



NATIONAL CONFERENCE n u s 2012

**Zone Reports &
Proposals**

Circulate to officers, student councils and throughout your representation structures such as Course Representatives, Community and Welfare Reps and student activity federations.

CD5

If you need this document in another format contact NUS on 0845 5210 262 or email events@nus.org.uk

Key information

Purpose of this document

This is Conference Document (CD) 5 which outlines the reports from each of the five policy zones on the work they have done since National Conference 2011. It also outlines their proposals for National Conference 2012.

CD5a is also available which just contains the proposals, but we recommend that you use this document for the accountability of officers.

What you need to do

You should read the reports ready to hold the vice presidents to account for the work they have done. You should use the proposals to consider whether you wish to submit amendments to the text submitted by the zones or new motions.

Reports Checklist

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| I have read through the zone reports | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have considered how well the zone has met the resolutions set by last conference | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have read the accountability guide available on www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I know how to hold the vice-presidents to account at conference if necessary | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Policy Checklist

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| The proposals have been circulated to students so they can consider them | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student council or other bodies will be debating proposals before the end of February | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Our union has checked to see if we already have live policy on the issues | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Someone has been tasked with submitting amendments and motions before March 2 nd | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I know I must use the submission pro-forma on www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delegates from my union have been chosen to speak on the issues (if needed) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Read through the document and need more help?

If you require additional information please contact one of the following people:

- For issues about delegate entitlement, zone committees, reports and policy, amendments to zone policy proposals & Cross Campus Ballots contact democracy@nus.org.uk

All the above can be contacted at:

- NUS, 4th Floor, 184-192 Drummond Street, London, NW1 3HP
Telephone: 0845 521 0262

Be the change with NUS Policy



It's become second nature to talk about how fast things change within the education sector. It wasn't that long ago that every student lived in halls, were between 18-24 years old and studied full time, the idea that you could use any resources other than the library to write an assignment would seem a nonsense.

The last 18 months have seen change in a way that is hard to grasp. The drawbridge to further education is fast being pulled up, courses and lecturers are under threat, funding regimes in the Nations are in chaos. Fundamental questions such as the role of students in governing their institutions, how much money students should have in their pockets and how, if at all, private providers should operate in the education landscape all demand swift answers.

Change has happened quickly, and we will respond as quickly when our colleges and universities are under threat through powerful activism and campaigns. The wins students' unions have achieved over the past twelve months are exceptional, but it is our long term policy, set at National Conference, that represents our aspiration for real change.

The zone committees have here outlined their recommendations for the year ahead in the following pages. But far more importantly is the simple fact that you're the boss. NUS is not simply a handful of officers in Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh and London. We are hundreds of students' unions, officers and volunteers throughout the UK. Use debate in your students' unions to create and submit amendments & ordinary motions. Tell us the change you want to see rather than the slogan you want to read, the aspiration you want students to have not the toolkit they should own. Speak up and speak out on behalf of your students. Through setting our political direction, you can be the change.

Liam Burns, NUS National President

Welcome to the NUS Zone reports & recommendations



National Conference is at the heart of our National Union's policy process. Firstly, it provides a check on the work you have entrusted to the leadership. Secondly, it contains the balanced debate which forms the national voice of the students on your campus and sets the agenda for our National Union.

To fulfil these two roles this document has two directions. It looks back at the actions agreed at Conference 2011 and asks the Zone Committees what they have done to fulfill these mandates. You should use these reports to scrutinise and challenge your leaders on the work they have done since last April.

In addition it looks forward to the year ahead - suggesting what campaigns and policies each Zone Committee believes is right for students like you and others at your institution. The leadership's work in the policy process is, at this stage, now done - but yours is just beginning. Take these recommendations and share them with your student groups and debating bodies. Have your union make amendments or propose new ideas so that the final proposals document in March becomes the work of all our members rather than just our leaders.

I very much look forward to receiving your ideas, amendments and motions and then seeing you in Sheffield to debate these issues at Conference.

Steven Findlay, Chair, Democratic Procedures Committee
democracy@nus.org.uk

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An Introduction to Zones and Policy

One of the jobs of National Conference is to set policy for NUS. This policy will create positions of principle (beliefs) and actions to be carried out (resolutions).

The work of NUS is split into 5 main 'zones'. These are:

Further Education - which covers things that affect the study and development of students in Further Education.

Higher Education - which deals with issues that affect the study and development of students in Higher Education

Society and Citizenship - where issues that affect students in wider society, the world and student engagement with those areas is worked on

Union Development - which looks at supporting students' unions in their role of supporting students and providing them with services

Welfare - which decides the work that supports the wellbeing of students in their institutions, their homes and their families

Each zone has a Vice-President who is elected at National Conference and leads the work of this zone on a day to day basis. They are full time positions.

Each zone held a 2 day conference in October that contained both workshops and discussion as well as section that made recommendations on policy for that zone which any union could attend.

The zone conference elected a 'zone committee' who support the vice-president, advise them on the work of the zone so far and also make policy recommendations based on the discussions at the zone conference. The zone committee is named at the start of each Zone report.

This document contains the report of the work done by each zone and also some recommendations from the zone committee.

Students' unions can decide to alter or add to these motion suggestions by making amendments. They can also decide to add new motions to the end of the zone report. The deadline for this is March 2nd.

Delegates will be emailed and asked to prioritise the ordinary motions and the order in which the zones are debated. Higher and Further Education zones will be debated as a mixed zone - i.e. all education policy will be discussed during the same period.

