nus NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Society and Citizenship Zone Live Policy 2016-19

If you need this document in another format contact NUS on 0845 5210 262 or email events@nus.org.uk

Key information

Purpose of this document

This document contains all the policy currently in effect for the Society and Citizenship Zone. This is the policy that the Vice-President Society and Citizenship and the Society and Citizenship Zone Committees are responsible for implementing and is sometime known as 'Live Policy'.

Policy Lapse

Policy Lapses in 2 circumstances:

1. If a subsequent policy over-rides it.
2. After 3 years unless National Conference votes to renew it.

Policy passed at National Conference 2016 will lapse at the end of National Conference 2019.

What You Need To Do

If you are considering submitting policy to National Conference you should first check whether any policy is currently 'live' for that issue and whether you need to change the National Union's current stance on that area of work.

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact **democracy@nus.org.uk**.

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Society and Citizenship Zone Policy Passed at National Conference 2016

Motion 501 | Right to Education for Persons in Detention

Conference believes

1. People in prison represent a highly marginalised group who often have their right to education violated whilst in detention and also after incarceration.
2. Learning in prison is normally viewed as a tool for change aimed maximising impacts on recidivism, reintegration and employment upon release. This focus is narrow as the right to education is not only a tool for change but a human right and thus the right to education not relinquished when a person enters the Criminal justice System (CJS).
3. There is need as evidenced by the Special Rapporteur for Education in their report on Prison Education to redouble efforts to respect, protect and fulfil the right to education for those in detention
4. The provision of education in detention is complex and often the environment it takes place in is hostile to the liberating potential
5. Statistics show prison population reflects a disproportionate number of people that come from poor, discriminated and marginalised groups and communities.

Conference resolves

1. To support youth offending units that provide education to young people in prisons
2. To raise the profile of education in prison through the media and social media (blogging and vlogging) and by working with stakeholders such as but not limited to PET, ACU and Howard League
3. To work specifically with alternative, innovative and engaging media outlets such as Buzzfeed to release engaging and easy access articles on Prison Education
4. To work with FE colleges to engage persons in detention as well as governors in raising profile of prison education.
5. To use NUS voice to break the narrative that prisoners are undeserving of education and highlight the human right to education as well as its rehabilitative potential
6. To campaign for varied, adequate, relevant and quality education provisions for those serving longer term custodial sentences
7. To campaign, strengthen and champion learner voice of prisoners as well as support initiatives aimed at formalising systems and avenues for learner voice in prisons
8. To support, create and disseminate toolkits for advocacy and campaigning on prisoner rights with a focus on access to education for people in prison.
9. To work with APPG on libraries to advocate for prison libraries and increased access to education materials for students in prison

Motion 502 | Divest-Invest

Conference believes

1. Man-made climate change is real and it is happening now, caused by the burning of fossil fuels, predominantly by the world's richest nations.
2. The effects of climate are already being felt through warming global temperatures, leading to more frequent extreme weather events and rising sea levels.
3. The world's poorest people will suffer most from climate change. Local and indigenous communities on the front-line of fossil fuel extraction face land grabs, violence and ill health. The colonial models of extraction employed by the fossil fuel industry must not be replicated as we construct our low-carbon future.
4. UK tertiary education institutions are playing a crucial role in leading on climate change research globally.
5. However, many institutions have investments in fossil fuel companies, or carry out research for them into conventional fossil fuel extraction. This is not in keeping with the 'public good' remit of our institutions.
6. At the time of writing, 14 UK HE institutions have made commitments to full or partial divestment from fossil fuels. Although this is an impressive campaign achievement for the movement, many more need to divest.
7. Institutions that divest should reinvest their money into a just transition through community-owned and controlled energy in the UK and Global South, so that our institutions are making a positive commitment to tackling climate change.
8. Priority for investment should be given to transformational scale projects like the $160mil Yansa indigenous owned wind development in Mexico which will see the creation of the largest community owned renewable energy scheme on the planet in a region where new corporate wind infrastructure has led to violence, corruption and land grabs.
9. The focus of the NUS campaign is fossil fuel divestment, and renewable energy investment from university endowments and pension funds.
10. The launch of the NUS 'Divest, Invest' Campaign, calling on Institutions to move their investments to renewable energy.

Conference further believes

1. The impact divestment and investment will have on the grounds by which decisions are made.
2. That it is important to ensure the fossil free campaign is made more relevant to students on campus day to day. For instance, a focus on a balanced curriculum is essential for our students.
3. Institutions will respond more positively to campaigns that have a more strategic and longer term objective.

Conference Resolves

1. Divest-invest to be a high-profile campaign for NUS in 2016/17.
2. NUS should produce a divestment toolkit, to include:

a. Clear steps on how to run a successful divest-invest campaign
b. Justification for why institutions should be divesting their socially and environmentally damaging investments such as those in fossil fossils and the arms trade
c. Case studies of successful divest-invest campaigns
d. Guidance on positive investments that includes advice for how student unions can invest in the Yansa community wind farm at the development and construction phase.
e. Tailored resources for FE colleges on severing links to the fossil fuel industry.

3. NUS should thoroughly research the number of tertiary education courses that are sponsored by the fossil fuel industry, and the value of research paid for by the fossil fuel industry, with a view to establishing a baseline value for both. They should also explore the ethics and implications of course sponsorship.
4. Society and Citizenship zone to work with Union Development to support and establish student societies coordinating divestment and reinvestment campaigns, particularly linking in with national social and environmental sustainability campaigning organisations such as People & Planet, Global Justice Now and War on Want.
5. Society and Citizenship zone to work with Further Education Zone to ensure FE is prioritised and mainstreamed into all sustainability projects.
6. NUS to engage AoC and UCU on climate change issues, and build consensus for divest-reinvest.
7. NUS to engage the research funding councils on climate change issues, with specific reference to the funding of research that supports the fossil fuel industry.
8. NUS to ensure that that it does not have any investments in the fossil fuel industry and commit to reinvest 10% of it's endowment in the construction phase of the Yansa community owned wind farm in Mexico; to seek to influence any pension schemes that it pays into to divest from fossil fuels; to engage Endsleigh Insurance on divestment.
9. To ensure that this work, at all stages, considers and is inclusive of campaigning work which is ongoing right across the U.K. and also explore potential collaboration through NUS-USI with the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and students' unions in the Republic of Ireland
10. To revise the Divest Campaign to focus on on-campus, local investment in community renewables and local energy.
11. This would include:
12. Considering the carbon-neutrality of campus estates programmes.
13. Reduce institutions’ reliance on fossil fuels.
14. Investing in solar, wind and other renewable energy.
15. Ensuring a balanced curriculum; teaching about renewable energy and fossil fuels.

Motion 503 | Students are Citizens, Too!

Conference believes

1. Students and Students' Unions contribute to their local communities by through the economy, volunteering with local groups, and fundraising for local causes.
2. Large numbers of students stay in their area of study after completing their course and stay as permanent residents of typically 'student' areas.

Conference further believes

1. Within local communities, students living in HMOs often get treated as nuisances by permanent residents.
2. Local and national media tend to cover students in a negative way, rather than highlighting the positive impact students can have.
3. Students consider themselves residents of their local area, and deserve to be treated as such.

Conference resolves

1. To work with local councils to ensure students are integrated effectively into local communities.
2. To produce a report outlining the non-economic benefits of students to communities, highlighting the positive case for students.
3. To support Students' Unions in building relationships with their local communities to ensure good levels of cooperation and collaboration.

