

Zone Report 2018

Union Development

Vice President:
Ali Milani

Zone Conference Report

Vice President (Union Development)

Introduction

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

Questions

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

You can access the form to ask accountability questions at:

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

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

Outgoing Committee

Last year's Zone Committee was:

Vice President: Ali Milani

Eva Crossan Jory	UD Zone Committee Member (NEC place)
Dwayne Foster	UD Zone Committee Member (FE place)
Romana Jabeen	UD Zone Committee Member (FE place)
Ahtesham Mahmood	UD Zone Committee Member
Amy Moran	UD Zone Committee Member
Dan Seamarks	UD Zone Committee Member
Katherine Hackshaw	UD Zone Committee Member
Meike Imberg	UD Zone Committee Member
Nastasha Crump	UD Zone Committee Member

Zone Committee 2018/19

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

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

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

Dates of Committee Meetings 2018/19

Date of meetings for this Zone are: 15 November 2018, 24 January 2019, 20 March 2019, 30 May 2019

Union Development Zone

Summary of policy 2016-2019

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

Overview

Championing the impact of students' unions

The policy position on this area commits NUS to supporting unions on evaluating the impact of their activities (with a particular focus on student opportunities: sports, societies, fundraising, media and volunteering), and then championing both individual unions and the impact of students' unions collectively.

An impact toolkit developed with the Student Opportunities Charity Advisory Group was launched in 2017 to support students' unions to evaluate the impact of their student opportunities. It focused on evaluating the dual benefit of student opportunities for both individual students as well as the wider community. The toolkit explores the skills and knowledge developed, as well as other areas of growth such as resilience. Work is planned for the next four years to focus on different areas of impact evaluation within student opportunities, supporting students' unions through the dedicated staff communities of practice which meet termly.

Championing students' unions is core to the NUS communications plans throughout the year but exemplified through the annual #LoveSUs week which shines a spotlight on the impact of students' unions on people's lives and the communities they live in.

Protecting students' and students' unions rights

The policy position on this area commits NUS to protect freedom of expression in students' unions, with a particular focus on the rights of student activists to challenge the actions of their university or college.

Healthy political spaces

The policy position on this area commits NUS to provide healthy environments to discuss issues of relevance to students, and engages with social media platforms to challenge issues of cyberbullying and trolling particularly during elections.

Developing and protecting Learner Voice

The policy position in this area commits NUS to supporting the development of learner voice mechanisms, and advocating for the enshrinement of learner voice in law for Northern Irish and Further Education institutions.

Across all four Nations, NUS-developed learner voice frameworks are used to support a partnership approach between students and colleges in shaping their education.

Accessible activities

The policy position on this area commits NUS to take action to improve the accessibility of engagement opportunities for disabled students.

We have been working hard over the last 24 months to improve the accessibility of what we

do so that our members with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are better able to engage in our work.

We've had a number of successes in this area; recognition as a Makaton Friendly organisation, partnerships with new sector bodies and an increase in the number of affiliates from specialist provision. The Vice-President has also written to the minister responsible for our SEND colleges to push for increased investment in supporting our SEND learners.

To ensure that our members with SEND are able to engage and enjoy our events, we have taken a number of steps which include:

- *A set of introductory slides designed to help new delegates with SEND understand the wider context of national conference and what to expect to help settle nerves and reduce anxiety*
- *A specific set of joining instructions that are more accessible for delegates with SEND*
- *Appropriate signage and signposting around our venues – including Makaton symbols for those who use them*
- *Dedicated support offered in advance of National Conference for delegates with SEND to understand the conference motions document. This will help to ensure that delegates are informed on discussions, wider debates and the motions that will matter most to them*
- *A dedicated Wellbeing Space which will be a calm and quiet space where delegates will be able to escape the business of conference. This space will be offered as part of the conference's wider safeguarding and access support*

NUS officers and staff have also visited Derwen College a number of times to engage with long standing members that have been leading NUS to working on its Inclusion Journey. Following this the elected officers wrote to the Minister for Local Government around the funding provided for SEND.

