





nus **NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

Union Development 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 Union Development Zone. This is the policy that the Vice-President Union Development and the Union Development Zone Committee 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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Union Development policy passed at National Conference 2016


Motion 301| The Impact of Student Opportunities

Conference believes

1. Over the last two years, particularly as a result of this government, a worrying series of events has built up a significant potential threat to the future of the student movement. This includes media attacks on the charity sector, a politically-driven and well-funded sector regulator, the Lobbying Act, the Trade Union Act, devastating cuts to FE and challenges to the transparency of students' unions.
2. Funding for SUs is also scarcer and more uncertain as budgets become even tighter and our enterprise markets more competitive. Many SUs are experiencing crisis levels of funding already, while income generation is made harder by the spiralling costs of student living, addressed by the NUS priority campaign. Furthermore a historically very successful lever for attracting HE investment in SUs, NSS Question 23, will shortly be retired.
3. All this has the effect of weakening the position of students' unions, preparing the landscape for future attack from government and its instruments.
4. When the student movement came under attack in the early 1990s we won the public debate by harnessing the love for students' unions. We turned the life-changing experiences our movement has given to students and communities into public and Parliamentary support.
5. To be able to do this again and to defend students' unions in the foreseeable future we need a deeper understanding of the impact we are having on students and society. This will help us make the case for the value of students' unions, as well as win locally on student opportunities. e.g. 'Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free' campaigns.
6. The Open University is the main provider of part time education in the UK
7. Part time students have unique needs and require adequate representation on a national level
8. Our national student voice is stronger when it is representative of all learners and NUS should be a home for students' unions of all shapes and sizes

Conference further believes

1. Student opportunities are the engine of our movement. Clubs, societies, volunteering, media, fundraising and enterprise groups transform lives and fuel progressive change in society.
2. SUs run student opportunities to make all of these broad differences, or impacts, in society:
3. Shared Control – *maximising collective control and shared power.*
4. Climate Justice and Sustainability – *preserving the natural environment.*
5. Social Justice – *ensuring equal access to opportunities including employment, education and development.*

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6. Economic Justice - *resource distribution to provide dignity in human life.*
 7. Freedom from Oppression – *strengthening civil rights and liberation from oppressive power relationships between groups of people.*
 8. Wellbeing of Communities and Self – *improving health and the quality and quantity of interpersonal relationships.*
 9. Liberty, Freedom, Discovery – *individual power and liberty for the sake of discovery.*
 10. The impacts overlap but give a broad reflection of the common goals of our movement.


Conference resolves

1. NUS to adopt these impacts both as a framework for expressing the difference students' unions are making in the world and as an overarching vision for the development of student opportunities.
2. NUS to continue the #LoveSUs campaign with a core theme of student opportunities, using recent efforts to build a national evidence base for their impact towards the defence of our movement.
3. NUS to embed these impacts across relevant areas of work. The Charitable Services board should start by looking at the NUS Awards, as a key way of acknowledging success in students' unions, recognising the evidenced difference made above and beyond other judging criteria.
4. NUS Trustee Board to explore how these impacts might be applied across the rest of the group's activities, seeing how they resonate for different stakeholder/membership groups.
5. NUS to offer support on behalf of members to national student opportunities groups where they aim to have the same impacts.
6. Work with the Open University students' association to explore options for their membership of NUS.
7. This work should incorporate specific and tailored support across Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, working in conjunction with NUS-USI, NUS Scotland and NUS Wales to demonstrate the impact of students' unions in their respective nations and regions.

Motion 302 | Students' unions are valued for student engagement in learning, help us NUS

Conference believes

1. Educational partnership asks students to co-create their education, taking equal responsibility in educational and institutional decisions.
2. Students' unions build collective power for students. Atomised student feedback could never substitute for serious student representation and as the collective voice for students in their institutions students' unions are essential to partnership. SUs empower students to improve teaching and learning, as well as to hold management of institutions to account.
3. Sector responses to the Higher Education Green Paper highlighted this as a valuable function for students' unions within education and there is clear expectation from sector bodies in FE and HE that students should be partners in education.

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4. SUs benefit from effective democratic structures, reflective of both how their institution is managed and how students organise themselves, to achieve this mission. Without effective structures SUs and institutions will not deliver on the promise of partnership.
 5. Structures for student engagement/Learner Voice vary in success across the movement. Meaningful progress is often limited to well-resourced SUs. Many of us know our current model is not working, but the way forward is unclear and the future of our SU depends on being able to get this right.

Conference further believes

1. Ensuring students are treated as partners in their education is and will continue to be a key function of students' unions, improving the quality of UK education.
2. There is plenty of work to be done with SUs on the ground to build capacity for supporting student engagement, making it effective and authentic. This should therefore be a core function of NUS's union development work.
3. Not every students' union needs to have bespoke democratic structures, there are common themes enough that off-the-shelf models can work for different types of students' unions.

Conference resolves

1. NUS to ensure that supporting members to engage students as partners in their learning is a core purpose of NUS work in developing unions across HE and FE.
2. NUS to review current and previous work in this area with a view to consolidating it all and making basic, practical recommendations for different types of students' unions; particularly where any relevant content can be reframed in the language/culture of Learner Voice.
3. NUS to have a clear and affordable consultancy offer to members and their institutions about building a more advanced approach to student engagement.


Motion 303 | Safe Social Elections

Conference believes

1. Students' Unions across the country are putting more effort every year into their annual elections, with turnout increasing annually as more students are being engaged.
2. The use of social media is becoming more important in annual elections for campaigning and challenging candidates
3. Many anonymous accounts are created online for the purpose of trolling or undermining election campaigns

Conference further believes

1. The use of social media during elections does more good than harm
2. The ability for the electorate to connect directly in real time with the election process is a positive element of social media

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3. Anonymous accounts have the ability to shield racists, sexists, and cyber bullies from campus disciplinary procedures.

Conference resolves

1. That the NUS open a dialog with Facebook, Twitter, and YikYak to introduce restrictions on 'anonymous' or troll accounts during election periods

Motion 304 | NUS Extra commission rates

Conference believes

1. All Students' Unions receive the same commission rates from sales of NUS Extra cards.
2. For many students' unions within FE their only source of income is from NUS Extra commission.
3. In 2014/15 FE Unions sold £1.3m of NUS cards raising over £500k in commission directly into FE Unions.

Conference further believes

1. The commission from NUS Extra sales has a much bigger positive impact on students' unions with small block grants than it does for those with large block grants.
2. Some students only have representation directly due to NUS Extra commission
3. Increasing the commission for FE unions would play a huge part in developing these unions and increase their ability to engage with NUS on a local and national level.

Conference resolves

1. For NUS to introduce a sliding scale for commission from NUS Extra sales with increased rates for Students' Unions with small block grants of less than £10,000 so that these unions can raise at least £1,000 before paying anything to NUS.



Motion 305 | Support Students' Union's to deliver their services to institutions with multiple sites/campuses and modes of delivery.