At National Conference delegates will have **2 jobs** to do based on this document

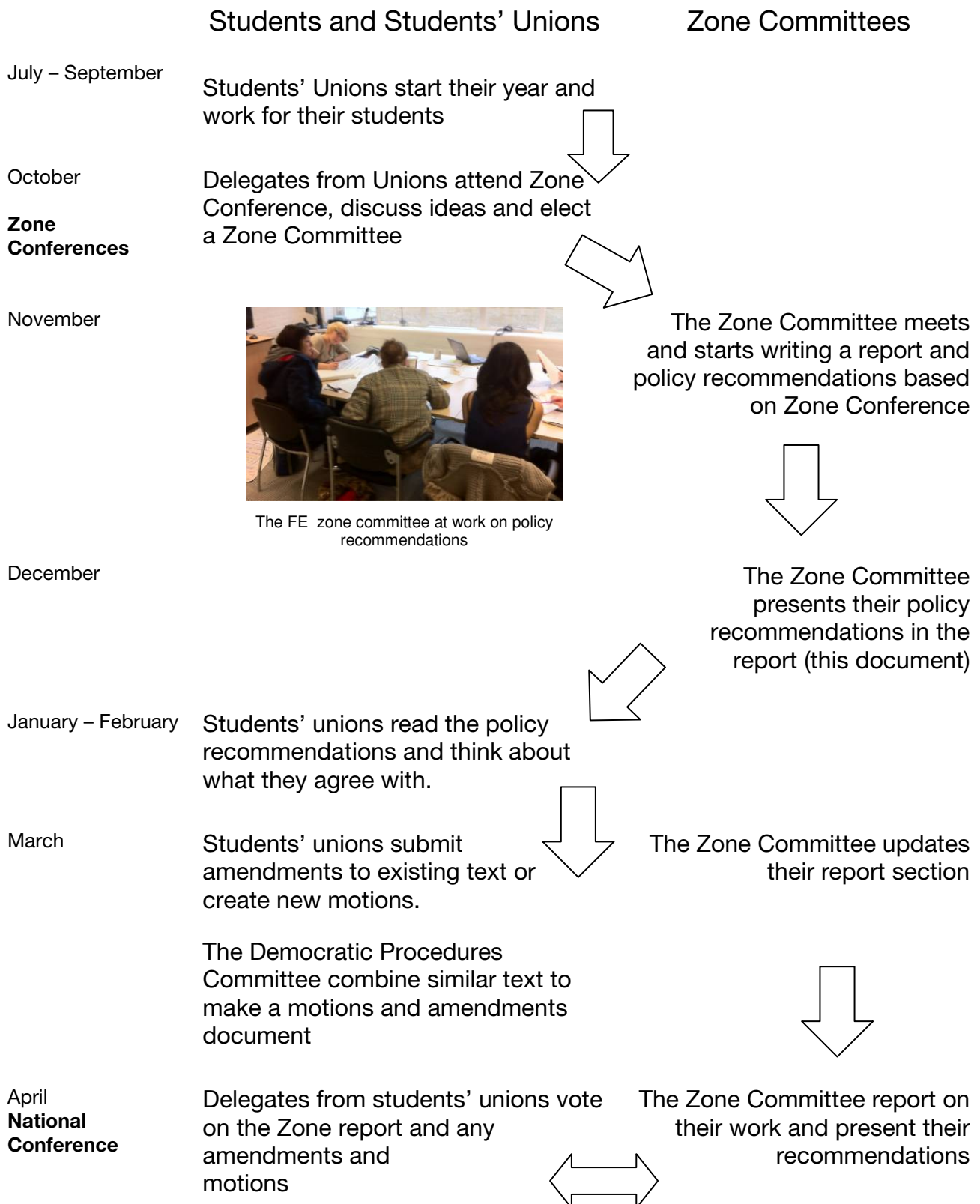
- Decide on whether to accept the work done in the zone (the report section)
- Debate and decide whether to accept (pass) the policy recommendations from the zone committee, any amendments to this report and any new motions that students' unions submit.

Any motions (including amendments) that National Conference votes on and passes will become the policy of NUS next year. The vice-presidents and zone committee will use it to set priorities and areas of work and use it to help influence the discussions and workshops at zone conference in the autumn of 2012 where the process will begin again for next National Conference.

Page 6 explains this process in a diagram.

This year the Democratic Procedures Committee (DPC) have submitted a number of motions. These are not part of the zones but are included in the back of this motions document.

How the process works



How to use this document

This document is split into 5 zones, each with 2 sections - one that is a report and one that has policy recommendation. They are formatted very similarly with 2 columns.

Report

Each zone must report on the mandates that currently apply to it. In the report sections the left hand column will include a list of what past conferences have resolved that zone to do.

In the right hand column of the report the zone will talk about how it has met these mandates as well as any other work that it has done in this area.

It is your role as delegates to **ask questions** of the zone to make sure they have done what is required of them as suggested by the mandates on the left hand column. Considering what is written on the right and what the zone will say at conference, you can decide whether to support (accept) or decline (refer back) the zone's work as fulfilling what it was asked to do.

Policy Recommendations

Based on the discussions at Zone Conferences and other work that has occurred during the year, the Zone Committees recommend policy to conference.

In the left hand column they give some background to explain why it is needed - why students and unions want it and the affect it has.

In the right hand column of the report the zone will suggest some positions and mandates on the issue - work that needs to be done.

In total this right hand section cannot be longer than 2,500 words for any one zone.

Zones can submit up to 5 motions.

It is your role as delegates to decide whether the right hand column contains the right positions on issues and the right actions for the year ahead. The left hand column will not become policy of NUS and is background only.

If you disagree, you may submit amendments to this policy recommendation.

If you want work to occur that hasn't been suggested by the zone committee at all then you can submit an ordinary motion.

All current policy for that particular zone is listed at the front of each recommendations section.

The Democratic Procedures Committee will take these amendments and motions and combine (composite) them into an accessible document.

What you should do now...

1. Circulate this document around your students' unions - your student council, senate, general meeting or other policy setting body. Ask your course representatives their views, as well as accommodation and welfare reps, student and liberation groups and students in classrooms. Make a decision on what you like and what you think needs to change.
2. You have until March to do this - so use the time wisely!
3. Write amendments if the work you want to see being done currently exists in the report or motions if they do not. For example, if you want to change some policy around course representatives that is an amendment. If no policy has been written on course representatives at all this is an Ordinary motion.
4. Each union can submit up to 1,400 words of text to conference. This 'word allowance' is over all zones, all amendments and all motions, so use your words carefully.