Enabling collaboration

The policy position of this area commits NUS to support collaboration between colleagues and students' unions in similar contexts and roles to enable learning and sharing of good practice.

In the last 12 months the NUS Facebook Workplace has been launched for both staff and officers in NUS membership. This platform replaces the previous Jiscmail system which allowed for only limited interaction between colleagues via email lists. The Facebook Workplace provides a more sophisticated platform for colleagues to collaborate based on any number of criteria such as role type, context, project type. Anyone can create a new 'group' on the platform to collaborate with colleagues on a new area of work.

Valuing the movement's staff

The policy position of this area commits NUS to supporting a living wage for staff in the movement, and support student staff representation in the workplace.

Sports

The policy position within this area commits NUS to support remove barriers (particularly those related to cost and identity) to engagement with physical activity.


In Summer 2018 we launched the Active Students Fund: £50,000 from Sport England

Specific changes to NUS social enterprises

The policy mandate relating to NUS social enterprises were specific amendments to the offer available at the time: a request that a sustainable sanitary product be added to the purchasing consortium offer; and a request for a more diverse range of restaurant options offering discounts on the NUS Extra card.

Last year Lunette, a sustainable and environmentally friendly sanitary product was incorporated into the purchasing consortium.

This year we are seeing the most radical change of the NUS Extra product since it was created. Finally seeing digital NUS Extra come to life, we are working with our member Unions to design an NUS Extra offer fit for the next



decade and beyond. Focusing in on the local offer and the engagement of SU's, we are integrating campus societies, sports, media, democracy and all elements of student life.

Our aim ensuring that the new NUS Extra product is designed to allow students to access more local discounts including a more diverse range of restaurants. From local offers to Kosher and Halal ranges.

Enshrining the National Society of Apprentices (NSoA) within NUS

The policy mandate on this area commits NUS to developing a task and finish group to explore options for enshrining the National Society of Apprentices into the NUS constitution.


A task and finish group has been set up with representatives from the NSoA and NUS full time officer team to progress work on this and bring a proposal to be voted on at National Conference 2019.

Nightline

The policy mandate on this area commits NUS to developing accessible resource packs for students' unions to be able to effectively lobby their universities to establish a nightline service.

Postgraduate

The policy mandate on this area commits NUS to reviewing postgraduate provision and representation.



Zone Conference Accountability

Vice President (Union Development) Zones Report

Author: Ali Milani

Date Produced: 30/09/2018

Priorities

Priority area	Area of work	Progress
Training and Development for Students' Union Officers	Students Union's, Lead and Change 2018 and the Muslim Student Leadership Retreat	<p>The summer conference season is usually the busiest time for the Union Development team - organizing the biggest congregation of Students' Union officers, staff and NUS colleagues. SU2018 this year saw over 1000 delegates come to Birmingham's NEC to share and learn, to network, to celebrate a years worth of success' and to be inspired to change the lives of their members.</p> <p>This year we streamlined workshop content, provided more space for learning opportunities between delegates, ensure the integration of Liberation officers and NUS Awards. The event ran successfully and though we will always have improvements and learning points - it was incredibly successful.</p> <p>Lead and Change is our other annual SU officer training residential. It provides an opportunity for officers to received quality leadership training, to network and learn from one another and to connect with NUS in an intimate way. This year's event had over 350 officers attending the training program to great success. While we are still gathering and analyzing the feedback, all indications point towards a successful summer conference season.</p> <p>For my term in office we have also worked specifically to support Muslim officers from around the country as they often face very specific barriers. This year we again supported the Muslim Student Leadership Retreat for Muslim SU Officers with bespoke training and support opportunities. Over 40 delegates attended with a 100% satisfaction rating.</p>
Revitalizing and Digitizing NUS Extra	TOTUM	<p>For years NUS Extra has been a great success story for our movement. Putting millions and millions of pounds back into the pockets of students, into our Students' Unions and into our movement more broadly. To ensure its continued success, we have completely revolutionized the product.</p> <p>TOTUM is the brand new platform that provides students the discount card and offers they love alongside a digital app. This new platform is the passport to student life; from a whole new membership experience (sports clubs, societies, volunteering, RAG etc) to tailored discount offers at the touch of a phone, TOTUM has completely changed the game for Students' Union's.</p> <p>While it is in its early stages of developments with incredibly exciting features set to arrive in the new year, it is an opportunity so many of our members around the UK are grasping to connect with members on their campuses. We have allocated TOTUM champions for almost every SU to answer your questions and support you through the transition. We have also done our best to connect with you on the phone or even attending your Freshers/Welcome week events to support you in sales and marketing.</p> <p>For more info visit: https://www.totum.com</p>