Conference believes

1. Across the tertiary education sector, more and more institutions are delivering learning across different sites and through different modes of study (specifically online).
2. Students not learning at the main site of an institution do not currently receive the same level of access to services/campaigns delivered by Students' Union's.
3. Multi site delivery and different modes of delivery have the potential to become more common as a result of the English Areas Reviews for FE Colleges and regionalisation of the Nations as well as the drive for institutions to generate income and consequently consider diversifying their modes of learning.

Conference further believes

1. That every student, regardless of their location or mode of study, should have access to the services Students' Union's provide, particularly representation and advice.
2. That the institution, the Students' Union and the students have a responsibility to help shape and consider how an equality of service can be achieved across modes of study and location, as well as remaining tailored and appropriate.


Conference resolves

1. To challenge the assumption that Students' Union's deliver their services to a specific type of learner at a specific location and to recognise the benefits and challenges presented by multi sites/mode of study.
2. To call for NUS to undertake research to understand the impact that multi site/mode of study has on student engagement with Students' Union's and to understand the scope of the issue.
3. To create a toolkit which will allow individual Students' Union's to understand a national picture of this issue, to share best practice and to ultimately ensure that all students have access to their Students' Union regardless of how they have chosen to access education.

Motion 306 | Service Privatisation ... or should that be Piratisation?

Conference believes

1. That in the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of outsourcing of services in universities and colleges
2. Many services previously run by student unions are now run by private providers
3. In many cases student unions no longer run any commercial services
4. NUS Services currently provides support for unions who run services like bars, shops, café's and nightclubs
5. NUS Services currently doesn't provide services for unions where the bar, shop, cafe or nightclub are run by a private provider


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6. NUS Services is a core part of the NUS offer
 7. A Freedom Of Information (FOI) request at Sussex University revealed contract conditions which were negative for students

Conference further believes

1. Outsourcing in the public sector to profit driven private providers leads to a focus on profiteering
2. Outsourcing compounds the challenge of students being treated like consumers and not partners
3. Outsourcing leads to increased costs and reduced quality
4. Outsourcing is a favoured trick by this Tory government
5. Student unions have no divine right to run commercial services and have in some cases run services poorly
6. That some student unions have conducted boycott's against outsourced providers
7. That boycotts are a legitimate tactic
8. That other student unions have chosen to constructively engage
9. That constructive engagement can lead have a positive impact and that through dialogue constructive engagement can produce incredibly positive impacts
10. That the student movement has a long and proud tradition of constructive engagement which has changed the world for the better
11. That constructive engagement is a legitimate tactic
12. That constructive engagement should always be the first approach taken, and boycotts should be reserved for when constructive engagement has broken down
13. That the Sussex University FOI proves that making FOI requests can produce insightful results
14. That unions with no commercial services should also receive support relating to their campus services
15. That unions with no commercial services have the least favourable member benefit statements
16. That the number of unions not running commercial services is increasing
17. That NUS Services not providing support to those unions in relation to campus services provides a major strategic risk to the student movement
18. That addressing this risk should be an absolute priority

Conference resolves

1. To do something about this...
2. For NUS to make a FOI request to every institution in the UK regarding the details of its outsourced contracts
3. To make the results of these FOI requests publically available to all student unions
4. To highlight any patterns, trends or concerns which this reveals
5. To include working with outsourced providers in the NUS Services work plan for 2016/17
6. For this to include providing support for unions seeking to improve campus services which they do not control

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7. To open discussions with the main providers of university catering, cleaning and security to seek national improvements to standards and costs
 8. To publish guidance to student unions on the legal status of provision which is not directly delivered by either the institution or the SU
 9. To constructively engage nationally on behalf of students wherever possible as a first resort

Motion 307 | A Student Voice for Student Staff

Conference believes

1. Students' Unions across the country employ approximately 17,000 student staff.
2. As of 2014, less than 5% of 16-24 year olds were members of trade unions.
3. One in four young people have issues with their mental health.

Conference further believes

1. Student staff deserve full and equal employment rights to full-time staff.
2. As members and employees of SUs, student staff often face unique issues with representation and support, particularly when it comes to employment rights and welfare support at work.
3. Students' Unions should uphold principles of democracy and collectivism on all levels, including workforce representation.

Conference resolves

1. To work with the TUC and other relevant organisations to create a student staff employee assistance programme to ensure student staff wellbeing is prioritised.
2. To create a best practice guide for SUs on student staff representation in the workplace, including but not limited to the unionisation of student workforces and collaborative consultation.


Motion 308 | This Student Can

Conference believes

1. Student opportunities are an integral part to student life.
2. 'The Impact of Student Opportunities' and '#CutTheCosts' are both key campaigns for NUS this year.
3. Evidence shows participation in student opportunities improves retention and attrition rates, but also improves a students' University experience and their graduate prospects.
4. Everyone should have the same opportunity to access the vast spectrum of opportunities regardless of their SU's provision.

Conference further believes

1. There are certain groups of students within the movement who find it difficult to access these opportunities

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2. Students who have additional responsibilities to their studies often struggle to access these opportunities and often don't receive the full benefits of a student experience and the advantages that come with it.
 3. Student opportunities often have a barrier to participation, one of these barriers is often due to cost. Institutions that have a large population of students that are from widening participation backgrounds may not be able to access these opportunities.
 4. Not all Students' Unions have the provision to provide a wide range of opportunities for students which may cause some students to miss out.
 5. Student opportunities are vital for student retention, wellbeing and creating well-rounded individuals.

Conference resolves

1. To create and provide Students' Unions with a toolkit in order to support their students appropriately, particularly those from a widening participation background.
2. For Students' Unions to lobby their University to show the positive impact that student opportunities can bring.
3. To encourage Students' Unions to work with local partnerships to allow for more opportunities to be delivered, particularly where these opportunities may not be able to be supplied.
4. To ensure that affordability and accessibility are prioritised in further work done on student opportunities by NUS.
5. To support Students' Unions in ensuring student opportunities are affordable for students from all backgrounds.

Motion 309 | FE-el the Love: Putting FE at the Heart of Union Development

Conference believes

1. At a time when FE is facing unprecedented attacks from the government it is important NUS is able to effectively support FE students, sabbatical officers and students' unions.
2. NUS has made progress over the last few years in building a movement that is more inclusive of the needs of FE including this year's work on FE Union Development.
3. In spite of this good work there is clearly much more that can be done to both ensure FE students are able to shape the national agenda, and in turn NUS are able to support FE students more effectively.

Conference further believes

1. The Costs and Benefits Commission launched by NUS, developed in conjunction with both HE and FE unions last year identified that there is 'A need for NUS' relationships with members to be based around two major areas – 'voice' and 'development and enterprise.'
2. NUS is only as strong as its constituent members. The UD priority motion agreed by conference last year stated that 'NUS must consult on and campaign for a revised regulatory framework that catalyses, rather than constrains, students' unions to use the collective power of their members as a united force for equality, social justice and the common good in society.'