Motion 504 | Refugees Welcome in Universities and Colleges

Conference believes

1. Over a million asylum seekers reached Europe in 2015 alone, many fleeing war and persecution.
2. People seeking refugee protection and those granted discretionary leave to remain (DLR) are classed as overseas students, are charged higher fees and cannot access student loans.
3. Students' Unions and student societies across the country have been successfully campaigning for scholarships and bursaries for refugees and asylum seekers.
4. That there are a number of refugees arriving in the UK after suffering untold violence, political and economic insecurity in their home countries
5. The Student Action for Refugees (STAR) and NUS campaign ensuring people in the UK seeking refugee protection have equal access to higher education.
6. People waiting for a decision on their asylum application or have been granted Discretionary Leave to Remain in the UK don't have equal access to university.
7. They are charged international student fees ranging from £8500 to £29200, with no access to student loans or grants. They cannot work and often live on £36 a week.
8. With the current refugee crisis there will be increasing numbers of individuals affected by this issue (By the end of 2014 there were 117,161 refugees, 36,383 pending asylum cases).
9. STAR and NUS are campaigning for those seeking refuge protection to be able to:
    a. study as home students

b be recognised as having additional needs and be given access to additional support, e.g. bursaries

Conference further believes

1. Education is a right and should be free for everyone, regardless of nationality and citizenship status.
2. Current funding system leaves Further and Higher Education out of reach for many refugees and asylum seekers.
3. While free public Higher and Further Education for refugees is the ultimate goal, scholarships and bursaries funded by universities and colleges are a temporary solution and make learning possible for many.
4. That unlike some sections for our communities Students' Unions core aim is to be welcoming, inclusive environments
5. Putting international students (who often receive funding from their governments and choose to study in UK), and people who were forced to leave their countries, due to war or persecution, in the same category goes against common sense.
6. A number of institutions have already adopted Equal Access, but there are more institutions which have made little improvement to their policy.

Conference resolves

1. To continue working with Student Action for Refugees on the Equal Access campaign, and make it a priority.
2. To campaign for free access to education for refugees and asylum seekers, funded by progressive taxation.
3. To encourage and provide resources for Students' Unions to lobby their institutions for scholarships for refugees and asylum seekers, covering fees and a living allowance.
4. Support students' unions to become local refugee welcome hubs with advice and support about the local community and who to speak to as part of local community open days supported by NUS.
5. Ensure this important issue is highlighted to students' unions and encourage them to lobby their institution.
6. Investigate other factors such as stigma that asylum seekers face on campus.

Motion 505 | A long-term strategy into how we engage our students with politics to increase voter registration and turn out.

Conference believes

1. The amount of 18-24 year olds who vote is on average 40%.
2. This has fallen from an average of 60% in the 1990s, and is nearly half of the amount of 65+ year olds that vote.
3. The Government is launching attack after attack on students and young people in both FE and HE - with tuition fee increases, maintenance grants being cut and the NHS bursary being scrapped.

4. Young people don't engage in politics, so politicians don't target their policies towards them.
5. Voter registration drives have become a common part of students' union's annual campaigning activity.
6. By registering students to vote and organising activities around voter registration, students' unions are consistently ensuring that university and college campuses remain spaces of political engagement and civic responsibility.
7. By registering students to vote, students' unions can also very easily and effectively measure impact and be strategic in how they enhance their political capital.

Conference further believes

1. We know for a fact that young people are nowhere near as 'apathetic' as other generations, and the media like to make out.
2. We know that there is just a disconnect between what young people care about and party politics. Young people feel let down by the Government and feel under represented in Parliament.
3. NUS does some great work on voter registration and turn outs - but it is often just in the months leading up to elections and referendums. We would get much better results if this was something we were constantly working on.
4. Online voter registration has been introduced in England, Scotland and Wales.
5. Online voter registration has to some extent made voter registration easier and more accessible.
6. Due mainly to historical reasons, online voter registration has not been introduced in Northern Ireland.
7. NUS-USI has in recent years called on the UK Cabinet office to review the current voter registration process for citizens in Northern Ireland, with the belief that there is no longer any good reason by online voter registration is not available there.

Conference resolves

1. We need a full review of the way that we currently attempt to engage students in politics and activism – we need to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of what we currently do.
2. We need to lead a long term strategy into how we can improve on how we engage students in politics.
3. We need a clear action plan of the next couple of years - and how we will achieve a target of increased amounts of students and young people voting.
4. For the Vice President Society & Citizenship to work alongside the NUS-USI President to make representations to the Westminster Government and UK Cabinet office to introduce online voter registration in Northern Ireland.

Motion 506 | Fight to save the National Health Service – back the junior doctors and NHS bursary struggles

Conference believes

1. That the momentum of the junior doctors' dispute about working conditions and the "Bursary or Bust" campaign to save NHS student bursaries gives us an opportunity to more actively oppose the Tories' dismantling and privatisation of the NHS.

2. That the NHS Bill, which when motions was submitted was about to return to Parliament, provides a rough outline of how to reverse the assault on the NHS.

Conference further believes

1. That health workers' struggles are an essential part of the fight to save the health service. If the junior doctors' and bursary struggles win, it will put us in a much stronger position to oppose the privatisation agenda.
2. That the NHS as its best has represented at least elements of planning and provision for need in the midst of an exploitative and unequal society – at least aspiring to the idea that everyone has an equal right to life and health regardless of wealth. We must save it.

Conference resolves

1. To support the junior doctors' strikes and the NHS bursary struggle.
2. To devote financial and other resources to helping students nurses and health professionals in this fight.
3. To support and campaign for an end to cuts, marketisation and privatisation in the NHS, and for a comprehensive, well funded, publicly owned, run and provided health service meeting clinical need. We support the NHS Bill and will lobby MPs to back it.

Motion 507 | Climate Change

Conference believes

1. The recent COP21 climate talks produced a lot of rhetoric, but insufficient concrete commitment on tackling dangerous climate change.
2. The $100 billion pledged to help developing countries meet the COP21 targets is less than 8% of global military spending, to say nothing of corporate profits.
3. COP21 had little to say about droughts, floods, crop failures, species extinctions, coastal erosion and extreme weather, and nothing about climate-driven mass migration.
4. The UK government's seriousness about meeting a zero emissions target by 2030 is shown by the fact it recently scrapped a £1bn competition to develop carbon capture technology and cut subsidies to solar power 65%.
5. Climate change is a thing! The earth temperature is rising faster than it has in previous years.
6. Sustainability and environmentally friendly practice is a National interest and aim.
7. The use of vehicles and contribution from people day to day doesn't even compare to the percentage that animal agriculture contributes to climate change. With an around of 50% carbon emission coming from the meat and dairy industry alone.

Conference further believes

1. Promoting lifestyle changes and relying on markets won't save us.

2. Tackling climate change requires massive public spending on developing alternative energy, transport, redesign of housing, workplaces, urban environments, and more, tied to democratic public ownership in these sectors.
3. Unsustainable industries need to be taken under democratic public ownership, their infrastructure converted and jobs transferred to prevent lay-offs.
4. We need mass mobilisation around these goals, linking up students and climate campaigners with the workers' movement.
5. that what we are selling in our cafeterias is more harmful to the environment than the amount of people using petrol vehicles to get to our institutions.
6. by reducing the amount of animal products we sell we can help our institutions to become more eco-friendly and lowering their c02 emissions.
7. by doing this it also give our students more healthy and ethical choices in turn improving their wellbeing.
8. if there is a reduction in animal products being used in our institution's the supply and demand will decrease there for impacting on the amount of animal agricultural activities happening which then leads to a bigger reduction in the c02 imitations making a more positive impact on the climate.
9. This will further inform people on environmental issue and in turn give them the choice to make conscious decisions in day to day life which then helps the environment.