Supporting Candidates, Officers and Students' Union's in Elections	The Elections Commission	<p>Over the course of the spring election cycle, it became increasingly evident that there needed to be significant work in supporting candidates, officers and students' union's around the country. There were significant numbers of complaints, delays to results, disqualifications and even the voiding of elections as a whole. It was also apparent that a disproportionate amount of black, international, muslim and jewish participants were affected both structurally and culturally.</p> <p>This year we have called an Elections Commission which comprises of our Black Students Officer, VP Soc and Cit, student officers, SU staff members, returning officers and representatives from outside the movement with election experiences. The commission has been tasked with reviewing the good and bad practices from around the country and providing tangible support frameworks for all involved.</p> <p>The first meeting of the commission took place where a scope and timeline was agreed and we began to explore areas of support and improvements. The commission will be meeting again in the coming month to develop comprehensive support frameworks for SU's in time for your spring elections and to ensure all elections are free, fair and accessible for all to participate in and enjoy.</p>
Accessible Events	NUS Charity Access Group	<p>It was increasingly clear that many of NUS' events, both democratic and non democratic, had much a ways to go in regards to accessibility for participants. NUS Charity this year has made it a priority to look at improving the accessibility of these events.</p> <p>We have been very fortunate to have the support of NUS DSO Rachel O'Brien and NEC 2nd place Piers Wilkinson - without whom the work would not be possible. Leaning on their expertise this group have been exploring ways in which NUS can provide more accessible spaces for members, hoping for tangible outcomes to be agreed and rolled out for the spring conference season.</p>
Accessible Sports Clubs	The Active Students Project	<p>Accessible sports clubs on campuses and in colleges has been a passion of mine since taking office. Last year we launched the "sport, sport, sport" research and toolkit to assist SU's from around the country.</p> <p>This year we have gone even further, partnering with Sport England, and we have won £100,000 of funding to run unique sports initiatives within Students' Union's to increase participation. We are ensuring that this money is not spent by NUS but put right back into SU's to support LGBT+, black, women and disabled members in England. We have also made it a requirement that HE institutions collaborate with local FE partners in the program.</p> <p>We opened applications and expressions of interests over the summer and received a number of incredible applications. A panel of NUS and Sport England colleagues have decided the successful applicants and we have brought in staff support to directly support the successful applicants to deliver on their visions.</p>

