

NUS National Executive Council AGENDA

Eighteenth meeting of the National Executive Council of the National Union of Students,
Monday, 21st May 2012, Holloway Road Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road, London, N7 6PA

1.00pm – 2.00pm Lunch

11am - 5.00pm (Afternoon breaks as required)

Members:	Name
President & Chair	Liam Burns
Zones	Toni Pearce & Roshni Joshi (Further Education) Usman Ali & Sophie Richardson (Higher Education); Danielle Grufferty & James Haywood (Society & Citizenship); Ed Marsh & Rebecca Bridgen (Union Development); Pete Mercer & Steph Johnson (Welfare)
Liberation	Kanja Sesay and Anil Sachdeo (Black Students); Rupy Kaur and Daryl Jones (Disabled Students); Vicki Baars & Alan Bailey (LGBT); Estelle Hart & Kelley Temple (Womens);
Sections	Christina Yan Zhang & Mateus Wysocki (International Students) Fee Wood (Mature & Part Time Students); George Charonis & Dante Micheaux (Postgraduate Students)
Nations	Luke Young & Raechel Matthey (NUS Wales) Robin Parker & Graeme Kirkpatrick (NUS Scotland); Adrienne Peltz & Stuart Cannell (NUS-USI)
Block	Mark Bergfeld, Nes Cazimoglu, Michael Chessum, Lauren Crowley, Matt East, Ruby Hirsch, Taylor Kane, Aaron Kiely, Joe Oliver, Surya Prakash Bhatta, Mary Prescott, Josh Rowlands, Daniel Stevens Rachel Wenstone, Stevie Wise
In attendance	
Staff	Matt Hyde (Group Chief Executive); Jim Dickinson (Director Policy and Delivery); Vic Langer (Deputy Director Policy and Delivery); Nick Smith (Democratic Services Coordinator); Dan Francis (Democratic Services Advisor); ACTS representative

If an item is 'starred' the Chair will assume that members have read and noted. Those presenting the papers will not speak to them. Non starred items will be discussed and may require a decision. To "unstar" an item, inform the Chair before the commencement of the meeting.

No	Item	Action	Paper	Author / Lead	Time
1 Introductory & Administration					
1.1	President's Opening Remarks			LB	10 mins
1.2	Apologies for absence and welcome of new members	Note		LB	
1.3	Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest arising from the agenda (verbal)				
1.4	Minutes of last meeting on 28 th February	Approve	NEC/18A/12	LB	
1.5	Matters arising from previous meeting on 28 th February			LB	
2 Reports and Accountability					
2.1	Report and Notices from the National President* Questions to the National President Presidential and Other Appointments	Scrutinise	NEC/18B/12	LB	15 mins
2.2	Report and Notices from the Zone Convenors* Questions to the Zone Convenors	Scrutinise	NEC/18C-G/12	PM, TP, UA, DG, EM	25 mins
2.3	Report and Notices from the Liberation Campaigns* Questions to the Liberation Campaigns	Note	NEC/18H-L/12	KS, RK, AB/VB, EH	20 mins
2.4	Report and Notices from the Student Sections* Questions to the Student Sections <i>Report: European Students' Union 62nd Seminar & Board Meeting*</i>	Note	NEC/18M-O/12	CYZ, GS/DM, FW	15 mins
2.5	Report and Notices from the Nation Convenors* Questions to the Nation Convenors	Note	NEC/18P-R/12	RP, AP, LY	15 mins
2.6	Report and Notices from the Scrutiny & Special Groups*	Scrutinise	NEC/18S/12		5 mins
2.7	Important information from CMs from the Block	Report	Verbal	Block	15 mins
Motions and Proposals					
3.1	No platform policy*	Approve	NEC/18U/12	LB	5 mins
3.2	National Demonstration (<i>to follow</i>)	Discuss	NEC/18V/12	LB	30 mins
3.3	National Conference motions referred to NEC	Debate/ Approve	NEC/18W/12	LB	90 mins
3.4	Motions to NEC	Debate	NEC/18X/12	LB	30 mins
3.5	Paper on the role of the block	Discuss	NEC/18Y/12	JO	20 mins
	Next Meeting: 23 rd July 2012 London				

minutes

NEC/18A/11

meeting of: National Executive Council (seventeenth meeting)

place: Sheffield Town Hall

date and time: 28th February 2012 11am

Members:	Name
President & Chair	Liam Burns
Zones	Toni Pearce & Roshni Joshi (Further Education) Usman Ali & Sophie Richardson (Higher Education); Danielle Grufferty & James Haywood (Society & Citizenship); Ed Marsh & Rebecca Bridger (Union Development); Pete Mercer & Steph Johnson (Welfare)
Liberation	Kanja Sesay and Anil Sachdeo (Black Students); Rupy Kaur and Matthew Bond (Disabled Students); Vicki Baars & Alan Bailey (LGBT); Estelle Hart & Kelley Temple (Womens);
Sections	Christina Yan Zhang & Mateus Wysocki (International Students) Fee Wood (Mature & Part Time Students); George Charonis & Dante Micheaux (Postgraduate Students)
Nations	Luke Young & Raechel Matthey (NUS Wales) Robin Parker & Graeme Kirkpatrick (NUS Scotland); Adrienne Peltz & Stuart Cannell (NUS-USI)
Block	Mark Bergfeld, Nes Cazimoglu, Michael Chessum, Lauren Crowley, Matt East, Ruby Hirsch, Taylor Kane, Aaron Kiely, Joe Oliver, Josh Rowlands, Daniel Stevens, Rachel Wenstone.
In attendance: Staff	Jim Dickinson (Director Policy and Delivery); Vic Langer (Deputy Director Policy and Delivery); Dave Farbrother (Group Finance Director); Graham Wise (Assistant Director Policy); Nick Smith (Democratic Services Co-ordinator); Dan Francis (Democratic Services Advisor), Dan Higgins (Acts Representatives)
Observers:	
Apologies:	
Zones	Rebecca Bridger
Liberation	Alan Bailey
Nations	Graeme Kirkpatrick, Robin Parker, Luke young
Sections	Dante Micheaux, Mateus Wysocki
Block	Taylor Kane, Nes Cazimoglu
Staff	
Absent no apologies:	
Stuart Cannell, Surya Prakash-Bhatta	

minutes

1. Introductory & Administration

- 1.1 Liam Burns (LB) opened the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were noted.
- 1.3 There were no declarations of interests.
- 1.4 Roshni Soshi should read Roshni Joshi
- 1.5 There were no matters arising.
- 1.6 Discussion and priority ballot

LB explained the process of the priority ballot to NEC and reminded councillors that they had a 1400 word limit on the submission of motions to national conference.

Priority ballot discussion

Motion A was presented by Toni Pearce (TP)
Motion B was presented by Pete Mercer (PM)
Motion C was presented by Danielle Grufferty (DG)
Motion D was presented by Rachel Wenstone (RW)
Motion E was withdrawn by Mark Bergfeld (MB)
Motion F was withdrawn by MB
Motion G was presented by MB
Amendment H was presented by MB
Amendment J was withdrawn by MB
Amendment K was withdrawn by MB
Amendment L was presented by MB
Amendment M was withdrawn by MB
Amendment N was withdrawn by MB
Amendment P was withdrawn by MB
Amendment Q was presented by Ed Marsh (EM)

NEC discussed the process of formulating policy and raised concerns over the policy development process. LB agreed to produce a paper outlining some of the issues around policy development in particular relation to factions and the election season. LB agreed to circulate this to NEC before they met in May.

A priority ballot was taken

2. Reports and accountability

- 2.1 LB: presented his report.

LB updated about the Office for Fair Access (OFFA). Les Edbon was appointed. Takes up post in September.

LB briefed NEC on the Come Clean campaigns planned week of action, national walkout and lobby of parliament. LB highlighted that whilst the week of action and the lobby seemed to be gaining traction the national walkout was more challenging given the timing.

MB asked LB why hidden course costs had become a priority for the campaign. LB explained that this was an area which had already been identified as a major campaign area. NEC also raised concerns that international students would be unable to take part in walk out action given their visa requirements, LB agreed to look into this.

minutes

NEC asked questions about the wider sector's response to the Come Clean campaign. LB suggested that UUK were aware that SUs were discussing it but were reluctant to offer support but that NUS and UCU were working closely on the action. LB agreed to *write to UUK and VCs explaining our position*.

Josh Rowlands (JR) asked LB what more could be done to work with the British Youth Council (BYC) LB agreed that NUS should institutionalise a working relationship.

2.2 Report and Notices from the Zone Convenors

Union Development – Ed Marsh (EM) presented his report and appealed for NEC to help with the Sunderland referendum on the 13th & 14th of March. EM also explained the purpose of the FE sabb holiday.

Further Education – Toni Pearce (TP) introduced her report adding that registration for the Teaching and learning summit now open and costs £10 per delegate. TP also added that she had recently spoken at an NUT rally in solidarity.

Welfare – Pete Mercer (PM) introduced his report. Clarified that the student support survey had closed and that this was incorrect in the report.

Higher Education – Usman Ali (UA) offered a verbal report. He noted that he had attended the The Future of Higher Education in the MENA

Society and Citizenship – Danielle Grufferty (DG) introduced her report and invited questions.

All Zone reports were *approved*.

2.3 The Liberation Officers presented their reports to note.

2.4 The Sections presented their reports to note.

2.5 The Nations presented their reports to note.

2.6 There were no papers submitted from scrutiny groups.

2.7 The Block raised the following issues from CMs:

Some members of block were concerned that the Come Clean toolkit should have been produced earlier.

3. Motions and Proposals

3.1 ES6 Equality and Diversity Strategy Review

EH presented the review paper highlighting the emphasis on the need to support the issues of Women and Black staff. Aaron Kiely (AK) asked that BME read black, EH agreed this as an error.

EH outlined the process of formulating the paper and role of LED committee but invited NEC to feed in informally.

NEC noted the paper.

NEC broke for lunch

minutes

3.2 NEC Motions to national conference

LB announced the results of the priority ballot as A, B, D, C, Q, L, G, H

Motion A: A Generation Lost

For: TP

MB: proposed parts delete Conference Resolves 1B and 2C

For: MB

Against: TP

For: George Charonis (GG)

Against: PM

Vote: **Parts removed**

MC: proposed parts, delete "rather than one London centric" from CR3

For: MC

Vote: **Parts removed**

Vote on motion: **Motion passes**

Motion B: Equipping a Generation to Make the Right Decisions

For PM

MB: proposed parts delete: Parts delete CB4 CFB1 CR2a and 2c

For MB

Against: EH

For: MB

Against: James Haywood (JH)

Vote: **parts remain**

Kanja Sesay (KS): proposed parts delete CR 2d

For KS

Against: No speech

For: KS

Against: EH

Vote: **parts remain**

Vicki Baars (VB) proposed parts delete CR 2c

LB refused to take parts as 2c had already been discussed

VB challenge chairs ruling to debate CR 2c

Vote: **Chairs ruling overturned**

Vicki Baars (VB) proposed parts delete CR 2c

Against TP

For: MB

Against: JH

For MC

Against EH

Vote: **Parts remain**

Vote on motion: **Motion passes**

Motion D: Retention

For: RW

Against: EM

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minutes

RW proposed parts delete FB4

For: RW

Against: MB

For JO

Against EM

Vote: **Parts removed**

For: RW

Against: JR

For: RW

Against: AP

Vote on motion: **Motion passes**

There being no AOB the meeting closed at 4 pm.

DRAFT

resolutions

NEC Motions to national conference

Motion A: A Generation Lost (477 Words)

Submitted by: Toni Pearce

Seconded by: Rupy Kaur, Joe Oliver, Rebecca Bridger, Luke Young, Estelle Hart, Fiona Wood, Rachel Wenstone, Robin Parker, Rebecca Bridger, Matt East, Adrienne Peltz, Liam Burns, Dannie Grufferty, Kelly Temple, Lauren Crowley, Adrienne Peltz, Pete Mercer

Conference Believes:

1. The past decade has witnessed the failure of young people by successive governments, with the introduction and trebling of tuition fees, scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance, record levels of youth unemployment, introduction of Anti-Social Behavioural Orders and damaging cuts to the funding of youth services and widening access.
2. The rhetoric of deficit reduction and austerity is not likely to stop any time soon. Further reductions in spending are likely across all Government departments throughout this parliament.
3. The media portrays young people as anti-social, aggressive trouble makers or as lazy benefit scroungers.
4. The lack of coherence in our qualifications frameworks or sufficient information, advice and guidance acts as a barrier to fair access and progression.
5. Too often "youth voice" is delivered by tokenistic positions that use a false façade of already privileged and confident young people as youth engagement, when those from poorer backgrounds, ethnic minorities and the "feral class" are left out in the cold.

Conference Further Believes:

1. If we don't build a consensus that promotes the rights of young people over the 'squeezed middle' before the next General Election then an entire generation will be written off by this and the next parliament.
2. We should continue campaigning to scrap tuition fees, reinstate the Education Maintenance Allowance and re-introduce public funding in higher education, but our asks must become broader and create a holistic narrative around the experiences and opportunities of young people.
3. We must include all areas of government policy in our mission to improve prospects for young people. Rejecting the role of industry in supporting this aim is naïve and counterproductive.
4. Young people should be genuinely involved in policy making throughout local and national government, not dismissed as ignorant, apathetic or irrational.

Conference Resolves:

1. To create innovative policies for the next General Election that prioritise:
 - a. access to quality education by those who could benefit most
 - b. social policies that champion young people rather than demonising them
 - c. national/local governance with young people from all backgrounds at the heart of decision making.
2. NUS must fight to ensure a better deal for our lost generation including:
 - a. A coherent, accessible and fair tertiary education system, supported by efficient and independent information, advice and guidance
 - b. A fair and sufficient student support system that provides young people with real opportunities to stay in education and fulfil their potential
 - c. Fair representation of young people throughout society, including within politics and the media

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3. To call for coordinated demonstrations in cities throughout the UK, demanding urgent action from this Government to protect and defend the rights of an entire generation of young people.

Motion B: Equipping a Generation to Make the Right Decisions

Submitted by: Pete Mercer

Seconded by: Sophie Richardson, Rupy Kaur, Joe Oliver, Rebecca Bridger, Luke Young, Estelle Hart, Fiona Wood, Pete Mercer, Rachel Wenstone, Robin Parker, Rebecca Bridger, Matt East, Adrienne Peltz, George-Konstantinos Charonis, James Haywood, Dannie Grufferty, Kelly Temple, Lauren Crowley, Adrienne Peltz, Toni Pearce

Conference Believes:

1. The tertiary education landscape has never been so complicated. In England, the Government reforms have exacerbated a market in both admissions and financial support while simultaneously cutting funding for Aim Higher, Connexions and removing the statutory obligation for Schools to provide guidance provisions. In Scotland, discrepancies in implementing the *Scottish Qualification and Credit Framework* remain and widening access records are the worst in the UK. In Wales, the proposed merger agenda and recently announced *Core and Margin* system of numbers allocation will result in a very different higher education landscape. Northern Ireland has the highest levels of drop-outs and cross border flow has collapsed. Funding and financing policies across the UK are now vastly different and likely to diverge further. Information, Advice and Guidance has never been more important.
2. Coming from a family with no history of tertiary education, or studying at a school with little guidance provision, acts as a major barrier to accessing the right types of education for the individual. Cultural capital is key to accessing and navigating different types of learning.
3. While we retain a fundamental opposition to the current tuition fee system, no student should decide not to go to university on the basis of misunderstanding the repayment system.
4. Successive Governments have failed to provide good contextual advice to prospective students, the sector is complicit in delivering an opaque admissions process and now universities are firmly driven by market/financial imperatives.

Conference Further Believes:

1. "*Information*" should be provided by agencies that collect relevant data themselves. "*Guidance*" should be delivered face to face, as early as possible. However students' unions could play a powerful role in offering good contextual "*advice*" to potential learners.
2. We should create an army of current students and experts willing to offer contextualised advice so that regardless of someone's background, they will be better equipped when making key decisions regarding tertiary education.

Conference Resolves:

1. NUS should create a digital platform that demystifies student life and enables current students to support prospective students in deciding what type of learning is best for them, particularly those with no family background of tertiary education.
2. Principles underlying the platform should be:
 - a. Advice that recognises the individual, not the sectors own definition of 'best'
 - b. Acknowledgement that crude ranking mechanisms are subjective and don't recognise individual students needs
 - c. It is not incompatible to explain the new fees regime in England, free of political judgement, while still campaigning for its reversal.

resolutions

- d. We should seek to work with not-for-profit organisations, free of financial imperatives that may influence advice, ploughing any revenue generated into changing students' lives.

Motion D: Retention

Submitted by: Rachel Wenstone

Seconded by: Pete Mercer, Estelle Hart, Liam Burns,

Conference believes:

1. The cost of university has increased over the last ten years - not just the cost of tuition fees, but the cost of accommodation, food, transport and general living.
2. NUS has just carried out both the biggest and most far-reaching piece of research on student support and the biggest study into hidden course cost in the sector.
3. Some students will arrive at university without the knowledge, pastoral care, family support and financial support they need to thrive.
4. Of those surveyed by the UCAS 'Back on Course' survey, 35% stated the reason for leaving being "course-related", whilst 32% stated financial or personal reasons.

Conference further believes:

1. The HE sector has failed to address the issue of retention in our universities. We have little institution by institution evidence to show who is leaving our universities early, from what course they are departing, and the reasons for their exit.
2. It is unacceptable students are dropping out Universities often unnoticed and unexamined by their institution.
3. Every student deserves the opportunity to make the most of their time at university; access to a quality student experience should never be undermined by lack of knowledge, funding or support.
4. Induction at university is a vital way of ensuring students feel supported throughout their time at University. Induction should never be confined to the first two weeks of University; it should be student specific and carried throughout the length of a student's degree.
5. Induction should focus not only on the academic experience, but on all elements of the student experience, including pastoral support, finance and extra-curricular opportunities.
6. Student should never be forced to take a commercial or payday loan to survive at university.
7. The personal relationship between students and staff can be key to ensuring student problems are addressed pro-actively.

Conference resolves:

1. Building on the HE zone research on retention and work with the welfare zone lobby the government and mission groups to commit to tackling issues driving low retention, specifically where there are "high risk" groups.
2. Lobby all institutions to advertise ALF properly, and lobby to sustain/extend this fund. And using the results of the student support research, launch a study into how different modes of financial support, such as statutory and discretionary funding, as well as "progress bursaries" and designated funds, impact on retention and enhance educational outcomes.
3. Lobby institutions to include hidden course costs in the overall tuition fee.
4. For the welfare zone to campaign against commercial and payday loans targeting students and advertise information relating to the potential dangers and consequences of these quick fixes.
5. To enable students' union to carry out an investigation into the 'student life cycle' of different students on their campus to establish when students need support. Using this information, students' unions will be able to lobby more effectively for better, focused, induction processes.
6. Conduct a study into relationships between students and staff and modes of progress monitoring, including a study into personal tutor systems and their effectiveness.