For example, Fibchester students' council passes an amendment to the Welfare zone report which adds 250 words of text. It also submits a new motion to the Society and Citizenship zone which is 1,000 words long. If it wanted to amend any other recommendation or write a new motion it would have 150 words to 'use'.

5. If you wish to delete text from a motion, your amendment should read "To delete [words from the motion]". The words 'to delete' will count towards your word allowance.
6. You must submit your amendments and amendments by Friday 2nd March 2012. Details of how to do so will appear at the end of January 2012 on our website www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference
7. The amendments and motions will be combined into a single document. This is sometimes called 'compositing'. Democratic Procedures Committee will suggest how this should happen, but if you submitted text you can come along to Drafting Commissions to discuss how the motion should come together.
8. Meanwhile you should be electing your delegates by cross campus ballot (unless you have a specific exception) and training them in the issues that will be discussed and what your union believes in relation to them.
9. Keep up to date with the goings on by keeping an eye on nusconnect and following @nusuk on twitter and #NUSNC12
10. If you have any questions about the policy process contact democracy@nus.org.uk or nick.smith@nus.org.uk

Some practical things to consider when submitting amendments and motions

Firstly you should make sure you're not submitting motions that covers the same policy as some which already exists. www.nusconnect.org.uk/about/policy holds a list of all current zone policy.

Because each union has 1,400 words of text to use, you will need to consider both how you debate the text you want to put in and how you will divide your word allowance.

It is up to individual unions how they do this and our suggestions are not exhaustive, but there are a number of methods you could use.

You could debate all the potential amendments and new motions at your student council, with one of the resolutions as "The proposer of this motion shall write an amendment [or ordinary motion] within the word limits allowed.

After student council, your chair can divide 1,400 by the number of successful amendments and motions and the successful proposers write a motion to National Conference of up to that amount.

For example: Fibchester City College student council debates 4 amendments to the policy recommendations and 2 ordinary motions. 2 of the amendments and both the ordinary motions pass. The proposers of each of these now have 350 words each to write an amendment or ordinary motion that reflects what was passed in the student council.

You could set limits for each amendment or motion. You vote on the order the motions are debated at student council. Once you have passed a number of motions that equal 1,400 words this becomes your text to National Conference.

For example: Fibchester Hope have 3 HE policy amendments, 2 Society and Citizenship motions, 2 Union Development amendments and 2 Welfare amendments. They have set a word limit of 200 words. After a vote to decide the order they debate the Union Development amendments (1 of which passes), the 2 Society and Citizenship motions (both of which pass) and the 3 HE amendments (all 3 of which pass). They are left with the 2 welfare motions. If they pass the first one, the second does not get discussed as they have passed text up to their 1,400 words.

You could allocate 280 words to each of 5 zones and ask the students with an interest in that zone's work to write amendments or motions up to that amount. They then choose which one they want to put forward. You may then want to ratify this through your student council.

For example: Coleg Fibchester Undeb Myfyrwyr have a Welfare Committee that discuss Welfare issues, an Education Committee, a Sports and Societies Council and an Ethics and Environment group. All of these can be attended by all students and discuss motions for Welfare, Higher and Further Education, Union Development and Society and Citizenship respectively. The text they choose becomes the union's text to National Conference.

Training and supporting your delegates

You'll want to train and support your delegates to National Conference to ensure your union's voice is represented accurately and strongly and that the delegates themselves get a positive experience. Delegates at Conference have an amazing job to do in deciding the direction of NUS, and if they have clarity about their role and the policy process, are empowered to participate and can be assured they represent the views of their peers and not just themselves the three day conference can become an unforgettable time.

Make sure all delegates understand their role

To hold the officers of NUS to account on the work that they have done, to set the direction of the NUS for the year ahead through the policy that is set and to choose new officers to lead the organisation up until National Conference 2013. They should do all these things considering the views of students at their institution.

Ensure all delegates understand the policy being discussed

This is especially true of delegates who aren't experts in a certain area. Why is the NSS used? What has it meant for your union? What does NSS even stand for? You could ask a representative for each of the areas to go through and discuss the policy with delegates - so the VP Education discusses that zone, and the VP Student Rights and Diversity discusses the Welfare motions.

What is your union's stance on the policies?

You may have passed student council policy on the issues before, or you may pass specific stances during the run up to this National Conference. If you haven't done this, you should seek information that will help delegates make a decision. What do course reps think about tutor contact? Do your Politics Society believe voter registration is an important campaign?

What skills do your delegates need?

Delegates at conference may want to make a speech without having planned to do so before. Can you offer them public speaking training? Can the debating society offer some suggestions and tips?

What else do your delegates need?

It is important that delegations know each other and look out for one another. They'll be sitting together for three days so it would be good for them to meet informally before April and get a chance to travel up to the Sheffield together. They should be able to rely on the delegate leader to ensure that they get their accommodation and know when they'll meet up over the Conference.

Make sure delegates look after themselves

With the debates so exciting, fringes to go to and socialising late into the night, delegates can forget to look after themselves. They should make sure they're getting sleep and food and are clear about what they'll be discussing. It sounds basic, but more than one delegate over the years has become so absorbed in what's going on around them that they've missed meals!



President's Report

The President has a duty to report on the Priority Campaign for the year.

Liam Burns
NUS President

Conference Resolves

Stopping the Market in Higher Education White Paper and HE Bill

1. NUS to provide a range of resources, training and support for all students unions to enable them to have the skills and knowledge to make effective and purposeful contributions to the funding and resource allocations within their institutions.

3. To support all unions by working to create national expectations about how Universities are open and accessible in consultation and transparent in considering how they implement cuts, by making all information regarding finances and quality of courses available to students and their unions in advance of decisions.

9. Produce a guide for student officers on scrutinising access agreements drawn up by universities seeking to charge above the minimum cap.

10. To demand that the Government's forthcoming White Paper on the future of the HE sector outlines what more students can expect from their respective HEIs should their institutions seek to charge higher fees.

19. To include improved information, advice and guidance on the breadth of educational opportunities post 16 as a key strand of the funding campaign.

