

Zone Report 2018

Society and Citizenship

Vice President:
Zamzam Ibrahim

Zone Conference Report

Vice President (Society and Citizenship)

Introduction

This paper sets out the accountability report from the Zone Vice President. It also contains a summary of Zone Policy 2016 – 2019.

Questions

Any Individual Student member of the National Union of Students' may ask a question of the Vice President. Questions must be submitted in advance of the Conference using the online form. You will be asked to state your name and Constituent Member (your Student Union or Association).

You can access the form to ask accountability questions at:

<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/conferences/zone-conferences/accountability>

The deadline for submission of accountability questions is Wednesday 24 October at 12.30pm. Questions will be asked during the accountability sessions at Zones Conference.

Outgoing Committee

Last year's Zone Committee was:

Vice President: Zamzam Ibrahim

Florence Onwumere	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member (NEC place)
Amy Smith	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member (FE place)
Dan Wood	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member (FE place)
Abdi Duale	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member
Ahmed Mahbub	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member
Aisling Murray	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member
Chisomo Phiri	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member
Joseph Tema	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member
Riddi Viswanathan	Soc/Cit Zone Committee Member

Zone Committee 2018/19

Elections for the Zone Committee (including the NEC place) will be taking place at the Zone Conference. Any individual student member of the NUS can nominate themselves online to be a member of the committee. Nominations are online via a form and the deadline for nominations is 24 October 2018 at 12.30pm.

More details of the election and the nomination form can be found at:

<https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/zones/elections>

Dates of Committee Meetings 2018/19

Date of meetings for this Zone are: 14 November 2018, 23 January 2019, 19 March 2019, 29 May 2019

Society and Citizenship Zone

Summary of policy 2016-2019

The following document summarises policy active for 2018-19 in the Society and Citizenship Zone, covering policy passed at NUS National Conference in 2016, 2017 and 2018

Overview

National Conference 2018

Motion SC101 | Ending single use plastics
Motion SC102 | International not isolationism

National Conference 2017

Motion 501 | Brexit means Brexit or so we're told
Motion 502 | Placements, Apprenticeships and Education for Good
Motion 503 | Defend migrants and support free movement
Motion 504 | Commu Commu Commu Commu Commu Community
Motion 505 | Strengthening the student voice
Motion 506 | NUS supporting the Abortion Rights Campaign for free, safe and legal abortion in Ireland and Northern Ireland
Motion 508 | Pay Inequality in Higher Education and Employment Rights of University Staff
Motion 509 | Fight Climate Change

National Conference 2016

Motion 501 | Right to Education for Persons in Detention
Motion 502 | Divest-Invest
Motion 503 | Students are Citizens, Too!
Motion 504 | Refugees Welcome in Universities and Colleges
Motion 505 | A long-term strategy into how we engage our students with politics to increase voter registration and turn out
Motion 506 | Fight to save the National Health Service – back the junior doctors and NHS bursary struggles
Motion 507 | Climate Change
Motion 508 | Stand Up to Racism

Motion 509 | Solidarity with Migrants and Refugees
Motion 510 | Personalised toolkits for lobbying MP's and local Councillors
Motion 511 | Extend EU Referendum Suffrage to EU Citizens living in the UK

Society and Citizenship Zone policy passed at National Conference 2018

Motion SC101 | Ending single use plastics

What NUS believes

Excessive single use plastic packaging waste is negatively impacting aquatic ecosystems and the human food chain. As such, society should minimise plastic waste entering oceans and waterways.

How NUS should work in this area

NUS should reduce or eliminate its own use of single use plastics from its commercial supply chain by engaging with suppliers to find practical alternatives to excessive packaging and develop a plan for phasing out products which use no recycled content, or overuse packaging.

NUS should ensure changes reflect the needs of disabled students and should work with the NUS Disabled Students Campaign to increase understanding among students' unions of requirements for single use plastics due to accessibility reasons.

NUS should partner with other organisations, such as the Eco Schools network, to support students to deliver sustainability education in schools and 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.

How students' unions should be engaged

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.

NUS should produce toolkits for students' unions on multiple topics: for Go Green Week on mitigating local pollution, around campaigns for individual students living zero waste lifestyles, around incorporating sustainability into national and local curriculums and incorporating understanding of the UN Sustainable Development Goals into education.

NUS should build a campaign for students' unions to bring to their campuses, to reduce the use of single-use plastics in particular.