Summary

This paper outlines matters of interest to the NEC which the President is dealing with or has taken a position on since the last NEC. The NEC are invited to:

- Canvass the views and reactions of students' unions on these issues
- Question any policy positions taken
- Make suggestions on future work concerning these issues

1) Pound in your Pocket

(Strategic Theme: Winning on Funding and Participation)

We have released the first of the Student Finance Commissions work, namely interim reports from the pound in your Pocket survey. We will also be giving local results from the survey back to students' unions over the summer:

- [Mapping the Evidence, A Review of Literature: Student Financial Support in Higher Education](#)
- [Pound in Your Pocket Survey Interim Results](#)

The reports were launched at a conference fringe. The Financial Support Commission will meet next month to commission micro projects run by students' unions and begin policy development using the literature review, survey and micro-projects.

Questions for the NEC:

1. Has your students' unions seen the reports? Are their particular areas of interest?
2. Has your students' union used the reports in negotiating their 2013/14 Access Agreements?

2) Come Clean

(Strategic Theme: Winning on Funding and Participation)

The Week of Action was a huge success with actions taking place across England (and some in Edinburgh). Local wins such as £200,000 in hidden course costs absorbed in Sheffield, university senate passing a statement calling for Government reforms to be debated at Reading and a joint statement with the students' union at Leeds. Following the week, Universities UK and GuildHE agreed to working with us to deal with hidden course costs over the next year so that "*no ones academic success in contingent on their financial situation.*"

The National Walkout was successful in profile but not in actual numbers. We achieved significant media and social media coverage, which hugely continued to the win on hidden course costs, but many students' unions took the decision not to participate in an actual walk out, instead opting for alternative softer actions. I think this is in part down to me not organising enough before hand but does also point to a worrying reluctance to take such action only 12 months since the fees vote.

The National Lobby was successful with nearly 200 MPs lobbied. An Early Day Motion (No. 2953) was tabled and has 31 supporters, all Labour/SDLP as it stands. There were numerous speakers on the day with all commenting how effective the lobby had been.

The rally after, although incredibly well organised event in and of itself, was not successful in either numbers or impact. This is wholly down to a lack of organising on my part and a poor choice of date (which was restricted by NUS democratic events). The rally itself was a compromise on some on the NEC calling for a feeder march to parliament, which from experience would have shut the lobby down. I was therefore disappointed that many who initiated that call failed to organise or attend the event themselves.

A fringe event was organised at conference on how to take the campaign forward. It is looking increasingly unlikely that a Higher Education Bill will be tabled before the next General Election, however a Draft Bill (as well as a response to the White Paper and BIS Technical Consultation) is expected before the end of the year.

Questions for the NEC:

3. How do your students' unions think we should now deal with hidden course costs with UUK/GuildHE?
4. Has your students' union contacted their MP and asked them to sign the EDM?
5. How did your students' unions perceive the Come Clean activities (Week of Action/Walkout/Lobby/Rally)

3) HEFCE Number Control Announcements

(Strategic Theme: Winning on Funding and Participation)

For 2012/13, HEFCE have released the results of the 'core and margin' exercise. 65 new Further Education Colleges will now be funded by HEFCE (of the 155 that won places in from the margin).

For 2013/14, the AAB threshold for 'off quota' (i.e unlimited) places has been moved to ABB. In practice this means that the 65,000 places up for grabs increases to 135,000 – but is inherently more unpredictable with a much greater number of non-tradition equivalent qualifications falling within this bracket, for instance BTEC with two Distinctions and a Merit. The 'margin' has been increased by 5,000 which will presumably be found through a small cut across the sector.

From our perspective, this is a mixed bag and makes some of our positions contradictory. We have always said that HE in FE aids social mobility and is a good thing, but this has been achieved by taking places from institutions with high demand and transferring them to low demand colleges. We disagree with the 'core and margin' system, but the reduction of the off quota threshold to ABB softens the 'cliff edge' on admissions and widens the number of non-traditional subjects institutions can take unrestricted. Institutions that lost numbers even after reducing their fees below £7,500 may chose to increase them again as only 5,000 places will be available next year, but this would mean students at those institutions get more spent on them and withdraws the incentive to offer fee waivers over bursaries.

We have sent an "Alternative HEFCE Annual Statement" to all MPs to contradict the actual statement laid before Parliament which fails to point out any of the detrimental impacts of the HE reforms.

Questions for the NEC:

6. Has your students' unions gained/lost through the core and margin (both in numbers and unit resource)
7. Will your students' union argue for a change in fee levels for 2013/14?

Additional

<u>Membership</u>	<u>Sector</u>
NUS Scotland Conference	Defend the Right to Protest
Sunderland Referendum	Million+ Parliamentary Reception
Surrey Students' Union	UCAS Board
Canterbury College Students' Union	TUC Youth Conference
Southampton Solent Students' Union	NUS/UUK/NCVO Social Impacts of Volunteering
Southampton Students' Union (Non-Affiliate)	Union of Jewish Students Conference
Cumbria Student Led Teaching Awards	Liberal Youth Conference
NUS Wales Conference	Union of Students in Ireland Conference
Quality Still Matters	HEFCE Board Meeting
NUSSL Convention	GuildHE Meeting
FE Learning & Teaching Conference	Brightside
Aldwych Meeting	
NUS-USI Conference	
Aberdeen University Referendum	
St Andrews SRC (Non-Affiliates)	
Exeter Student Led Teaching Awards	
Aberdeen College Students' Association	

Highly Trusted Status of institutions across the UK in both FE and HE have come into question by UKBA. This has serious consequences for International students who could be deported should their institutions status be revoked and they are unsuccessful in securing another place. I have delegated work with the sector/UKBA to Toni Pearce and called for both opposition to this move but also a sector solution for allowing international student to find alternative places.

Separate but connected, through referendums, visits to students' unions and the tone of conference regarding international student issues – I am looking into creating additional resource specifically for our campaigning on UKBA issues (not the international students campaign generally) but this may well be discussed during the motions from the Sections regarding additional support.

Can I also put on record my thanks to all the full time officers for their work before and during National Conference. Maintaining the 'day job' when fringes, policy and elections all need organising is no easy feat and I'd like to thank the whole team for managing to do so with huge amounts of professionalism and respect for the membership.

**NUS National Executive Council
TO SCRUTINISE / NOTE**

Officer Report

Toni Pearce

Outcomes and Outputs

My Top priorities since the last NEC	What changes I have achieved or rights I have defended for students and students' unions in these areas
Teaching and Learning	First ever teaching and learning summit for FE in NUS Teaching and learning charter – being used in FE colleges as best practice. I.e. Basingstoke College of Technology
International Students and UKBA	Trying to organise "sector led solution" to UKBA removing highly trusted status from several providers
Information, Advice and Guidance	Research published into FE students' experiences of information, advice and guidance
Complaints in FE	Research published into FE students' experiences of local complaints procedures and recommendations for a sector run independent ombudsman
Keep FE free	Campaigning (with 157 Group, Association of Colleges, Institute for Learning, Unison and UCU) against the introduction of fees and loans in further education
Student Voice and governance	Developing new model learner involvement strategy and published foundation advice for governance in colleges. Developing Student Governor Support Programme to be rolled out across the UK
Mergers	Developing mergers toolkit to support students' unions when their colleges merge (launch in Scotland in early June)

Other achievements of my Zone/Section/Campaign/Nation

<p>Response to Ofsted consultation on major changes to inspection procedure (including unannounced inspections) Taking part in government's skills commission Taking part in governments adult vocational education commission Responding to UCAS tariff review Responding to Qualifications Information Review Responding to Adult Community Learning Consultation Responding to consultation on raising of the participation age</p>
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My outputs since the last NEC (meetings / actions attended)

<p>Learner Voice Think Tank FE team meeting – Cardiff Toni Notes: Review of CDP, UCAS Points tariff consultation, National Student Survey in FE, Review of NUS' Learner Involvement Strategy, FE Loans, IQER, College Governance, Stop and Search, ESOL, Complex Needs, Complex Choices – IAG.</p>
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Plans before the next meeting

Between now and the next NEC, we plan to achieve:

My Priority area before the next NEC	What I hope to achieve
FE Leadership and Sabb Res	Training student leaders in FE for next year
Constituency lobby on FE fees and loans	MPs campaigning against the introduction of fees and loans in FE
Complaints in FE	Working with civil servants to produce a plan for new independent complaints service in FE

Membership Engagement

Since the last NEC meeting, I have undertaken some union visits and attended a number of events to engage with the membership

Union / event visited	Purpose / Issues arising
Sabbatical Residential	Training sabbatical officers in FE unions (mergers, learner involvement strategy, campaigning and personal development)
Women's Conference	Presenting on impact of FE fees and loans on women
Newcastle College	Presenting on impact of HE reforms to the FE sector
Disabled Students' Conference	Presenting on the impact of FE fees and loans on disabled students
Hackney Community College	Presenting on NUS current campaigns in FE and development of SU at Hackney College
City of Glasgow College	Met with CoGC and Kirdonald College to discuss mergers and UKBA
Aberdeen College	Discussing federation model of merger in Aberdeen
Reid Kerr College	Meeting to discuss FE work in Scotland
Edinburgh Telford, Jewll and Esk and Stevenson College	Mergers and UKBA
NUS USI Conference	Leading sessions with FE Unions in Northern Ireland
Basingstoke College of Technology	Learner Voice Think Tank
National Conference	Obvs
University of Manchester Students' Union	Chairing assembly meeting re: community
Sheffield Hallam	Speaking at Come Clean rally

Media Engagement and External Relations

Meetings attended and media appearances made

<p>Speaking at National Union of Teachers pensions lobby Meeting with Ofsted to discuss changes to inspection framework * 2 Further Education Reputation Strategy Group AOC Governance Council LSIS Governance Conference AOC Bursary Conference – presenting on NUS views on new bursary and calling for reinstatement of EMA Meeting with 157 group, Association of Colleges, Unison, UCU, IfL and Shadow Skills Minister to discuss FE loans campaign Further Education and Skills Ministerial Advisory Panel Skills Funding Agency Advisory Board Quarterly meeting with John Hayes Presenting at Capita conference encouraging investment in student voice Skills Commission Channel 4 news debate – generational divides FE week article on plans for next year FE week coverage of re-election and national conference</p>

Issues

During this period I have become aware of the following issues not recorded elsewhere

Declaration of Gifts, Hospitality And Interests

Accommodation before presenting at Newcastle College
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**NUS National Executive Council
TO SCRUTINISE / NOTE**

Officer Report

DG

Outcomes and Outputs

My Top priorities since the last NEC	What changes I have achieved or rights I have defended for students and students' unions in these areas
Citizens UK and Living Wage	Masterclass on 30 th May, designed to develop future leaders Nottingham Citizens has been set up and Uni of Nott SU is a founding member We are focused on Glasgow, Birmingham and Cardiff too and I am setting up 1-2-1s with organisers and SUs there
Defending the Right to Protest	Hilliard brothers acquitted- a significant development. Organising roundtable with DTRTP, Liberty and others in early June to discuss campaign to be launched in sept
POD	Launched a 'pledge' campaign and had a very good fringe at national conference
Access to education for asylum seekers	Had two roundtables with STAR and Article 26 at HKF and formulated campaign plan to be presented to zone committee
Open Book	Liverpool workshop held and WP department have agreed to look into developing it up there. One scheduled in Hull for June time.

Other achievements of my Zone/Section/Campaign/Nation

<p>Working with Olympics project to look into how legacy work can support training of activists in and around East London Working with Birkbeck on a public engagement project looking at how SUs can support public engagement with the curriculum Currently looking to a day of action around banking with UKUncut in the Autumn</p>
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Plans before the next meeting

Between now and the next NEC, we plan to achieve:

My Priority area before the next NEC	What I hope to achieve
Citizens and Living Wage campaign	Get 30 community organisers trained
Unpaid Internships	Submit 10 min rule bill on clarifying internships in law
Open Book	Secured OB funding at Liverpool and hold session at Hull and Middlesbrough college
POD	Bournemouth VC pledge day and organise one at Canterbury and Wakefield College too
Constructive engagement	Try to meet with Eden Springs (again) and meet with co-op about their boycott of Israeli settlement goods

Membership Engagement

Since the last NEC meeting, I have undertaken some union visits and attended a number of events to engage with the membership

Union / event visited	Purpose / Issues arising
Brighton living wage launch	
Portsmouth	Living Wage chat/1-2-1 with ed officer
Sunderland	Referendum
Manchester Uni	Launch of Manchester protest group
Manchester College	Visit
Worcester	1-2-1/e&e debate
Hull	Awards
Liverpool	Awards
Buxton College conference	
Queens	Referendum
USI/Wales Conferences	

Media Engagement and External Relations

Meetings attended and media appearances made

Debate with Shadow HE Minister at Labour Party event in Luton
STEM Public engagement keynote at Aston Uni for NCCPE Event
Unison Young Members meeting
E&E Water stewardship event at parliament with NUSSEL
Debate with some Tories in Worcester on austerity and the sustainability agenda
Liberty AGM

Issues

During this period I have become aware of the following issues not recorded elsewhere

The zone needs more direction on how to effectively support voter registration and engagement as well as the votes at 16 agenda. Advice welcomed!
The NEC need to work hard over the next few weeks to beat the staff in the football.

Declaration of Gifts, Hospitality And Interests

The gift of a second term.
I campaigned for Ken Livingstone.

**NUS National Executive Council
TO SCRUTINISE / NOTE**

Officer Report

Officer Name Ed Marsh

After consultation with the Union Development Committee, this report is themed around five priorities for the Committee for the rest of the year. Similarly, a review of the active policy from national conference has now concluded and this report will note the key areas of work which have been delivered and those which are still underway. These are: **Championing Students' Unions, Breaking Down Barriers to Participation in Students' Unions, Deepening Participation in Students' Unions, Empowering Students to Make Change and Finding the Voice of Millions of Students outside Students' Unions**

Outcomes and Outputs

My Top priorities since the last NEC	What changes I have achieved or rights I have defended for students and students' unions in these areas
Championing Student unions	<p>Delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NUS Charitable Services have completed developing a competency framework for staff across the movement working with the CASS Business School We are actively using the good governance code on 2 campuses where relations have deteriorated, and relations have improved The volunteer Accreditation pilot has successfully reached a conclusion, the final report will be ready for the next NEC and a national roll out will happen by Sept!!!! We are building the talent bank within NUS Digital to highlight the expertise of staff across the movement in FE and HE to encourage the sharing of resources, the first e-mail asking for pilot SU's went out last week I will be writing to the young Briton foundation again to see whether or not they would like a meeting The third edition of the democracy toolkit is written and is on its way to students unions looking at political activism, participation and impact across students' unions and the wider third sector using resources released by the Hansard Society and NCVO We have re-written the handover guide for SU's We will have added an award to the NUS awards specifically for small and specialist unions We're running a series of masterclasses in the next few months on many issues, the first of which was 'so, you're leaving the student movement', helping sabbatical officers move on from students' unions, it was widely regarded as a massive success
Breaking Down Barriers to Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fortnightly D&G mail-out, which highlights best practice in students' unions and gives key information about NUS is now live and will be ongoing In addition we will be rolling out bespoke strategic support for students unions on how to make this year's elections as accessible and open as possible Turnout in SU elections was the highest it has ever been! We have produced a 'brochure' so that unions are clear exactly what support is available from the democracy and governance consultancy unit The Lovely Democracy and Governance Unit was highlighted and profiled in spotlight, so that people can put jobs to faces and faces to names
Deepening Participation in Student Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first UD commission took place in parliament, we heard from many leading experts as well as wes streeting. Interim finding were presented at NUS NC and we will be looking at integrating the final report into the summer training program, and the whole of the departments work next year.
Empowering Students to make change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We trained our 2000th activist, will probably hit 2500 in total and should be very proud of everything we have achieved
Finding the Voice of Millions of Students outside Students' Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agenda for the big apprentice v2 get together is nearly complete, im determined to make sure it happens before I leave office. A strategy for individual membership will be completed by September now that we have agreed it is the correct way forward. At this meeting we will discuss representation in London which is exciting. We have a referendum on the cards at Southampton, it passed at their AGM to hold a vote in term 1. and the strategy for other non affiliates is currently being created ALSO SUNDERLAND HAVE RE-AFFILIATED

Plans before the next meeting

Between now and the next NEC, we plan to achieve:

I will be handing over to Vicki Baars and ensuring that before the next NEC she is able to start delivering on her priorities within the zone and that the zone is in good shape to support her. I will also be handing over my multiple other responsibilities, nussl, endsleigh, DPC, NUS SUCS, the NUS Board etc etc

Membership Engagement

Since the last NEC meeting, I have undertaken some union visits and attended a number of events to engage with the membership

Union / event visited	Purpose / Issues arising
NUS Conference	To stand for president
NUS Student Media Event, Covering conflict	To empower student journalists to take ownership of difficult issues
Liverpool Hope SU AGM	To talk about the value of NUS affiliation
UD Zone commission	To investigate widening participation
Sunderland referendum	Victory!
DSC conference	
LGBT Scotland Awards	I was a judge on the awarding panel, it was a great evening, and proves that successful volunteer accreditation can be done within NUS
Unions94	Its all going well, and might even survive handover which would be the first time ever
Sheffield Varsity	To support the Poly
NUSSL Convention	The big news is that the committee review passed and the company is committed to review its ownership in the year ahead

Media Engagement and External Relations

Meetings attended and media appearances made

Ian King Memorial Service, DPC Compositing, I lobbied my MP, Hull volunteer awards
Student Skills Accreditation Working Group, Unions 94, NUS Trustee Board, Audit Risk and Remuneration Committee, Student Hubs, Finance and Resources Committee, NUSSL Board, NUS Charity Board,

Declaration of Gifts, Hospitality And Interests

Arsenal V AC Milan thanks to endsleigh, (it was 3-0 to arsenal so they sadly went out 4-3 on aggregate)
Muslim Council of Britain Annual Dinner, I also anticipate between now and leaving office I will be attending a lot of summer balls as a guest. (so i thought I should list this as something which I will be receiving, I bloody love summer balls, #farewelltour)

**NUS National Executive Council
TO NOTE**

Officer Report

Kanja Ibrahim Sesay

Outcomes and Outputs

<p>My Top priorities since the last NEC</p>	<p>What changes I have achieved or rights I have defended for students and students' unions in these areas</p>
<p>Black Representation</p>	<p>Over the last few weeks and months we prioritised the local and mayoral elections. It was essential we did this, the fascist BNP and other far-right groups stood candidates in the elections including the London Mayoral elections. We ran a joint initiative with Operation Black Vote in our voter registration drive. It is important we exercise our democratic right to vote. We also supported Operation Black Vote and other community organisations in the Black Manifesto, generated from the mayoral debate Black Britain Decides. If you are interested in the outcome of the manifesto please have a look here: http://obv.org.uk/news-blogs/bme-londoners-manifesto-manifesto-hope-and-recovery. We also communicated the importance of the Mayoral and local election and how it will affect Black communities.</p> <p>Furthermore, we provided support and advice on how to build campaigns and spoken at meetings around the country, including supporting Black students standing in there elections from Kings College London, Bradford, Huddersfield, Liverpool University, Robert Gordon to Lincoln University.</p> <p>Finally, it has been a long time coming the fact that BNP have lost all their council seats across the country. However, we must not become complacency has there has been a new formation of the British Freedom Party, another fascist organisation aiming to gain electoral success we must be united again to defeat this new threat.</p>
<p>Anti-Racism and Anti-Fascism</p>	<p>We continue to work with StopWatch and organisation that focus on the disproportionality that lives within the policing of Stop and Search powers. With the introduction of stop and search within Further Education there is a greater need for this union to rightly opposed such policies within our education system and to highlight the problems and the discriminatory nature of it all. We must also promote 'Know your rights' briefings to educate learners on their rights. I am please that this union will be able to focus on these issues in the coming weeks and months</p>

	thanks to the motions passed at Annual conference presented by Mid Kent College and our Campaign.
Black Students Summer Conference	We have completed our registration drive for the coming conference and would like to take this opportunity to thank all my committee members, staff and NEC members that help to promote the conference. We would have successfully elected the Black Student's officer and the new Committee by the 21 st May.
Hate Crime Report	This report will provide a great deal of insight into hate crime and incidents, and how it impacts on Black students. This report will be launch at the Conference please ensure we all promote it as wide as possible.