20. In all instances, this must include contact time, on course costs, student satisfaction, assessment methods, curriculum content and graduate employability

21. To campaign for improved universal student rights including access to an independent complaints body, involvement in decision making, mobility across institutions and access to representation.

The first semester has been focussed on influencing the contents, and informing students' unions of the implications, of the Government's White Paper - *Putting Students at the Heart of the System*. We have been publically challenging the White Paper's contents and formulating what policy wins we could secure out of its translation into the imminent HE Bill.

In the second semester we will launch a campaign to ensure the HE Bill and new regulatory framework delivers additional rights for students in institutional practice, governance, funding and student financing. Specifically, we want wins in areas such as student loans terms and conditions, student representation in private providers, reduced hidden course costs, increased bursary provision and additional powers in institutional strategic decisions.

Outputs:

- Fringes and briefings at all party conferences, media coverage on a range of issues regarding the White Paper and speeches at numerous sector conferences and events
- Membership briefings covering the content of the White Paper as well as responses from across the sector, specifically on access agreements, right to redress, equality impacts, employability, fee waivers, part-time students and 'choice'.
- Launch of a consultation into students' unions experiences of negotiating Access Agreements, due to report early next year.
- Launch of a survey to deliver what will be the most comprehensive analysis of student financial support ever produced (see Welfare Zone report).

Impacts reported so far:

- More money in students' pockets with numerous unions reporting better Access Agreements with larger amounts allocated to bursaries as a result of NUS support. Lobbying has also resulted in

Campaign Capacity and Activism

2. To create a range of campaigning actions that capture the activism created following the 2010 National Demo.

11. To work with education unions and anti-cuts campaigning organisations to build, coordinate and support a range of actions including protests, strikes, walkouts and occupations against the cuts.

12. To continue to campaign proactively and innovatively against education cuts in a way which is coherent, does not undermine students unions, and seeks to ensure that demonstrations engage all students and do not become dominated by fringe groups due to lack of leadership from the NUS.

15. To lead the opposition to any closures or similarly regressive developments of HE or FE institutions.

Long Term Education Funding Strategy

5. To demand and lobby for continued funding for arts and humanities.

6. To continue advocating an alternative to the current funding model.

7. For the NUS President and VP HE to lobby the government to remove interest rates, and mandate them to explore alternative 'interest-free' models.

8. To campaign for the restoration of EMA and Aimhigher, or adequate replacements.

13. To hold the government to account on the whitepaper, widening access and the promise to only allow fees to reach £9,000 only in exceptional circumstances, actively and vocally.

14. To lead the opposition to any move to go beyond a £9,000 cap.

16. To create an NUS Funding Campaign, opposing all forms of tuition fees, marketisation and cuts to both further and higher education sectors

17. The Campaign will make the case for public investment in education, emphasising education as a social good

18. To create a new 4 year strategy to deliver the

an extended period before part-time students begin repaying their fees, where as they would have had to repay while still studying.

- Student' unions futures secured (in terms of Government intention) with explicit recognition of their value in the White Paper secured.

From the NCAFC demonstration to November 30th Pensions Strike, working with *Defend the Right to Protest* and *Liberty* nationally to local students' unions where institutions have tried to curtail protest locally, NUS has supported a wide range of actions over the first semester. However we have also proactively built capacity in activism locally and nationally through direct funding to students' unions, in-house activist training, *Student Activism 2011* and the "I am the Change" initiative (see Union Development Zone report).

Next semester we will continue to train activists locally but will work with trade unions, sector bodies and anti-cuts groups to demonstrably alter the contents of the HE Bill.

Outputs:

- Funding, support and joint briefings with *Defend the Right to Protest* and *Liberty*.
- Funding and support for the 2-5k strong NCAFC National Demonstration.
- Training of over 1000 students locally through in-house activism training, 400 nationally through *Student Activism 2011* and over 200 submissions to the "I am the Change" website.
- Briefings and support for the November 30th Pensions Strike.

Impacts reported so far:

- None yet recorded

Several years ahead of the General Election 2010 NUS developed a long term strategy that allowed it to build towards the election with regards to its policy work. It was fortunate that this also coincided with a major review of the future of higher education funding. This provided a clear focal point for the organisation with regards to its work. Whilst there are clear areas where NUS can and should influence policy during the term of the current Government, it is important that NUS thinks ahead into the future, about influencing the policy of the next Government and influencing political parties during their policy development processes.

However NUS and the student movement have a decision to make regarding what its vision for the future of education is, and then how it reflects that vision in its future work and as the lines between further and higher education become increasingly blurred, this next election provides NUS with an exciting opportunity to consider what a 'tertiary education' looks like for students and institutions and educations relationship to wider society.

stated aims and fully incorporating the broader context of the updated campaign priorities
22. Make central to our campaign the demand for taxation of the rich and business to fund Services.

Not Undertaken

4. To provide support for unions with large numbers of members on Health and Education programmes, by creating resources and training to help representatives engage in policy discussions and campaigns for non-HEFCE funded provision

The challenge ahead is for NUS to develop a clear vision for further and higher education for 2015 and then to plan on how to deliver this vision. This work is due to begin next semester.