Conference resolves

1. To again look at the reasons that despite constituting the majority of our membership FE students are still a minority at our national events, training, and policy forums.
2. To mandate the VPUD and VPFE to find a way to provide adequately support to FE unions and FE students to attend more NUS events whether that is through increased financial support, or training.
3. To mandate the VPUD and VPFE to consult with FE students' unions, and FE students in how their democratic voice can be strengthened, whether that is through; developing new students' unions, providing additional resources, facilitating democratic processes, or any other steps as necessary.
4. For progress on this work to be reported to NEC at the earliest opportunity, with further motions brought to next year's conference based on the findings of this work.

Motion 310 | Make NUS Communications work for all

Conference believes


1. That it is important for students' union to know and understand the work that is being done by NUS
2. Currently it is difficult to get access to information or people about the work of NUS unless you are part of the relevant networks
3. This is creating a hierarchy in NUS or those who are able to engage in the work of NUS and those that cant
4. All members of NUS should be able to communicate with, get communicate from and engage with the work of NUS
5. Student unions are all working on similar topics, usually around the same time.
6. There are excellent examples of best practice around the sector that we could all share with each other and learn from, in order to build stronger student unions.
7. Jiscmail is our only current way of sharing best practice, which is very time-consuming and not very practical.
8. It takes people a long time and effort to respond, and isn't a very informative and clear way of doing things.
9. We could be doing a lot more to celebrate our successes and support each other in what we do.

Conference further believes

1. That the opt in system of jiscmail cannot be the primary source of communication with members
2. That the NUS website still needs work.

Conference resolves

1. That NUS comprehensively review its communications and engagement strategy with students' union and report that review back to National Conference 2017
2. NUS should set up an online platform for sharing best practice – divided into different subject areas.

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3. Student Unions should be able to upload work that they have done, for other unions to use as a resource.
 4. There could also be ways of unions to contact each other to ask questions and share advice, such as forums on each topic.
 5. This would make a huge difference for us to all be able to easily work together – and collectively build stronger student unions.


Motion 311 | Solidarity Forever: FE and HE Unions Makes us Strong

Conference believes

1. Further Education students' unions continue to be amongst our most effective campaigners in spite of little resources and often a lack of staff and support.
2. Higher Education institutions across the country have established partnerships with FE SU's that allow for better sharing of resources and expertise.
3. Last year's voter registration campaign is evidence of the great work FE and HE students' unions can do in working together on agreed policies.
4. These partnerships can often dissolve as sabbatical teams change and academic years come to an end.
5. The Association of Colleges has calculated that overall funding for colleges has decreased by 27% in real terms since 2010. Funding for 16-19 year olds fell by 14%. The Adult Skills Budget has been cut by 35% since 2009.
6. That the latest assault on further education is coming from the Government's 'Area Reviews' of post-16 education and training in England. At least 36 reviews across England will be completed by March 2017.
7. Whilst the Government's stated aim for the review is to create "larger, more efficient, more resilient providers" within further education, they will in reality see colleges merge, with fewer colleges, less staff and possibly more cuts to the further education budget.

Conference further believes

1. Effective partnerships between FE and HE students' unions makes our movement stronger.
2. FE is under unprecedented attacks from the government and it is important that HE students' unions act in solidarity to support FE students' unions in their campaigns.
3. NUS can do more to lead networks in local areas to maximise connections between FE and HE students' unions.
4. Continued cuts to further education are a national scandal and undermine access to education for people of all ages and all social classes.
5. College mergers and narrowed curriculums are only being viewed as necessary because of Governments' successive decisions to cut public funding.

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6. That further education and sixth-form colleges provide education for a massive range and diversity of learners, and are intrinsic parts of local communities. Small communities need local colleges to maintain their local identity.

Conference resolves

1. NUS should design and lead a 'buddy system' for HE and FE students' unions in local areas.
2. To identify areas of joint campaigning between HE and FE and unions, improving local links, and strengthening local networks.
3. To mandate the VPUD and VPFE to work on building stronger links between FE and HE students' unions to make us better able to resist the next wave of government attacks
4. Establish resource and training packages with the aim of developing a joint FE/HE Activist network.
5. To ensure that learners' voices are heard in the process of area reviews by bringing together college student representatives in affected areas.
6. NUS to provide lead officer and staff contacts for local FE & HE institutions
7. To actively promote and facilitate joint FE & HE campaigning against cuts, area reviews, and attacks on the further education sector.

Motion 312 | Very superficial.... the writing's on the wall (or is it?)

Conference believes

1. NUS' membership includes colleges and other specialist learning institutions for students with complex learning needs and disabilities.
2. Students from these colleges require national representation which pertains specifically to their perspectives.

Conference further believes

1. Whilst there has a commitment by NUS to work in partnership with these specialist colleges to enable students with learning difficulties and disabilities to participate in democratic and training events, this work must go deeper and further if NUS' values of inclusion and collectivism are to be truly realised.
2. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities' engagement with NUS should not be remarkable, it should be core activity as with every other constituent member of NUS.

Conference resolves

1. NUS must urgently review how to accommodate and support the wide ranging access
2. needs of students with learning difficulties and disabilities, to ensure that these students are supported and enabled to shape, and participate fully in, the work of the organisation.
3. NUS must urgently review, and prioritise, training needs across the organisation to develop and enhance capacity for supporting the access needs of these students.



Motion 313 | Student Unionism Worldwide

Conference believes

1. Universities across the UK operate Transnational Education (TNE) schemes, including partnership with institutions in other countries and overseas campuses. [<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/free-statistics>, and <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20120216105739999>]
2. TNE students are offered a 'comparable student experience' to other students, but have dramatically different experiences to students in the institution's home-countries, especially lacking autonomous student unions for representation and support. [Maxwell Stuart, R. (2015). Transnational Student Engagement: The Invisible Students? Master's Thesis. Danube University Krems & University of Tampere]
3. Many TNE schemes operate in countries where student organising and protest has been repressed, often violently.
4. UK universities have support responsibilities towards TNE students, and often require that UK-based Students' Associations represent TNE students.

Conference further believes

1. Many TNE students do not get an appropriate level of support and representation. No UK-based Students' Association is fully equipped to represent or provide services directly to TNE students.
2. Around equality and diversity, TNE students have dramatically different support needs. There are TNE campuses in countries where homosexuality is illegal, where women face severely oppressive conditions, and students experience other conditions of extreme oppression.
3. There is very little awareness of TNE students' issues in the sector. Governments and sector bodies do not have a clear approach to the support and representation TNE students deserve or how this can be achieved.
4. Democracy and collective empowerment are foundational values of our student movement. Students' Associations should lead the way in securing these principles for TNE students.


Conference resolves

1. NUS should bring together the Students' Associations from institutions with TNE students to discuss what support they need on TNE issues.
2. NUS should build links with international organisations, sector experts, and students' organisations overseas to support the development of student unionism on TNE campuses.

