2017, the Irish Government announced a referendum to change the country's laws on abortion. The government has not yet announced the date of the referendum, but it is expected to be held in May/ June 2018.

Conference believed:


1. The right to bodily autonomy is a fundamental human right that should be granted to all people - the eighth amendment is in direct violation of this.
2. Free access to abortion choice is key to bodily autonomy and is an important step in liberating people's reproductive rights.


Conference resolved:

1. For the Women's Officer to release a public statement of solidarity with the Repeal the Eight campaign and referendum.
2. NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to raising awareness of the referendum this year so as to encourage Irish nationals studying in Scotland to vote in the referendum.
3. For the campaign to be a collaborative effort between the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign and organisations campaigning to repeal the eight-amendment including but not limited to The Scotland- Irish Abortion Rights Campaign, the Abortion Rights Campaign, The Coalition to Repeal the Eighth Amendment.

Tackling Trans Misogyny

Conference noted:

1. Transmisogyny is the particular experiences of oppression faced by trans women and some non-binary people.
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2. This past year there has been a huge spike in transmisogyny in the media and wider society.

Conference believed:

1. Trans women are women. Therefore transmisogyny is a women's issue as much as it is an LGBT+ issue.
2. There is a need for cis women to show solidarity with their trans sisters and siblings.
3. Cis women feminists are uniquely placed to use their access to spaces where trans people do not have access to argue for trans inclusion and for solidarity with trans women.

Conference resolved:

1. To work with the NUS Trans Campaigns and NUS Scotland LGBT+ Campaigns to organise a workshop tour of Women's and feminist societies on how to recognise and challenge transmisogyny within feminist and queers spaces and the student movement in general
2. In consultation with trans women members, produce a resource pack on how to challenge transmisogyny to disseminate to student groups.
3. Encourage feminist and women's societies and groups to have guaranteed committee spaces available to trans women.


Policy Lapse


Consent in the curriculum

Conference believed:

1. In Scotland sex and relationship education is not compulsory in schools.
2. Increased awareness of issues sexual violence given news coverage of the exposure of Jimmy Saville and other prominent figures.
3. That sexual violence is a huge problem in the UK, and is a gendered crime: around 21% of girls and 11% of boys experience some form of child sexual abuse, 23% of women and 3% of men experience sexual assault as an adult, and 5% of women and 0.4% of men experience rape (Rape Crisis statistics).
4. The recent videos by the Home Office that attempt to challenge rape myths.
5. Lothian and Borders Police in conjunction with Rape Crisis Scotland produced postcards as part of an awareness campaign entitled 'Drinking not a crime. Rape is'.

Conference further believed:

1. That more needs to be done to support women and girls who are survivors of sexual violence.
 2. That we also need to look at the root causes of sexual violence.
 3. That examples of the Home Office videos shows us that education about the nature of consent and rape culture is beginning to take place, but hasn't gone far enough and is not consistent.
 4. That including education about the nature of consent and rape culture in secondary schools would be a positive angle to the wide-ranging campaign on sexual violence (including positive messages around consent in relation to alcohol, drugs, peer pressure, gender norms and relations; not assuming a heteronormative model; challenging rape myths and providing resources on how to get support).
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6. That educating people about sex and relationships at an early age will lead to young people making more informed choices whilst growing up.

Conference resolved:


1. For the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to work with NUS UK Women's Campaign, specialist groups such as Rape Crisis Scotland, Women's Aid to put together a comprehensive list of what should be included in education regarding consent rape culture.
2. For the NUS Scotland Women's Campaign to write a model letter to MSPs asking for support with this campaign for activists to use.
3. To lobby the government and all political parties to make sex and relationship education compulsory in schools.
4. To run workshops on consent in colleges and universities.

No cuts!

Conference noted:

1. Cuts to public services – and 'austerity' more generally – disproportionately impact on women and other oppressed groups in society.
2. The idea that there is a 'need' for cuts, promoted by the government, the media, the leadership of the Labour Party, and to some extent the unions, is a lie.
3. During the economic crisis, the rich have got richer at the expense of the rest of society.