Conference resolves

1. Make campaigning against climate change and for a sustainable world a major priority this year, highlighting demands for public ownership and democratic control of energy and transport.
2. Highlight the government's lack of seriousness about reaching zero emissions by 2030.
3. Build links with trade unions on this, including support for unions representing the solar energy workers whose jobs the government is slashing.
4. For NUS to create a campaign to support the students' unions in lobbying their institutions to reduce carbon foot print and become more environmentally friendly by reducing animal produce by a third, and highlight nationally the impact that animal agriculture has on the environment
5. To lobby the government to launch a similar imitative across all educational institutions.

Motion 508 | Stand Up to Racism

Conference believes

1. The refugee crisis has seen thousands of people die over the past year while thousands more languish in camps in the most appalling conditions.
2. The government's response has been disgraceful and has sought to demonise people who are fleeing war, poverty and persecution.
3. Across Europe there has been a staggering rise in Islamophobic hate crimes, including in Britain. Between 2013 and 2015 hate crimes against Muslims in London doubled.

4. As the cuts bite racist scapegoating is on the rise, with politicians seeking to blame immigrants and Black communities for falling living standards which are in fact a result of the Tory government's austerity measures.
5. Racist discrimination and institutional racism continues to rise. For example, new research from the TUC has shown that Black university graduates earn 23% less than their white counterparts.
6. The government's response in letting only 20,000 refugees into the country across 5 years is disgraceful.

Conference resolves

1. To reaffirm that campaigning against all forms of racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism is a top priority for the student movement.
2. To continue to oppose and campaign against the government's racist Prevent agenda, which sees Muslim students unfairly targeted and harassed on campuses.
3. To reaffirm NUS' No Platform for Fascists policy and continue to campaign for its full implementation within NUS and all Students' Unions.
4. To work with Stand Up To Racism in campaigning against racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism including by mobilizing students to join the national demonstration to mark UN Anti-Racism Day annually.

Conference resolves

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Motion 509 | Solidarity with Migrants and Refugees

Conference believes

1. The rhetoric around immigration in the UK is toxic, with politicians from all parties lining up to attack migrants.
2. The current Government's position is that the UK should accept 20,000 refugees over a period of five years, which is a failure of its moral duty for the country to act as a place of safety for people fleeing conflict, oppression, the effects of climate change and other factors which may force people to seek asylum.
3. Ongoing conflict in Syria will heighten the refugee crisis, with more people taking more dangerous action in order to attempt to find safety.
4. The continuing climate crisis will increase the number of refugees and environmental migrants.

5. Across Europe, anti-immigrant policies are being introduced, including the seizure of valuables from migrants in Denmark.
6. NUS has a long and proud history of standing in solidarity with the oppressed.
7. That since the start of the Syria crisis over 4 million people have been displaced
8. That 1.2 million refugees are currently in camps in Lebanon, 650 000 are in camps in Syria, 1.9 million are in camps in Turkey and the UK has taken a pitiful number, globally places for a mere 2.6% of the refugees have been offered places by the global community
9. That student unions have played a key role in making this crisis a national news story
10. That local councils can offer to take refugee's
11. That those who are trapped in Syria and in camps on the border are often the most vulnerable
12. That as a result of a campaign by MDXSU 50 Syrian refugees have been resettled in Barnet
13. That refugee resettlement campaigns bring together communities, with mosques, synagogue's, churches, schools and SU's all playing a crucial part

Conference further believes

1. As the referendum on EU membership looms, the rhetoric used by the national media and political figures will become more and more hostile.
2. The United Kingdom can and should accept many more refugees than the current UK government is doing.
3. Western military intervention in Syria will only exacerbate the refugee crisis.
4. Climate change is already disproportionately affecting people in the Global South, as its worst effects will naturally affect these countries hardest, but also because these countries are least well equipped to adapt to a changing climate as a result of a long history of Western imperialism and capitalist exploitation.
5. Migration brings benefits both to the migrants themselves and to the country they are migrating to.
6. Arbitrary national borders that prevent certain people entering a certain country are morally problematic and perpetuate racism and conflict between people, and that freedom of movement should become the norm, not just across Europe but across the Globe.# That the UK should do its bit, and that David Cameron has offered more rhetoric than action
7. That there is a grassroots desire amongst students for action
8. That many students are directly affected by the situation
9. That NUS should be doing more to co-ordinate a national response
10. Campaigns to help those in camps from Turkey to Calais are a way of improving the conditions in temporary accommodation
11. Long term the solution is for the global community to step up and to do its bit
12. Councils up and down the UK should take at least 50 refugee's each immediately
13. This would provide emergency relief for 50,000 of the most vulnerable people in the world

14. That by creating a safer route to the UK the UK can reduce the risks being taken in getting to the EU by refugee's
15. That this will undermine the inhumane and immoral financial gains being made illegally by people smugglers
16. That for us to affect this we need effective national leadership
17. That NUS should be co-ordinating a national coalition of those students, groups and SU's who want to make the world a better place
18. Students can play a crucial role in helping refugee's settle in the UK, providing English lessons, sports opportunities and other SU services

Conference resolves

1. To express full solidarity with refugees and migrants.
2. To lobby the UK Government to accept more refugees for as long as the current crisis continues.
3. To condemn the aggressive anti-migrant policies of European governments.
4. To re-affirm our position against British military intervention in Syria.
5. To ensure that in NUS campaigns on climate change, the explicit link is made between it and the effect this has on people in the Global South.
6. To support migrant solidarity actions wherever possible by:
7. Aiding Student Unions to run collections and organise solidarity runs to the Calais jungle.
8. Working directly with migrant solidarity groups that seek to improve conditions in detention centres, combat fascist organisations, resist deportations and other actions in solidarity with migrants.
9. Supporting national demonstrations in solidarity with migrants and refugees.
10. To work with Citizens UK and the National Refugee Welcome Board to campaign both for refugee's to be resettled and then to be supported upon arrival
11. To condemn the failure of the UK government to do more
12. To mandate the VP Soc and Cit to do more about this
13. To celebrate case studies from student unions who have successfully run resettlement campaigns

Motion 510 | Personalised toolkits for lobbying MP's and local Councillors

Conference believes

1. Students all around the UK's accessibility to education is under huge threat at the moment – with the Government planning to cut NHS bursaries from the year 2017/18 and the cuts in maintenance grants said to result in the poorest students leaving higher education with £53,000 worth of debt.
2. Student housing is also one of the biggest issues that affects students currently, with ¾ of students claiming to have problems with their homes.
3. These issues have huge implications for accessibility to education, retention and mental health.

Conference further believes

1. If we want to tackle these issues, we need to start from the ground up, lobbying local MPs and councillors to do something about it.
2. Many student unions, however, have little resource and expertise to do so, and NUS currently doesn't currently provide much support in this area.
3. Local Councillors are crucial to engage with when it comes to issues like student housing.
4. There is also little tailored support when it comes to tailored support for different parties – for example, student unions with Labour MP's and councils getting much more success in lobbying than student unions with Conservative MP's and councils.

Conference Resolves

1. To set up resources for student unions to use on how to lobby local Councillors and MP's.
2. Tailor them from party to party - and consider other factors such as regions of the UK and specialist support that might be required.
3. Give us examples of best practice and some helpful guidance and advice of where to turn if we are struggling.