Motion 314 | Media and SU Officer Elections

Conference believes

1. That most Students' Unions have service level agreements (SLA's) with their media groups that contain clauses on covering SU Officer Elections.
2. Most coverage involves either interviewing the candidates or stating the candidates manifesto points.

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3. The NUS Student Media Guide stated "Anyone can pick up a national newspaper and read about what the government is doing, but student media outlets are uniquely placed to cover what is going on locally in their institution, students' union and local community. Student journalists should take advantage of this on topics where you can be an expert, get access to information, comments and interviews, and where you can easily speak with those affected – the students on your campus.'

Conference further believes

1. It is important that students are well informed on the candidates standing in SU Officer Elections, and media groups currently cannot give an accurate reflection on the viability of candidates manifesto policies and promises.
2. For the University of Bath, accountability of incumbent officers standing in media coverage is suspended until the end of the election period. Such practices harm both media groups in providing true and accurate coverage, and their ability to hold the SU to account, but also harm the electorate as they are less well informed when going to vote.
3. Democracy is at the heart of Students' Unions, and that democracy should be transparent and Media coverage helps to do that.
4. Currently, Students unions place too many restrictions on media groups during this period. This results in Media groups not wanting to do any coverage for fear of breaking these many rules, and ensures elections are primarily a popularity contest.
5. NUS, who serves as Returning Officer for many SU Elections, are perfectly placed to give better guidance to Media Groups, and allow more opinionated coverage.

Conference resolves

1. For the VP Union Development to investigate how media groups can run better content for Students' Unions Officer Elections.
2. For the VP Union Development to produce guidance for Students' Unions Media Groups in running pieces that truly reflect candidates' policy proposals and incumbent officer progress.
3. For the VP Union Development to work with external organisations, such as the National Student Television Association (NaSTA), Student Publication Association (SPA) and Student Radio Association (SRA) to help find effective avenues in supporting media groups in providing coverage during officer elections.

Motion 315 | KWAF KWAF KWAF IS ON FIRE

Conference believes

1. Sport is a good thing
2. Volunteering is a good thing
3. Co-curricular activity is a good thing
4. Most NUS national demonstrations occur on a Wednesday afternoon
5. Lots of students don't have Wednesday afternoons free

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6. For some one students this is unavoidable but for most it could be free

Conference further believes

1. Wednesday afternoons should be kept free

Conference resolves

1. To support student unions who locally run KWAF (keep Wednesday afternoons free) campaigns
2. If the VP UD deems it necessary they should run a National Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free Campaign (NKWAF)


Motion 316 | Recognise competitive e-sports

Conference believes

1. That E-Sports shares many common elements that feature in traditional sports such as: extensive training and practise careful strategizing and game planning skilful execution during play team and individual performance coaching and analysis spirit of competition and fair play
2. That physical exertion and outdoor playing areas are not required to classify an activity as a sport.
3. International Olympic Committee (IOC) recognises E-Sports as a legitimate sporting activity.
4. The following countries recognise E-Sports as a legitimate sporting activity:
 - a. The United States of America
 - b. France
 - c. Italy
 - d. Denmark Taiwan Malaysia South Korea China
5. The following Universities and Colleges in the United States recognise E-Sports as a varsity sport and offer scholarships to E-Sports students that have potential to turn professional: Robert Morris University – Chicago Maryville University – St Louis University of Pikeville – Kentucky Southwestern University – Texas
6. In the United Kingdom approximately 350 teams of 7 competed from 150 Universities in the National University E-Sports League in the past 12 months.
7. In the United States approximately 1600 teams of 7 competed from 600 Universities in the US E-Sports League in the past 12 months.
8. Competitive E-Sports – the League of Legends World Championship Finals had more viewers than the Major League Baseball (MLB) final.
9. E-Sports attract sponsorship from big brands such as Red Bull and The Coca Cola Company and they support events locally and nationally as they would a traditional sporting event.

Conference further believes

1. E-Sports unlike some traditional sports has no issue with professional players and coaches self-identifying as members of the LGBTQIA* community.

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2. Recognition of E-Sports as a sport would break down barriers to traditional sports and give students that are less likely to participate in these sports better access.

Conference resolves

1. To petition Sport England and the British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) to recognise E-Sports as a legitimate sport and for them to provide proportionate funding and support to any University Students that wish to compete in E-Sports.
2. To support and facilitate negotiation at University level for access to appropriate facilities on campus for E-
3. Sports Societies to allow teams to train in the same physical environment. (These may include: Computer
4. Games Design PC Labs, Animation PC Labs and other facilities with appropriate PC Equipment)
5. To support and facilitate negotiation at University level in order to have any restrictions lifted that prevent students from participating in E-Sports from University owned or operated student accommodation.



Union Development Zone policy passed at National Conference 2017

Motion 301 | Civic Engagement through political action

Conference believes

1. Young people are repeatedly affected with the impact of policy decisions they do not agree with. There are many recent examples including unwanted reforms to education, the UK leaving the European Union and spiralling costs of living.
2. This is because young people are not involved enough in our national democracy. In addition to when young people are actively shut out and not given a vote, we know much of this comes from lack of confidence.
3. Confidence means understanding the issues and understanding how participation can make a difference.
4. Older generations are likely to have this kind of confidence through experience.
5. Students' unions are uniquely positioned to level the playing field, providing an education in politics and power to a generation of young people.
6. That Wednesday afternoons spent engaging with SU's through co-curricular activities, sport and volunteering are crucial forms of civic engagement


Conference resolves

1. NUS should aim to offer an accredited course in political literacy to every under 24 year-old in education or training.
2. NUS should double efforts to provide excellent leadership opportunities to young people, including encouraging democratic communities in student clubs, societies and other groups.
3. NUS should seek curriculum change so that every tertiary education course will reflect on and react to live local and national political issues.
4. NUS should invest in student media with regular, quality coverage of local political affairs.
5. NUS should review how young people respond to the language of politics and power.
6. All of this activity must only be delivered by offering products and services to students' unions as the members of NUS. NUS will not impose one-size-fits-all initiatives.
7. 70% of investment and activity should be targeted towards FE students' unions. This is representative of NUS membership and will be a more effective use of resources.
8. To ramp up the National Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free Campaign (NKWAFC)

Motion 310 | The Inclusion Journey Continues

Conference believes

1. NUS is the self-professed national voice of students, with around 600 affiliated students' unions

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2. NUS members include higher education institutions, further education institutions and apprenticeship providers. Within our members are specialist institutions including Derwen College, a specialist residential FE college for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
 3. NUS liberation campaigns are at the heart of our work, fighting for liberation from oppression
 4. NUS this year has continued to develop the training programme – FE Leaders – developed specifically for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and has made an effort to begin to address inclusive practice