Motion SC102 | International not isolationism

What NUS believes

The UK and Europe should be resettling far more refugees than it currently is. Refugees and asylum seekers in the UK should be able to access education and work that is safe, secure and fairly paid. They face a number of barriers however to accessing and succeeding in education, including the cost of fees and maintenance in particular.

Since the EU referendum, the mainstream media have vastly over exaggerated the number of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK and this has led to a rapid increase in reported incidents of hate crime aimed at black and Muslim people.

Britain and local authorities in particular have a responsibility to relocate and support child refugees, as outlined in the Dublin Regulation.

How NUS should work in this area

To campaign for free access to education for refugees and asylum seekers, funded by progressive taxation.

NUS should collaborate with groups such as the International Rescue Committee to increase the number of refugees the UK settles each year, with Student Action for Refugees to campaign for better access to education and trade unions to campaign for better employment rights for asylum seekers and refugees.

NUS should lobby the government to reopen the Dubs Amendment as well as honouring the Children at Risk Scheme, the National Transfer Scheme and Dublin Regulation and lobby local authorities to allocate resources to unaccompanied child refugees.

NUS should campaign for the closing of detention centres and work directly with migrant solidarity groups that seek to improve conditions in detention centres.

How students' unions should be engaged

NUS should work with universities to support solidarity campaigns with migrant workers and impose anti-immigrant hostile environment policies on campuses.

NUS should provide resources for students' unions to lobby their institutions for scholarships for refugees and asylum seekers, covering fees and a living allowance.

Related active policy

Motion 503 | Defend migrants and support free movement

Motion 504 | Refugees Welcome in Universities and Colleges

Motion 509 | Solidarity with Migrants and Refugees

Society and Citizenship Zone policy passed at National Conference 2017

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

What NUS believes

EU free movement enables students to travel for study which enhances the educational and cultural diversity of colleges and universities as well as the educational experiences of the students who travel and protects their rights.

We should oppose the raising of national barriers, 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. Free movement is not against the interests of working class people, neither does. We need to politically combat anti-migrant ideas.

How NUS should work in this area

To campaign for free movement to remain a key principle of the UK's political engagement with the EU, to remain in the single market and remove international students from net migration figures. NUS should work with ESU to lobby MEPs and students' unions to lobby MPs.

NUS should also 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.

How students' unions should be engaged

NUS should support students' unions to lobby their MPs and MEPs in support of these asks.

Related active policy

Motion 503 | Defend migrants and support free movement

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

Motion 502 | Placements, Apprenticeships and Education for Good

What NUS believes

Students show a preference for work based experiential learning. University placements are often tokenistic and there are few apprenticeship standards that relate to sustainability.

How NUS should work in this area

Work with NSoA to establish new apprenticeship standards relating to sustainability and ensuring fair funding for sustainable apprenticeships.

To establish a 'Placements for Good' scheme to sit alongside its Dissertations for Good scheme and lobby the IfA to include sustainability as a functional skill alongside literacy and numeracy within apprenticeships.

Motion 504 | Commu Commu Commu Commu Commu Community

What NUS Believes

Students' unions should be the centre of their local communities and they can achieve more when they work within them. As the idea of community becomes eroded, the student movement should work to change this.

What is more students contribute to their local communities in many ways, often staying in local areas after finishing at HEIs, but are often seen as nuisances any this stereotype is perpetuated in the media.

How NUS should work in this area

To support students' unions to make good relationships in their local communities and make the case for the non-economic benefits of students' unions locally.

To develop a trade standard corporate responsibility mark through the Quality Students' Union programme by undertaking ethical audits for companies on a commercial basis.

How students' unions should be engaged

NUS should support students' unions to deliver a variety of projects in their communities including local debates in the lead up to elections, hosting welcome parties for refugees, lobby institutions to provide open classes for the local community and develop social responsibility policies for local companies.

Students' unions should also develop localised community strategies.

Related active policy

Motion 503 | Students are Citizens, Too!

Motion 505 | Strengthening the student voice

What NUS believes

That students are one of the key groups that fail to register to vote, and that changes to constituency boundaries have exacerbated this problem.

Students experienced repeated attacks on them on behalf of the government such as cuts to maintenance grants and the NHS bursary. At

the same time, as less students engage formal politics, the less government policies represent them.

Students' unions play a key role in ensuring students are registered to vote and that university and college campuses remain spaces of political engagement and civic responsibility.