Motion 511 | Extend EU Referendum Suffrage to EU Citizens living in the UK

Conference believes

1. 2.3 million EU citizens are resident in the UK.
2. EU citizens are allowed to vote in the UK for devolved Parliaments and Assemblies, local authorities and European Parliament. They can register to vote if they have been residing in the UK for 12 months or more.
3. British living abroad (emigrants) can vote in all British elections up to 15 years after they left the UK.
4. Qualifying Commonwealth and Irish citizens are allowed to vote.
5. The democratic participation in the referendum of EU Citizens residing in the UK is critical as the outcome of the referendum could bear potential life-changing consequences and serious implications on their future lives. We find it deeply unfair that the outcome of the referendum will directly affect millions of people who could not express their views democratically.
6. 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 the referendum.
7. 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 has not been addressed sufficiently.
8. European migrants contribute immeasurably to the UK and its education system in a number of ways.
9. International EU students make up an important component of the UK education system and the student movement.
10. The date for the referendum on the UK's membership in the EU has been set for June 23 2016.

11. The result of the EU referendum could impact the access of European students to European educational institutions.
12. NUS has policy to campaign for the UK to remain in the EU.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. This year will be the referendum on the UK's EU membership, and David Cameron is already trying to renegotiate the terms, undermining important rights and attacking migrants.
16. 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".
17. 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.
18. 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.
19. There are 14 Immigration detention centres/immigration removal centres in the UK
20. There's a long list of human rights abuses in these
21. One can be taken there without evidence and there is no limit on how long one may be kept there
22. Conditions in these centres are inhumane
23. Several are run by private companies such as G4S
24. Many people die in these centres, and thousands of detainees are on suicide watch
25. Since 2009, government funding for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) has been cut by 60%.
26. Only this summer £45 million previously allocated to fund mandated ESOL learning for job seekers was cut.
27. At the same time, roughly 850,000 residents across the UK lack basic English language skills.
28. Research indicates that language skills are the single most important alterable aspect of integration in the labour force.
29. Free and accessible language courses are a key aspect in ensuring social and economic stability for new migrants and minority language speakers.

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.
2. Crucial questions remain unanswered, e.g. the retrospective application of restrictions to benefit access; imposition of Tier 2 working visas (with the consequent £35,000 minimum income threshold.

3. We believe in freedom of movement for all.
4. We are in a better position to campaign for the EU to work on behalf of workers of Europe and for the principles of free movement and to better align with our beliefs as an organisation, if we remain in it.
5. 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.
6. Universities are often international students' immigration sponsors
7. Universities have been known to use this to threaten international students who criticise them, for example the cases of Justice 4 Sanaz and Dr Casey Briezna.
8. The Prevent Legislation continues to demonise international students and students of colour
9. Government policy and the current anti-immigration rhetoric in politics and the media is extremely worrying
10. The right to learn English in a free, accessible environment is a right for all.
11. The government's ongoing cuts in ESOL budgets are part of its wider xenophobic campaign against migrants.
12. Depriving people from free, accessible language courses is a punitive measure by the government aimed at making the life of recent migrants harder and discourage them from remaining in the UK.

Conference resolves

1. For NUS to campaign and to pressure the Government to extend the right to vote in the 2016 EU Referendum to include EU students and citizens residing in the UK.
2. For NUS to issue resources to unions on how to engage and campaign around this issue.
3. 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.
4. 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 including a sovereign European Parliament
    d. freedom of movement and an end to "Fortress Europe"
5. Campaign against David Cameron's renegotiations undermining migrant rights, workers' rights and human rights.
6. Put migrants' rights and freedom of movement at the heart of our campaign.
7. To condemn the existence of any and all Immigration Detention Centres in the UK
8. To raise attention to the racist profiling of students of colour and particularly Muslim students under the Prevent Legislation, especially with regard to immigration detention.
9. To work with organisations such as Queer Strike and Movement for Justice to support those seeking asylum in the UK and those detained in immigration detention centres.

10. To draw attention to the inhumane conditions inside such detention centres and to allocate financial and human resources to lobbying the Home Office to change the law and government policy to better carry out its obligations under international convention and the demands of natural justice, and to ultimately end immigration detention in the UK.
11. To help any individual Student Union to mobilise students for protests against immigration detention centres.
12. Join forces with the Action for ESOL campaign and campaign for the government to reverse cuts to the ESOL budget.
13. Campaign and lobby for publicly funded, accessible, high quality language education for all those who need it.
14. Support the FE zone, the International Students' Campaign, and Black Students' Campaign in their ongoing campaigns for ESOL.
15. Develop and distribute materials explaining the importance of ESOL, highlighting the ongoing cuts to its budgets, and encouraging SUs in both HE and FE to join up with Trade Unions and community groups in their locality to campaign for the reversal of ESOL cuts.

Society and Citizenship Zone policy passed at National Conference 2017

Motion 501: Brexit means Brexit or so we're told

Conference believes

1. NUS is a member of the European Students' Union.
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 .
3. Hate crime in the UK surged in the aftermath of the EU vote, up 58% in July 2016 alone
4. This hate crime affected both EU and non-EU nationals, as well as people of colour more broadly
5. That while the Brexit vote left the futures of EU migrants uncertain, it has also caused damage and violence to non-EU migrants and communities of colour
6. European, ERASMUS and International students play a valuable part of our HE and FE institutions.
7. All students, regardless of European identity, can be and have been subject to racism and/or xenophobia in light of Brexit.
8. That around 73% of 16-24 year olds voted to stay in the EU.
9. The EU provides around £1bn/year2 to UK universities in research grants.
10. That the United Kingdom voted in a majority to leave the European Union;
11. That Northern Ireland and Scotland both voted to Remain, whilst England and Wales voted to Leave;
12. That the European Union currently provides a number of rights for disabled people;
13. Theresa May's hard Brexit proposal would bring about enormous cuts to education – 15% of UK university funding currently comes from the EU. A hard Brexit means this funding will be lost and the implications for Higher Education will be extremely damaging: entire institutions may be shut down, courses and departments slashed, the number of student places cut, jobs cut and there is a real threat that tuition fees will be increased once again in a bid to close the huge funding gap that would be created.
14. Membership of the Single-Market provides massive economic benefits to the UK through allowing for UK trade with the EU to be free from tariffs and many non-tariff and regulatory barriers.
15. Britain owes much of its working rights, workplace and environmental regulations to its participation in the European Union.
16. As set down by the precedent of the Supreme Court ruling, it is important for Parliament to be involved in negotiations and for the government to report on its withdrawal negotiations regularly to Parliament.
17. If Theresa May's Tory hard Brexit goes ahead the UK will be ripped out of the Single Market, the Customs Union, the European Court of Justice and freedom of movement will be ended. This hard Brexit would cause serious damage to the UK's economy and society for generations to come if it goes ahead, making the majority of the population much poorer.

18. The UK needs to remain in the European Single Market as it is of enormous economic value to the UK. The alternative to remaining in the European Single Market, is a trade deal with Donald Trump, where he will put 'America first' and not the job prospects and living standards of the UK's population.
19. Theresa May's threat that the UK will leave the EU Single Market has already prompted major companies to announced that they will be moving thousands of jobs to other countries.
20. The outcome of the EU Referendum was also in part caused by the fact that the major remain campaigns inadequately explained the genuine causes of and solutions (such as those outlined above) to the problems many people experience. As such, it did not properly challenge the narrative of many arguing for Brexit.
21. In recent years, the government scrapped the post-study work visa, introduced NHS charges for non-EU students and deported tens of thousands of international students.
22. Often the response by Vice-Chancellors and sections of the student movement to such attacks is insistence that international students are not migrants and should be treated differently,
23. The arguments often emphasise how much international students contribute to the British economy by "funding our universities" (justifying sky-high fees) or emphasise the differences between students and migrant workers instead of challenging prejudice against both.
24. We must continue to defend free movement without shame, compromise or capitulation."The recent slide into anti-immigration, anti-free-movement politics by even some people on the left, including the Labour Party left.