Conference further believes

1. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are entitled to a voice within our structures, entitled to have their views listened to and their voice heard
2. NUS prides itself on access awareness, but, despite some raised awareness, still falls short for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Our campaigns and national conference remain inaccessible to this group
3. NUS has a continuing duty to ensure that all members are able to understand processes, to make an informed decision and choice. However, if learners with learning difficulties and disabilities cannot understand or interpret the information provided by NUS, then this is a barrier to participation
4. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are very limited in their choices for further education, and it is essential that their rights are promoted, defended and extended
5. Whilst some valuable work has been ongoing within NUS on addressing accessibility issues for this group of learners a more dedicated and consistent programme of training and a considerable organisation wide cultural shift is required


Conference resolves

1. To further develop and maintain the FE Leaders programme developed specifically for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and to deliver a minimum of two training sessions per year
2. A further call for elected NUS Officers to review NUS information, seek and undertake relevant training and produce accessible versions
3. A further call for elected NUS Officers to visit Derwen College Students' Union and other specialist providers to gain an understanding of how specialist colleges function to ensure that training is relevant to need

Motion 302 | If We Don't #Lovesu's Then Nobody Will!

Conference believes

1. Students' Unions are a vital source of engagement, satisfaction and improvement in education, the UK and the world.
2. Students' Unions continue to be at threat due to an aggressive and hostile policy environment which undermines the work which we do.
3. That the TUC campaign highlighting the positive impact of Trade Unions has helped to change the narrative about their role and impact.

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4. That championing Students' Unions is a vital role, which NUS should always continue to play.

Conference resolves

1. To reaffirm our position that the work of Students' Unions must be effectively championed by NUS.
2. To hold an annual #LoveSUs week highlighting positive stories from around the movement.
3. To provide materials to student unions to allow them to #LoveSUs locally.

Motion 303 | Free Periods

Conference believes

1. Students are now one of the hardest hit groups in society due to the Government's austerity policies, rises in tuition fees, the scrapping of maintenance grants and student housing crisis.
2. The 'Tampon Tax,' the 5% rate of VAT imposed on luxury products, was abolished in March 2016 but this still leaves students with a uterus using 11,000 sanitary products and having to spend on average £18,000 in their lifetime.

Conference further believes

1. Student Unions including Birmingham Guild of Students and UAL have implemented successful schemes for students to pick up free sanitary products from their unions.
2. These initiatives had a huge impact on their students but this needs to be scaled out on a national level.

Conference resolves

1. To include sanitary products, including but not limited to tampons, menstrual cups and sanitary pads, into the NUS Purchasing Consortium.

Motion 304 | NUS Extra Card

Conference believes


1. The Chinese food is a popular cuisine in the UK
2. That NUS Extra Card is promoted to students to purchase to be able to access discounts
3. That there are not many Halal and Kosher options with the NUS Extra Card

Conference further believes

1. That NUS Extra cards do not have any discounts for Chinese restaurants thus reducing their appeal amongst students
2. Discount inclusion of some multi-chain Chinese restaurant can promote the sale of NUS extra

Conference resolves

1. That NUS Extra should work to diversify their offer to include cuisines from other cultures including Halal and Kosher offerings.

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2. That NUS Extra should proactively approach some multi-chain Chinese restaurants to introduce student discounts.

Union Development Zone policy passed at National Conference 2018

Motion UD101 | Our Unions have, and always will be, Political


Conference believes

1. Student unions have a long history of engaging in political campaigns and activity: from student-organised boycotts of South African apartheid, to the fight over vice chancellors' pay, we are proud of our tradition of changing political landscapes and fighting for a better world.
2. In 1994, the Conservative government introduced the Education act. A piece of legislation that aimed to limit the scope and remit of Students Union's.¹
3. Since then, we have had the Charities Act 2006 which has meant most Students Unions are required to register with the Charity Commission and have had legal restrictions placed on what they can do.²
4. The increasing willingness for the Charities Commission and Government to encroach on the freedom of activity of Students Union's is dangerous and attempts to clamp down on important work Students Unions have been doing.
5. In February this year, the Campaigns Officer at Arts Students' Union had her staff card blocked, was banned from campus unless granted a special permission by security, and was placed under disciplinary investigation after taking part in an occupation against the university's complicity in gentrification.
6. This is just one recent example of university management victimising student officers and activists. Previous examples include, among many others: students being pepper-sprayed by police during a free education protest at Warwick in 2014, police being called on protesters in Birmingham on the same year, 15 activists including the SU President and other officers being taken to court by UAL after an occupation in 2015, and students in Manchester facing a disciplinary after a 2017 Israeli Anti-Apartheid Week banner drop.
7. Other forms of victimisation of SUs by universities include threats of funding cuts if officers refuse to drop support for a campaign.

Conference further believes

1. The commission has gone as far as questioning the existence and structures of political societies on campuses - such as Labour, Greens, Liberal Democrat Societies etc.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1994/30/contents>
² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/50/contents>

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2. We have seen unions decide to abolish liberation groups representing women, Black students, LGBT members, mature and disabled students when faced with pressure from the regulatory bodies and their hardline interpretation of legislation.
 3. The ability of Union's to take political action and run political campaigns is both consistent with our history and a requirement for our future.
 4. We will only and can only change the Further and Higher education landscape through, collective and powerful, political action and negotiation. This must be done with our Students Unions at the very forefront.
 5. The protection of political activity and campaigning of Students Union's is pivotal to the future of the Student movement more broadly
 6. Repression of activists by university management is an attack on free speech and freedom of expression.
 7. It is also an attack on Students' Unions and their ability to do their job, and NUS has a responsibility to defend its constituent members.


Conference resolves

1. For the Union Development Zone to better support student unions in response to the Charity Commission's clamp down on political activity and campaigns by running specific support sessions at its training conferences.
2. To resist attacks on our Union's political rights and freedoms, including the disarming of our collective organisations through anti-union laws
3. To work with and support UCU, TUC and other trade unions that have also been subject to legislation limiting their ability to organise.
4. To campaign against the repression of students and their unions' political activity.
5. Whenever a story emerges about a university victimising student activists, NUS should get in touch with the SU and the activists in question and offer support: anything from releasing a statement condemning management's actions to calling a solidarity protest.
6. To build links with organisations such as the Green and Black Cross to support activists facing victimisation as well as produce general Know Your Rights toolkits for students involved in political campaigns and direct action.

Motion UD102 | A new strategy for engaging disability specialist students' union

Conference believes

1. The NUS is increasing its members, relationships and interaction with disability specialist institutions and Students' Union's from across the country.