How NUS should work in this area

Review the way that we currently engage students in political activism and develop a clear long term strategy for how we can improve this.

NUS should condemn the UK Government's boundary review and highlight the importance of student engagement in all elections as well as collaborating with NUS USI on campaigning for online voter registration in Northern Ireland.

How students' unions should be engaged

NUS should provide resources and information for students' unions about voter registration so that they can drive up registration numbers on campuses.

Related active policy

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

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

What NUS believes

The Republic of and Northern Ireland have some of the most restrictive abortion laws in the European Union and in the world.

How NUS should work in this area

The NUS should support the London Irish ARC campaign to repeal the 8th Amendment in ROI and extend the 1967 Abortion Act to NI.

How students' unions should be engaged

Student unions across the UK should support and raise the profile of the Abortion Rights Campaign in any way that they can.

Motion 508 | Pay Inequality in Higher Education and

Employment Rights of University Staff

What NUS believes

The rise in the use of zero hours contracts in UK universities has a damaging effect on the lives of university staff, including postgraduate teaching staff, and in turn students' education. Research students are workers as well as students, and thus should be entitled to associated rights.

Gender pay gaps continue to exist in universities whilst at the same time, Vice Chancellors are paid seven times their average staff member.

How NUS should work in this area

Campaign for all staff to be offered a full or part time contract and support UCU in their campaign for equal pay on campuses. To campaign for proper worker rights and legal protections for research students.

How students' unions should be engaged

Students' unions should campaign on campuses 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.

Motion 509 | Fight Climate Change!

What NUS believes

Climate change is happening and it causes the world's poorest people to suffer disproportionately, as they are often on the front line of fossil fuel extraction. Many institutions have investments in fossil fuel companies, or carry out research for them into conventional fossil fuel extraction.

Alongside this, our energy infrastructure should not be organised for private profit, and private ownership of energy infrastructure hurts renewable energy development. Urgent action is needed on climate change – faster than is comfortable for the fossil fuels industry and so the energy industry should be put under public ownership and democratic control.

How NUS should work in this area

To run the Divest Invest campaign and support students' unions to run divestment campaigns on campuses. NUS should also create a campaign to support students' unions to lobby

their institutions to reduce their animal produce by a third and highlight nationally the impact that animal agriculture has on the environment

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

How students' unions should be engaged

NUS should support the establishment of student societies coordinating divestment and reinvestment campaigns on campuses, particularly linking in with national social and environmental sustainability campaigning organisations.

Related active policy

Motion 502 | Divest-Invest

Motion 507 | Climate Change

Society and Citizenship Zone Policy Passed at National Conference 2016

Motion 501 | Right to Education for Persons in Detention

What NUS Believes

Those in detention often have their right to education violated and learning in prison should be seen not solely as a tool for change, but as a right. This disproportionately impacts those from poor and marginalised groups.

How NUS should work in this area

To raise the profile of education in prison by working online, with the media, FE colleges and specialist organisations.

To campaign for adequate education provisions for those serving long term sentences and advocate for and strengthen learner voice in prisons.

How students' unions should be engaged

To work with FE colleges to engage persons in detention as well as governors in raising profile of prison education.

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

What NUS believes

Momentum from the junior doctors' dispute about working conditions and the campaign to save NHS student bursaries provides an opportunity to actively oppose the dismantling and privatisation of the NHS.

The NHS represents planning and provision for need in the midst of an exploitative and unequal society and the idea that everyone has an equal right to life and health regardless of wealth, and must be saved.

How NUS should work in this area

To support the junior doctors' strikes, the NHS bursary struggle and campaign for the end of cuts, privatisation and marketisation in the NHS.

How students' unions should be engaged

NUS should also devote financial and other resources to helping student nurses and health professionals in this fight.

Motion 508 | Stand Up to Racism

What NUS believes

The UK government's response to the refugee crisis has been disgraceful. At the same time, incidents on hate crime on campuses are on the rise, institutional racism in education providers continues to exist and the government continue their racist scapegoating of migrants.

How NUS should work in this area

NUS should reaffirm its campaigning against all forms of racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. NUS should 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.

How students' unions should be engaged

NUS should ensure that its No Platform for Fascists policy is fully implemented within NUS and all students' unions.



Motion 510 | Personalised toolkits for lobbying MPs and local Councillors

What NUS believes

Student issues such as housing require action from the ground up, with students lobbying local MPs and councillors. Students have little expertise in this area however and are not offered tailored support to do this.