Conference further believes

1. The EU has not only enabled the free movement of millions of people across national borders and facilitated cultural exchange, but has done so while protecting their rights within the countries they travel to.
2. The UK's membership of the EU enables over 140,000 students to travel for study between the UK and Europe each year, which enhances the educational and cultural diversity of our colleges and universities as well as the educational experiences of the students who travel.
3. We must fight the idea that the problem is "Europe". We oppose the re-raising of national barriers. We need cross-European campaigns to defend and improve services and rights, and to defend migrants' rights.
4. 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.
5. That as students our future is at risk by the vote to leave European Union.
6. That NUS should work to defend students from a right-wing hard Brexit.
7. Free movement is not against the interests of working class people. Migrant workers are part of the working class too; our politics of fighting for workers' rights does not respect borders imposed by our rulers. Furthermore, the evidence shows that immigration does not substantially depress pay or conditions.

8. Restricting immigration will therefore neither help UK-born nor migrant working-class people. Instead, such politics divide students and workers, damaging our ability to organise and fight against the common enemy that is actually responsible for low wages, shortages of housing and jobs, and overstretched public services – the rich and powerful, and the parties and politicians who serve their class interests.
9. We need to politically combat anti-migrant ideas, and advocate real solutions in their place, not concede the debate to populist misrepresentations.
10. That attacks on international students and other migrant groups are based on the same racist and xenophobic ideology, and can only be defeated through active solidarity, not creating further divisions.

Conference resolves

1. To assist lobbying efforts to find out what the Government's terms of withdrawal from the European Union are and what "Brexit means Brexit" actually means.
2. To campaign for free movement to remain a key principle of the UK's political engagement with the EU, and to remain in the single market.
3. To work with the European Students' Union to actively lobby Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) on issues which will impact students and education.
4. To support Students' Unions to lobby their MPs and the government, calling on them to remove international students from net migration figures.
5. To continue working with the Human Rights Act coalition to publically oppose and campaign against any attempt to repeal the Human Rights Act and replace it with the British Bill of Rights.
6. To lobby the Government to enshrine the preservation and extension of EU environmental protections in UK law after leaving the EU.
7. NUS should organise a campaign to showcase the non-academic benefits of European, ERASMUS and International students.
8. To work with other European focused campaigning youth organisations such as Youth for Europe and Undivided.
9. To work with organisations including Movement for Justice and Anti-Raids Network to support migrants.
10. For the 'Liberate Education' campaign to make central the demand that the UK retains its 15% university funding from the EU.
11. To lobby against the repeal of any European regulations that would water down rights, standards or protections on the environment, consumer protection, competition rules, workers' rights and workplace standards.
12. To vigorously campaign for the UK to remain a member of the EU's Single Market in order to defend jobs, living standards and freedom of movement.
13. To campaign to defend and extend freedom of movement and the right to free, accessible education for everyone, regardless of nationality. Blame not migrants, but the rich and powerful, the ruling class, for the problems facing working class people.

14. To argue and campaign for a programme of immediate real solutions to the problems facing working class people, including: uniting migrant and British-born workers in trade unions to fight for improved pay and conditions for all; reversing anti-union laws; raising and enforcing the minimum wage; decent housing accessible for all; secure, decently-paid jobs, training and education for everyone; serious taxes on the rich and their businesses in order to redistribute wealth and reverse cuts to welfare and education, fund decent public services and rebuild the NHS.
15. To fight against any further attacks on international students, including through direct action if necessary.
16. To challenge the "students are not migrants" approach within the student movement and more broadly on the left, and to fight uncompromisingly against capitulation by the left and the student and trade union movements on migrant rights and free movement.

Motion 502 | Placements, Apprenticeships and Education for Good

Conference believes

1. The NUS-HEA sustainability skills surveys show a clear preference from students for more work-based experiential learning.
2. Many universities now offer paid placements for recent graduates, which helps them with their institutional employability statistics, but many of these placements seem tokenistic.
3. The Apprenticeship Levy starts on 01 April 2017, but there are, as yet, very few apprenticeship standards that relate to sustainability.
4. The TUC has published a new report outlining how the UK can undergo a clean energy transition to create high-quality jobs and secure a major share of the future clean energy industry, which is estimated to be worth $500bn dollars globally.

Conference further believes

1. The NUS-HEA sustainability skills surveys show a clear preference from students for more work-based experiential learning.
2. Many universities now offer paid placements for recent graduates, which helps them with their institutional employability statistics, but many of these placements seem tokenistic.
3. The Apprenticeship Levy starts on 01 April 2017, but there are, as yet, very few apprenticeship standards that relate to sustainability.
4. The TUC has published a new report outlining how the UK can undergo a clean energy transition to create high-quality jobs and secure a major share of the future clean energy industry, which is estimated to be worth $500bn dollars globally.

Conference resolves

1. NUS to work with NSoA and other partners to establish new apprenticeship standards relating to sustainability, that equip students with skills for a low carbon and circular economy.

2. To use our collective lobbying power to support NSoA in their work with Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA) to ensure fair funding for sustainable apprenticeships.
3. NUS to establish a 'Placements for Good' scheme to sit alongside its Dissertations for Good scheme.
4. Lobby the IfA to include sustainability as a functional skill alongside literacy and numeracy within apprenticeships.
5. To collaborate with the National societies in the nations to ensure that this work is carried out in the most appropriate way in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
6. For NUS to work with TUC on sustainable careers and placement opportunities.
7. To work with Apprentice Extra, National Society of Apprentices and Trade Unions to facilitate ease of access and promote the benefits of union membership for apprentices and students.

Motion 503 | Defend migrants and support free movement

Conference believes

1. In recent years, the government scrapped the post-study work visa, introduced NHS charges for non-EU students and deported tens of thousands of international students[1].
2. Often the response by Vice-Chancellors and sections of the student movement to such attacks is insistence that international students are not migrants and should be treated differently[2],
3. The arguments often emphasise how much international students contribute to the British economy by "funding our universities" (justifying sky-high fees) or emphasise the differences between students and migrant workers instead of challenging prejudice against both.
4. The recent slide into anti-immigration, anti-free-movement politics by even some people on the left, including the Labour Party left.
5. That a sanctuary campus is one that offers protection to migrants and refugees and refuses to cooperate with government attempts to collect data on migrants and/or attempts to deport students
6. That migrants and refugees escaping from conflict have come under increased attack over the last year
7. That the government has increased attention on migrants and refugees to be seen in a negative light
8. That since the EU referendum in June 2016 there has been a spike in hate crime of around 50%[3]
9. That there is a decreasing amount of help and spaces available for migrant and refugee students to receive free help, guidance and protection from this rise in hate crime
10. That the Sanctuary Campus policy being used in the United States has been successful to the protect and stop the reporting and deportation of migrants and refugees in the United States.
11. That the rhetoric around immigration in the UK is toxic, with politicians from all parties lining up to attack migrants
12. That racist campaigns during the Brexit referendum have encouraged a sharp increase of anti-migrant rhetoric and hate crime across the UK.