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2. We are seeing educational institutions under strain from increasing pressure on resources for disabled students. With an increase of demand on services, the Government has been inadequate in ensuring the required funding reaches the necessary institutions.
 3. The United Nations has criticized the UK's 'failure to uphold the disabled people's rights across a range of areas' including education.³
 4. NUS is the self-professed national voice of students with around 600 affiliated students' unions
 5. NUS members include higher education institutions, further education institutions and apprenticeship providers.
 6. Within our members are specialist institutions including Derwen College, a specialist residential FE college for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
 7. NUS liberation campaigns are at the heart of our work, fighting for liberation from oppression
 8. NUS this year has continued to develop the training programme -FE leaders - developed specifically for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and has continued to address inclusive practice


Conference further believes

1. We need to ensure all of our resources and support mechanisms are fit for purpose and accessible by disabled students and specialist institutions and students' unions.
2. We must ensure our conferences; training programs and events are accessible by all of our members.
3. To accomplish this, we must think holistically about a new strategy surrounding our engagement with disability specialist Students Union's.
4. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are entitled to a voice within our structures and to have their views listened to and their voice heard
5. NUS prides itself on access awareness, but, despite some raised awareness, continues to fall short for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. Our campaigns and conferences remain largely inaccessible to this group
6. NUS has a continuing duty to ensure that all members are able to understand processes, to make an informed decision and choice. However, if learners with learning difficulties and disabilities cannot understand or interpret the information provided by NUS, then this is a barrier to participation
7. Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities are very limited in their choices for further education and it is essential that their rights are promoted, defended and extended
8. Whilst much valuable work has been ongoing within NUS on addressing accessibility issues for this group of learners a more dedicated and far more consistent programme of training and a considerable organisation wide cultural shift continues to be required

Conference resolves

1. To work with the Disabled Students campaign to create a new strategy of how we better engage disabled students and specialist Students Union's.

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/aug/31/un-panel-criticises-uk-failure-to-uphold-disabled-peoples-rights>

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2. To make available specific resources to ensure our conferences, training programs and events can be accessed by all of our member Students Union's.
 3. To work with the disabled students campaign, local students' unions and any other parties to campaign on better local services and funding made available to students with visible and not visible disabilities.
 4. To continue to further develop, maintain and deliver the FE Leaders programme developed specifically for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities
 5. A further call for the VPFE and VPUD to work together with the Disabled Students' Officer to review NUS information, seeks and undertake relevant training and produce accessible versions
 6. A continued call to the Disabled Students' Officer to work with the VPFE and VPUD to support Derwen Students' Union and other affiliated specialist providers to further understand the needs of specialist colleges and to ensure that training is relevant to need.

Motion UD128 | We Want Welsh

Conference believes

1. NUS currently run campaigns that student unions are expected or invited to involve themselves in
2. Currently any materials given to student unions by NUS is only supplied in English
3. Any SU's that are bilingual are being overlooked by NUS when they only chose to supply resources in English
4. SUs with bilingual policies often can't get involved in campaigns run by NUS without translated material which is often hard to achieve when art work has been designed by NUS


Conference resolves

1. To provide Bilingual resources to any SU requiring this
2. National campaigns art work to be sent to student unions if bilingual resources are unavailable to allow them to get involved and make their own resources with similar themes
3. NUS to consider all its membership, not just those who speak English.

Motion UD103 | Media Response Unit

Conference believes

1. It has become increasingly clear that the mainstream press are often very hostile towards student activists from our member unions, including sabbatical officers.
2. This includes smear campaigns being run in articles online and in the printed press, and by journalists on social media.
3. Negative press can have a detrimental impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of members compromising their health
4. False media stories and narratives from mainstream media on student-led activism can result in abuse, both physically and online, which is a serious safety concern for our members.

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5. The purpose of these smears is to serve as a silencing mechanism, especially for those pursuing progressive/left-wing activism.
 6. These attacks are often highly racialised and gendered.

Conference further believes

1. As an umbrella body for unions across the UK, it is paramount to show solidarity and support to member unions and students who face difficulties from the press who push false stories and narratives of student activism.
2. The NUS should provide resources that support member unions and student to navigate through negative press.

Conference resolves

1. Launch an Activist Media Training programme for student activists, organisers and officers.
2. Establish a Helpline for Student Unions and student groups to provide legal expertise for student organisers facing potentially defamatory, slanderous or otherwise hostile stories in the media.
3. Establish a 'Know your Rights' legal briefing toolkit.
4. Create a tour of Student Union and regions highlighting the impact of negative press and how to deal with it, as well as to empower Student Union and students to continue with their activism in potential adverse environments that are created as a result

Motion UD104 | 'Welfare and Inclusivity' positions on SU Sports Team Committees

Conference believes

1. BAME Students are less likely to be involved in sport than students who are White British.⁴
2. Disabled people are twice as likely to be physically inactive than people who are not disabled.
3. Nearly half of LGBT+ students do not participate in sport and perceive the culture as alienating and unwelcoming⁵
4. There are 10% fewer women students engaging in Sport.⁶
5. Sports club culture has been linked to 'lad culture', which enables misogyny and sexism.⁷
6. This lad culture can spill over into verbal and physical sexual harassment in sports social settings.⁸
7. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has previously urged U.K. authorities, media and Studies show that participation in sport improves mental health and wellbeing.
8. Positive academic achievement has been linked with sports participation.
9. There is a strong link between sports participation and employability.
10. Positive effects of sports participation help to increase retention at institutions.

Conference further believes


⁴ Sport England, 2013. Evaluation of Active Colleges

⁵ NUS, 2012, Out in Sport: LGBT+ Students' Experiences of Sport

⁶ BUCS, Women in Sport, 2014. "Get started on the right foot" Activating women's sport in Higher Education

⁷ <https://www.nus.org.uk/Global/Campaigns/That's-what-she-said-summary-WEB.PDF>


⁸ <https://www.nus.org.uk/Global/Campaigns/That's-what-she-said-summary-WEB.PDF>

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1. Sport at institutions is an integral part of the student experience, with 71% reporting better physical health and 48% reporting better mental health as a result of sport involvement,⁹
 2. All students, regardless of disability, sexuality, race, religion or gender should be able to access sports without fear of discrimination.
 3. There is a clear link between highly priced sports memberships, and low membership numbers. The idea of 'free sports' and subsidising club memberships is becoming more common in institutions, but more needs to be done.
 4. Racism, inappropriate staffing provision and cultural expectations create barriers into sports participation for BME students. As a result, a high proportion of BME students are less likely to take part in sports than their white British counterparts.
 5. Lack of accessibility provision creates barriers into sports participation for disabled students.
 6. 'Lad culture' in sports clubs inhibits participation through ableism, misogyny, racism, transphobia and homophobia.
 - a. 46% of LGBT+ students don't participate in sport and find the culture around sport alienating and unwelcoming, 38% of LGBT+ students who play sport are not out to their coaches or teammates and 14.3% of LGBT+ students in sport have experienced discrimination based on their gender or sexuality.
 - b. A significant less number of women take part in sports due to underrepresentation. Students of faith who require gender-specific classes or activities are also affected by barriers into sport participation.