Other achievements of my Zone/Section/Campaign/Nation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Unite Against Fascism Luton Demo *Committee Meeting *Supported Students in elections -provided extensive support to Black students who stood for election in their Students' Union this year, including at: Kings College London, Cambridge University, Bradford University, Lincoln University, Middlesex University, Portsmouth University, Huddersfield University, Liverpool University, Birmingham City University, LSE, Robert Gordon and SOAS. *NUS Annual Conference *HEA Attainment Submit
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My outputs since the last NEC (meetings / actions attended)

<p>Supported Students in Elections: TUC Black Members Conference- Speaking on Black youth unemployment Inspirational You- Trayvon Martin Solidarity protest Shine Media- continue to support their drive to increase Black representation with the media, working with the Guardian, Pearson's and other media outlets Black women conference- very successful conference, a website has been developed and hopefully this event will happen again next year. NUS Wales Black Students Conference- congratulation to the new officer and committee, new policies passed such as a policy on Free Education and Love Music hate racism etc NUS Scotland Black Students Conference- the current officer re-elected and with a new committee. Policies passed at the conference on opposing the Scottish Defence League.</p>
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Plans before the next meeting

Between now and the next NEC, we plan to achieve:

My Priority area before the next NEC	What I hope to achieve
Hate Crime Report	Release this report and ensure unions implement some of the findings from the report. We are in the process to ensure we deliver this report as soon as possible. Thanks to all the staff that are working hard on this. Will be launched at the Black Students Conference.
Black Students Conference	My last conference as the NUS Black Students Officer. Looking forward to conference. We will elect a new Officer and committee, pass policies to support the work of the campaign in the coming

Attainment Briefing	The attainment gap amongst Black students needs to be seriously addressed, the campaign has been working alongside various organisations with the sector to ensure we prioritise attainment and retention.
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Membership Engagement

Since the last NEC meeting, I have undertaken some union visits and attended a number of events to engage with the membership

Union / event visited	Purpose / Issues arising
Aberdeen	The Scotland African Caribbean Society Debate. Part of the judging panel
Kings College London, Cambridge University, Bradford University, Lincoln University, Middlesex University, Portsmouth University, Huddersfield University, Liverpool University, Birmingham City University, LSE, Robert Gordon and SOAS	Supporting students in elections
Birkbeck	Spoke at the Teach in before the Walk out.

Media Engagement and External Relations

Meetings attended and media appearances made

Islam Channel Voice of Africa Radio Huffington Post

Issues

During this period I have become aware of the following issues not recorded elsewhere

N/A

Declaration of Gifts, Hospitality and Interests

N/A

**NUS National Executive Council
TO SCRUTINISE / NOTE**

Officer Report

Rupy Kaur, National Disabled Students' Officer

Outcomes and Outputs

It feels very weird writing my last NEC report, but I'm afraid I'm in Florida, kissing and rubbing down dolphins (in a non-dodgy way). I just wanted to say, it has been amazing working for NUS. I don't think I ever imagined working as a National Officer, but I've done it! And it feels really good to have delivered on priority campaigns. Good luck to you all, and hopefully see you on June 29th where I will be drinking various concoctions through a straw!

My Top priorities since the last NEC	What changes I have achieved or rights I have defended for students and students' unions in these areas
Preparing for Disabled Students' Conference	Most of my time has been spent in preparation for Disabled Students' Conference, including workshops and inviting guest speakers etc. Conference went very well, with the new officer elect, and policy being put forward including change of governance for the Disabled Students' Campaign.
Continuing with the Personal Care campaign	I have been in liaison with BIS and the Department for Work and Pensions, with regards to securing funding for the National Advocacy Service, as this is an ongoing campaign. Both departments seem really keen on working with NUS, and establishing this service, as it fits in with the coalition's agenda. We are hoping to secure funding from at least one of these departments, and are continuing to add some further details to our business plan.
Mobilising unions to nominate themselves for the Access Challenge	This is the first year that an Access Challenge award will be given out at the NUS Awards Ceremony 2012, as it is an historic moment. I have been encouraging students' unions to nominate themselves for the award... very exciting indeed!

Other achievements of my Zone/Section/Campaign/Nation

This may seem a little lacking, but that is because most of the Disabled Students' Priority Campaigns have been delivered on.

APPG for young disabled people access inquiry into HE – I was invited by the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign, 'Trailblazers', to be part of a panel looking at issues that are faced by young disabled people within education, but with a particular focus on personal care issues after our 'Life, not Numbers report.' Paul Maynard MP chaired the meeting, and following that he has been very keen in terms of working with NUS in establishing the National Advocacy Service.

DSA-QAG board meeting.

Women's Conference

LGBT awards ceremony.

Review of Liberation Development Programme – looking at ways in which Liberation training can be improved upon.

Lobby of Parliament on HE bill

National Conference – apart from chairing Conference with my wand and crown, the campaign also held a fringe event and I spoke at a Anti-Fascism/Racism fringe.

NUS Wales SWD Conference – chaired this Conference.

Ambitious about Autism – looking at working together with this organisation, to improve education access for disabled learners in FE.

Convenors

Judging NUS Awards

Together-UK and NIACE – meeting with these two organisations, to seek ways in which we can lobby government and improve access to mental health services within education as a whole.

My outputs since the last NEC (meetings / actions attended)

Meeting with Together-UK and NIACE.

Meeting with Ambitious about Autism.

APPG for young disabled people access inquiry into HE.

DSA-QAG board meeting.

Plans before the next meeting

Between now and the next NEC, we plan to achieve:

My Priority area before the next NEC	What I hope to achieve
To secure funding for the National Advocacy Service	To continue as above, and informing the Disabled Students' Officer elect of the campaign so that she can continue working towards a National Advocacy Service.
To complete handover with the Disabled Students' Officer elect.	Producing a handover document and arranging meetings with key members of staff and organisations.

Membership Engagement

Since the last NEC meeting, I have undertaken some union visits and attended a number of events to engage with the membership

Engagement via email.

Media Engagement and External Relations

Meetings attended and media appearances made

N/A

Issues

During this period I have become aware of the following issues not recorded elsewhere

Declaration of Gifts, Hospitality And Interests

**NUS National Executive Council
TO NOTE
Officer Report**
Vicki Baars and Alan Bailey

Outcomes and Outputs

My Top priorities since the last NEC	What changes I have achieved or rights I have defended for students and students' unions in these areas
Sports Priority campaign	<p><u>Survey/Research</u> The survey is still live with a large mailshot and a targeted FE mail out having gone out in the last couple of weeks. We are still falling a bit short of our 1000 target so would encourage everyone to help promote the survey and encourage LGBT students to fill it out. We continue to run focus groups at institutions to gain some more qualitative information. We ran a large consultation at NUS LGBT conference. The information gathered will help feed into the final report.</p> <p><u>Governments Sports Charter</u> We proud to say that a large number of colleges and universities has now signed the governments sports charter against homophobia and transphobia in sport. We are continuing to work with the Government Qualities office on this work.</p>
Schools Priority campaign	<p>Work is progressing unfortunately slowly as repeated dairy clashes with partner organisations have caused delays with arranging meetings to plan the next stages of work.</p> <p>Work has been done on creating more links with regional organisations that are doing work around schools that student union groups could then link up with and do collaborative work.</p> <p>Also following NUS Scotland LGBT, and NUS LGBT conference there are now just under 40 LGBT groups signed up interested to take part in the project.</p>
NUS LGBT Conference	<p>The vast majority of work and time has been directed towards NUS LGBT Conference. We had aprox 325 delegates, this is slightly lower than the previous year but still a good number we had an additional 100 guests and staff attend the NUS awards and 40th Birthday celebrations.</p> <p>Although we haven't had chance to look through feedback as yet, the impression we have from speaking to delegates during and after conference is positive. From an Officer standpoint we believe that the Conference was a great success.</p>

Other achievements of our Campaign

We have been promoting the governments consultation of Civil Marriage. We've signed up to the Campaign for Equal Marriage and have produced a briefing on the mater and are writing our own internal response which we will publish for our membership to see.

Our outputs since the last NEC (meetings / actions attended)

- *Gaybydegree,
- *Two fringes and a stall at NUS National Conference
- *Planning handover to new officers
- *Attended NUS Scotland LGBT conference
- *Attended NUS Wales LGBT conference

Plans before the next meeting

Between now and the next NEC, we plan to achieve:

My Priority area before the next NEC	What I hope to achieve
Sports priority campaign	By the next meeting we will have closed the survey and started to analyse the data and formulate the report. We will hopefully by then have a print date and launch event scheduled in.
Schools priority campaign	Meeting with partner organisations and plan next stage of work. Ensure that next phase of work is ready to hand over to incoming officers.
Handover to new officers	To have provided a good handover to the incoming officers. Meetings with new officers and key stakeholders. Handing over priority campaigns to new officers.

Membership Engagement

Since the last NEC meeting, I have undertaken some union visits and attended a number of events to engage with the membership

Union / event visited	Purpose / Issues arising

Media Engagement and External Relations

Meetings attended and media appearances made

Non

Issues

During this period we have become aware of the following issues not recorded elsewhere

Declaration of Gifts, Hospitality And Interests

none

**NUS National Executive Council
TO SCRUTINISE / NOTE**

Officer Report

George-Konstantinos Charonis, PGT Rep
Dante Micheaux, PGR Rep

Outcomes and Outputs

My Top priorities since the last NEC	What changes I have achieved or rights I have defended for students and students' unions in these areas
Forum on International Postgraduates	Final and one of the most successful Forums of the year, identified the key issues for international PG students as well as some key action points for different stakeholders
Postgraduate Conference 2012	Successfully host the largest ever NUS PG conference and elect a new PG Committee for 2012/13
Postgraduate Fringe at National Conference	Ran an informal fringe event, briefly presenting the work of the PG Committee this year and providing a networking opportunity for delegates to discuss PG issues and share best practices
Joint work with Sections NEC members on resourcing matters	Initiating debate on providing additional support to Student Sections Campaigns in order to improve capacity of influencing the lives of students that fall in these categories

Other achievements of my Zone/Section/Campaign/Nation

<p>Final PG Committee Meeting for 2011/12: Productive meeting attended by nearly all Committee members, discussed PG funding as well as agenda and policies/motions for PG conference.</p> <p>Produced article/blog, encouraging CMs to send representatives to Sections conferences.</p> <p>Produced a briefing sheet on Postgraduate issues for the Come Clean Lobby of Parliament.</p> <p>Produced the NUS submission to the Higher Education Commission's Postgraduate Inquiry.</p>

My outputs since the last NEC (meetings / actions attended)

<p>Attended a roundtable at BIS in the run-up to the Bologna Ministerial Conference.</p> <p>Attended the 62nd Seminar and Board Meeting of the European Students' Union in Bucharest, along with Krissy Meyer (International Students' Officer, University of Sheffield).</p> <p>Attended the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) Ministerial Conference on HE (Bucharest) as the student member of the UK delegation.</p>

Plans before the next meeting

Between now and the next NEC, we plan to achieve:

My Priority area before the next NEC	What I hope to achieve
Follow-up of Sections work on additional resourcing (based on outcome of May NEC), together with other Sections NEC members	Ensuring (all possible) work on resourcing of Student Sections is followed up and successfully handed over to the 2012/13 Sections NEC Reps
Handover	Brief the newly elected 2012/13 Committee/NEC Reps on key issues

Membership Engagement

Since the last NEC meeting, I have undertaken some union visits and attended a number of events to engage with the membership

Union / event visited	Purpose / Issues arising
Warwick Integration Summit	Ran a session on international postgraduates
Sussex University Come Clean Lobby	Briefly spoke at the Come Clean Lobby at Sussex University, representing NUS

Media Engagement and External Relations

Meetings attended and media appearances made

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Issues

During this period I have become aware of the following issues not recorded elsewhere

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Declaration of Gifts, Hospitality And Interests

Accepted a very kind invitation from the NUS LGBT Campaign to attend the NUS Scotland LGBT Awards in Glasgow, as the date and location coincided with our forum on International Postgraduates. Despite arriving late it was a lovely, enjoyable evening. Thank you very much for the invitation ☺
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TO NOTE

Report: European Students' Union 62nd Seminar & Board Meeting

George-Konstantinos Charonis

Seminar

The seminar preceding the Board Meeting was themed around Financing of Higher Education, based on the "Financing the Students' Future" (FinSt) project in which NUS UK is a partner. In addition to several plenary sessions a series of content-based workshops (one of which was delivered by NUS UK, courtesy of Dr. Debbie McVitty) were delivered. Parallel skills-based workshops on activist training were also delivered, all by NUS UK (Bethan Payne, Debbie McVitty, Dani Beckett). The Seminar was followed by the Board Meeting.

Key policy stances taken by NUS UK

Issue	Stance taken by NUS UK
Commodification of Higher Education	This statement reiterates ESU's opposition towards the increasing view of HE as a commodity and students as customers, calling for a firm commitment to education as a public good and public responsibility from national governments across Europe. NUS UK supported the Statement.
Gender Mainstreaming Strategy	The Board adopted the updated Gender Mainstreaming strategy, which consisted of much input from the NUS Scotland Women's Officer.
Statement on HE and the Economic Crisis (Copenhagen Declaration)	Numerous amendments were proposed and adopted by the Board for the declaration drafted during the 23 rd European Students' Convention in Copenhagen (February 2012). Due to the document changing dramatically from its original form into a lengthier and often grammatically incorrect and incoherent document, NUS UK abstained from the final vote on this. The Board approved the statement.
Statement on Erasmus for All	This statement calls on greater portability of national grants and loans as well as increased investment in Erasmus grants, as well as avoiding the shift from grants to loans.

	<p>This statement is closely linked to the Erasmus Loans scheme proposed at Masters level by the European Commission, something that ESU is vehemently against. NUS UK has a different stance given our national context and more importantly given the fact that the European Commission has yet to outline the details of this loans scheme. NUS UK submitted a separate, internal motion (a non-externally facing document) outlining the acceptable terms of such a loans scheme as a 'Plan B', were ESU to fail to have the proposal scrapped and should the Commission implement it. This motion was met with much support and was passed by the Board.</p>
<p>Statement on the Bologna Ministerial Conference 2012</p>	<p>Aimed at the Communiqué drafted by Ministers across Europe that was due to be adopted at the EHEA Ministerial Conference. Key elements included the need for a clear, firm commitment to HE as a public good and public responsibility, as well as the need for a more focused approach towards delivering policies and setting and monitoring targets in the social dimension (widening participation). NUS UK supported this statement.</p>

Membership

Following reports from study visit teams; two full new members were accepted into ESU. These are SKONUS (Serbia) and ASYOU (Azerbaijan). NUS UK did not actively oppose either from being accepted as full members. Mateusz Wysocki from NUS UK participated in the study visit to Azerbaijan.

A further candidate member, ANSA (Armenia) was not accepted as a full member. The study visit report laid out a series of recommendations as well as a follow-up study visit in September 2012 and report at the next BM.

Elections

As the new ESU structures were approved by the Board at the last Board Meeting (Sofia, November 2011), a new team was elected for 2012/13.

Presidency (full-time representatives)

Chairperson: Karina Ufert (Lithuania)

Vice-Chair: Taina Moisander (Finland)

Vice-Chair: Rok Primozic (Slovenia)

Executive Committee (part-time/voluntary representatives)

Nevena Vuksanovic (Serbia)

Tinja Zerzer (Austria)

Elizabeth Gehrke (Sweden)

Liliya Ivanova (Bulgaria)

Fernando Miguel Galan Palomares (Spain)

Florian Kaiser (Germany)

Blaze Todorovski (Macedonia)

A further election was held for one position on the Committee for Internal Audit (CIA). ESU Alumnus Bert Vandenkendelaere (Belgium) was elected.

Other information

While political engagement with ESU has been more consistent than in previous years, a number of issues still remain. These will be followed up internally, however it is still strongly felt by those representing NUS UK that structural changes to facilitate better engagement will be required if we are to realize change.

TO NOTE

Report: Bucharest Ministerial Conference of the European Higher Education Area

Background

Since the launch of the Bologna Process in 1999, with a view to harmonizing HE systems across Europe, Ministers of HE have met every two years to review progress and set priorities for the period ahead. The most recent iteration of this Conference took place in Bucharest from 26-27 April 2012.

In line with these conferences, the European Students' Union prepares a publication reviewing progress, from the perspective of its members, national unions of students across Europe. Bologna With Student Eyes 2012 was distributed to ministers and delegates at the Conference, and is available online from the ESU website (some hard copies available at NUS HQ).