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[1] www.workpermit.com/news/uk-tier-1-post-study-work-visa-will-not-be-re-introduced-20160115 www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-38876527 www.independent.co.uk/student/news/home-office-s-shocking-treatment-of-international-students-needs-urgent-inquiry-says-nus-a6979146.html
[2] www.telegraph.co.uk/education/universityeducation/11053743/Foreign-students-should-not-be-classed-as-immigrants.html

[3] www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-38976087

13. That this situation has been fueled by the government's actions and words.
14. That the British government continues to aim to bring net migration under an arbitrary 100,000 threshold.
15. That the British government continues to deport, harass, and criminalises migrants, refugees, and international students.
16. That the British government canceled the student visas of over 50.000 international students on faulty evidence.
17. That the British government has announced a new cap on the number of Syrian refugee minors it will accept.
18. That the British government continues to refuse to offer free access to FE for unaccompanied migrant minors
19. That the British government has built a wall in Calais alongside its French counterpart, instead of offering sanctuary to migrants fleeing war, poverty, and persecution.
20. That across Europe and North America increasingly draconian anti-immigrant policies are being introduced.
21. That NUS has a long and proud history of standing in solidarity with the oppressed.
22. That students across the UK have repeatedly demonstrated their determination in fighting against anti-migrant policies and xenophobic movements and governments, including our own.

Conference further believes

1. We must continue to defend free movement without shame, compromise or capitulation.
2. Free movement is not against the interests of working class people. Migrant workers are part of the working class too; our politics of fighting for workers' rights does not respect borders imposed by our rulers. Furthermore, the evidence shows that immigration does not substantially depress pay or conditions.
3. Restricting immigration will therefore neither help UK-born nor migrant working-class people. Instead, such politics divide students and workers, damaging our ability to organise and fight against the common enemy that is actually responsible for low wages, shortages of housing and jobs, and overstretched public services – the rich and powerful, and the parties and politicians who serve their class interests.
4. That attacks on international students and other migrant groups are based on the same racist and xenophobic ideology, and can only be defeated through active solidarity, not creating further divisions.
5. We need to politically combat anti-migrant ideas, and advocate real solutions in their place, not concede the debate to right-wing lies.
6. That it is important to have spaces that Migrant and Refugee students know they are safe and will be protected from being reported and possibly deported during their time in the UK.
7. That the rise in hate crime towards Migrants and Refugees is unacceptable
8. That help should always be available to migrant and refugee students to allow for them to feel safe in the UK and so they can always access have free and fair access to someone who can explain them their rights

9. That a sanctuary campus policy is the best and most accessible way for migrant and refugee students to be able to be secure and see as well as a recognisable place in most cities and towns with universities
10. universities offer a huge voice of resistance if they become sanctuary campuses as they represent a huge section of society.
11. That the election of Donald Trump and the sharp rightward shift across Europe will further embolden the UK government's anti-immigration stance.
12. That the United Kingdom can and should accept many more refugees than the current UK government is doing.
13. That migration brings benefits both to the migrants themselves and to the country they are migrating to.
14. That arbitrary national borders that prevent certain people entering a certain country are morally reprehensible and perpetuate racism and oppression, and justify the exploitation and oppression of those migrant who do make it to our shores
15. That freedom of movement should become the norm, not just across Europe but across the Globe.
16. That students have a key role to play in these campaigns.
17. That we should reject the argument that migrants bring down living conditions and wages, and instead point out that it is the ill-treatment and discrimination of migrant workers which facilitates these processes

Conference resolves

1. To campaign to defend and extend freedom of movement and the right to free, accessible education for everyone, regardless of nationality. Blame not migrants, but the rich and powerful, the ruling class, for the problems facing working class people
2. To argue and campaign for a programme of immediate real solutions to the problems facing working class people, including: uniting migrant and British-born workers in trade unions to fight for improved pay and conditions for all; reversing anti-union laws; raising and enforcing the minimum wage; decent housing accessible for all; secure, decently-paid jobs, training and education for everyone; serious taxes on the rich and their businesses in order to redistribute wealth and reverse cuts, fund decent public services and rebuild the NHS.
3. To fight against any further attacks on international students, including through direct action if necessary.
4. To challenge the "students are not migrants" approach within the student movement and more broadly on the left, and to fight uncompromisingly against capitulation by the left and the student and trade union movements on migrant rights and free movement.
5. To launch a campaign that fully supports Sanctuary Campuses
6. To distribute information about Sanctuary Campuses
7. To help create and maintain any campus that wishes to become a sanctuary campus
8. To fight against the rise of hatred against migrants and refugees

9. To supply help to any Migrants and Refugee students that may be facing issues during their time in the UK or their right to remain
10. To express full solidarity with refugees and migrants and continue to work alongside other groups to achieve equal rights for migrants in the UK.
11. To lobby the UK Government to accept more refugees.
12. To condemn the aggressive anti-migrant policies of European governments including our own
13. To campaign for the closing of detention centers, such as Yarl's Wood, alongside other groups and unions.E.g. Movement for Justice, Women for Refugee Women, Anti-Raids Network
14. To continue to campaign for justice for the tens of thousands of international students targeted by the home office.
15. To continue to campaign for the right of international students to study and work in the UK both during and after their degrees.
16. To campaign for the right of unaccompanied minors to access post-16 education for free.
17. To campaign for the rights of migrants to enter the UK, settle and work, free of discrimination and exploitation, in education, at work, and in wider society.
18. To encourage students' unions to take actions in the same direction.
19. To work directly with migrant solidarity groups that seek to improve conditions in detention centres, combat fascist organisations, resist deportations and other actions in solidarity with migrants.
20. To support national demonstrations in solidarity with migrants and refugees.

Motion 504 | Commu Commu Commu Commu Commu Community

Conference believes

1. That some unions have proven that working with their local communities can achieve great results, such as the work of Middlesex Students' Union who worked with their local Citizens UK group to resettle 50 Syrian Refugees.
2. That there are a number of issues that affect both the student body and the wider community that they live in, such as housing or crime.

Conference Ffurther believes

1. That Students' Unions should be the centre of their local communities.
2. That Students' Unions can achieve results much more quickly if they reach out, beyond the student body to other affected bodies and build a campaign alongside them.
3. That over the last 30 years the idea of a community has been eroded, leaving a society that is far more focused on the individual than it is on the collective, which is something the student movement should work to change

Conference resolves

1. To work with students' unions to develop localised community strategies. Analysing big issues to local residents, responding to the perception of students in the local area and building a community strategy into the students' union and institution strategic plan.
2. To support students' unions in hosting debates as well as holding national NUS led debates in the run up to assembly and parliamentary elections and working in partnership with local schools and sixth forms to encourage active participation and source questions for candidates and campaigns.
3. To pilot the creation of a student-led apprenticeship scheme to develop regional advice networks by students' unions delivering careers advice to students and to prospective students in the local community.
4. To support students' unions to organize welcome parties for refugees who are resettled in their local community and meet with local council leaders and MPs to discuss the number and details of refugees resettling in the area, bringing together local community groups with STAR groups on campus to create a local action plan.
5. To support students' unions to become local refugee welcome hubs with advice and support about the local community and who to speak to as part of local community open days supported by NUS.
6. To encourage students' unions to lobby their institutions to provide more open classes and lectures to the local community.
7. To develop a trade standard corporate responsibility mark through the Quality Students' Union programme that can raise revenue for sustainability and community projects by undertaking ethical audits for companies on a commercial basis.
8. To work with commercial teams in students' unions to develop local corporate social responsibility policies to actively change the way that companies work and engage with the local community.