Conference resolves

1. To encourage SUs to make a 'Welfare and Inclusivity Officer' on sports teams a compulsory committee position
2. To support SUs in training these students to be actively breaking down barriers to participation in Sport and to be a visible point of contact for students to report and disclose discrimination or harassment
3. To continue to tackle the prevalence of lad culture and sexual harassment and assault in sports settings on campuses to ensure open and safe environments for everyone
4. To liaise with BUCS and to implement a programme with them to further welfare and inclusivity in sport.
5. The Vice President Union Development to continue the great work on breaking down the financial barriers to sport and continue to support Students Unions in gaining sports bursaries or scholarships to close the financial gap in sports participation.
6. That NUS Full Time Officers collaborate with NUS Disabled Students' Officer, BME Officer, LGBT+ Officers, Trans Student Officer and Women's Officer on developing provisions and good practice for students' unions to take to their campuses, advising them on what steps to take to dismantle barriers for access in their sports participation.

⁹ NUS, 2018. Sports, Sports, Sports! Increasing Participation And Breaking Down Barriers

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7. The National Union of Students' will circulate best practice on inclusion on students of faith in sports participation.
 8. The National Union of Students' will circulate resources on the This Girl Can Campaign.
 9. The National Union of Students' will run inclusivity training for Sports or Activities Officers at students' unions, sharing best practices on taking down barriers into sports participation for liberation groups, and dismantling 'lad culture'.

Motion UD105 | National Postgraduate Representation

Conference believes

1. A quarter of all students in the UK higher education system are undergoing postgraduate degrees
2. Increasingly difficult graduate employment markets and implementation of a postgraduate loan system has led to an influx of postgraduates- one that universities are simply not equipped to deal with.
3. Unions have realised the difficulties in engaging and providing for this demographic and responding to their needs which are intrinsically very different to undergraduates.
4. The landscape of higher education in the UK is changing dramatically and postgraduates are at risk of being left behind.

Conference further believes

1. Many unions have been successfully integrating Full Time Postgraduate Officers to their structures.
2. That these Postgraduate Officers lack adequate support that other Officers get in the form of training events like Lead in Change, relevant campaigns and full time officers to fight for their voice
3. There exists an informal network of Postgraduate Officers who organise conferences and networking opportunities for themselves – but little support exists from NUS.
4. NUS removed the postgraduate committee that supports the two postgraduate reps on NEC. This has decreased activity in the Section and has meant that the NEC reps are unsupported in representing over 500,000 students.

Conference resolves

1. That NUS undergo a review into its postgraduate provision and representation
2. This review will include looking into the governance and funding of the Postgraduate Section, establishing training opportunities for Postgraduate Officers and exploring the possibility of a full time NUS Postgraduate Officer - in line with the grass-roots movement in unions across the country.
3. This review person will establish who in NUS is responsible for national representation of postgraduates.
4. This review will be in consultation with Postgraduate Officers and Unions across the country to make sure it is fully representative.



Motion UD106 | Protecting Students in Nightclubs and Bars

Conference believes

1. NUS and affiliated Student Unions must be proactive, rather than reactive, when it comes to students' safety.
2. Students should be safe at university. NUS statistics from 2010 suggest that 1 in 4 students will be sexually harassed during their time at university.
3. Chronic underreporting makes identifying the true extent of sexual violence on campus difficult to determine, but evidence suggests that at least 1 in 7 students will experience serious sexual violence.
4. Within student union bars and clubs, most cases of sexual harassment or assault go undetected and unreported.

Conference resolves

1. Adequate training must be given to all bar staff within student unions, so that appropriate procedures can be followed when cases of harassment arise.
2. These policies should be accessible and visible within union buildings, allowing students to report incidents.
3. Furthermore, student unions should work with popular student bars and nightclubs to ensure that they follow a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment.

Motion UD107 | Hello, is it Nightline you're looking for?

Conference believes

1. University Nightlines are incredibly important services giving students a confidential outlet in which they can discuss issues they may be having.¹⁰
2. Nightline is distinct as a welfare service due to its peer-to-peer nature.
3. Universities can be a barrier for the establishment of a Nightline service with regards to funding, infrastructure and welfare.
4. The Nightline Association currently does not provide Students' Unions with adequate support to lobby their Universities to fund Nightline services¹¹.
5. University Nightlines create opportunities for students to improve their listening skills, increase their confidence and give them an insight into student welfare¹².


Conference further believes

1. Considering the value of Nightlines, Students' Unions should be fully supported when trying to establish them.

¹⁰ <https://www.nightline.ac.uk/about-nightlines/>

¹¹ <https://www.nightline.ac.uk/universities-student-unions/>

¹² <https://www.nightline.ac.uk/2014/08/facts-statistics-summary/>

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2. The NUS, as an institution which already actively supports Students' Unions in lobbying their Universities on other matters are best suited to providing support to Students' Unions in this context.

Conference resolves

1. NUS should work in collaboration with the Nightline association to build accessible resource packs for Students' Unions to be able to effectively lobby their Universities to establish these key out-of-hours services.

Motion UD108 | Unions should pay the real living wage, as defined by the Living Wage Foundation

Conference believes

1. The work done by Union employees, both student staff and permanent staff, is extremely valuable.
2. The living wage, as dictated by current government regulation, is insufficient.
3. Providing a more suitable hourly rate to Union employees will reward them for their hard work, and in turn improve their quality of life.

Conference further believes

1. Unions should be offered support to plan a transition to providing a real living wage to all their employees.
2. The real living wage, as of the 12th January 2018, is a national rate of £8.75 and £10.20 within London.
3. The process of providing a real living wage should take into account the need for gradual change in union finances.


Conference resolves

1. To encourage the payment of a real living wage for all affiliated union's employees.
2. To provide planning support for this change.

Motion UD109 | Asset learner forum

Conference believes

1. The National Society of Apprentices launched in 2014 and is continuing to deliver more events and engage with apprentices
2. There are now over 150 training providers and colleges that are signed up to the NSOA
3. NOSA has a fully functioning leadership team that is leading the work of the society and ensuring that apprentice's experiences are improved in the work place, within providers and on campuses.
4. At NUS National Conferences 2015 and 2016 motions were passed with the intention to enshrine the NSOA into NUS constitution and rules
5. NUS conference 2017 passed governance principles that included the provision to ensure that NSOA was included within the NUS constitution and rules.

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6. NUS Conference 2017(Motion 606) also agrees that the NSOA reforms would be included in the wider NUS governance reforms.
 7. The NSoA was set up in 2014 to be the representative voice of apprentices in the UK
 8. NUS UK should work together with the NSoA on common issues that reflect the needs of apprentices

Conference further believes

1. It is clear that the current NUS governance reforms proposals have not gained enough political agreements
2. NUS reforms have not been brought to this conference
3. As the NSOA reforms were being looked at as part of the governance reforms which will now not be passed, once again the NSOA and apprentices are without recognition and constitutional rights
4. Practically this means that once again apprentices from the NSOA are not able to be involved in NUS democracy or structures. This means they are not able to vote, stand in elections or shape our policy making process
5. This is not good enough. NUS need to act now and ensure that NSOA have a genuine and fair voice around the table.
6. By working together, NUS and NSoA can provide better representation for apprentices.