UK Delegation

The UK Delegation, headed up David Willetts, included Jane Peters (BIS), Anthony McLaren (QAA), Colin Riordan (Essex; UUK HE International Unit), Lucy Shackleton (HE International Unit) and myself (NUS).

For the first time, Scotland attended with its own delegation. Robin Parker represented NUS Scotland.

Outcomes

Despite a clear, explicit reference to HE as a public good and public responsibility requiring public funding in nearly every Ministerial Communiqué since the launch of the Bologna Process in 1999, the original version of the Bucharest Communiqué did not explicitly mention public funding. With the help of several delegations ESU proposed an amendment to include explicit reference to public funding at the start of the conference. Countries that spoke explicitly against the inclusion of this, or argued for a compromise include Spain, Lithuania, Hungary, and last but not least – you guessed it – the UK. A strong, concerted lobbying effort from the student members of delegations as well as certain delegations (including Scotland!) and individuals that were on the students' side led to the amendment and explicit reference to "the highest possible levels of public funding" being included.

Overall, it appeared that the UK was eager to share “best” practices on its recent reforms, yet by the end of the Conference it was rather marginalized and to an extent humiliated.

Impact

The wording of the Communiqué will no doubt have virtually no impact on the UK funding system and its recent reforms. However, it is significant for a number of reasons, outlined below.

1. Despite the ongoing economic crisis, and despite the will of some countries to exclude explicit reference to public funding of HE, Ministers of HE across Europe overwhelmingly favoured including such a reference. This sends a strong message of a clear commitment in favour of public funding across Europe.
2. Given the above point, the UK, along with a very small minority of countries, is clearly marginalised in the wider European context of HE funding policy.
3. Despite the commitment to public funding, a number of countries (including those that spoke against the inclusion of the public funding amendment) are indeed looking towards the UK for “best” practice. This includes a number of countries that were convinced by their student delegates not to explicitly speak against the amendment but rather to remain silent. This is a dangerous trend and further cooperation and collaboration between national student movements, especially in countries where public funding is under sever attack, should be fostered.

**NUS Scotland Scottish Executive Committee
TO SCRUTINISE / NOTE**

NUS Scotland Report – May 2012

Robin Parker/Graeme Kirkpatrick/Kelley Temple

Outcomes and Outputs

Our top priorities since the last NEC	What changes we have achieved or rights we have defended for students and students' unions in these areas
Fairer Access	The SFC will prioritise the issue of Widening Access alongside Knowledge Transfer as they introduce Outcome Agreements for all Universities this year. Join Widening Access conference with SFC (Learning for All) was a success – a buoyant, can-do attitude was in evidence from practitioners. Also had some exploratory talks with Skills Development Scotland about what we could do together on Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).
Student Support	Following an announcement by the First Minister at a visit to Langside College, we have joined a working group with the Scottish Government and the SFC to review the FE Bursary system. The simple creation of the group is a major achievement of several years' campaigning, however the result is not a foregone-conclusion. In the meantime the group has already agreed some beneficial short-term tweaks to the system for next year. An announcement on HE student support looks likely for the summer.
College Regionalisation	SFC guidance to colleges on mergers makes clear the importance of student involvement in the process. NUS Scotland and SPARQS have jointly set aside staff support to support colleges with further regionalisation.
Council Elections	Supporting students' associations with voter registration, creating local manifestos and holding hustings event. Student manifestos completed in Edinburgh, Stirling, Aberdeen and Glasgow. Glasgow manifesto backed by both SNP and Labour.
Scottish Constitution (Votes at 16)	Met the First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Parliamentary Business to talk about Votes at 16 to explain why Scottish Govt current proposals are insufficient. Supported the launch by a coalition of Civil Society organisations of the 'Future of Scotland' campaign. Working with SYP to lobby Westminster & Holyrood to deliver true Votes at 16 for referendum and beyond.

Other achievements of our Campaign

<p>Successful referendum on staying in NUS at Aberdeen University. Achieved quoracy (exactly!) against the odds.</p> <p>Limited success with promoted NUSUK's Come Clean campaign in Scotland. Some isolated activity from unions, mainly on hidden course costs and other student costs.</p>

Specific support, especially to Edinburgh and South-west Glasgow colleges with mergers, and holding joint merger-strategy days between merging students' associations.
 Spoke at the cross-parliamentary group on Internationalisation, primarily about the need for greater outward mobility of students.
 St Andrews SA will have an NUS-affiliation referendum in the Autumn.
 Re-affirmation from Cabinet Secretary of his 'welcoming' of the University Governance review at UCU Annual Congress

Our outputs since the last NEC (meetings / actions attended)

NUS Scotland conference – democracy and attendance by Cabinet Secretary to take questions from student officers
 Annual Reception – very good turn-out cross-party from MSPs
 First meeting of FE student support working group
 Meeting with Scottish Government about Learner Journey event
 College Green Ideas Den event held, with £2000 given to college students to support the introduction of their green ideas, as well as to network and share ideas.

Plans before the next meeting

Between now and the next NEC, we plan to achieve:

Our Priority area before the next NEC	What we hope to achieve
Fairer Access	Meet with opposition parties, to secure their support for Scottish Government's plans to legislate on access.
College Regionalisation	Merger support launch event to be held. Support students' associations with engagement in regionalisation/mergers, including local joint sign-ups of Principal's Promise II. Get initial thinking to happen between students' associations about merger of students' associations.
Student Support	Continue meetings of HE and FE student support working groups.

Membership Engagement

Since the last SEC meeting, we have undertaken some union visits and attended a number of events to engage with the membership

Union / event visited	Purpose / Issues arising
Glasgow Universities/Colleges – CS	Agree council elections manifesto, and plan campaign.
South-West Glasgow Colleges –RP	Joint meeting with regard to proposed SAs merger
University of West of Scotland – RP	Talk about retention campaign
South-West Glasgow Colleges – KT	Strategic Planning Day
Edinburgh University – RP	Elections results announcement party
John Wheatley College – RP	Support with meeting about sabbatical, regionalisation and greater SA funding
Glasgow Caledonian University – RP	'Principal's listening event' to support on exam re-sit fees campaign

Media Engagement and External Relations

Events attended and media appearances made

NUS Wales Conference – nations #solidarity

Declaration of Gifts, Hospitality And Interests

No Platform Policy

TO NOTE

This paper outlines: The organisations on the NUS No Platform List for information

Outline

Each year the list of organisations on the NUS no platform policy comes to the NEC to note and ensure that no organisation which has been removed from the list remains, or that any who have been added are not missed.

Organisations

The current list following National Conference 2012 is as follows:

1. Hizb ut-tahrir (HUT)
2. Al-Muhajiroun (AM)
3. Muslim Public Affairs Committee (MPAC)

Resolutions 2005 (5-7 April)

4. British National Party (BNP)

Resolutions 2007 (27-29 March)

5. English Defence League (EDL)

Resolutions 2010 (13-15th April)

Policy referred to NEC form National Conference

This document contains policy recommendations and ordinary motions which were submitted but not discussed at NUS National Conference 2012. These have been referred to NEC for consideration.

All motions with amendments will be debated as usual with a free speech for and a free speech against:

511 Membership data
306 Education Now and Then: Tear it Down and Start Again
307 Education: Public not profit
308 Employment and employability
311 Defending arts education
610 Against discriminatory immigration
403 Living Wage
404 Eden Springs
406 Fight the far right
407 A generation lost
514 4300,00 Students
414 Don't attack Iran – Fund education not war

The motions without amendments that will be currently be passed without debate are:

512 FE Students affiliation Strategy*
513 Global union development*
515 Transnational education*
206 security in collages*
207 International FE*
309 Mature students, we hardly know you*
310 Funding for CRB checks*
312 Supporting placement students*
313 Part-time loans – a ticking time bomb*
608 Nations*
609 Retention*
405 Gap years*
408 Opposing unpaid internships in creative arts*
409 Citizenship*
410 Move your money*
411 Peace one day*
412 Solidarity with Syria*
413 Student fuel poverty*
415 Defend the welfare state*
416 Intentional student activism*
417 Twin with Egyptian universities *
418 Tarsands*
419 University of sanctuary*

If you do not want a motion to automatically pass without debate

Email nick.smith@nus.org.uk no later than 12 Noon on Thursday 17th May saying which motion you wish to take a speech against for. Note that you must email Nick only please.

On the afternoon of Thursday 17th we will email around noting which motions will be debated on the following Monday.

Any questions nick.smith@nus.org.uk

Zone | Union Development

Motion No: **511**
Policy Area: Membership data
Submitted by: Oxford University Students' Union
Introduction: Oxford University Students' Union (1.5 min)

Conference Believes:

1. That across the Student movement there is a chronic lack of access to comprehensive membership details from parent institutions. The NUS estimates that only about a third of all students' unions have access to university or college databases of students' details.
2. Having access to membership details is not only important for democratic purposes, but will also allow students' unions to engage with their membership on campaigns and provide important information in areas such as welfare.
3. That it is hard to engage students on issues such as funding, access, liberation campaigns, teaching standards, ethical investment, housing and student voice if students' unions don't know who their members are or how to contact them.

Conference Resolves:

1. NUS to produce a best practice guide of both how to campaign to get membership details from parent institutions, and a best practice guide for managing such data.
2. NUS will produce case studies of how access to membership details has not only built stronger students' unions, but stronger parent institutions.

Amendment: **511a**

ADD AMENDMENT

Submitted by: University College London Union Union
Speech For: University College London Union Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Free (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. An impediment to "one member one vote" democracy in NUS is that some CMs lack access to lists of their own members and in some cases have difficulty holding fully democratic processes.
2. Those CMs would benefit from being more democratic and member-controlled.

Conference Resolves:

1. The VPUD should support and encourage CMs to gain direct access to their own members for democratic processes.
2. To commit in principle to empowering individual members to directly elect NUS officer when it becomes possible, and to explore approaches like aggregating results of general meetings and/or referenda across CMs.

Back to the main motion

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Proposer of last successful amendment (1 min)

Motion No: **512***
Policy Area: FE Students affiliation strategy
Submitted by: Basingstoke College of Technology Students' Union
Introduction: Basingstoke College of Technology Students' Union (1.5 min))
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Basingstoke College of Technology Students' Union (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. NUS should campaign against any form of privatization of education because education is a fundamental public good.
2. There are hundreds of private colleges who are non-affiliates of NUS. The students unions in those private colleges are not always strong enough to protect the best interest of their students.
3. Students studying at private colleges deserve to be better supported by NUS.
4. There are a large number of Six Form Colleges which are not affiliated with NUS.

Conference Resolves:

1. NUS to re-affirm its strong opposition to any form of privatization to education, especially in FE.
2. Mandate NUS VP FE and NUS VP Union Development to work with Association of Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges' Forum to develop a 5 year plan to affiliate Private Colleges and Six Form Colleges to ensure students unions of those non-affiliates will be properly supported by NUS to fight for the best interest of FE students, especially

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against any further exploitation from their institution.

Motion No: **513***
Policy Area: **Global union development**
Submitted by: **NUS International Students Campaign Committee, Heriot Watt Students' Union, Reading University Students' Union**
Introduction: **NUS International Students Campaign Committee (1.5 min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **NUS International Students Campaign Committee (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. NUS International Students Campaign has worked with the Higher Education Academy to organise trips for Australian university students union to visit 8 UK students' unions to share best practice on both sides.
2. The feedback from these trips has been overwhelming positive.
3. A reciprocal funded visit from UK students' unions to Australia is currently under discussion.
4. NUS International Students Officer has been working with the Commonwealth Secretariat to set up a Commonwealth Students Union for students' leaders from 54 countries, which will be launched in August 2012.
5. NUS international Students Officer Chairs NUS European Co-ordination Group, which co-ordinates all NUS UK's activities within European Students Union (ESU), of 45 national unions of students from 37 countries, promoting various ESU funded opportunities for UK students unions officers to attend funded ESU conferences on a variety of important students' union issues.
6. International collaborative provision is an important part of UK Education Internationalisation, which is often institution-led on research, teaching, enterprise, alumni etc.;
7. Students' unions in the UK should also be encouraged to link up with students unions overseas whose institutions have international collaborative partnership to form global partnerships.
8. With the privatisation of education in the UK, students union in both FE and HE face unprecedented challenges. We need to learn from students' union in other countries on effective campaign against privatization of education.

Conference Resolves:

1. To mandate the NUS VP Union Development to initiate a "NUS Global Union Development" Strategy;
 2. To launch a consultation on what global links NUS and students unions in the UK have already established with overseas students' unions;
 3. To mandate NUS VP UD to support all part of NUS nations, liberations, sections & zones to build up links with equivalent campaign overseas for global best practice, solidarity and students' union exchange;
 4. To promote and lobby ESU, Commonwealth Students Union, the UN Programme on Youth etc. to provide more funded opportunities for UK students' union officers to attend Global Youth Conferences;
 5. To lobby UUK, AoC, individual universities and colleges, etc. to provide more funding for UK students' unions to build up links with students' unions globally for international visits and joint projects as part of the UK Education Internationalisation strategy.
-

Motion No: **514**
Policy Area: **433,000 Students**
Submitted by: **Queen Mary Students' Union and Kings College Students' Union**
Introduction: **Queen Mary Students' Union (1.5 min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **Kings College Students' Union (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. There are approximately 433,000 students studying at further and higher education institutions in London.
2. The Greater London Authority (GLA) has a unique structure and extensive powers when compared to other local government systems in the UK.
3. The GLA has powers over transport, policing, economic development, and emergency services and planning.
4. Further and higher education institutions, and therefore students' unions, are more geographically concentrated in London than anywhere else in the UK.
5. Currently NUS has no formal structure for influencing the GLA policy agenda or formal support for students' unions that seek to pool front-end and backroom services and activities.
6. Regions in the UK that have significant devolved powers have NUS nations officers that represent those cohorts interests on a regional level, namely Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
7. There is currently no London representation on the NUS National Executive Committee

Conference Further Believes:

1. Although the GLA does not control education policy, it has powers that can shape the experiences of students in London.
2. A formal structure for influencing the GLA policy agenda should exist within NUS structures.
3. The geographical concentration of students' unions in London means there are opportunities for students' unions to pool front-end and backroom services and activities.
4. NUS should offer formal support to students' unions that seek to pool front-end and backroom services and

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activities.

Conference Resolves:

1. Following consultation with students' unions in London, NUS should establish:
 - (i) A formal structure for influencing the GLA policy agenda within NUS structures.
 - (ii) Formal support to students' unions that seek to pool front-end and backroom services and activities.
-

Motion No: **515***
Policy Area: Transnational education
Submitted by: Heriot Watt Students' Union, Reading University Students' Union, International Students' Committee
Speech For: Heriot Watt Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Reading University Students' Union (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. Transnational education (TNE), according to the definition of the British Council means delivering education where the learners are located in a different country from the one where the awarding institution is based.
2. TNE includes full scale campuses overseas, faculties in education villages, franchised UK degrees for local delivery, twinning arrangements with study in both the local country and the UK, validation of local programmes by UK institutions, distant learning programmes, collaborative delivery with shared input in curriculum, e.g. Joint/double/dual degrees, advanced standing or articulations agreements
3. With the fast development of UK TNE, there are more than 300,000 international students studying at a UK university with TNE provision, more than the number of international students study in the UK. Increasingly UK students are encouraged to study through TNE.
4. More than 30 universities in the UK have TNE provisions.

Conference Further Believes:

1. After the close of Post Study Work Visa, increasingly universities are setting up TNE provision to educate international students overseas. Not all universities actively engage their students unions in the representation of TNE students.
2. What students unions can do to support students based in overseas TNE programme is becoming an increasingly important issue

Conference Resolves:

1. Mandate NUS VP Union Development to work with NUS International Students Officer on this issue
 2. Launch a literature research on Students' Union Development to support students studying at TNE provision around the world
 3. Identify key issues of union development for TNE and propose a national framework to support students' unions whose institutions have TNE provisions.
 4. Explore opportunities to allow UK students' unions to link up with students' unions globally through TNE students' union development
 5. Lobby UUK and UK International Unit to encourage UK Universities to provide more funding to allow students' union to better represent, engage, and support their students at TNE provision
-

Zone | Education

Motion: **206***
Policy Area: Security in Colleges
Submitted by: Leicester College Students' Union
Introduction: Leicester College Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Leicester College Students' Union (1 min)

Conference Believes

1. Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 FE College's have statutory duty to safeguard the health and well-being of vulnerable adults as well as children.
2. FE Colleges are losing a quarter (1/4) of their budgets in the government cuts nationally, a large FE college spends approximately £500,000 on security and a smaller institution approximately £250,000
3. Under these cuts, corners will be cut on learner safety, safeguarding and good community cohesion in terms of security. This cannot happen, but if we have local control over such things, we can make sure that money is spent where appropriate, which means more for teaching and learning." – Dame Ruth Silver (Chair of the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS))

Conference Resolves

1. Work with the NUS to lobby against any cuts in FE Security
 2. To set up a steering group to meet with government to discuss the funding cuts and their potential impact on security with colleges and other possible options to these cuts.
-

Motion No: **306**
Policy Area: Education Now and Then: Tear it Down and Start Again
Submitted by: Bristol University, Hull University Union and Wolverhampton University, Sheffield University Students' Union
Introduction: Bristol University (1.5 min)

Conference Believes

1. The next General Election will be held on 7th May 2015. Between now and then the Coalition Government will have made huge changes at all levels of education and society, the state of the economy will look very different and the labor market will have completely different demands.
2. In the 2010 General Elections NUS campaigned for a new system of graduate contributions, linked to earnings post-graduation and not to the cost of provision pre-graduation, with public funding remaining and business also contributing. Although we secured a much better deal for part-time students, improved loan repayment conditions and the retention of an upper cap, identifiable fees on entry remained and public spending on teaching was cut.
3. Market principles are now used to reduce cost to the exchequer while reducing financial support for students. An 'inverse pupil premium' has been created where by the institutions that have the most disadvantaged students spend the least on teaching.
4. In England, there exists two qualification frameworks straddling two departments of government. Students in further education are funded by two different funding agencies and the currency of their qualifications is poorly understood by universities and employers alike. The lack of a national offer in access and progression throughout tertiary education lets down those who could benefit the most.

Conference Further Believes

1. Our tertiary education system is fragmented, compartmentalised and too far down the road of commodification for piece meal changes to represent winning campaign aims anymore. NUS must be prepared to propose radically different policies come the next General Election that deal with not only funding, but also the shape and structure of tertiary education as a whole.
2. The 'graduate tax' type model of funding laid out in the NUS Blue Print was and remains the right policy to advocate to this government, at this time. Rich graduates should contribute back to ensure those from all backgrounds can access higher education for as long as our universities remain far from universal services, but never with an identifiable fee influencing choice of course, institution or whether to go to university at all. But this may well not be the right policy for the 2015 General Elections.