Conference believed:

1. That anti-cuts struggles have been hindered by:
 2. The position of the Labour leadership, which has often been at odds with many members of the party.
 3. The leaderships of some trade unions, as demonstrated by the selling out of the pensions dispute immediately after the magnificent strike of 30 November 2011.
 4. Disputes between competing anti-cuts groups.
 5. The National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts has played a positive role in building a united student anti-cuts movement.
 6. We should demand the following:
 - a. No cuts to jobs and services
 - b. That the rich and big businesses should be taxed in order to rebuild public services, the NHS, and council housing
 - c. That we should expropriate the banks and bring their wealth under democratic control
 - d. That we should scrap Trident, withdraw troops from Afghanistan, and slash military spending
 - e. That we support every strike and struggle against cuts
 - f. That Labour stops collaborating with the Coalition's cuts and that Labour councillors refuse to implement them
 - g. That there is a united, democratic national anti-cuts coalition.
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Conference resolved:

1. To work with NCAFC and NCAFC Women where appropriate.
2. Actively campaign against all cuts, to produce campaign materials for activists and to work with NCAFC Women.
3. To work with a wide number of groups on anti-cuts campaigns.
4. Work with the Councillors Against the Cuts initiative.

Save the NHS!

Conference noted:

1. The Coalition is dismembering the NHS.
2. The deconstruction of the NHS has had, is having, and will have a disproportionate effect on women, as health workers, service-users and carers.
3. That the dismantling of the NHS is opening the door to private companies to profit from ill health.
4. That many students are active in, and many more interested in and could become involved in, the fight against cuts.

Conference believed:


1. That we need to mobilise students in defence of this crucial public service and the welfare state beyond education.
2. That the dismantling of the NHS is not only opening the door to private companies to profit from ill health, but opening the door to anti-choice religious groups such as those behind 'Care Confidential'.
3. That we should be inspired by the recent springing up of many more powerful local campaigns - including for instance the battle to save Lewisham A & E, many children's wards, critical care services and maternity wards - which has seen many thousands of people on the streets.

Conference resolved:

1. To work with organisations including the medical student network Medsin, BMA Students, Keep Our NHS Public, NCAFC and the NHS Unity Network to campaign in defence of the NHS.
2. To make defending the NHS a central theme of our work throughout the year, and produce a guide to how women students can get involved in the campaign.
3. To add our name to the statement demanding the next Labour government rebuilds the NHS being circulated by the NHS Unity Network.

Liberating the curriculum

Conference noted:

1. NUS liberation officers and the NUS Scotland VP Education held a joint event called Educate Liberate in February at Glasgow Caledonian University
 2. This was the first of its kind and was attended by institutions (mainly universities) from all over Scotland to discuss some issues students feel during their time of studying.
 3. This event was excellent in highlighting the issues that students felt alienated them while studying.
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Conference believed:

1. Many institutions use liberation in tokenistic ways when it comes to course content, materials and resources. A lot of these areas are dominated by stale, pale, male influences.
2. Staff take some students more seriously, contributions from women on gender seen as biased and make assumptions of past knowledge/people's backgrounds.
3. There is a gender and race imbalance in teaching staff, especially senior staff, a lack of role models for certain groups and staff using unsuitable language can have an effect on students' experiences.
4. This is unacceptable and in no way should students have to go through this experience while studying in any institution whether it is college or university.

Conference resolved:

1. The Women's' Officer works with the Vice President (Education) and the Education Convenors to do more work on this.
2. To mandate the Women's' Officer to do more events, like the one done in February, regionally to allow more students, student officers and staff to attend this event.
3. To work on having student specific sessions as well as staff specific sessions throughout the agenda of these events. This will allow an atmosphere where staff and students can openly speak about issues with likeminded people that may be hindered if staff and students were in sessions together.

Ensuring equal representation in governance structures


Conference believed:


1. The VonProndzynski review of university governance proposes a number of substantive recommendations to improve university transparency, accountability of senior management, and decision-making by staff and students.
2. NUS Scotland Conference 2013 passed policy requiring that at least 40% of university governing board members are women.
3. NUS Scotland Conference 2013 passed policy requiring that governing bodies include at least two student members.
4. NUS Scotland Conference 2013 passed policy that trustee boards are not democratic.

Conference further believed:

1. The majority of student presidents in Scotland are men.
2. A lack of women in representational structures hinders progress for women students and the development of women in leadership roles.
3. Seeing as trustee boards are not democratic it is important to ensure equal representation for women on these boards.
4. Students' associations struggle to get women candidates for their trustee boards seeing as there is a structural deficiency of women in leadership roles.