Supporting Student Media and Fundraising	Student Media Summit, RAG Conference and the Student Guides	<p>Student opportunities, specifically RAG and student media, provide incredible opportunities for members all around the country. Our support for these groups continues to grow as this year we once again worked in partnership with Amnesty International to deliver the Student Media summit.</p> <p>This is one of our most exciting events where we bring together Student Media from across the UK with leading experts from the sector. The event provides an unparalleled opportunity for often volunteers to network and connect with each other and leaders in their industry. This years event was bigger than ever and received overwhelmingly positively.</p> <p>We also revitalized our student media and student fundraising guide for all SU's this year, providing a physical resource to support student media; and worked with Nasfa to assist with the national RAG conference.</p>
Membership Engagement	ME's and QSU 2018	<p>Quality Students' Union's is one of the leading projects of the NUS Charity for the past few years. It has been developed by our us to assure the quality, standards and overall effectiveness of students' unions around the UK. It also principally aides our SU's in continuous improvements and development.</p> <p>This year, 21 'cohort' unions are midway through completing QSU with an enhanced support offer to guide them through. The cohort are due for verification in the new year (Jan-April). This year's cohort will also inform the updated version of the QSU framework which will be launched in April 2019.</p> <p>The Membership Engagement team have also delivered induction training session for elected officers at all larger unions during the summer period to initiate greater involvement with NUS. The new officer priorities were discussed in those visits and have been tracked centrally to ensure we provide the right sort of support to each officer team, with widely held priorities focusing on improving student-led decision making, Black attainment gap, academic representation, student engagement, mental health and diversifying engagement with sports and societies.</p>
The NUS Ethics Group	#StopFunding Hate	<p>The #StopFundingHate campaign was founded to encourage advertisers to divest money from "news" organisations such as the Daily Mail, The Sun and the Express who regularly use hateful and incendiary rhetoric towards muslim, black and migrant communities. The campaign has been incredibly successful and has been supported by NUS UD zone strongly.</p> <p>This year so a landmark success as the Co-Op conference passed with an overwhelming 96% majority to support ethical advertising including #StopFundingHate. This goes alongside campaigns and wins in the mobile phone industries and with other national brands such Pizza Hut.</p> <p>https://www.thenews.coop/127999/sector/retail/co-op-group-agm-address-responsible-advertising/</p> <p>https://stopfundinghate.org.uk/2018/05/19/coop-agm-overwhelmingly-backs-stop-funding-hate-motion-on-ethicaladvertising/</p>
Developing Officers-Staff Relationships	Developing Officers-Staff Relationships	<p>Last year as VP UD it became apparent to me that many Students' Union's struggled to find the right balance and culture between sabbatical officers and Union staff. This year our team and I are working hard to address this.</p> <p>We are currently in the process of a large scale diagnosis and research activity on good practice in line management of Chief Executives, good and bad practice in relationships between senior staff and officers and developing trustee support. Our aim is to create a guidance document and training by the new year to aid all officers and staff to create the right balance and culture within Unions.</p>

Supporting Commercial Activity for Students Unions	Trading Support for Students' Union's	<p>Trading Support delivered £150,000 of surplus at the end of 2017/18 year as a result of the incredible work of the Trading team and as a result of working in close partnership with members all around the country.</p> <p>We discussed with our members what should be done with this surplus at the recent CEU and members meeting which was held during Convention 2018 in Leeds. As a result, we will have a brand new capital fund created to be available to any purchasing consortium member to bid for funding for innovative and exciting commercial development. This is money again being put back into SU's for innovation and growth projects.</p> <p>The primary purpose for this fund is to support exciting commercial development activity within the student union to assist growth initiatives.</p> <p>The Trading Support team will work closely with successful bidding students' unions through commercial engagement with a view to ensuring that the funding pot becomes a sustainable funding stream that grows year-on-year alongside compliant volume growth through the consortium.</p>
----------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Next steps

Action/Work area	What I hope to achieve
Elections commission	Publish a comprehensive support framework for SU's to be able to deliver fairer and more accessible election cycles across the country. To better support candidates and officers who face discrimination and barriers in participation. And to create a better culture in our democratic spaces more broadly.
NUS Charity Access group	This group have been exploring ways in which NUS can provide more accessible spaces for members, hoping for tangible outcomes to be agreed and rolled out for the spring conference season.
TOTUM	In the new year TOTUM's digital platform will see a new wave features which we hope will continue to innovate and revitalize the product. As with any digital product, it will be lean and agile and will continue to adapt to what users and Students' Union's need from it and how best it can be used by members.
The Active Students Project	To support in the delivery of projects, measure impact and ensure maximum participation of sports clubs in HE and FE institutions around the country.
Officer-Staff Relationships	Our aim is to create a guidance document and training by the new year to aid all officers and staff to create the right balance and culture within Unions.