How NUS should work in this area

NUS should set up resources for student unions to use on how to lobby local Councillors and MPs, offering tailored support and best practice.



Zone Conference Accountability

Vice President (Society and Citizenship) Zones Report

Author: Zamzam Ibrahim

Date Produced: 01/10/2018

Priorities

Priority area	Area of work	Progress
Media Response Unit	Activist media training programme	We are developing an activist training programme around working with the media which will be launched to coincide with Lead and Change 2019.
Media Response Unit	Know your rights legal briefing	We have worked with the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and MediaWise, who have contributed advice and codes of ethics to include within the activist briefing which we are launching at Zones 2018!
Sustainability	Divestment campaign	<p>We have continued our collaboration with People and Planet on our 'Divest Invest' campaign, and have made great progress towards our milestone of having 50% of UK institutions committed to pulling their investments out of coal, tar sands, oil and gas.</p> <p>In September we held a strategy day to map out our plans for reaching the goal in 2018.</p>
Sustainability	Climate change is a race issue	<p>We are developing a new research project with the Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment, alongside the Equality Trust. The project will explore the lack of racial diversity in the sustainability sector.</p> <p>This year's NUS Sustainability Summit will have a strong focus on social justice. There will be a workshop on climate change as a race issue, and a plenary panel on sustainability and liberation.</p>
Asylum Seekers & Refugees in Education	Barriers to education	<p>We have had a meeting with Student Action for Refugees (StAR), and secured a date for the Equal Access conference - which is going to be on the 24th January. We are now in the process of planning the conference which will be open to all students, to enable us to recruit more advocates for and expand the campaign.</p> <p>We have also been speaking to Universities UK, who are keen on supporting the campaign and working with universities to do more to offer scholarships to refugees and asylum seekers.</p>
A society for the many	Active Citizenship in Schools	<p>We have developed a new project which will work in two stages. The first is running from now until the end of 2018. We are conducting an internal policy review and talking to students' unions, including running a session at zones, to develop NUS' understanding of active citizenship. I am also meeting with sector leaders, such as the British Youth Council and the National Charity for Volunteering Organisations to identify the role that students' unions can play in delivering active citizenship education in schools. We have also met with the British Council to identify ways in which students can benefit from the funding they have available through the Erasmus+ scheme to fund volunteering and activism.</p> <p>In the new year we will draw on this learning to deliver opportunities and resources for students' unions to work in their communities to support education around, and opportunities for, active citizenship in schools.</p>
A society for the many	Youth centres	This project is focussed around two areas: lobbying policy nationally and supporting students' unions locally. I am meeting with sector leaders to identify how NUS can contribute to this lobbying work. In the new year we will release resources for students' unions to campaign locally on this.

A society for the many	Votes at 16	<p>There will be another private members' bill end of October for which we are working collaboratively with our partners The Association of Colleges (AoC), the British Youth Council (BYC) and The Votes at 16 Coalition to maximise influencing potential. We have developed campaign resources for students' unions to target key MPs and released video clips on social media of students calling for votes at 16.</p> <p>Last year we lead on bringing sector stakeholders together and established ourselves as the expert voice on votes at 16. This includes multiple (even Tory!) MPs quoting our work and publically thanking us in parliament. We have built on this for this year by developing NUS profile in the press.</p>
FE is where it begins	Hate crime in FE	We are developing a research project aimed at identifying the barriers that students in further education face to reporting incidents of hate crime. The project will begin at the end of 2018.

Other achievements of my Zone

Put all our events you have been to in here that don't fit in with any of those categories

Achievement	Progress (what have you achieved since the last NEC)
SOS	We have been working with the Danish NUS and USI to develop a new international entity to enable us to work in partnership on sustainability issues.
NUS Sustainability Summit	We have been planning the NUS Sustainability Summit 2018, which will happen on the 31 st October.

Next steps

Action/Work area	What I hope to achieve
Votes at 16	Winning votes at 16 for all across the UK on October 26 th with the private members bill!
Access to education	Finalising plans and opening registration for access to education conference
A society for the many	Continue to deliver our learning in the sector as a basis for resources for students' unions
GISU	Launching our Green Impact Students' Unions programme for 2018 to support students' unions sustainability work
Media Response unit	We will be launching Activist legal briefing at Zones!
Environment Bill Campaign	Developing a campaign for strong environmental legislation post Brexit.