Conference resolves

1. NUS and the NSOA should urgently create an apprentice task and finish group to create and publish proposal to enshrine NSOA into the NUS constitution.
2. This group should be made up of representatives from the NSOA, NUS President, NUS Vice President Union Development and Vice President Further Education.
3. This group should be joint chaired by NUS and NSOA
4. This group should produce an options paper and rule change motion which can be submitted to next annual conference
5. The group should bring forward proposal to the October 2018 meeting of the NUS NEC and NSOA leadership meeting
6. To mandate the NUS NEC to submit a rule change motion which enshrines the NSOA in the NUS constitution by December 2018
7. To explore with DPC and the CRO what transitional arrangements can be made to ensure that apprentices and the NSOA are able to access NUS structures during this period of time
8. NUS UK should support and work with the NSoA on the four main priorities set out by the NSoA leadership team:
 - a. Apprenticeship Pay
 - b. Quality Apprenticeships
 - c. Cost of Living
 - d. Transport



Motion UD110 | Updating the Education Act

Conference believes

1. That the 1994 Education Act made it mandatory for Higher Education institutions (HEIs) in England, Scotland, and Wales to have an autonomous Students' Union.

Conference further believes

1. That the legal requirement for an institution to have Students' Union should be extended to Further Education providers and colleges as well.
2. That apprentices should have mandatory protections for learner voice under the act.

Conference resolves

1. To mandate the Vice President Union Development to lobby the UK Government around improving and expanding Students' Unions legal protections in the Education Act.
2. This will include lobbying to add a learner voice framework requirement for apprenticeship training providers.
3. This will include lobbying for it to be mandatory for Further Education providers and colleges to have an autonomous Students' Union.
4. The Vice President Union Development will consult with NUS-USI, as Northern Ireland is not covered by the Education Act, to lobby for these requirements for student voice and representation to be in place in Northern Ireland as well.

Motion UD111 | Defending Freedom of Speech


Conference believes

1. The National Union of Students has a No Platform policy which was introduced in 1974 and is voted on every year.¹³
2. As part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, under the Prevent Duty, the government made it mandatory for all public bodies - including schools, colleges, and universities - to have due regard for the need to be drawn into terrorism. Under government guidance, education institutions are trained to monitor the behaviour of their members, encouraging staff to raise concern over their members lives inside or outside of the institution¹⁴
3. On October 19th 2017, Jo Johnson called on the Office for Students (OfS) to champion free speech in universities, with the aim of ensuring that "students are exposed to a wide range of issues and ideas in a safe environment without fear of censorship".¹⁵
4. Following this, Jo Johnson announced that the Office for Students would take a more aggressive role in securing freedom of speech in universities, including fining institutions for failing to uphold it.

¹³ https://nusdigital.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/document/documents/31475/NUS_No_Platform_Policy_information_.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAIJE56ZWKFU6MHNQ&Expires=1517780809&Signature=wij7rSvY1B6MKadA180EGiEtoiI%3D

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/free-speech-in-the-liberal-university>

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5. An outrage about 'Free Speech' in universities has been manufactured in recent years by the government and press.
 6. This often relies on crude, false conflation between diverse direct-action tactics and campaigns with 'No Platforming' or 'Safe Spaces', accusing student campaigning as the greatest threat to free speech in universities.
 7. It is unclear exactly what this new 'duty' would add in practice, but in context it's likely that student direct action will be targeted.
 8. Alongside this, the OfS will be enforcing the Prevent duty, to ensure that universities comply with the racist and repressive PREVENT agenda.

Conference further believes


1. The OfS's inclusion on 'freedom of speech' is geared towards inhibiting Students' Unions to create 'no platform' policies; this clashes with NUS's policy on no platforming, and the safety of our liberation group students. It is well within our democratic rights to no platform those who incite hate speech.
2. The OfS's stance on 'freedom of speech' is flawed and inconsistent with the Prevent strategy: they cannot both champion freedom of speech, and yet persist with the Prevent Duty, which creates a chilling effect on campuses, in which a number of students feel targeted and unable to speak freely and engage in democratic and normal debate, without being reported to Prevent authorities.¹⁶
3. It is unethical to monitor the activity of students - by monitoring prayer rooms, or emails, or by censoring normal student events. This leads to the censoring of students' rights to freedom of expression.
4. The OfS's stance on 'freedom of speech' is flawed and inconsistent with the Prevent strategy.
5. The University of Exeter and UCLAN intervened to cancel student-run events that were intended to raise awareness about Palestinian human rights because of links to Prevent.¹⁷
6. Muslims are fifty times more likely to be referred to Prevent than a non-Muslim. This is not conducive to an equal society, in which Islamophobia is increasing and Muslim communities are targeted.¹⁸
7. Links to Prevent also led The University of Westminster to install CCTVs inside their prayer rooms without consultation. This made women using the room feel uncomfortable with taking their headscarves off in a safe space.¹⁹
8. Free Speech is one of a number of rights to hold power to account and is inseparable from the right to organise and the right to protest. Therefore it must be defended and exercised 'from below'.
9. Cases invoked by the government/press as threatening free speech on campuses include 'Decolonise' campaigns, pro-Palestine protesting, trigger warnings and antiracist/antifascist campaigning.
10. There is indeed an attack on Free Speech in universities - it comes from the state cracking down on student political organising, and the likes of PREVENT.

¹⁶ <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/opinion/if-ofs-all-about-freedom-speech-policy-must-least-be-consistent>

¹⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/27/universities-free-speech-row-halting-pro-palestinian-events>

¹⁸ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/07/criticism-prevent-based-facts-myths-170703072558455.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/preventing-free-thought-on-campus/18062#.Wnc46jTLjIU>

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11. Student events have come under heavy restrictions and censorship under the Prevent duty. This includes demands for security, monitoring or vetting guests.
 12. Direct action has a proud tradition in the student movement that we must defend. Universities should not be made to police students' action, nor should SUs ever be complicit in doing so.

Conference resolves

1. To mandate the Vice President Union Development to support Students Unions to develop a 'Know Your Rights' toolkit, with legal briefings on student rights and freedoms as enshrined in legislation, including our rights of freedom of expression and freedom of speech
 2. To continue the campaign against the Prevent duty, which curtails all our rights and freedoms
 3. To work with other unions, including UCU, to lobby the government to review and repeal the Prevent duty.
 4. Lobby for an end to the OfS' 'Free Speech' duty, as government bodies cannot be trusted to defend Free Speech.
 5. Campaign against any future laws or policies that stifle or criminalise direct and disruptive action.
 6. Continue to campaign for the abolition of PREVENT and the Prevent duty.
- Campaign for an end to extra restrictions and bureaucracy being applied to events and student activities under the Prevent duty.