Motion 505 | Strengthening the student voice

Conference believes

1. The Electoral Commission has signalled students as one of the key groups who fail to register to vote4
2. It is imperative that students' voices are heard at both national and local elections.
3. The Government 2018 Review will reduce the number of constituencies in the UK to 600 from 650.
4. That the changes in parliamentary constituency boundaries are a direct assault on students' rights to representation – weakening the student vote.
5. That registering students and educating them as to why it is so important to vote is key to making sure students' voices are heard nationally and locally.

Conference resolves

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4 www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/journalist/electoral-commission-media-centre/news-releases-reviews-and-research/electoral-commission-report-on-1-december-2015-electoral-registers-in-great-britain [Since 1 December, 1.3 million applications to register to vote have been made, following the significant registration activity that continues to take place across the UK in advance of the important elections in May 2016.
The Electoral Commission is also running a national public awareness campaign supported by a range of partners, ahead of the 18 April registration deadline. This includes TV, radio and digital advertising.
The campaign will reach all adults, with a focus on groups that the Commission's research has identified as being less likely to be registered to vote, such as students, young people, those who have recently moved home, people who rent their home, and people from some black and minority ethnic communities.]

1. To provide resources and information for students' unions about voter registration and best practice.
2. To condemn the UK Government's boundary review which weakens the student voice.
3. To mandate the NUS VP Society and Citizenship to work on ways to highlight the important of student engagement in all elections, both nationally and locally to students across the UK.

Motion 506 | NUS supporting the Abortion Rights Campaign for free, safe and legal abortion in Ireland and Northern Ireland

Conference believes

1. The Republic of and Northern Ireland have some of the most restrictive abortion laws in the European Union and in the world5
2. London Irish Abortion Rights Campaign call for the repeal of the 8th Amendment from the Irish Constitution, and to extend the 1967 Abortion Act to Northern Ireland6.
3. London Irish ARC campaigns for access to free, safe, and legal abortion in both Ireland and Northern Ireland.
4. The Abortion Rights Campaign aim is to bring people in London together to campaign for free, safe, legal abortion by fundraising, lobbying, direct action, establishing partnerships with relevant people and organisations in the UK and building awareness through media and communication.
5. Women wishing to have an abortion in Northern Ireland must travel to England to receive this right.

Conference further believes

1. Ever since its formation, the NUS has been the natural home for generations of women campaigning for social justice and equality.
2. The fight for a Woman's right to choose is a global fight.

Conference resolves

1. The NUS should stand in solidarity with the women and others of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland
2. The NUS should support the London Irish ARC campaign to repeal the 8th Amendment in ROI and extend the 1967 Abortion Act to NI.
3. Student unions across the UK should support and raise the profile of the Abortion Rights Campaign in any way that they can to highlight the +160,000 women and others who have been forced to travel for abortion services from the Republic of Ireland since 1983[7]

Motion 508 | Pay Inequality in Higher Education and Employment Rights of University Staff

Conference believes

[5] www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35980195

[6] londonirisharc.com/about

[7] www.ifpa.ie/Hot-Topics/Abortion/Statistics

1. The explosion in use of insecure zero-hour contracts at UK universities without the option of a full-time contract is immoral, unjustifiable and has a damaging effect on the lives of academic and university staff.
2. The demoralising effects of low pay and insecure zero-hour contracts on academic staff have a negative knock-on effect on students' education[8].
3. Postgraduate teaching staff are equally entitled to proper contracts as permanent teaching staff.
4. That research students are workers as well as students, and thus should be entitled to associated rights to limited hours, minimum pay, healthy and safe workplaces, holidays, sick leave, academic freedom, and protection from harassment and unfair dismissal.
5. Unjustifiable gender pay gaps exist in pay structures at UK Universities with female staff being paid an average of £6,103 less in 2013, with such pay gaps increasing to close to £10,000 at the worst offending universities.[9]
6. Universities are communities in which all students, academics, and workers contribute to the financial success and sustainability of the institution – not just the Vice-Chancellors and senior managers.
7. Vice Chancellors should not be earning salaries of 7 times their average paid member of staff on top of significant expenses – nor should their pay increase at a faster rate than their colleagues![10]

Conference resolves

1. Campaign for all academic and university staff to be offered a full-time or part-time contract alongside a zero-hour contract rather than be forced to accept a zero-hour contract and lose statutory benefits and increased financial insecurity.
2. To campaign for proper worker rights and legal protections for research students and thus they should have rights to minimum pay, healthy and safe workplaces, holidays, sick leave, academic freedom, and protection from harassment and unfair dismissal.
3. To stand in solidarity and actively support the University and College Union's campaign for equal pay on campuses.
4. To campaign for alongside the UCU for a 10:1 pay ratio across all universities and for proportional increases in the pay academic and university staff receive to be the same for all regardless of position.

Motion 509 | Fight Climate Change!

Conference believes

1. The view of leading climate scientists that climate change exceeding 1.5°C is now likely[11]
2. Donald Trump's appointments of fossil fuel executives such as Tillerson; his executive orders favouring construction of new fossil fuel pipelines; and his statements contradicting climate science[12].

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[8] www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/nov/16/universities-accused-of-importing-sports-direct-model-for-lecturers-pay
[9] https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/international-womens-day-universities-pay-gaps-highlighted
[10] www.ucu.org.uk/article/8096/Report-reveals-university-heads-pay-rises-and-perks
[11] www.theguardian.com/science/2016/aug/06/global-warming-target-miss-scientists-warn
[12] www.ft.com/content/c04f96e0-c21e-11e6-9bca-2b93a6856354 www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2017/01/24/trump-signs-five-more-orders-pipelines-steel-and-environment/96988428/ www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/donald-trump-paris-climate-change-deal-myron-ebell-us-president-america-pull-out-agreement-a7553676.html

3. That the government admits that 2.3 million families were living in fuel poverty this winter[13].
4. That consumer energy prices are expected to rise 5% in 2017 – a price rise driven by gas prices[14].
5. Profits of the Big Six energy firms (British Gas, EDF Energy, E.ON, npower, ScottishPower and SSE) have increased tenfold since 2007[15].

Conference further believes

1. Organising our energy infrastructure for private profit instead of public use is wrong
2. Private ownership of the energy infrastructure in the UK hurts people and obstructs renewable energy development
3. Urgent action is needed on climate change – faster than is comfortable for the fossil fuels industry
4. The energy industry should be put under public ownership and democratic control.

Conference resolves

1. To campaign for the nationalisation of the Big Six under democratic control as part of a renewed drive for student action against climate change
2. To support protests against Trump's rollback of progress on climate change

[13] www.theguardian.com/society/2016/dec/30/millions-families-living-fuel-poverty-england-statistics

[14] www.telegraph.co.uk/bills-and-utilities/gas-electric/falling-energy-prices-this-is-the-best-way-to-take-advantage/

[15] www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/energy/11475989/Big-Six-energy-companies-profits-increased-tenfold-since-2007.html

Society and Citizenship Zone policy passed at National Conference 2018

Motion SC101 | Ending single use plastics

Conference believes

1. That in 2015 alone, new plastic production stood at 322 million tonnes globally.
2. At least 8 tonnes of plastic is leaked into the ocean.[16]
3. That the UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.8 aims to ensure that by 2030 'people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature'.