Conference Resolves

1. To continue to advocate the NUS Blue Print graduate tax as the right way to fund higher education in the current context of government policy.
2. To begin researching, consulting and creating new policy on both tertiary education funding and structure so that we are ready with fully costed alternatives come the 2015 General Election.
3. To still oppose cuts

Amendment: **306a**

DELETE and replace amendment: If passed deletes all of 300J. Amendment 300Jb will not be discussed if this amendment passes

Amendment: Free Education

Submitted by: Essex University Students' Union University Students' Union, Queen Mary Students' Union, NUS Black Students Committee, Kingston University union, KCLSU, Liverpool Guild of Students, Birmingham Guild of Students, Royal Holloway Students' Union

Speech For: NUS Black Students' Committee (1.5 min)

Speech Against: Hull University Union (1.5 min)

Speech For: Queen Mary University of London (1 min)

Speech Against: Sheffield University Students' Union (1 min)

Speech For: Free (1 min)

Speech Against: Free (1 min)

Summation: Liverpool Guild of Students (1 min)

Conference Believes

1. The Tory-led attacks on students and education are ongoing.
2. The trebling of tuition fees, scrapping of the EMA, course closures and cuts across the education sector will all have a devastating impact.
3. Women, Black, LGBT and disabled students will be hit the hardest by the attacks on education as a result of discrimination and oppression in society.
4. The fight-back to defend education, public services and the living standards of the overwhelming majority has only just begun. Actively opposing the Tory-led attacks is vital if we are to stand up for our members' interests.
5. The cuts to public services and education are the key issue in British politics
6. The Campaign for the Public University, Education Activist Network, No Confidence Campaign and NCAFC have contributed to raising public awareness around private providers in HE.
7. There is an alternative to cuts, higher fees and paying more through a graduate tax. We need state investment to provide free education – not cuts. The government's own figures show that for every £1 invested in higher education the economy expands by £2.60. Cuts and higher fees are not only socially unjust they are economically illiterate.
8. Investing in higher education is the only way of ensuring Britain has a highly skilled, high growth economy in the future and that young people have the chance to fulfil their potential.
9. That to defend public higher education NUS should stand with the campus trade unions, academics, administration staff and university sector

Conference resolves

1. To actively campaign against all cuts and for free education for all
2. Oppose all methods of charging students more for education including fees and a graduate tax. Instead campaign for free education.
3. That our broader demand is for 100% public universities – run HE as a public service.

Amendment: **306b**

DELETE and ADD AMENDMENT

If passed deletes CFB2 and CD1 from 300J.

Submitted by: NUS LGBT Committee, University College London Union, Liverpool Guild of Students, Birmingham Guild of Students, Royal Holloway Students' Union

Speech For: NUS LGBT Committee (1.5 min)

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Speech For: University College London Union (1 min)

Speech Against: Free (1 min)

Summation: NUS LGBT Committee (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. Education is a public right at any level and qualification not a privilege as the current market agenda within the education sector would lead us to believe.
2. Higher education is now as much as £9,000 a year for undergraduate home students and unregulated for International, Post Graduate and Further Education courses.
3. The governments priorities continue to be spending billions of pound on warfare rather than investing in health and education that would be of public good.

Conference Further Believes:

1. That HE should be a public service, with publicly owned, publicly funded universities, run by workers, students and communities. We demand adequate public funding.
2. Taking a principled policy stance on how we wish the utopian education system to be funded does not preclude being able to negotiate with pragmatic short-term solutions.
3. Progressive taxation should fund a free education system as all within society benefit from education, training and skill even if it is not them directly being trained or educated.

National Conference 2012 | Policy referred to NEC

Conference Resolves:

1. Our fundamental and principled position on education funding should be that it is free at all and any level.
2. To call for this to be funded by a more progressive taxation system, finding new academic and innovative ways to express this.
3. This does not preclude our ability to negotiate and compromise for something slightly better for prospective students such as a graduate tax in the short term.
4. To run a campaign "Access for all" highlighting the disastrous effect of deregulated fees and of the tiered restructuring of HE (in terms of both more and less prestigious universities), demanding a free and expanded higher education open to all.

Back to the main motion

Speech Against: Birmingham Guild of Students (1.5 min)
Speech For: Wolverhampton University (1 min)
Speech Against: Kings College University of London (1 min)
Summation: Proposer of last successful amendment (1 min)

Motion: 207*

Policy Area: International FE
Submitted by: Stevenson College Students' Union
Introduction: Stevenson College Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Stevenson College Students' Union (1 min)

Conference notes:

1. International students in further education, like international students in higher education, face unregulated market in tuition fees;
2. The rise of private colleges in England has been an under-reported back door route for privatization of the whole post-16 education system;
3. Students in private colleges have no work rights so access is restricted to those who can rely on outside support;
4. The Centre Forum report Tier 4 Tears details the "devastation"
5. caused by international visa cuts to colleges relying on international students, with many international colleges closing.
6. International students studying at private FE colleges cannot work part-time, and international students studying at public FE colleges can only work 10 hours a week.

Conference future believes:

1. Discrimination in access to education by origin should be opposed in principle;
2. Privatization and marketisation in further education will lead to huge reductions in access in the long run and should be opposed in principle;
3. Access to education in both the short term and the long term courses in FE should be defended in principle.

Conference resolves:

1. To call for equality in FE fees for all students, with now-private colleges brought into the public sector to ensure continuity of access;
 2. To oppose immigration rules restricting international students' right to work.
 1. To call for the UK government to make up shortfalls in FE funding through public investment.
 2. To campaign against FE college treating international students as cash cows without any transparency and accountability of the fee they pay.
 3. To lobby Association of Colleges to work closely with NUs VP FE to develop better support to FE international students.
-

Motion No: 307

Policy Area: Education: Public, not for Profit
Submitted by: University of Sheffield Students' Union and Kent Union
Introduction: University of Sheffield Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Kent Union (1 min)

Conference Believes

1. That Education institutions should be publicly funded as public bodies
2. That the agenda of the Coalition government is to force an unworkable market in HE
3. That with the squeeze on student numbers and almost universal charging of £9k fees a vacuum has opened up which is being offered to the private sector
4. That education institutions should never be run for profit.

National Conference 2012 | Policy referred to NEC

Conference Further Believes

1. That the governments reforms point to an Americanisation of the HE system
2. That publicly-funded education institutions, such as Oxbridge Colleges' should not have charity status and hence escape tax
3. That institutions like Harvard in the US because they are deemed 'public for profit', dodge billions of tax every year
4. That there is a threat that like the University of Phoenix in the US, institutions will increasingly expand spending on marketing with detriment to teaching and access

Conference Resolves

1. That we are fundamentally opposed to the right for private; or public for profit; institutions to exist
 2. That the public should never subsidise privately-owned places
 3. That we condemn the privatisation and sell-off of our education
 4. That we work with allies in the trade union, anti-cuts movement and Kill the NHS Bill movement to raise the profile about the sell-off of our education
 5. That we lobby the government and HEFCE on the public subsidisation of Oxbridge colleges.
-

Motion No:

308

Policy Area: Employment and employability

Submitted by: University College London Union and Edinburgh University Students' Association

Introduction: Edinburgh University Students' Association (1.5 min)

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: University College London Union (1 min)

Conference Believes

1. That the student movement has developed a focus on employability over the past few years.
2. That students often rate future employment as their highest priority and reason for coming to university.

Conference Further Believes

1. That the reason why graduate unemployment is high is because there is an economic recession and an unprecedented attack on public services: no amount of employability training would alter this.
2. That it is reasonable for unions to focus on their members' needs, and that training on employability is to an extent socially progressive. However, on a national level, emphasis on employability amounts to teaching our members how to compete with each other more efficiently for jobs that may not even exist.

Conference Resolves

1. To make employment NUS's core priority when it comes to students in the labour market, and to fight primarily against cuts, and for more jobs and better working conditions.
 2. To continue to provide unions with support on employability projects.
 3. To oppose the idea that education should be reduced to a series of marketable skills.
-

Motion No:

309*

Policy Area: Mature students, we hardly know you

Submitted by: NUS Mature and Part Time students committee

Introduction: NUS Mature and Part Time students committee (1.5 min)

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: NUS Mature and Part Time students committee (1 min)

Conference Believes

1. NUS and Million+ have undertaken a significant amount of research into mature students including a survey with 4,000 mature respondents from across the UK and a series of regional workshops.
2. Of the respondents to the survey one fifth had a disability, two fifths had caring responsibilities, two thirds were campus based for their teaching, and half live close to their chosen higher education institution. Only one fifth held A-levels or Higher qualifications; the rest held Access to HE qualifications, a foundation year, or a vocational qualification at level 2 or 3.
3. While interest in the course or subject is the predominant motivator for mature students to enter higher education, career aspirations and the need for flexible study options are important drivers.
4. The biggest challenges to mature students in higher education are balancing study with life or finance and funding. Where mature students consider suspending or leaving their course it is likely to be because of one of these two factors, and they are more likely to discuss it with a tutor than with a students' union advisor.
5. Half of survey respondents are in receipt of financial support from their institution. One quarter say they have encountered financial hardship as a result of studying. One third have taken on commercial or family debt apart from a student loan.
6. Students' unions will benefit from better understanding of, and engagement with, mature students.
7. Mature students want different things from their HE experience than younger students, and students' unions need to be equipped to support this.

Conference Resolves

National Conference 2012 | Policy referred to NEC

1. To use the findings from the research to develop advice to HE unions about ways to support, represent and engage with mature students.
 2. To give thought to a more appropriate term than 'hard-to-reach' in relation to mature students.
 3. To develop the research to explore in more depth the experience of mature students in further education, and those studying higher education in further education, who did not respond in great numbers to the initial survey.
 4. To develop a series of briefings supporting campaigns that unions may wish to run on mature student issues eg retention, course organisation and management, finance, information, advice and guidance.
-

Motion No: **310***
Policy Area: Funding for CRB checks
Submitted by: Salford University Students Union, Liverpool Students Union and Edge Hill Students' Union
Introduction: Liverpool Hope University (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Edge Hill University (1 min)

Conference Believes

1. Students studying in education institutions should not have to pay extra for compulsory requirements of their programme of study, on top of their already paid tuition fees.
2. Many vocational students, such as those in education and healthcare, require Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) clearance before they can attend their work placements.
3. Although a select few institutions include the cost of processing a CRB check in their tuition fees, many do not. Currently, students in these institutions must contribute either the full cost, or part of the cost of this process, on top of their already paid tuition fees.
4. The main beneficiary of students carrying out CRB checks is neither the Student nor the Educational institution, but instead is the state. (as it is perceived to mitigate risk in certain settings)
5. Students studying professions in healthcare, education and social/youth work should have the cost of their CRB checks funded for by their respective government departments.

Conference Resolves

1. NUS to work with Students' Unions and their universities/colleges to establish the number of institutions across the UK where students are expected to fund the cost of compulsory course required CRB checks themselves.
 2. To lobby the Government to provide a funding system that covers the complete costs of CRB clearance afforded to students who must have CRB clearance as a requirement of their programme of study.
-

Motion No: **311**
Policy Area: Defending Arts Education
Submitted by: University for the Creative Arts Students' Union
Introduction: University for the Creative Arts Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: University for the Creative Arts Students' Union (1 min)

Conference Believes

1. The coalition government have begun an onslaught on niche subjects in Higher Education
2. With the introduction of the AAB Rule and Core & Margin rules, arts institutions have had to bid for exemption from these student number controls.
3. That with the withdrawal of the teaching grant from art & design education, arts institutions are having to becoming almost 100% self-sufficient.
4. That according to HESA figures, in 2010/11 there were 176,700 students enrolled on Art & Design courses in the UK (over 16,000 more than when arts policy was passed in 2009)
5. The AAB system directly attacks arts institutes' standard forms of admissions; interview and portfolio entry.

Conference Further Believes

1. At present the National Union has no policy on Arts Education.
2. That the right to study niche arts subjects should be protected.
3. The National Union should be working with Arts Unions to highlight the need for Creative Arts education in the UK and worldwide.
4. That the credit structures and assessment models for arts subjects differ massively from the model used by traditional subject bases and therefore needs specialist attention from the NEC.

Conference Resolves

1. That the Higher Education Zone work with Unions with Arts Provisions to champion Arts Education and it's protection.
2. That the National Union should lobby the government for arts institutes to gain permanent exemption from the AAB rule laid down by the government.
3. That the VP HE should lobby the Arts & Culture Minister, and the Universities Minister to champion creative arts education in the UK.
4. That the National Union investigates the effects of the closure of niche courses in Higher Education.

National Conference 2012 | Policy referred to NEC

5. To add a new NEC Responsibility of Arts Students Representation to be allocated to a member of the NEC each year.

Motion No: **312***
Policy Area: Supporting Placement students
Submitted by: Salford University Students Union, Liverpool Students Union and Edge Hill Students' Union
Introduction: University of Salford (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Edge Hill University (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. There is currently little support for students once they start their placement and often inconsistent support is due to national funding differences.
2. Support from a student's university with regards to finding accommodation and pastoral support is a minimum requirement of their welfare operations
3. Inconsistencies often lead to students retaking years or failing to get the maximum out of their opportunity
4. Students are often charged full or partial fees while on placement

Conference Resolves:

1. To mandate NUS to lobby for Universities to set up support branches dedicated to placement students
2. To campaign at EU level to correct these irregularities in student support and awareness during their placements (ERASMUS)
3. To campaign to get better value for money for placement students especially with the imminent fees rise

Motion No: **313***
Policy Area: Part-time loans – a ticking time bomb
Submitted by: NUS Mature and Part Time students committee
Introduction: NUS Mature and Part Time students committee (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: NUS Mature and Part Time students committee (1 min)

Conference Believes

1. While the introduction of loans for some part-time undergraduate students is welcome in principle, the implementation of this policy by government has been shoddy.
2. That as a result of the introduction of part-time fee loans plus the prospective fee increase for part-time undergraduate study the demand for part-time study may be unstable in the next few years.
3. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has failed to put adequate resource into explaining the new fees and finance regime to part-time students; while millions were spent on providing information to young full-time prospective students, part-time students merited only a £50,000 information budget.
4. The Student Loans Company is ill-equipped to cope with the new system and is unlikely to be able to provide adequate advice to part-time students hoping to access loans. Administrative chaos is a plausible outcome given past performance.
5. That the restriction of part-time loans to those studying below 75 per cent intensity is short-sighted, unfair, and will discourage part-time students from finishing their course in good time.
6. That institutional provision of part-time study will have to change to enable wider eligibility for fee loans.

Conference Resolves

1. To monitor the situation closely and be prepared to issue advice to unions when necessary.
 2. To investigate how higher education institutions are responding to the new criteria for part-time loans, and the impact on study options.
 3. To hold the Student Loans Company to account for how it meets the needs of part-time student loan holders.
 4. To campaign for better information about student finance options to be made available to prospective part-time students, using routes in local communities, employers and through FE colleges.
 5. To push for the extension of part-time fee loans to be extended past 75 per cent so that students have more flexibility in how they decide to study and can fit study around the rest of life more easily.
-

Zone | Welfare

Motion No: **608***
Policy Area: Nations
Submitted by: Edinburgh University Students' Asscoiation
Introduction: Edinburgh University Students' Asscoiation (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Edinburgh University Students' Asscoiation (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. That NUS is a UK wide movement with 6 million members.
2. That NUS should seek to represent every one of those members.
3. That the NUS Priority campaign for 2011-2012 'Pound in your Pocket' only applied to English institutions.
4. That NUS UK should run inclusive campaigns that protect, defend and extend the rights of students from from across the UK.
5. That there is no provision for a full time welfare officer within NUS Scotland, NUS Wales and NUS USI.

Conference Resolves:

1. To mandate the Welfare Zone to ensure that at least one of their priority campaigns for 2012-2013 is inclusive of Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish institutions.
2. That for England-only welfare campaigns, the welfare zone will produce briefings and suggestions for how these campaigns could be adapted for the devolved nations.

Motion No: **609***
Policy Area: Retention
Submitted by: NUS National Executive Council
Introduction: NUS National Executive Council 1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: NUS National Executive Council (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. The cost of university has increased over the last ten years - not just the cost of tuition fees, but the cost of accommodation, food, transport and general living.
2. NUS has just carried out both the biggest and most far-reaching piece of research on student support and the biggest study into hidden course cost in the sector.
3. Some students will arrive at university without the knowledge, pastoral care, family support and financial support they need to thrive.
4. Of those surveyed by the UCAS 'Back on Course' survey, 35% stated the reason for leaving being "course-related", whilst 32% stated financial or personal reasons.

Conference Further Believes:

1. The HE sector has failed to address the issue of retention in our universities. We have little institution by institution evidence to show who is leaving our universities early, from what course they are departing, and the reasons for their exit.
2. It is unacceptable students are dropping out Universities often unnoticed and unexamined by their institution.
3. Every student deserves the opportunity to make the most of their time at university; access to a quality student experience should never be undermined by lack of knowledge, funding or support.
4. Induction at university is a vital way of ensuring students feel supported throughout their time at University. Induction should never be confined to the first two weeks of University; it should be student specific and carried throughout the length of a student's degree.
5. Induction should focus not only on the academic experience, but on all elements of the student experience, including pastoral support, finance and extra-curricular opportunities.
6. Student should never be forced to take a commercial or payday loan to survive at university.
7. The personal relationship between students and staff can be key to ensuring student problems are addressed pro-actively.

Conference Resolves:

1. Building on the HE zone research on retention and work with the welfare zone lobby the government and mission groups to commit to tackling issues driving low retention, specifically where there are "high risk" groups.
2. Lobby all institutions to advertise ALF properly, and lobby to sustain/extend this fund. And using the results of the student support research, launch a study into how different modes of financial support, such as statutory and discretionary funding, as well as "progress bursaries" and designated funds, impact on retention and enhance educational outcomes.