No work has been undertaken in this area



Toni Pearce, FE Zone Committee Chair

Roshni Joshi, South Downs College SU (NEC member)
Heather Dower, Canterbury College SU
Charlotte Knight, Cornwall College SU
Kyra Murison, Aberdeen College SU
Benjamin Thompson, Derby College SU
Hailey Townsend, Bridgend College SU

Liam Burns, National President (ex-officio)

Toni Pearce NUS Vice-President (Further Education)

Teaching and Learning for the 21st Century Conference Resolves

1. That NUS should work with the Institute for Learning (IfL) to allow student input into the design of teachers' Continuing Professional Development, allowing students to offer their perspectives on student life and the use of technology in teaching and learning
2. That NUS should produce a Teaching & Learning Charter for colleges, setting out ways to involve students in the development and delivery of teaching & learning, how to use VLEs in teaching & learning, and encouraging colleges to use external tutors and other experts in the classroom
3. To oppose the use of student observers and encourage proper utilisation of student feedback and trained and supported class reps.
4. Work with providers to encourage the utilisation of social networking in the teaching and learning process.
5. Seek support for a cross-sector approach for technology in learning and investigate the situation internationally
6. Work with VLE providers such as Moodle and Blackboard to engage with NUS and Students' Unions in improving the user experience
7. The Further Education Zone should instigate links between NUS, OfQUAL and the Sector Skills Councils to improve student engagement in developing qualifications and deciding on curriculum
8. For the Further Education Zone to carry out a survey on students' experiences with Functional Skills provision and report to the sector with recommendations for improvement

CPD Review The FE Zone is working with the Institute for Learning to contribute to the sector's review of continuing professional development for teaching staff in FE. In addition, NUS has been invited to sit on the editorial board for the Institute for Learning's professional journal on continuing professional development.

Teaching and Learning and Technology charters

The FE Zone is currently working with students and sector partners to develop content for the charters, which will be launched in the spring term.

Qualifications and Curriculum In partnership with sector bodies and exam boards, the FE Zone will be holding a series of regional and national consultative events to involve students and students' unions directly in the design, format and content of qualifications.

During summer 2011, the FE Zone led the scrutiny of Ofqual and the Joint Council for Qualifications over the high number of errors in summer 2011 exam papers. This led to an inquiry into the conduct of the exam boards, as a result of which safeguards have been put in place to prevent the reoccurrence of such errors. The government has recently announced new powers for Ofqual, enabling them to fine exam boards when they make errors. In addition, the government is opening up a debate about examination standards in Further Education in England and Wales.

Technology NUS will be working with Microsoft on a series of focus groups on students' preferences in relation to the use of technology in teaching and learning.

After consulting with students at NUS Festival 2011 on their aspirations and priorities for the use of technology in teaching and learning, NUS presented the findings at Microsoft's *Briefing for FE Principals and Policy-makers 2011*.

Vocational Education Conference Resolves

1. To lobby the government to allow NUS to influence the development of the new All-Age Careers service -this comes into place in April 2012.
2. To lobby for a strong web presence for the new careers service, with links to the BTEC Alumni project.
3. To support the Government's plans to improve the aesthetics of practical learning and achievement but with an emphasis that students studying in different skill areas should be treated equally
4. To urge the government to provide a tool which will enable careers advisors and information, advice and guidance professionals to map professional and vocational qualifications onto academic qualifications.
5. To use the recommendations of the Wolf Review of 14-19 Vocational Education to create a campaign strategy to oppose the segregation of academic and vocational education.
6. To lobby the government to incentivise higher-level apprenticeships to encourage uptake of students and employers.
7. To engage with the government and call for student engagement through sector skills councils when developing licenses to practice and professional standards.
8. The Further Education Zone should call for an immediate review of the UCAS tariff to include the introduction of the Qualifications and Credit Framework

Funding Conference Resolves

1. To work with the AoC and other provider representative groups to form examples of best practice for merging/merged colleges and super colleges, advocating shared services and the merging of 'back office functions'
2. To create resources for students' unions to allow them to demonstrate students' financial and resource needs, in order to influence college decision-making on funding priorities
3. To lobby the Skills Funding Agency and Education Funding Agency for a place upon their respective advisory boards.
4. To oppose changes in adult education funding

Functional Skills Following some preliminary research in this area, the FE Zone has produced a briefing on Functional Skills and is soon to be surveying student members on their experiences of Functional Skills provision.

IAG Research The FE Zone has commissioned and launched a significant piece of research (funded by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service) into FE students' experiences of information, advice and guidance (IAG) services. This research has probed specifically into students' experiences and expectations of web-based guidance services. In addition, our response to the HE White Paper consultation raised concerns around IAG provision.

Careers Lobbying We have contributed to and taken part in discussions around careers, including a "careers seminar" in the House of Commons. We are lobbying the government to ensure that students are well informed enough to make the right choices about their education and to ensure that the new National Careers Service is fit for purpose.

Parity of esteem between vocational and academic qualifications We are contributing to the UCAS tariff review and lobbying for apprenticeships to be included on the tariff, which will allow students to progress more easily from apprenticeships into higher education.

Apprentices The FE Zone has been involved in the design and launch of the new NUS Apprentice Extra card and is working with the government to launch the new National Society of Apprentices, which will look to carry out research into the experiences of apprentices in the future. In our response to the HE White Paper consultation, we argued that there should be more engagement with industry to allow apprenticeships to be considered more seriously in HE admissions, and we encouraged the establishment of a quality assurance framework for careers advice services.

Enrichment Cuts The FE Zone has launched the "Fair Necessities" campaign against cuts to Enrichment. This is accompanied by a campaign toolkit which provides information and adaptable resources to enable unions to deliver a bespoke campaign locally, as well as an audit tool to allow unions to gauge the impact of cuts in their colleges. This toolkit has also been adapted for colleges in Scotland who are facing institutional funding cuts. We are lobbying the Department for Business Innovation and Skills to carry out an impact assessment of these cuts to the sector, focussing specifically on the perceived omission of extra

which further marginalises those on 'inactive benefits' and the unemployed

5. To campaign for a universal offer for access to basic ESOL, regardless of whether you live in a settled or unsettled community
6. To lobby the Skills Funding Agency and Education Funding Agency to more effectively promote the sources of individual learner support available, and to work with relevant third sector agencies and IAG services to do likewise.
7. To create a guide which informs students and students' unions what they are entitled to and how to access funding for courses and student support.
8. To lobby BIS to make student loans available for level 2 students aged over 25.
9. To collect evidence on the ways in which public sector cuts (changes to welfare benefits, for example) affect students across the board, to create an overall picture of how the cuts affect our members.
10. To work with the Welfare Zone to create a 'Blueprint' for FE funding, setting out a vision for funding priorities within schools and FE & Skills, as well as a new model for individual learner support.
11. To speak out against all funding cuts.
12. To work with education unions and anti-cuts campaigning organisations to build, coordinate and support a range of actions including protests, strikes, walkouts and occupations against the cuts

Student Voice

Conference Resolves

1. That NUS should develop Class Reps election packs for tutors, advising them on how to facilitate elections and support class reps throughout the year
2. That NUS should review and redevelop the Dewey Weber Model Learner Engagement Policy to reflect developments in learner involvement in the years since its creation
3. To lobby the Department for Education to make the Learner Views Survey compulsory in schools and Sixth Form Colleges
4. To ensure that NUS has input into any review of the Framework for Excellence programme
5. Request that the Skills Funding Agency hold a review of the Learner Views Survey, led by NUS, to improve the system and bring back Sixth Forms
6. To work with the sector to create a stronger relationship between Learner Involvement Strategies and the institutions' Quality Department.

curricular activities from government priorities for education, as well as the impact of Enrichment funding cuts on student voice mechanisms.