Conference further believes

1. The amount of packaging waste in society, and single-use plastic packaging in particular, is excessive.
2. That single-use plastic packaging in particular is having a significant negative effect on aquatic ecosystems - as illustrated by BBC's Blue Planet II.
3. That the long-term impact of plastic in the food chain on humans is still poorly understood.
4. That in the absence of that understanding and given the known negative impact on aquatic ecosystems, society should adopt the precautionary principle in minimising plastic waste entering our oceans and waterways.
5. That constructive engagement with suppliers and companies by NUS and Students' Unions can lead to practical alternatives to reduce or eliminate excessive packaging.
6. That Students' Unions have an important role to play in raising environmental awareness and in encouraging pro-environmental behaviour change.
7. That environmental engagement campaigns can lead to changes in environmental values, attitudes and behaviours of students that can last well beyond their time in education.
8. That Students' Unions have an important role to play in engaging with their local communities on environmental issues – particularly with local schools.
9. That the Government's recent 25-year environment plan[17] was positive in its general outlook but was far too long-term and didn't include anything that was binding.

Conference resolves

1. NUS should investigate possibilities for finding alternative options within its commercial supply chain, or to constructively engage existing providers, to identify and use lower or no packaging options – specifically focusing on reducing plastic packaging.

[16] United Nations Environment, 2016 http://cleanseas.org/get-informed
[17] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan

2. NUS should develop a plan for phasing out products which use no recycled content, or overuse packaging. Whilst still being accommodating to disabled people's needs, for prepared easy access cheap food.

3. NUS should support and advise students' unions on how to seek alternative suppliers, or engage with existing suppliers, where possible to limit and reduce single-use packaging waste.

4. NUS should build a campaign for students' unions to bring to their campuses, to reduce the use of single-use plastics in particular.
5. NUS should provide a toolkit for students' unions for Go Green Week on mitigating local pollution by running activities such as plastic clean-ups, in partnership with local and national organisations such as the Marine Conservation Society where relevant.
6. NUS should partner with other organisations, such as the Eco Schools network, to support students to deliver sustainability education in schools.
7. To lobby the government to ensure that the 25 Year Environment Plan is translated into meaningful policy and that more ambitious, shorter-term targets, are set for reducing plastic waste.
8. NUS should provide toolkits for students' unions around campaigns for individual students living zero waste lifestyles, focusing on how individual students can modify behaviours and make sustainability focused life decisions.
9. NUS Society and Citizenship Zone should work with the NUS Disabled Students Campaign to increase understanding among students' unions of requirements for single use plastics due to accessibility reasons.
10. NUS Society and Citizenship Zone should work with the NUS Higher Education Zone and NUS Further Education Zone to develop toolkits around incorporating sustainability into national and local curriculums, and incorporating understanding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals into education.

Motion SC102 | International not isolationism

Conference believes

1. In 2016, there were around 39,000 applications for asylum in the UK. Less than half of these were accepted[18].
2. That only around 1% of the world's refugees live in the UK.[19]
3. The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reported in 2016 that there were around 22 million refugees and 2.3 million people were seeking asylum globally.
4. Turkey, Pakistan and Lebanon host the largest amount of refugees globally; Turkey hosts 2.7 million refugees. Lebanon, a country the size of Wales, now hosts over a million refugees.[20]
5. That the International Rescue Committee (IRC) currently runs the Together for Refugees campaign, calling on EU countries to resettle and support refugees and asylum seekers.

[18] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2016/summary
[19] http://www.redcross.org.uk/~/media/BritishRedCross/Documents/What%20we%20do/Refugee%20support/Mythbuster%20booklet%202016.pdf
[20] https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/what_we_do/refugee_services/resettlement_programme/refugee_resettlement_the_facts

6. People who have sought refuge in the UK do not have equal access to university; most are classed as international students which mean they are charged higher fees. On top of this most cannot get a student loan and do not have the right to work to earn money to pay their fees and living costs.
7. That the NUS Society and Citizenship Campaign and the International Students' Campaign have been working with Student Action for Refugees (STAR) to campaign for better access to education for refugees and asylum seekers.
8. The roots of the current refugee crisis are inherently political.
9. NUS has often shied away from international solidarity, or derided this as "not relevant" to students in the UK.
10. Given the global span of our student membership; the active role of the UK government in creating the conditions for refugee flight; or the fact as illustrated by this refugee crisis that international events inevitably come "knocking on our door"- this is a very narrow conception of our movement.
11. NUS is uniquely positioned in civil society to challenge and organise around international issues, and government policy on these.
12. Our solidarity with refugees can and must go further than supporting them once they have arrived in Britain, to the root causes of why they are forced to flee their homes whether war, climate change, border policies or otherwise.
13. We must also vigorously oppose the surveillance and subjugation refugee/migrant students face under the UK immigration regime.
14. From December 1938 to August 1939 Britain allowed 10,000 Jewish children on the Kindertransport to seek refuge from Nazi Germany, including Lord Alf Dubs.
15. There are currently 95,000 unaccompanied refugee children living in Europe.
16. In 2016 more than 25,800 unaccompanied children risked their lives to reach Europe.
17. Section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016, known as the Dubs Amendment, required the government to help relocate 3000 refugees to the UK and support unaccompanied child refugees.
18. After only 200 child refugees were allowed into the country, the scheme is set to finish after letting in only another 150 in.
19. On average, it takes 10-11 months to bring refugees in northern France to their family in the UK.

Conference further believes

1. That the UK, as well as the rest of Europe, should commit to resettling and supporting far more refugees than it currently does.
2. That everyone, including refugees and asylum seekers, should be able to access and succeed in education.
3. That, particularly since the EU referendum, the mainstream media have vastly over exaggerated the number of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK.
4. This has led to a rapid increase in reported incidents of hate crime aimed at black and Muslim people in the UK.
5. That refugees and asylum seekers in the UK should be able to access work that is fairly paid, safe and secure.

6. Trade union officials have at times repeated damaging fallacies about migrant workers “driving down wages” for workers in order to justify their opposition to free movement.
7. NUS must be steadfast in campaigning against such logic, and campaign for an end to borders.
8. Campaigns like the LSE Cleaners’, and SOAS Justice 4 Cleaners, show how powerful student solidarity with precarious migrant workers in our institutions can be.
9. It is unacceptable that the Home Secretary stopped the Dubs amendment on the grounds of it encouraging “people trafficking’.
10. The Dublin Regulation has created a situation where there are child refugees with no legitimate home because they fall outside the policies parameters
11. Dubs therefore serves the purpose of taking in these children in desperate need of a home, but have no ties to a specific country
12. Britain has a responsibility to relocate, support and welcome unaccompanied child refugees to the UK and given the NUS”track record on fighting injustice it is right to campaign on this issue.
13. As students, we are the next important generation and have a responsibility to fight for what is right.
14. Local authorities play a vital role in supporting child refugees.

Conference resolves

1. That the NUS Society and Citizenship campaign should work with the International Rescue Committee to campaign for the UK to increase the number of refugees it resettles each year.
2. That the NUS Society and Citizenship campaign should support the International Students’ Campaign with its work with Students Action for Refugees, campaigning for better access to education for refugees and asylum seekers through the Equal Access campaign.
3. To collaborate with the trade union movement to campaign for better employment rights for asylum seekers and refugees.
4. Support student solidarity campaigns with migrant workers in universities, and work with the IWGB to develop campaign guidance for students.
5. Lobby universities to oppose the encroachment of anti-migrant 'Hostile Environment' policies on their institutions as far as legally possible.
6. To provide training sessions on migrants’ rights.
7. Continue opposing any legislation restricting migrant rights and freedom of movement.
8. NUS will press the government to reopen the Dubs Amendment as well as honoring the Children at Risk Scheme, the National Transfer Scheme and Dublin Regulation under EU law to take in unaccompanied child refugees if they can be reunited with family in the UK, and speed the process up.
9. NUS will lobby local authorities to allocate resources to unaccompanied child refugees to demonstrate to the government that more than 480 refugee children can be accepted into Britain.