3. Lobby institutions to include hidden course costs in the overall tuition fee.
 4. For the welfare zone to campaign against commercial and payday loans targeting students and advertise information relating to the potential dangers and consequences of these quick fixes.
 5. To enable students' union to carry out an investigation into the 'student life cycle' of different students on their campus to establish when students need support. Using this information, students' unions will be able to lobby more effectively for better, focused, induction processes.
 6. Conduct a study into relationships between students and staff and modes of progress monitoring, including a study into personal tutor systems and their effectiveness.
-

Motion No: **610**
Policy Area: **Against discriminatory immigration**
Submitted by: **NUS International Students' Committee**
Introduction: **NUS International Students' Committee (1.5 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. A thriving international culture is critical to academic freedom, multicultural experience of all students on campus, and research;
2. International students, as a vulnerable part of the migratory community, are being singled out by the UK government as a scapegoat;
3. Many international students graduating after April 2012 will find it difficult to find work experience after the cancellation of Post Study Work visas.
4. UK Home Secretary Theresa May stated that international students "count towards 2/3 of the net migration in the UK" with plans to reduce international students numbers by 80,000 (40%).
5. Further plans will make it more difficult for international graduates of UK universities to continue study and have work experience in the UK (eg. restriction of student visas to five years, requiring students to find a job with an income of over £20,000/year, while the average wage in much of the UK is as low as £17,000).
6. A similar experiment in slashing student visa numbers in Australia resulted in massive harm to the multicultural experience and academic research in that country.

Conference Resolves:

1. To work with UK Education Sector and international Education sectors to launch a national and international campaign to lobby UKBA, UN to take international students out of the "Net Migration" definition.
2. To mandate NUS VP HE, VP Welfare, VP Soc & Cit to work closely with NUS International Students Campaign on Immigration, with more staff support & resources allocated from NUS
3. To lobby for more support from UK universities, colleges & national agencies on employability for international students after the cancellation of Post Study Work Visa.
4. To continue supporting the work of NUS International Students Campaign in defending the equal human rights, including working rights, of international students;
5. To take a position of opposing cuts in international student visas, as part of a position of opposition to cuts in post-16 education places, and for the restoration of international student visas to their previous number.

Amendment: **610a**

ADD AMENDMENT

Submitted by: **Kingston University Students' Union**

Speech For: **Kingston University Students' Union**

Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**

Summation: **Kingston University Students' Union (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. Since the change in government, a change in immigration policy has meant huge changes to student visas.
2. International students have a huge positive cultural impact on the UK and our Universities, making them seats of learning, where diversity and internationalism promote positive graduate attributes.
3. The international student market is projected to be worth £26bn a year to the UK economy by 2025.
4. The current visas can cause significant problems for international students, who wish to volunteer, complete work placements or work experience, or even become a sabbatical officer.
5. The current visa scheme threatens international recruitment and this could have hugely negative impacts for UK HE, considering the competitiveness posed by countries such as Australia, Canada, China and the US.
6. That there are better ways of tackling bogus colleges than these draconian methods.

Conference Resolves:

1. To state our opposition and dismay at the new visa changes.
2. To lobby the government to implement a fairer and more flexible system that allows legitimate students to attend UK universities and access to the full student experience.
3. To ask for the creation of a new form of visa for sabbatical officers that is not linked to post study work visas, thereby ensuring equality of opportunity for international students.

Back to the main motion

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: Proposer of last successful amendment (1 min)

Zone | Society and Citizenship

Recommendation No: 403

Policy Area: Living Wage

Submitted by: Society and Citizenship Zone Committee and Disabled Students Committed (CB 11)

Introduction: Society and Citizenship Zone Committee (1.5 min)

All workers should receive a fair pay for a fair day's work. With more than a million young people out of work, there has never been a more crucial time to defend access to work and fair pay.

Paying staff a living wage guarantees that workers can afford to pay for the basics and essentials in life. This is not a luxury, even in a recession, but a necessary measure to lift people out of poverty. Many universities and colleges don't pay their staff a living wage. We are uniquely placed to campaign on this, lobbying both nationally and locally to support this campaign for fairer pay for university and college staff members, and for students who work on top of their studies.

An increasing number of job opportunities which previously would have been paid, are now being offered as unpaid internships. Unpaid internships are illegal because they don't comply with National Minimum Wage legislation; they also create a barrier for those people who can't afford to work for weeks, and in some cases – months, without pay.

Moreover, many university careers services still advertise unpaid internships to their students. We have huge power to lobby on this issue, and achieve real change for students.

Conference Believes:

1. That all workers should receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.
2. That fair pay includes being paid a living wage.
3. That universities and colleges should pay all their staff a living wage so the people who keep their organisations going can afford to pay for the basics and essentials of life
4. That students are uniquely placed to demand fair pay for university and college workers.
5. That as job opportunities dry up, many students and graduates are forced to work unpaid to get the necessary experience and contacts to enter their preferred profession.
6. That unpaid internships create a barrier for those people who can't afford to work for weeks, or in some cases – months without being paid.
7. That unpaid internships are illegal as they do not comply with National Minimum Wage legislation.
8. That unpaid internships are part of the problem of student and graduate unemployment – not part of the solution.
9. That a large proportion of university careers services continue to advertise unpaid internships to their students.
10. That all of NUS Services' suppliers should pay all their workers a living wage.
11. "Access to Work" is a government scheme to meet the additional costs for disabled people in work, such as the cost of equipment, taxis or a personal assistant. This help is not available for people undertaking unpaid work, thus excluding disabled people who require these adjustments. Unpaid internships are illegal as they do not comply with the Equality Act.

Conference Resolves:

1. For NUS to help students run their own local campaigns on the living wage and unpaid internships– providing resources, campaign support and advice.
2. To work with Citizens UK and other relevant organisations to campaign for the implementation of the Living Wage at our institutions.
3. That NUS highlights the good practice of university careers services who do not advertise unpaid internships to their students.
4. To mandate the VP Society and Citizenship to lobby for NUS Services to ensure all workers across its supply chains are paid a living wage.

Amendment: 403a

Submitted by: Kent Union, City College Norwich, Portsmouth University, Warwick University, Edinburgh University, Dudley College, Royal Holloway Students' Union, University Students' Union, Liverpool Guild of Students, Kent Union, Birmingham Guild of Students

Speech for: Dudley College

Speech against: Free

Summation: Royal Holloway Students' Union

Conference Believes:

1. The Living Wage is defined as the threshold at which people can live without fear of poverty with a sufficient safety net to also provide for a better quality of life
2. The tools for calculating the living wage outside of London are provided by the Minimum Income Standard (MIS) research project based at Loughborough University and funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation
3. In London the current rate is £8.30 per hour. Outside of London the current average rate is £7.20
4. Education institutions currently paying the Living Wage include: The Manchester College, Queen Mary University of London, London School of Economics, School of Oriental and African Studies, Birkbeck College, University of London Union, School of Hygiene, Institute of Education, Goldsmiths College, London Business School, London Metropolitan University, University College London, University of East London, Kings College, City and Islington College, Norlington Boys School, ARK Academy, St. Charles 6th Form College.

Conference Further Believes:

1. Employers who have implemented the living wage have reported better retention of staff, lower rates of absenteeism and improved service as a result
2. The recent increase in unemployment and dramatic cut in growth proves we badly need to put money back in to the economy to prevent a double dip recession
3. The costs of paying a living wage does not need to come from tuition or frontline teaching. The college/university can reallocate existing funds to deliver it
4. The gender pay gap manifests itself through the fact the average Principal/VC is a man, while the lowest-paid staff are often cleaners; the vast majority of whom are women.

Conference Resolves:

1. The Society and Citizenship zone supports students' unions to link up with trade union branches, and other partners, as part of the national NUS/Unison Living Wage campaign
2. That NUS supports students' unions who wish to map the number of staff that do not get the living wage, including those contracted out
3. That students' unions work with commercial managers in SUs to get them to commit to paying all their staff a living wage and recognise unions
4. That student groups work with low-paid staff such as cleaners and security staff to highlight the gap between the highest and lowest paid in our institutions
5. That student groups meet with college/university management to negotiate for a living wage for all staff
6. That the soc/cit zone delivers training for unions to campaign for a Living Wage.
7. To campaign for a minimum wage of 2/3 median male earnings.
8. To approach GMB and other unions to organise a national campaign to unionise student workers, building on the work done at institutions including Goldsmiths and Royal Holloway Students' Union.

Amendment:**403b****ADD AMENDMENT****Submitted by: University of Central Lancashire Students' Union****Speech for: University of Central Lancashire Students' Union****Speech against: Free****Summation: University of Central Lancashire Students' Union****Conference Believes**

1. As students express a need for more employability skills, responsive unions and universities will begin to offer internal internships and placements on campus
2. That NUS cannot campaign on unpaid internships without a degree of internal analysis of students unions and institutions
3. That universities and student unions should lead the way on paying their interns
4. That student's unions should analyse ourselves and our institutions to ensure students receive fair pay.

Conference Resolves

1. To work with student unions to make sure union and institution hosted internships are subject to the same scrutiny as internships in industry
2. To ensure students receive fair pay for their work- wherever they work

Amendment:**403c****ADD AMENDMENT****Submitted by: Royal Holloway Students' Union University Students' Union****Speech for: Royal Holloway Students' Union University Students' Union****Speech against: Free****Summation: Royal Holloway Students' Union University Students' Union****Conference Believes:**

1. The gap between the lowest paid workers and senior management in universities is too large, the biggest in the public sector, and increasing.

2. University Heads tend to earn 15.35 times the salary of the lowest paid. In the Russell group it is 19 times.
3. The average salary of university heads (approx. £250,000) is too high when many workers are paid the NMW.
4. NUS needs to be at the forefront of progressive politics on fair pay, and should champion income equality on campus. NUS should call for an incremental reversing of inequalities towards a 1:10 pay ratio.
5. NUS campaigns alongside Citizens UK for the Living Wage. This should be integrated into an overall project for greater income equality along the lines of a '1:10' campaign.

Conference Resolves:

1. To lead the fight for greater pay equality on campuses by calling for a maximum pay differential in the HE sector of 1:10, and campaign on this issue.
2. Reaffirm the commitment to a Living wage for all workers within HE and FE.
3. Write to Universities UK, expressing uneasiness on the excessiveness of VCs' pay.

Back to the main motion

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: Proposer of last successful amendment (1 min)

Recommendation No: 404

Policy Area: Eden Springs

Submitted by: Society and Citizenship Zone Committee

Introduction: Society and Citizenship Zone Committee (1.5 min)

Eden Springs is an Israeli company that bottles, markets and distributes mineral water. In the UK, the company operates as Eden Springs UK Ltd and provides bottled and plumbed water coolers for universities, colleges and city councils across the UK.

Eden Springs has a bottling plant in the Katzrim, in the Golan Heights. Israel's settlements are illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, which forbids population transfer into territory occupied in war. The Israeli Occupation of the Golan Heights is in direct contravention of the United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 452 (1972), 465 (1972), 465 (1980), 471 (1980) and 497 (1981).

Students are uniquely placed to lobby their universities, colleges and councils, who purchase water from Eden Springs to cancel their contract in line with ethical purchasing guidelines.

Conference Believes:

1. That NUS has a proud history of campaigning on global justice and ethical purchasing issues.
2. That Universities are public institutions with a dedicated commitment to the public good and their purchasing and investments should reflect this.
3. That water is a natural resource which is essential to life and access to water is a basic human right, as recognised by Amnesty International.
4. That the illegal appropriation of water for commercial use is particularly problematic in the Golan Heights, where resources are scarce and distributed unequally.
5. That NUS should campaign on ethical purchasing, in line with previous campaigns on ethical investment.

Conference Resolves:

1. To mandate the VP Society and Citizenship to write to the Chief Executive of Eden Springs outlining NUS' objections to their bottling plant in the Golan Heights and asking them to remove it.
2. For NUS to constructively engage with Eden Springs.
3. To release guidance for students campaigning on ethical purchasing, including information about Eden Springs and how best to engage with their universities, colleges or city councils to lobby them to cancel their contracts.
4. To research which universities and colleges have contracts with Eden Springs and work with local SUs to lobby universities to remove Eden Springs.

Amendment: 404a

Delete amendment: If passed this amendment deletes CR2-4 of 404 and amendment 404b will not be discussed

Submitted by: School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union, Liverpool Guild of Students'

Speech For: School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union (1.5 min)

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: Liverpool Guild of Students (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. The NUS has a moral responsibility to heed the call of oppressed peoples. In the 1980s it supported the BDS call by South Africans fighting racism and apartheid
2. The call for BDS has come from over 170 Palestinian civil society organisations as well as organisations within Israel
3. The campaign is founded on the basis of anti-racism and human rights for all and has united human rights campaigners from different nationalities, races, religions and creeds across the world

4. Israel's continuing oppression of the Palestinians is an Apartheid regime.
5. Israel does not allow Palestinian refugees or their descendents to return to the territory from which they were expelled in 1948. The population of the Gaza strip is subject to a blockade described by the Director of UNRWA Operations as a "Medieval siege".
6. Palestinian organisations have called for a policy of boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel. The TUC supports a boycott of goods produced and companies operating in Israel's illegal settlements.

Conference Resolves:

1. Institute thorough research into SUs' investments and connections with companies, including subcontractors, that may be implicated in violating Palestinian human rights
2. Pressure universities and SUs to divest from Israel and from companies directly or indirectly supporting the Israeli occupation and apartheid policies
3. Promote students' union resolutions condemning Israeli violations of international law and human rights, and endorsing BDS
4. Actively support and work with Palestine solidarity organisations
5. Affiliate NUS to the Palestine BDS National Committee and engage in education campaigns to publicize the injustice of Israel's discriminatory policies against the Palestinians and its illegal occupation
6. To demand freedom for Palestine, calling for an end to the siege of Gaza and occupation of the West Bank and the right to return for all refugees.
7. To encourage unions to twin with universities in Palestine based on inequalities and its' oppression and to send an NUS delegation on future convoys to the Gaza strip
8. To join the TUC in promoting a boycott of goods produced and companies operating in Israel's illegal settlements

Amendment: 404b

DELETE and ADD AMENDMENT

Deletes CR 3 and 4 from the substantive

Submitted by: Leeds University Union

Speech For: Leeds University Union (1.5 min)

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: Leeds University Union (1 min)

Conference Resolves :

1. To release guidance for students campaigning on ethical purchasing, including information about Eden Springs and how best to engage with their universities, colleges or city councils to lobby them to constructively engage with Eden Springs.
2. To research which universities and colleges have contracts with Eden Springs and work with local SUs to lobby universities to constructively engage with Eden Springs.

Back to the main motion

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: Society and Citizenship Zone Committee (1 min)

Recommendation No: 405*

Policy Area: Gap Years

Submitted by: Society and Citizenship Zone Committee

Introduction: Society and Citizenship Zone Committee (1.5 min)

Open contribution: 1 minute

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: Society and Citizenship Zone Committee (1 min)

The debate surrounding Gap Years Abroad has again come to the forefront. As the 'Gap Yah' YouTube video went viral and the government launched the 'Big Society' initiative, there has been a resurgence of interest in volunteering.

While Gap Years have potential to enhance the student experience and positively contribute to the communities they seek to help, the ethics around some schemes has been questioned. For example, some brand gap years as 'volun-tourism', leading to both problems for the participants involved and a somewhat neo-colonial style of development.

Gap Year companies are now commonplace, frequently charging large sums of money and making profit from their schemes. Students wishing to pursue a gap year are at the mercy of these companies and face challenges in searching through the sheer volume of opportunities to find ethical schemes, while the demographic of those choosing to go on gap years is not at all diverse

Conference believes:

1. There has been a recent resurge of interest in Gap Years and volunteering.
2. The ethics of some Gap year schemes are questionable; this causes issues not only for students who take part but also for the communities they are seeking to help.

3. The rise in Diaspora volunteering where people volunteer within the country of their ethnic heritage is a positive step.
4. The questionable ethics of some Gap Year schemes needs to be exposed.
5. Like unpaid internships, most gap year projects are only accessible to those who can afford to work for free.
6. Information on Gap Year companies, particularly 'for profit' organisations can be difficult to access.
7. A limited amount of research has been conducted about students' perspectives and experiences of Gap Years.

Conference resolves:

1. The Society & Citizenship zone will carry out research on this top inform our work in this area.
2. NUS will seek to highlight the issues both from a students' perspective and from the communities involved.
3. NUS will seek to wield greater influence through our student membership on the work of Gap Year companies.
4. NUS will seek to highlight organisations who demonstrate good practice and help ensure that students wishing to pursue a Gap Year are able to make informed decisions.
5. NUS will highlight companies who make efforts to provide opportunities to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and the Society and Citizenship zone will work with the BSC to encourage Diaspora volunteering

Ordinary Motions

Motion No: **406**
Policy Area: **Fight the far right**
Submitted by: **Holloway Students' union, Birmingham Guild of Students**
Speech For: **Royal Holloway Students' Union SU (1.5min)**

Conference Believes:

1. That while the BNP is in disarray, the far right remains a serious threat.
2. That the EDL is able to mobilise thousands on the streets, and may enter electoral politics in alliance with a BNP split, the British Freedom Party.

Conference Further Believes:

1. That the conditions feeding the far right are:
2. Widespread racism in society, encouraged by mainstream political parties and the press which promote the idea that immigration is a major cause of social problems;
3. Huge cuts and perceptions of a struggle for scarce resources, which the far right is actively exploiting;
4. Mainstream political parties have failed to challenge the narrative on immigration or on cuts;
5. That we need an anti-fascist movement which:
6. Is genuinely democratic, allowing activists to debate the way forward;
7. Relies on mass mobilisation to drive the EDL etc off our streets, instead of calling for state bans;
8. Unites workers', community and students' organisations for demands which can undercut the demagoguery of the far right: black and white, all religions and none, British-born and migrant – unite and fight for jobs, homes and services for all.

Conference Resolves:

1. To produce dedicated NUS anti-fascist materials with this perspective.
2. To fight for these ideas in any anti-fascist campaign NUS supports.

Amendment: **406a**

ADD AMENDMENT

Submitted by: **Liverpool Guild of Students, Kingston University Students' Union**
Speech For: **Liverpool Guild of Students (1.5min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5min)**
Summation: **Kingston University Students' Union (1min)**

Conference Believes

1. David Cameron's statement linking Britain's multicultural society with terrorism had an impact to deflect the anger against his government's cuts onto the Muslim community.
2. Cameron's speech was made on the day the English Defence League (EDL) brought its bigotry and violence to the streets of Luton. Mainstream Islamophobia fuels the growth of fascist organisations and racist violence.
3. Our multicultural society built on respect and solidarity is a cause for pride. We reject any moves to undermine it.