Mergers The FE Zone is producing a practical merger support resource for unions whose institutions may be merging with other institutions. This resource will be designed to provide support with both institutional and union mergers

ESOL The FE Zone has worked with the Action for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) campaign to fight for universal access to ESOL. Our lobbying work resulted in a partial u-turn on the criteria for access to free ESOL provision, and the policy now allows anyone who can evidence that they are looking for work access to provision at a local college. The FE Zone continues to campaign on this issue as this u-turn doesn't go far enough to support some of the most vulnerable people who need access to this provision.

Adult Education Funding During terms two and three we will run a campaign on adult eligibility for level 2 and 3 courses. We have also responded to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills consultation on the introduction of loans in the Further Education sector for adults studying at level 3 or 4.

Individual Learner Support As part of the priority campaign, the student support commission will design a new model for individual learner support in Further Education. In addition, we have launched the *Caring for the Future* campaign to protect the *Care to Learn* scheme, which funds childcare for teenage parents in school and further education.

Class Reps The FE Zone is working with LSIS to look at how we can redesign the class rep support materials that are currently available from NUS and LSIS, and to create a modular system to guide unions from election to accreditation.

Learner involvement The FE Zone is in the process of rewriting the model Learner Involvement Strategy, a draft of which will be presented to the FE sector's Learner Voice Think Tank in the spring.

The Learner Satisfaction Survey NUS has met with John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, to request that he works with the Department for Education to make participation in the Learner Satisfaction Survey compulsory for school sixth forms and sixth form colleges. In addition, we highlighted the importance of full participation in the survey in our response to the HE White Paper consultation. We continue to work with the Skills Funding Agency to improve the survey, and to render the results more

meaningful to current and potential students.

Student Governors The FE Zone successfully campaigned against the proposed scrapping of student governors in England. The FE Zone has delivered a successful pilot of the Student Governor Support Programme in England, with high level of satisfaction from participants.

HE in FE

Conference Resolves

1. That NUS FE officer training ('FE Leadership') should include a session on HE sector policy, to help FE officers to understand how to support HE students
2. That NUS should survey HE in FE students about their likely destinations in order that better HE in FE destinations data can be provided to potential students
3. To provide materials for students' unions to lobby their colleges for better induction for HE in FE students
4. To campaign against HE institutions withdrawing from collaborations with FE providers in order to deliver that provision themselves
5. To lobby HEFCE to fund colleges directly for HE courses
6. To create a high profile campaign with the Higher Education Zone including a digest of how HE funding changes will affect HE in FE provision specifically
7. To create a national campaign with the Higher Education Zone to tackle student dissatisfaction for HE in FE students, particularly around access to high quality learning resources
8. Work with the HE, Union Development, Welfare and Society and Citizenship Zones to improve NUS' relationship with HE in FE students

The FE zone is working with the Higher Education and Union Development Zones to improve our offer to students' unions that represent HE in FE students and to meet the needs of those students better. As such, we will be producing a toolkit to enable HE and FE students' unions to development partnership and service level agreements, and to carry out research amongst HE in FE students to find out more about the issues they face.

FE Support Guide

Conference Resolves

1. That a guide will be created explaining how the cost of higher education tuition will be paid back
2. That this guide will also explain the maintenance loan and grant system and will also mention London weighting
3. That this guide will also include information about what bursaries and grants are available at different higher education institutions
4. That this guide could hold higher education institutions to account on widening access
5. That this guide will be readily available for A Level and other types of FE students

In the new year, the VPFE will work closely with the VPHE and partners from the further and higher education sectors to ensure that a comprehensive and accessible guide on the HE funding landscape is produced for those considering entry to higher education.

Lifelong learning in a global context

Conference Resolves

1. Mandate NUS VP FE to work closely with NUS International Students Officer to produce briefings to promote funding opportunities from the European Commission on the Lifelong Learning Project, including the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, and the Grundtvig programme to all students unions 2 months before deadlines
2. Lobby FE students unions to work closely with their colleges leaders to discuss bid to both funding project to enhance the global experience of students who are involved in vocational training or adult education in the UK.

The VPFE has facilitated communication and information sharing between the NUS International Students Officer and the FE membership on the opportunities listed.

Other work

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The FE Zone responded to a series of government consultations on:

- The introduction of loans into Further Education
- The provision of Care to Learn
- The provision of residential bursaries in Further Education
- Further institutional reforms to the FE sector to increase marketisation and competition in the sector
- Informal, Adult and Community Learning
- The new Ofsted Common Inspection Framework
- 15-19 examinations
- Programmes of study for 16-19
- 16-19 funding

National Conference 2012 | FE Zone proposals

This section outlines the recommendations from the FE Zone Committee to National Conference which you can submit amendments to. If you want to discuss an issue that has not been covered in these recommendations you can submit an ordinary motion.