Conference resolved:

1. We recommend that students' associations introduce a requirement that at least 40% of non-elected trustee board members are women.
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2. We recommend that students' associations ensure that where there are two student representatives on university governing boards one of these should be a woman, where possible.
 3. We mandate the NUS Scotland Women's Officer to research organisations and networks championing equality for women, women's rights and women leadership and to create a resource for students' associations seeking external trustees.

Gender equality officers – men's officers in disguise


Conference noted:

1. The position of Women's Officer, in student unions/associations (SUs), frequently goes under attack, with threats to replace the role with a 'Gender Equality Officer'.
2. Large sections of society do not see the necessity for a continued Women's Movement – consequently many SUs currently are without women's officers or women's groups.
3. The deliberate misrepresentation of feminism is often a device used to further the patriarchal oppression of women.

Conference believed:

1. Women are consistently, disproportionately, under-represented in our society and our
2. SUs, women's officers are essential to tackling this problem.
3. Compulsory women's representation in the democratic structures of SUs needs to be effectively defended and extended to those SUs where it does not exist.
4. 'Gender Equality' does not yet exist and can only be achieved via women's liberation.
5. Creating an officer role for something which does not exist not only takes the emphasis away from the women's movement.
6. Lad culture and societal sexism often account for the 'fear' or 'discomfort' many people have associating themselves with the women's movement and feminism – 'gender equality' is a 'cuddlier' term, but it completely removes women from the centre of the campaign (and the name) thus perpetuating patriarchy in itself.
7. Women's officers often find it difficult to continuously defend their role, constantly repeating themselves, faced with harassment and attacks against their character can result in officers being intimidated out of their SUs. Challenging a continued deluge of misplaced moral outrage and misogyny can prove tough, enough for the most seasoned of campaigners.

Conference resolved:

1. The Scottish Women's Committee to assist all NUS affiliated SUs, in Scotland, which currently are without a women's officer role in creating and maintaining this role, with the goal of having a women's officer in every affiliated SU.
 2. The Scottish Women's Committee to create a toolkit for all women's officers which equip them with the knowledge, practical support and advice on how to effectively challenge and quash suggestions of 'gender equality officer' roles being created. The toolkit should also provide information on how best to create and/or maintain a strong women's campaign on campus.
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Learning on campus

Conference noted:

1. Many women return to further and higher education after having children.
2. The current legislation provides for a nursery place for 15 hours per week, granted to every three and four year old child in Scotland.
3. That although some nurseries work in partnership with local authorities to deliver these places, there is usually a disparity between the funding granted from the local authority and the price charged by the childcare institution. This leaves student parents out of pocket.
4. That there is no such provision for a child under three.
5. Childcare in the UK is amongst the most expensive in Europe.

Conference believed:

1. Student parents/carers must have access to reliable, affordable, quality childcare in order to progress and reach their full potential as students.
2. That although many colleges and universities in Scotland have nurseries on campus, these are usually owned and operated privately.
3. That where there are nurseries on campus, it is not guaranteed that students will have priority for their children and where these nurseries are privately operated, students may not be able to access a term-time only place putting more financial pressure on them.

Conference resolved:


1. To campaign for both further education and higher education institutions to critically evaluate their campus childcare provision.
2. To research what childcare is available to student parents/carers across the institutions in Scotland.
3. To mandate the NUS Scotland Women's Committee to call for quality, reliable and affordable childcare at every campus in Scotland.


Let's promote women

Conference noted:

1. NUS Scotland has three full-time officers, namely President, Vice-President (Education) and Women's Officer.
2. Only women can and should be able to run and be elected as Women's Officer, thus guaranteeing at least one full-time officer is a woman.
3. That not one of the three candidates for President or Vice-President (Education) at NUS Scotland Conference this year was a woman.
4. The last woman President of NUS Scotland was elected in 2004 then re-elected in 2005.
5. That an organisation called EMILY's list operates in the USA with the sole purpose of supporting pro-choice women to stand for public office.

Conference believed:

1. NUS Scotland is an inclusive and accessible organisation.
 2. That it is the responsibility of a democratic organisation such as NUS Scotland to ensure that its leadership reflects the membership.
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3. That there are quantifiable reasons why women are not choosing to run for election, which can include (but are not limited to) lack of finance and other resources.

Conference resolved:

1. To mandate NUS Scotland Women's Committee to work with the NUS Scotland VP Communities and Campaign Conveners, and third party organisations as necessary to establish support for future women candidates for any NUS or NUS Scotland full time officer position.



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