Conference Resolves

1. To add NUS to the signatories of the statement initiated by Unite Against Fascism in defence of multiculturalism.
2. To help student unions organise Love Music Hate Racism and Love Music Hate Homophobia gigs and festivals to help foster a culture of anti-racism and solidarity on our campuses.
3. To reaffirm our commitment to mobilising students for counter-demonstrations against the EDL and to organise an anti-fascist speaking tour alongside UAF and other organisations

Back to the main motion

Speech Against: Free (1.5min)

Summation: Proposer of last successful motion (1min)

Motion No: **407**

Policy Area: A Generation Lost

Submitted by: NUS NEC

Speech For: NEC (1.5min)

Conference Believes:

1. The past decade has witnessed the failure of young people by successive governments, with the introduction and trebling of tuition fees, scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance, record levels of youth unemployment, introduction of Anti-Social Behavioural Orders and damaging cuts to the funding of youth services and widening access.
2. The rhetoric of deficit reduction and austerity is not likely to stop any time soon. Further reductions in spending are likely across all Government departments throughout this parliament.
3. The media portrays young people as anti-social, aggressive trouble makers or as lazy benefit scroungers.
4. The lack of coherence in our qualifications frameworks or sufficient information, advice and guidance acts as a barrier to fair access and progression.
5. Too often "youth voice" is delivered by tokenistic positions that use a false façade of already privileged and confident young people as youth engagement, when those from poorer backgrounds, ethnic minorities and the "feral class" are left out in the cold.

Conference Further Believes:

1. If we don't build a consensus that promotes the rights of young people over the 'squeezed middle' before the next General Election then an entire generation will be written off by this and the next parliament.
2. We should continue campaigning to scrap tuition fees, reinstate the Education Maintenance Allowance and re-introduce public funding in higher education, but our asks must become broader and create a holistic narrative around the experiences and opportunities of young people.
3. We must include all areas of government policy in our mission to improve prospects for young people. Rejecting the role of industry in supporting this aim is naïve and counterproductive.
4. Young people should be genuinely involved in policy making throughout local and national government, not dismissed as ignorant, apathetic or irrational.

Conference Resolves:

1. To create innovative policies for the next General Election that prioritise:
 - a. access to quality education by those who could benefit most
 - b. social policies that champion young people rather than demonising them
 - c. national/local governance with young people from all backgrounds at the heart of decision making.
2. NUS must fight to ensure a better deal for our lost generation including:
 - a. A coherent, accessible and fair tertiary education system, supported by efficient and independent information, advice and guidance
 - b. A fair and sufficient student support system that provides young people with real opportunities to stay in education and fulfil their potential
 - c. Fair representation of young people throughout society, including within politics and the media
3. To call for coordinated demonstrations in cities throughout the UK, demanding urgent action from this Government to protect and defend the rights of an entire generation of young people.

Amendment: **407a**

ADD AMENDMENT

Submitted by: Sheffield Hallam and University of Sheffield Students' Union

Speech For: University of Sheffield Students' Union (1.5min)

Speech Against: Free (1.5min)

Summation: Sheffield Hallam Students' Union (1min)

Conference Believes:

1. Students have the right to have their voice heard as members of the local community.
2. Students can be disproportionately impacted by council decisions

Conference Further Believes:

1. The government is proposing to scrap the legal obligation for people to provide their local Electoral Registration Officer with information.
2. The government is proposing to switch from a system of household to individual electoral registration.
3. Many students live in HMOs and frequently move address.
4. Students and young people are already disproportionately not registered to vote.
5. The Electoral Commission warns that proposed changes could result in up to 10 million people unregistered.

- Students previously registered under household registration are at risk of being left off the register.
- Students and young people are often first time voters, and the government should make every effort possible to get them to register to vote.

Conference Resolves:

- For NUS to develop a toolkit for councils & unions which identifies the sorts of issues that may disproportionately affect students.
- For NUS to encourage dialogue between councils & unions.
- For NUS to develop a good practice resource of work between councils & unions
- To support Student Unions in encouraging students to register to vote.
- To oppose the government's changes to make voter registration optional.
- To oppose the government's plans to introduce individual voter registration

Back to the main motion

Speech Against: Free (1.5min)

Summation: Submitter of last succesful amendment (1min)

Motion No: 408*

Policy Area: Opposing Unpaid Internships in the Creative Arts

Submitted by: University for the Creative Arts Students' Union

Introduction: University for the Creative Arts Students' Union (1.5 min)

Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)

Summation: University for the Creative Arts Students' Union (1 min)

Conference Believes:

- That under National Minimum Wage laws introduced in 1999, anyone who "works" is entitled to the current hourly rate. That currently stands at £6.08 for those aged 21 and over.
- That of the arts internships advertised on a Department for Business Innovation and Skills-sponsored website, 92% were unpaid.
- That on the same website, seventy-seven per cent of advertised fashion internships were unpaid.
- That on the same website, 76% of PR internships were unpaid.
- That on the same website, half of the media internships were unpaid.
- That an intern is not a "voluntary worker".
- A "voluntary worker" is "A worker employed by a charity, a voluntary organisation, an associated fund-raising body or a statutory body"
- That "internships" and "interns" are not defined in law.
- The Arts Council for England believes that the majority of interns actually qualify as 'workers' in the definitions of the NMWA 1998 and must be paid.
- That the Trade Union Council fears that internships are replacing paid work for young people and pushing down pay for those in work.

Conference Further Believes:

- That the definition of "unpaid or unsupported intern" or "unpaid or unsupported internship is an intern that is not remunerated for performing necessary or critical duties ("work").
- That any student on "work placement" should be paid for their labour as a productive worker.
- That unpaid internships and work placements not only undermine those graduates and students taking part in such practices within the Creative industries, but such practices undermine the industry as a whole and lead to lower pay for all workers.

Conference Resolves:

- To unilaterally oppose the practice of unpaid or unsupported internships and work experience, with highlight to the those in the Creative Arts.
- That the National Union lobby for work placement to be paid on top of loans and bursaries.
- To promote institutionalized support mechanisms for students on work placement or internship, working in conjunction with institutional careers services.
- To support Unions to lobby their Careers Services to properly vet placements advertised on their website and social media, and for Careers to remove advertised unpaid placements from their books immediately.
- That the National Union works to support Arts Unions and those Unions with Arts provisions in lobbying the Creative Arts industries to oppose unpaid internships.
- That the National Union initiates a survey of arts students nationwide to collect names of companies for which unpaid internships are common practise.
- Further, through the use of this data and monitoring to publically name and shame organisations that exploit or through bad practice have undermined the needs of students so long as sufficient information is available.
- To work with the Welfare Zone to formulate a "Your rights as interns" documents outlining rights, best practice and avoiding exploitation etc, to be distributed to all constituent members for circulation throughout their membership.

Motion No: **409***
Policy Area: Citizenship
Submitted by: Cornwall College Students' Union
Introduction: Cornwall College Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Cornwall College Students' Union (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. That Citizenship education is a vital part of school and college life
2. That the Coalition are set on breaking up its curriculum and the way its delivered
3. Citizenship is thought to be the fastest growing subject at GCSE. More than 100,000 teenagers take a qualification in it each year.
4. That grants for PGCE Citizenship students were scrapped in 2011 and there was little to no interest in this issue from the media
5. Michael Gove was quoted saying the curriculum "must not cover every conceivable area of human knowledge or endeavour and should not become a vehicle for imposing passing political fads"
6. Gove has also said that his intention is to "restore the national curriculum to its original purpose – a core national entitlement organised around subject disciplines".

Conference Further Believes:

1. That citizenship education offers a platform for young people to engage in politics and advocacy, thus inspiring the future leaders of tomorrow
2. That students' unions through student activities and liberation groups have the ability to deliver education, advocacy, training and resources to young people in schools, and students in FE.

Conference Resolves:

1. For the Society and Citizenship zone to work with the FE zone to put a petition to Downing Street to save citizenship education
2. To work with allies to co-ordinate the lobbying of MPs on this issue
3. To work with the NUT on building up local NUT student groups to help co-ordinate campaigning on this issue
4. To lobby to get PGCE students doing citizenship the full teaching grant
5. That where there is a lack of movement from policy-makers and politicians, NUS supports students' unions to engage with trade unions and councils to look at ways for students to complement the delivery of citizenship and activism in schools at FE.

Motion No: **410***
Policy Area: Move Your Money
Submitted by: Kent Union, Sheffield University Students' Union, Aberdeen University Students' Union
Introduction: Sheffield University Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Kent Union (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. That banks are still reporting huge profits, RBS for example declared £2 billion in the three months to September 2011
2. UK taxpayers have given an estimated £500bn to banks in the form of bailout and guarantee schemes
3. That banks continue to practice risky speculation with what is public money, exposing us to future crises and instability
4. That some students' unions, and many institutions bank with unethical providers such as RBS who fund tar sands amongst other things
5. That the Society & Citizenship zone and NUS have launched a national deal with the Co-operative bank for SUs to easily and efficiently switch their bank provider

Conference Resolves:

1. For the Society & Citizenship zone to run a national campaign to get SUs to bank with the Co-operative bank
2. To support the 'Move Your Money' campaign and get students to pledge to switch their provider to a bank with an explicit ethical commitment
3. To mobilise our members around days of action when banks report profits and announce executive bonuses
4. To support 'shareholder activism' and get students along to AGMs of banks to lobby them on their practices.

Motion No: **411***
Policy Area: Peace One Day
Submitted by: Wakefield College Students' Union, Canterbury College Students' Union, Cornwall College Students' Union

Introduction: Canterbury College Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: Canterbury College Students' Union (1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. In 2001 a United Nations General Assembly resolution was unanimously adopted by UN member states, formally establishing an annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence on the UN International Day of Peace, fixed in the global calendar on 21st September
2. Peace One Day is calling for and working towards a day of ceasefire and non-violence on the 21st September 2012; a Global Truce which could be the largest reduction in global violence in recorded history, both domestically and internationally
3. On Peace Day 21st September 2010, in all 192 UN member states, and 28 organizations carried out 88 humanitarian activities across 31 countries
4. POD Education aims to advance learning in areas of conflict resolution, global citizenship and human rights, and NUS can play a key role in this.

Conference Further Believes:

1. That on the 27th February 2012 the NUS along with students' unions from across the globe, including South Africa, the USA, Nepal and Sri Lanka, called for the students of the world to unite as one on the run up to global truce 2012 and beyond
2. That FE colleges have taken a lead on the POD campaign on campuses, including Canterbury College linking it to 'Blue Monday' and anti-bullying campaigns; and Wakefield College planning a POD education day.

Conference Resolves:

1. For the Society and Citizenship zone to create a campaign kit specific for FE on how unions can get involved in the run up to global truce 2012
2. To hold training and education days that help get students to understand what they can do to help on various levels, ranging from working with liberation campaigns on bullying and violence against women on a local scale; to how we can work towards peace on a larger international scale
3. To use the POD networks to build international alliances with other students' organizations
4. To create a Principal/VC pledge to support Global Truce day.

Motion No: **412***
Policy Area: Solidarity with Syria
Submitted by: University of Manchester Students' Union
Introductiob: University of Manchester Students' Union (1.5 min)
Speech Against: Free (1.5 min)
Summation: University of Manchester Students' Union 1 min)

Conference Believes:

1. As of 13th February 2012, at least 8117 Syrians had died as a result of the violence in Syria since March 15th 2011 (Violations Documenting Centre. Accessed at: <<http://www.vdc-sy.org/>>)
2. A report published in January 2012 by global civic organization Avaaz claimed the number of those detained from March 2011 – January 2012 to be 69,000.
3. Due to the Syrian government's violent crackdown on anti-government protesters, Damascus has been suspended from the Arab League. ('Syria unrest: Arab League observer mission head quits'. BBC. Accessed at: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-17001032>>)
4. Despite William Hague's condemnation of the Syrian regime and Britain's public support of the Syrian people, the Syrian Embassy remains open and its staff remain employed in London.

Conference Further Believes:

1. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other human rights organizations have stated that the Syrian regime is guilty for committing crimes against humanity.
2. It is the responsibility and duty of the international community to voice concern over and take action in order to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people.
3. The Syrian regime has no remaining legitimacy and is beyond the point of negotiation.
4. The British government must make an uncompromising commitment to support the rights and freedoms of the Syrian people.
5. The first step to doing so is the closure of the Syrian Embassy and the suspension of any diplomatic relations.

Conference Resolves:

1. The NUS to encourage Students' Unions to publicly condemn the Syrian regime and show solidarity with the Syrian people through student media.
2. The NUS to support scholarships to students for the post Assad reconstruction.
3. To call for Assad's removal, a trial against him for crimes against humanity and for the initiation of a transition towards a stable and representative government.
4. NUS to lobby and pressure the British government to:
5. Expel the Syrian ambassador and boycott Syrian diplomacy

6. Impose economic sanctions on Syria, in the form of freezing the assets of Assad and any members of his government (ensuring that these sanctions are compensated for by investing in non-governmental humanitarian organizations).
 7. To raise awareness amongst students in the UK and to help them identify with the struggle of people overseas.
-

Motion No: **413***
Policy Area: **Student Fuel Poverty**
Submitted by: **Swansea University Students' Union**
Introduction: **Swansea University Students' Union (1.5 min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **Swansea University Students' Union (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. Households are currently considered by the government to be in 'fuel poverty' if 10% or more of the household income is spent on keeping the house at an adequate temperature.
2. Those living in private rented accommodation are more likely to be living in conditions of 'fuel poverty'.
3. The Living in Wales Survey (2008) estimated that around 26% of Households in Wales were living in conditions of 'fuel poverty'.
4. The English Housing Survey revealed that 4.0 million households in England were classified as being in fuel poverty in 2009 (18% of all households). This is three times the number of households that were in fuel poverty at the low point in 2003, and there have been increases in each year since 2003.
5. Not being able to afford heating is detrimental to both physical and mental health both of which have an impact on student experience.
6. Hidden course costs, the recession and cuts to student support mean that more students are suffering from fuel poverty.
7. Students across the UK are not usually associated with 'fuel poverty' because their housing situation is deemed 'temporary'.
8. The effects upon students are likely to increase with the rise in prices of the 'Big six' energy providers.

Conference Resolves:

1. Conduct research on the extent to which students are living in fuel poverty.
 2. Highlight solutions that involve the use of sustainable energy.
-

Motion No: **414**
Policy Area: **Don't Attack Iran – Fund Education Not War**
Submitted by: **NUS Black Students' Campaign Committee, School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union**
Introduction: **Black Students' Committee (1.5 min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. Over the past decade hundreds of thousands of young people have been active in the movements against war and for global peace, from opposing the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to calling for an end to Britain's nuclear weapons system.
2. According to the Treasury, by mid 2010 Britain had spent more than £20 billion on the wars against Iraq and Afghanistan. The cost of Britain's war on Libya last year totalled £2 billion.
3. The cost of renewing Trident, Britain's nuclear weapons system has risen to £100 billion.
4. Government figures show that it would have cost just £2bn per year to abolish tuition fees, before they were trebled.
5. The wars on Afghanistan and Iraq have been a waste of money and a waste of lives. One million dead in Iraq and hundreds of thousands killed in Afghanistan – and at the cost of billions of pounds to the British taxpayer.
6. There are dangers of new wars being launched by the Western powers in the Middle East. These wars will bring even more death and destruction to the Middle East and could cost the British taxpayer billions of pounds.
7. There is no evidence that Iran is developing nuclear weapons. Iran, unlike Israel and Pakistan, is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It has the right to develop civilian nuclear power.
8. £20bn has been spent on wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, more than the £7bn HE budget.
9. Attacking Iran could lead to thousands of casualties, as in Iraq, and provoke retaliation with devastating effects. Current Western rhetoric recalls the Iraq war, when a threat was fabricated to justify an attack.
10. The cost of war is unacceptable. Spending on an attack at a time of deep cuts to public services is immoral.
11. Nuclear disarmament should be a long term goal, but war is not a solution to nuclear proliferation.

Conference Resolves:

1. For NUS to work with the Stop the War Coalition and Student CND to campaign for the British government to change its twisted spending priorities and fund education not war, to scrap Trident and scrap tuition fees.
2. For NUS to send an open letter to the Foreign Secretary William Hague proposing that the government end the war

on Afghanistan, refrain from launching new wars in the Middle East and use the money saved to fund education and other public services.

3. To condemn any future war with Iran, releasing statements to this effect.
4. To affiliate to Stop the War Coalition, organizing with them and others a campaign of protest against any future attack.

Motion No: **415***
Policy Area: **Defend the Welfare State**
Submitted by: **Kingston University Students' Union, Birmingham Guild of Students, Royal Holloway Students' Union, School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union**
Introduction: **Birmingham Guild of Students (1.5 min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **Royal Holloway Students' Union (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. Britain's deficit is lower now, as a proportion of GDP, than after the Second World War when the welfare state was created. The deficit is a result of bailing out banks which are now paying out billions in bonuses.
2. In other European countries similar austerity programmes have been met with mass resistance including general strikes.
3. To demand heavy taxation of the rich and full nationalisation of the banks to fund decent jobs, education and services for all.
4. To fight for a government based on the organised labour movement which carries out these measures in the interests of workers, students and the majority of society.

Conference Resolves:

1. To make the case against all cuts and austerity.
2. To support all protests and strikes against the cuts, including protests outside the conferences of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties.
3. To coordinate with the TUC, trade unions and anti-cuts campaigning organisations for a united defence of public services and the welfare state.
4. To support calls for a general strike.
5. To offer NUS support to campaigning activity like UK Uncut and the Occupy movement.
6. To affiliate to the Coalition of Resistance.
7. Austerity is an inappropriate response to the crisis. Ongoing stagnation is the direct result of falling demand in the economies.
8. The sharp increases in debt and deficits are the direct result of the financial crisis of 2008. It was not spending on public services that produced the increase in public debt.
9. Austerity pushes the costs of the crisis onto those who can least afford it and students are directly affected by austerity measures. Applications for university places are down this year. Removing EMA has hit over 600,000 students.
10. Austerity programmes, consisting of sharp cuts in public expenditure, are being implemented across much of the developed world. George Osborne has extended austerity measures beyond the lifetime of the current Parliament.

Motion: **416***
Policy Area: **International student activism**
Submitted by: **NUS International Students' Committee**
Speech For: **NUS International Students' Committee (1.5min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **NUS International Students' Committee (1min)**

Conference Believes:

1. In July 2011, former MP & cabinet undersecretary Kim Howells declared, as reported by the BBC, that international students, particularly those from Libya, are "security threats" and that international student recruitment risked bringing "violent jihadists" into the UK;
2. Howells' comments in the midst of the Libyan civil war distressed Libyan and other international students in the UK;
3. NUS International Students Campaign and NUS Wales Black Students Campaign partnered to campaign with demonstrations and publicity against Howells' statements;
4. In the wake of Howells' comments, Cardiff Lord Mayor Delme Bowen circulated a letter encouraging international students to "get involved in the life of the city";
5. At the same time, Libyan Cardiff University graduate and practising dentist Nizar Mhani returned to Libya to lead the "Free Generation Movement" in resistance to the Gaddafi regime;
6. The Free Generation Movement's campaign vandalised property but did not carry out violence against people and was lauded by media sources across the UK and internationally;
7. Mhani represents part of a proud tradition of international students who became politicised while studying in the UK and which also includes, among others, Mohandas Gandhi, founder of Kenya Jomo Kenyatta and Bill Clinton.