The FE Zone has live policy on the following issues which are available to read in full at www.nusconnect.org.uk/about/policy

FE policy 2009 – due to lapse at this Conference

Supporting students in the recession
CALL – Campaign Alliance for Lifelong Learning
ULN. Got Your Number!
Postgraduate Study
Arts Education funding and Hidden Course costs
Stop Ripping Off Those on ALG and EMA
The Student Experience
Bin the Broke and Broken Funding System

FE policy 2010

Learner Voice
Students as co-producers
Great Teaching and Learning
Equality and Diversity
Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
Capital
Information, Advice and Guidance
Investment in Adult Education
16-19 Provision
Apprentices: Practice what you preach
Increase in 16+ Participation in the FE sector
Enhance the experience of FE International Students
Healthy FE
Bogus Colleges

FE Policy 2011

Teaching & Learning for the 21st Century
Vocational Education
Funding
Student Voice
HE in FE
FE Support Guide
Lifelong Learning in a Global Context

Keeping Colleges in check (201)

Over the last 12 months, we have seen government attacks on the compulsion for colleges to have student governors in both England and Wales, under the guise of cutting back on regulation and “bureaucracy” in further education. Over the last 12 months, the National Union of Students has been working with the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) to pilot the Student Governor Support Programme in each of the four regions in England. This comes alongside reforms of the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework (CIF) that proposes a “lighter touch” approach to the inspection of colleges rated “outstanding” or “good” not being inspected for extended periods of time, and with the removal of restricting grades on safeguarding and equality & diversity. The new CIF for colleges generally and residential colleges has much less of an emphasis than in recent years on any college provision outside of the classroom. We have also seen changes to the Learner Satisfaction Survey (LSS) over recent years, with school sixth forms and sixth form colleges being exempted from the survey.

Conference Believes:

1. There is inconsistent practice across the sector regarding the appointment of student governors and many colleges do not fulfil the requirement to have them elected
2. It must be compulsory for all further education providers to have at least two elected student governors on their governing body. This should include sixth form colleges, general further education colleges, academies, university technical colleges and private providers
3. Student governors should have access to quality training and support programmes
4. The decision by Ofsted to remove the restricting grades for safeguarding and equality & diversity sends out a message to the sector that these areas are no longer of as great importance to the government
5. A lack of emphasis around extra curricular activities in Ofsted inspections, alongside a cut in funding for these activities sends a clear message to colleges that these are not priorities for the government
6. It is not acceptable for any colleges to be able to go uninspected for extended periods of time, regardless of whether they were judged outstanding or good at their most recent inspection
7. Colleges should be inspected regularly on all aspects of their work and quality of their provision, not just around teaching and learning, and when measuring outcomes for learners, Ofsted should be aware of the scope of these outcomes, from preparing young people and vulnerable adults for independent living, to progression into higher education or employment
8. There should be greater provision for informal “formative” inspection of the further education sector, including spontaneous “spot checks” by Ofsted and peer review and mentoring programmes
9. The further education sector should have an independent complaints and appeals procedure outside of internal institutional structures.
10. There is currently no nationally benchmarked satisfaction survey for 16-19 students in the UK

Conference Resolves

1. To lobby the government, sector agencies and providers to extend the NUS/LSIS Student Governor Support Programme to all providers across the UK – The NUS further education zone should support NUS Wales, NUS Scotland and NUS-USI to roll out this programme across the nations
2. To lobby the government to reinstate the compulsory requirement for all further education providers to carry out the Learner Satisfaction Survey
3. To produce a range of resources to support

effective class rep systems, with support and advice at a local, regional and national level to facilitate effective scrutiny of quality teaching and learning provision

4. To lobby the government for a national complaints ombudsman for the entire further education sector, including work based learning providers and private providers
5. To produce and disseminate best practice provision around local complaints systems for further education providers

Offender Learning (202)

Much of the policy discourse currently in existence around offender learning provision is focused upon employment outcomes for offenders. This is driven by the belief that offenders will turn away from crime if they are given the appropriate skills and knowledge to find jobs, and will result therefore in a reduction in reoffending. As such, education provision for offenders often takes the form of functional and vocational skills provision.

The transformative power of education both for individuals and communities may be difficult to measure but cannot and should not be underestimated. Education builds confidence, aspiration and a sense of identity. Whilst the perceived benefits of vocational education are often more tangible, the advantages of having access to academic study are of equal importance to offenders and ex-offenders.

Conference believes:

1. education is a fundamental right, even for those in prison or on probation
2. those in prison and on probation should be given access to a full spectrum of learning choices, including 'academic' courses
3. little is understood about the wider benefits of learning for offenders outside of employability outcomes
4. the focus upon employability outcomes may detract from a focus upon the quality of education provision for offenders
5. further education can and should exist for its own sake, regardless of employability outcomes

Conference resolves:

1. NUS should work with sector partners to commission or conduct research into the experiences of education for offenders
2. this research should place particular emphasis upon offenders' experiences of the quality and range of provision on offer, as well as access to provision

Qualifications and Progression (203)

Students seeking to enter higher education currently make their applications to the University and College Application Service (UCAS) before they receive exam results; in many cases, before they have even sat the exams. Even students who achieved the grades that they were predicted are not guaranteed a place at the institution they applied to as many institutions over-recruit.

UCAS have proposed a new model, a post-qualification admissions system (PQA). This means students applying to higher education institutions after they have their exam results. Students can apply to two institutions. The application would be made from the end of June until mid-July, and applicants would receive the institutions' decision by the third week of September.

Moving to a post-qualification admissions system would mean bringing the exam schedule forward to give UCAS and HEIs time to process the results before the start of the academic year. This reduces the number of weeks between a student starting their course and sitting their exams, which could have an impact on the amount of teaching time they have access to. This is further complicated by the fact that there are not consistent start and finish dates for all qualifications across the sector.

The government is also trying to encourage providers to abandon modular A-levels, in favour of a two year programme assessed via linear examinations at the end of the course.

All of this comes at a time when students are less confident than ever of the ability of private companies to administer qualifications accurately, promptly and fairly. In the summer of 2011 more than 100,000 students were affected by errors in the examination process.

