Union Development Zone Live Policy 2017-20

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 2017 will lapse at the end of National Conference 2020.

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**.

Contents

Key information 2

Union Development Zone policy passed at National Conference 2017 4

- Motion 301 | Civic Engagement through political action 4
- Motion 310 | The Inclusion Journey Continues 4
- Motion 302 | If We Don't #Lovesu's Then Nobody Will! 5
- Motion 303 | Free Periods 6
- Motion 304 | NUS Extra Card 6

Union Development Zone policy passed at National Conference 2018 8

- Motion UD101 | Our Unions have, and always will be, Political 8
- Motion UD102 | A new strategy for engaging disability specialist students' union 9

Motion UD128 | We Want Welsh 11
Motion UD103 | Media Response Unit 11
Motion UD104 | 'Welfare and Inclusivity' positions on SU Sports Team Committees..... 12
Motion UD105 | National Postgraduate Representation 14
Motion UD106 | Protecting Students in Nightclubs and Bars 14
Motion UD107 | Hello, is it Nightline you're looking for?..... 15
Motion UD108 | Unions should pay the real living wage, as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.... 16
Motion UD109 | Asset learner forum 16
Motion UD110 | Updating the Education Act 18
Motion UD111 | Defending Freedom of Speech 18
Union Development Zone policy passed at National Conference 2019..... 21
Unions as Unions..... 21
The Elections Commission - making democracy accessible! 21

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

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.

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. 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.

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.
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.

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

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

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.
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 facig 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 unwelcoming[5]
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

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.

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

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.
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 county.
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 services[11].
5. University Nightlines create opportunities for students to improve their listening skills, increase their confidence and give them an insight into student welfare[12].

Conference further believes

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

[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/

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.
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 institution[14]
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=AKIAJKEA56ZWKFU6MHNQ&Expires=1517780809&Signature=wiJ7rSvYlB6MKadAI8OEGiEtoiI%3D
[14] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance
[15] https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/free-speech-in-the-liberal-university

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 conflations 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 censuring normal student events. This leads to the censuring 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

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.

Union Development Zone policy passed at National Conference 2019

Unions as Unions

Conference Believes

1. The student movement exists alongside and within a strong trade union movement in the UK.
2. Attacks on education and Students' Unions are happening side by side attacks on our colleagues and siblings in the Trade Union movement.
3. The success of our movement and society is best served by standing in solidarity and working closely with the wider Trade Union movement in the UK.

Conference Further Believes

1. That there needs to be far more done in our education system to raise awareness about the important role Trade Unions have played and continue to play in the creation and protection of valuable rights workers in the UK have earned.
2. Students' Unions around the country can build strong local links through their trade union branches in their institutions and in the local community more broadly. This can help in development of campaigns and the engagement and support of groups beyond our immediate members on campuses.
3. Solidarity between our movement and the trade movement has been proven to work when we share beliefs, such as in the case of our continued fight against the PREVENT strategy.

Conference Resolves

1. The Vice President Union Development should work to create support for SU's to link in with local Trade Union branches.
2. To integrate political and historical training of the Trade Union movement into Lead and Change for sabbatical officers within Students' Union's.
3. That NUS should be providing SU and/or student staff with information on joining a Trade Union.
4. We should continue to grow and develop our integration with the wider Trade Union movement in the UK.

The Elections Commission - making democracy accessible!

Conference Believes

One of the unique and special aspects of our student movement and individual Students' Unions is our democratic spaces, elections and decision making. Our movement should be run by elected student leaders representing the voice of millions of students around the UK.

1. The absolute aspiration of all should be to ensure that our democratic spaces in Students' Unions and NUS is accessible for all and capturing the full wealth of experience, talent and diversity of our membership.
2. The NUS Black Students Campaign, Women's campaign, VP UD and many other campaigns and officers consistently hear of the difficulties that both candidates and Students' Unions face during their individual election season.

3. The work surrounding the elections commission by the zone this year is welcomed, but needs to be grown and expanded much further.
4. Students Unions often run elections with several weeks of campaigning and voting, and candidates are encouraged to spend as much time talking to students as possible. Many SUs consider this best practice. This can lead to long days of campaigning, with candidates sometimes spending 12 or more hours trying to 'sell themselves' to students. This is by its very nature exclusionary to many disabled students, including but not limited to those with chronic physical health conditions and those with poor mental health.

Conference Further Believes

There have been a plethora of experiences shared by students showing consistent examples and experiences of both conscious and unconscious bias as well as discrimination in elections on campuses.

1. Many Students' Union's struggle specifically with encouraging women to stand in elections and often end up with all men teams and very often men as presidents. In places where all women teams are elected, it is frequently faced with backlash and calls for 'Men's officers' or representatives for reasons that can be addressed through liberation campaigns.
2. International students have particularly found in recent years that elections are increasingly inaccessible and have been disproportionately affected by suspensions and disqualifications.
3. Black students are often homogenized and disproportionately targeted through sanctions, suspensions and disqualifications during elections.
4. Students' Union's themselves have told us they have also struggled in many places with running of elections and engaging all students.

Conference Resolves

The Vice President Union Development should continue to work on the Elections Commission work in supporting SU's and candidates in accessibility of SU democracy.

5. To particularly work with all Liberation campaigns and officers to support students and candidates that define into these groups.
6. That we also take a stance against Men's officers/representatives, and that we redirect these calls for support to the relevant liberation campaigns.
7. To provide particular attention to the experiences and support of international students in SU democracy.
8. The UD Zone will work with the Disabled Students Officer, the Disabled Students Committee and member unions to evaluate the impact of lengthy elections periods on both turnout in elections, and the impact on disabled candidates.