8. Howells' comments represent a current of opportunistic mock paranoia used to justify tighter, more discriminatory policies on migration;
9. Attitudes such as Howells', like programmes such as PREVENT, discourage international students from taking active roles in their students' unions and in their broader communities;
10. The contribution of UK international students to the world political stage has been profound and positive.

Conference Resolves:

1. To condemn Kim Howells' statements regarding international students;
 2. To applaud Nizar Mhani for his positive and effective contribution to the downfall of Gaddafi;
 3. To give solidarity and support to NUS International Students Campaign and NUS Black Students Campaigns in actively opposing a culture of scapegoating and paranoia regarding international students;
 4. To encourage NUS constituent members, while being sensitive to the political considerations of international students' origins, to facilitate international students taking active roles in their students' unions and community, not only through international societies but also through activism and through standing for elected positions.
-

Motion No: **417***
Policy Area: **Twin with Egyptian Universities**
Submitted by: **Kings College London Students' Union, School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union, Kingstion University Students Union, QMSU**
Introduction: **School of Oriental and African Studies Students' Union (1.5 min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **Kingston University (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. The Egyptian revolution against the Military Council (SCAF) continues
2. The Military Council is no ally of the Egyptian people
3. We stand unequivocally on the side of those risking their lives to fight for freedom, justice and dignity and against the regimes that repress them.
4. The students at the American University of Cairo and other institutions have been right to kick out their Principals and Chancellors linked to SCAF and Mubarak regime

Conference Resolves

1. To congratulate the students of the American University of Cairo and other institutions
 2. To organise speaking tours of youth and student activists from Egypt on our campuses.
 3. To roll out a twinning programme with Egyptian students across the campuses
-

Motion No: **418***
Policy Area: **Tarsands**
Submitted by: **University of Leicester Students' Union**
Introduction: **University of Leicester Students' Union(1.5 min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **University of Leicester Students' Union (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. That the Earth has a finite amount of natural resources that should be used in a sustainable manner to ensure a decent standard of living for future generations.
2. Sustainable living has positive benefits for global social equality.

Conference Resolves:

1. To support the Tar Sands-Free campaign
-

Motion No: **419***
Policy Area: **University of Sanctuary**
Submitted by: **University of Sheffield Students' Union**
Introduction: **University of Sheffield Students' Union (1.5 min)**
Speech Against: **Free (1.5 min)**
Summation: **University of Sheffield Students' Union (1 min)**

Conference Believes:

1. Asylum seekers and refugees encounter immense barriers to Higher Education
2. Asylum seekers are charged international fees by universities, cannot work in the UK or access UK funding.
3. There are over 15 Cities of Sanctuary in the UK and universities can sign these agreements and become a 'University of Sanctuary'.

4. Education is a human right and should be accessible to all on the basis of merit alone.
5. Access to Higher Education would help asylum seekers and refugees to as it would help them successfully adapt to life in the UK.
6. Asylum seekers and refugees culturally and intellectually enrich our campuses and general society
7. Prejudices against asylum seekers and refugees are unjust and unacceptable.

Conference Resolves:

1. To educate students about asylum seeker and refugee issues by working with student groups and other organisations to help Students' Unions co-ordinate their own Refugee Weeks.
 2. To provide advice and information for SUs to aid in lobbying their institutions to become Universities of Sanctuary and to affiliate with the Council for Assisting Refugee Academics.
 3. To work with CARA to develop a minimum standard for which affiliated universities would need to meet
 4. To seek a national agreement on university provision for asylum seekers and refugees.
- To lobby the government to provide funding for asylum seekers and refugees education

Motions to NEC

Motion 1: Autumn Demonstration

Submitted by: Mark Bergfeld

Seconded by: Ruby Hirsch, James Haywood, Kanja Sesay, Aaron Kiely,

NEC believes

1. NUS Conference voted to support an autumn demonstration
2. According to the survey conducted at conference more than 50% of all delegates at this year's conference were Sabbatical Officers

NEC further believes:

1. We must fulfill the democratic mandate given to us
2. We have a massive opportunity to start building momentum behind the call for the national demonstration among the newly elected Sabbatical Officers.

NEC resolves:

1. To congratulate National Conference to voting 'yes' to the national demonstration.
2. To organise a national meeting for Sabbatical Officers, local cuts groups, interested students to discuss the cuts, restructuring of our university system and the national demonstration. This meeting should be organised no later than June 24.
3. To organise a speaking tour throughout the colleges and universities with either speakers from Quebec or Chile where student protests have won massive concessions off of equally vicious governments. This should be in the immediate run-up to the national demonstration.
4. To approach the UCU in particular to support and mobilise for the national demonstration
5. To send an open letter to other trade unions to join and mobilise the demonstration.
6. To name the date for the national demonstration over the next four weeks.

Motion 2: Solidarity with the Quebec student strike

Submitted by: Mark Bergfeld

Seconded by: Aaron Kiely, Alan Bailey, Kanja Sesay, Michael Chessum, Ruby Hirsch

NEC believes:

1. For more than three months now more than 170 000 secondary and tertiary students have been on indefinite student strike in Quebec, Canada.
2. Students are protesting against a 75% increase in tuition fees.
3. The demonstration in Montreal on March 22 was the largest student demonstration in Canadian history
4. The students have been met with fierce police tactics. One student even lost his eye due to shock grenade.

NEC further believes:

1. That international solidarity is a weapon.
2. That Quebec students have been an inspiration to countless students around the globe.

NEC resolves:

1. To organise a picket outside of the Canadian embassy.
2. To hand a letter to the Canadian embassy congratulating Quebec students and calling upon the Canadian government to stop the crackdown.
3. To invite a Quebec student over to the UK to address Sabbatical Officers, students and others in the movement.

Motion 3: Staff Support for Student Sections Campaigns

Submitted by: Fiona Wood

Seconded by: George-Konstantinos Charonis, Christina Yan Zhang, Mateusz Wysocki, Matt East, Dante Micheaux, Rachel Wenstone

NEC believes

1. Over the past few years NUS has been able to begin to specifically target and address the issues of key demographics of the overall student population, including international, postgraduate and mature & part-time students.
2. While much progress has been made in representing student sections, the campaigns are unable to reach their full potential in positively influencing the lives of the students they represent.
3. Given the current context of rising fees and lack of a publicly-funded student support system for postgraduates, devastating changes to immigration policy and further increasing international student fees, and the detrimental effects of the new funding system on mature & part-time students, NUS has not been able to adequately prioritise and address issues faced by these student demographics.

NEC further believes

1. Students' Unions agreed to pay a levy with the introduction of a full-time member of staff working on postgraduate issues in 2009.
2. NUS does not currently have a full-time member of staff fulfilling this role.
3. Given the level of support required across all three sections campaigns, a full-time role should be created and broadened out to include the International and Mature & Part-time campaigns, and should be additional and supplementary to current support.
4. A full-time staff member position should be created to support and deliver the work of the Student Sections, as outlined in the supporting document.

NEC resolves

1. The National President will investigate possible sources to fund a new, additional, full-time staff position for the Student Sections Campaigns.

Appendix A: Staff Support for Student Sections Campaigns supporting document

April 2012

Through the dedicated efforts of elected representatives of the Student Sections campaigns, over the past few years NUS has been able to begin to specifically target and address the issues of key demographics of the overall student population: international (17%), postgraduate (24%) and mature & part-time students (33%).¹ This has been made possible through the invaluable commitment and support of staff.

While much progress has been made in representing student sections, the campaigns are unable to reach their full potential in positively influencing the lives of the students they represent. A first step is to ensure the smooth running of the current work of the Student Sections Campaigns and their relevant committees in areas that are often lacking due to a number of reasons. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Briefings on urgent and topical matters related to International, Postgraduate, Mature & Part-time students are prepared on a regular basis, in line and on time with the NUS Priority Campaign activities, to be disseminated to the membership, where relevant
- All events, including forums, are widely advertised to the membership, at least one month in advance
- Outcomes from events are compiled, circulated to attendees and uploaded to NUS Connect within at most two weeks of the date of the event
- Relevant news stories and articles are uploaded to NUS Connect in a timely manner
- Committee meeting dates and locations are advertised to committee members at least one month in advance, with meetings lasting for the entire duration of their allocated time
- Committee meeting papers are circulated a week in advance of meetings
- Minutes from any given committee meeting are written up and circulated to the committee prior to the next meeting of that committee

As mentioned previously, supporting the current work, which is very often felt to be greatly under-resourced, is a first step. In order for the Student Sections Campaigns to truly reach out beyond students' unions and directly to students, a number of areas or work must urgently be given attention, above and beyond ensuring the day-to-day smooth running. Some of the areas where this especially holds true include:

- Coordinating national campaigns
- Delivering local and regional training and networking events
- Coordinating and delivering national training to students' union officers both as part of the NUS Officer Development Programme during the summer months as well as to officers and individuals who directly represent and work with international, postgraduate, mature & part-time students during the Autumn
- Regularly engaging with the membership, identifying areas where further work is desired and required, and delivering relevant briefings, events and campaigns
- Identifying areas where further research is required, planning and executing relevant research and dissemination activities
- Building and maintaining a database of membership staff and student representatives' contact details

¹ HESA data for 2010/11, note that there is overlap between these three categories!
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- Providing a more joint and integrated approach to the work of the three individual student sections campaigns
- Applying for external project funding

Furthermore, it should be noted that Students' Unions agreed to pay a levy with the introduction of a full-time member of staff working on postgraduate issues in 2009. NUS does not currently have a full-time member of staff fulfilling this role. Given the level of support required across all three sections campaigns, such a full-time role should therefore be broadened out to include the International and Mature & Part-time campaigns, and should be additional and supplementary to current support, as described above.

We therefore propose the creation of a new, full-time staff member position of CAMPAIGNS ORGANISER to support and deliver the work of the Student Sections.

Thank you very much for taking the time to consider our proposal. While we understand it is not fully comprehensive and has the potential to benefit from further discussion and deliberation, we strongly believe it fills a very real gap by providing a plausible solution. We look forward to discussing this further in person.

George-Konstantinos Charonis (PGT Rep, NEC),

Dante Micheaux (PGR Rep, NEC),

Fiona Wood (Mature & part-time Rep, NEC),

Mateusz Wyszocki (EU Rep, NEC),

Christina Yan Zhang (International Students' Officer)

NUS National Executive Council

Report on the role of NUS block of 15

[With political diversity being one of the evident strengths of the Block, all the suggestions and views included are those of individual Block Members, rather than representing any attempt to reach a unified or majority view.]

One of the main issues causing frustration for Block Members this year has been a lack of clarity about their exact role. The purpose of Block seems to be an uncertain and at times contradictory mix between a political platform to influence the policy of the organisation, scrutinising and holding FTOs to account, communicating between the NEC and constituent members, and generally supporting NUS as needed.

NEC meetings this year have particularly focused on the scrutiny role, whereas candidates' manifestos continue to focus on the political platform aspect, with a lack of awareness of the practical role of Block even amongst NUS' most engaged members.

With a review of Governance approaching it would seem a good time to clarify what we want from Block, as well as potentially introducing changes to improve the way it functions, particularly in the light of how the Block has worked in recent years, and inter-relates with Zone Committees.

The Communication role of Block

Members of Block raised various issues with regard to communication:

The current system of using Block to communicate with CMs needs to be reviewed, as it means inconsistent messages are being sent out, and often not getting through at all, coupled with a lack of buy-in and involvement from many Unions.

In practical terms suggestions include:

- Block members could co-write and send out a uniform update to ensure parity of contact with CMs
- The role of Clerks of the NEC could include working up newsletters/communications to send round with input from Block members.
- A Liamesque list of specific questions on NEC papers could be pre-determined and sent out, to make feedback as easy as possible.
- Block Members receiving allocated CMs ready for the start of their term would be very helpful; with FE allocations not being received until November this year crucial changes to engage with officers at the start of the year were lost.
- A wider organisational issue with finding reliable contact details also needs attention; Despite assurances contact details, particularly for FE Unions, are often not on NUS Connect.

In broader terms it's been questioned whether sending out NEC papers etc should be the role of Block at all, given the inconsistent messages it can lead to.

- A summary document produced and sent by an FTO (or staff member) might work better
- Online methods of gathering feedback could be used via NUS Digital, such as video feedback, or 'Question the officers' tools, or Discussion Boards and Wikis

-When FTOs or allocated staff members visit CMs in future it would be good if the appropriate Block Members could go too. This has worked well on occasions this year, but has been inconsistently applied.

-Block could also submit (brief) reports to NEC, as FTOs do, to feedback information and record what they're doing for scrutiny.

Block members could also communicate more with each other, with suggestions including setting up an email list, and arranging dedicated time to meet together, particularly at the beginning of the year.

The Scrutiny role of Block

It was recognised that scrutiny of FTOs, and of fellow Block Members, hasn't been performed as much as it could.

-Several Members raised the conflict of Block being expected to scrutinise FTOs while essentially relying on their goodwill to attend many events and carry out other aspects of the role, which could compromise impartiality.

-Others raised a broader issue in sometimes finding a difficulty of reconciling an independent scrutiny function with being a representative voted in on a political platform.

Visiting Constituent Members and a Block Budget?

Many members of Block expressed frustration at the difficulty of visiting CMs.

-At the beginning of the year, it would be good to try to promote that if CM Block Members to visit they should invite them.

-It would also be worth clarifying whether Block should attend regional receptions at the start of the year to introduce themselves, as there was some confusion over that this year.

-From NUS' point of view it would be good to clarify the role of Block in Union visits. Whilst Block Members recognised the need to monitor who visits where, Union visits should not be discouraged.

-It would be good to more formally manage who attends which other events, rather than particular members of Block/NEC being favoured. (A formal process for attending Zone Conferences this year was a step forward, but this should happen with all events.)

-It was also strongly felt that Block could be deployed much more as enthusiastic advocates of NUS at events as a matter of course, rather than at the last minute if an FTO can't make something.

-Some Block Members said they'd been left personally out of pocket, as a result of visiting CMs to help with campaigns, or support them, so strongly felt there should be an allowance for such visits.

Although there are differing views about whether Block should be paid, all Block Members, who expressed an opinion, agreed that there should be some sort of designated 'Block budget' and allowance for travel.

-While recognising that any allowance would have to be monitored, to prevent people going on tours of Summer Balls etc, if a visit is clearly NUS related then a travel allowance should be available; the lack of one means people often physically can't visit the CMs they're supposed to represent.

-It was argued that a budget shouldn't be seen as a last resort, but something that would really help the organisation by allowing some of NUS' most passionate advocates to actually represent it.

-It was also argued that any distinction between giving Block a budget and spending money on campaigning is a false one, as any budget could greatly increase NUS' campaigning capacity, and NUS could save a lot of money internally, through cultural changes, for example on travel and cheaper accommodation.

There is also significant unhappiness that Block are expected to contact CMs by phone at their own expense; the cost of which can be extensive.

Block as a paid role?

Several people felt that Block should be a paid position, while others disagreed. Although this is a complicated debate, perhaps similar to whether course reps should be paid, ahead of any Governance changes it should be had, as at the moment Block seems neither one thing nor the other, lacking the budget it used to have, but culturally and often in CMs expectations, still seen as more than just a voluntary role.

The fact that Block is unpaid often limits people from devoting large amounts of time to it, as well as arguably rendering the role inaccessible and unattractive to potential candidates.

It also means Block members on low incomes are limited in the extent they can be involved.

On the other side, it was argued that although there should be a Block budget, individual Block members shouldn't be paid, as it should be a voluntary role.

A practical point was raised in that paying Block might also have an unintended impact on Members' tax which should be considered in the debate.

The political role of Block

In terms of the actual purpose and role of Block several people felt it should be part of a wider debate around what we want from a National Executive Committee.

Some felt that Block does add to the organisation's transparency, with independent voices on the NEC providing scrutiny of the leadership and organisation, but that Block Members need to be able to play a larger role of advocates of NUS – to make the best use of our most enthusiastic volunteers and 'keenos'.

-Others emphasised that as Block Members are usually elected on political platforms they should have an enhanced political role.

One issue is that as the NEC has grown in size over recent years, Block's influence as a group has necessarily weakened. In addition much of the policy development, and support for VPs which traditionally came from the Block is now undertaken by Zone Committees.

This is clearly only part of a broader Governance discussion on the role of the NEC, and the inter-relationship of Zones, Sections, and Block, but some suggestions raised include:

-Block could just be drawn from Zone Committees creating an enhanced, dual role.

Others were critical of this as it would remove the democratic mandate Block currently

has from being elected at National Conference, and would make running for Block accessible to many fewer candidates.

-From the other direction it was also suggested Block Members could also sit on different Zone Committees.

-It was pointed out that there's currently no way sectional reps can feed into Zones' policy recommendations except through amending the policy once it's recommended, and suggested we look at ways Block and Sections can feed into zone policy more.

-Block members have also expressed frustration about not being consulted on policy in advance of NEC meetings; which ties into communication between the NEC and (please) including Block members when circulating/discussing policy.

-The HE Zone Committee, where members were allocated different policy areas and responsibilities based on their interests, was suggested as a possible model for Block members having the ability to develop their own specific portfolios.

-The role of Block Members in supporting FTOs could be formalised at the beginning of the year, with Block Members allocated a specific FTO, although this could just cause more complications

-The Sub-Committees of the NEC, such as the Communications Scrutiny Group could be reviewed to see if they're meeting their purpose, and whether Block could usefully contribute more to them.

-Block could choose from amongst their number people to take on bigger allocated roles as spokespeople or to liaise with the membership. Others felt this might just create more divisions.

-Organisations NUS is affiliated to, such as UAF, could have a Block member allocated to maintaining relationships with them, which would in some cases formalise what already happens.

Although there are clearly many issues with Block to consider, it's only fair to add that one member ended their contribution with 'I've still enjoyed it though!'

[8 members of Block fed into this – although everyone was asked – so there's probably plenty more feedback to be got from members/former members when we come to the review of Governance.]

Some simple Burnsian question to consider would include:

1. Should Block Members be paid?
2. Should there be a specific budget for Block?
3. Should Block Members be sending out NEC papers and communicating about meetings?
4. How do Block inter-relate with Zones, and is there a way Block could contribute more to them?
5. Is there a space for Block to develop individual specific portfolios as in some Zone Committees?
6. Do the current NEC sub-Committees work and could they play more of a role?
7. How could Block Members scrutinise each other more?