Conference believes:

1. A higher education application system based on guesswork is fundamentally unfair
2. The current application system is designed around an outdated elitist model of higher education and is no longer fit for purpose
3. The current application system is based around an outdated idea of an homogenous higher education sector and is designed for progression in to universities but not into other forms of higher education, e.g. apprenticeships
4. The higher education clearing system puts students under unnecessary pressure and promotes snap choices over informed decision making
5. The current UCAS application system assumes a level of institutional support and access to technology that is not always available, particularly for "non-traditional" students
6. Students are being asked to take a gamble on admission to university by paying for the current UCAS application system
7. UCAS should move to a post-qualification application system
8. Applying to an institution after receiving grades still does not guarantee students a place in higher education; the post qualification application system should not limit students to choosing two higher education institutions.
9. Any new higher education application system should not be designed purely for A-level students; students on other qualification pathways have a right to a system that meets their needs.
10. Any change in exam scheduling to accommodate a post-qualification application system should not come at the expense of teaching time.
11. The clearing system also disadvantages students who are less confident at promoting themselves personally as well as those who do not have access to support networks of people who have gone through the process before
12. Student confidence in the operation and scrutiny of exam boards continues to fall
13. A system of competing, private, for-profit exam boards introduces perverse incentives when providers are choosing an exam board, often making value for money more of an incentive than quality
14. Exam boards charging for resources that help students to pass their exams places some students at a disadvantage if they cannot afford to purchase them

(cont)

Conference resolves:

1. To support proposals for a post-qualification application system to higher education and actively promote the benefits of such a system to bodies across the sector.
2. To work with UCAS to ensure any new application process takes the needs of all types of students into account, particularly for students on programmes that are not based around the traditional academic year
3. To campaign to protect guided learning hours for further education students, which may be put at risk in the implementation of some post qualification admission models
4. To campaign for a free, accessible higher education application process
5. To campaign for a the introduction of a single state-run examination board for all further education qualifications

Free Education (204)

The “free education” debate is one which is regularly discussed by the National Union of Students regarding higher education, tuition fees and whether higher education is a right or a privilege. However, this is not a discussion which has been had about the further education sector and as new reforms to the further education planning and funding landscape take effect, and we begin to see the government manufacturing a “market” in the further education sector, it is important that NUS establishes a policy on further education funding that takes into account the complex intricacies of the sector.

In recent years, we have seen the government moving more of the burden of funding for further education on to individual students, particularly for adults in the sector. This includes the proposed introduction of a fees and loan system for over 24s studying level 3 or 4 programmes, even if it is their first qualification at this level. This comes alongside the withdrawal of maintenance payments for 16-18 year olds which have fully exposed the “hidden costs” involved in further education.

The government's own impact assessment on FE loans suggests that a 20 per cent reduction in the number of adult learners will be necessary simply for the scheme to stay in budget, the system does not bring with it any provision for the maintenance loans or grants that currently exist within higher education and institutions will not be required to publish access agreements.

Conference Believes

1. Further education is a basic human right that is required to be able to gain employment, or even to live independently in the UK
2. The benefit of further education to the individual is far outweighed by the benefit to wider society
3. The introduction of a loans system in further education for over 24s studying at level three and above is damaging, particularly when coupled with a system which allows for uncapped fees.
4. Where fees are to be charged in further education, NUS advocates that a loans system is available
5. Removing the entitlement to a free first level three for over 24s is discrimination against those in this age bracket, who are much more likely to be from disadvantaged, debt averse backgrounds.
6. It is not acceptable to penalise adults by placing an arbitrary age limit on their access to free education
7. Arbitrary age limits on access to further education are exacerbated, if not caused, by discrepancies between the two further education funding bodies
8. Everyone should be entitled to free education up to full level three, at least for the first time, regardless of their age or previous access to education
9. “Free education”, should be exactly that, without hidden costs, including those for transport, equipment, mandatory trips or examinations
10. Access to education and success for young people often relies not on their ability, or their ability to pay, but the willingness of their parents or families to support them
11. Further education should be funded by progressive taxation in the same way as other public services
12. The idea that some students should pay for further education whilst studying alongside others who are receiving the same course for free perpetuates the idea that one persons education is more important than others’ because they are consumers

Conference resolves:

1. the NUS Further Education Zone will continue to campaign against the introduction of a fees and loan system in further education
2. The NUS Further Education Zone will research the average cost of gaining basic qualifications for further education students

(cont)

Conference resolves

3. NUS will lobby for one funding body for the entire further education sector, including apprenticeships, work based learning and adults, and for planning to lie within one government department
4. NUS will lobby for the reinstatement of entitlements to free first level 2 and 3 qualifications for all, regardless of their employment status
5. To use the results of research into hidden course costs in further education to lobby colleges to be upfront about any “hidden costs” involved in any of their programmes, and to remove these wherever possible

Lifelong learning (205)

Whilst the current government is committed to funding Skills for Life and GCSE English and maths provision, as well as level 2 and 3 qualifications, younger adults are prioritised within this system. Access to education and training for those aged 24 is much more limited; those in employment will be expected to pay fees in order to study a level 2 qualification, and those wishing to pursue a level 3 qualification will need to take out a student loan to cover the cost of fees.

The benefits system can prevent access to education and force people to give up a course if it doesn't fit in with working hours, even if the course could lead to better job prospects in the longer term.

Conference believes:

1. informal adult and community learning (IACL) is a vital stepping stone to community engagement, further education and employment for those who have been out of education, giving people knowledge, skills and confidence
2. our education system should provide equality of access to a high quality education for all learners, regardless of class, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, asylum status or employment status, including a statutory entitlement to learning in the workplace
3. our education system should provide universal access to basic skills, ESOL and ICT courses and a first level three qualification regardless of age
4. our education system should provide learner, teacher and community involvement in all levels of decision-making about their learning wherever it takes place
5. learning is vital for personal wellbeing and development
6. education should provide a path out of poverty and disadvantage including widening participation in higher education and the provision of a second chance later in life
7. universal access to education yields a stable, motivated and rewarded workforce of professional practitioners
8. the consultation on Universal Credit due to take place in 2012 should seek to resolve the barriers to learning resulting from the current benefits system

Conference resolves:

1. NUS should campaign for universal access to a first full level 2 and level 3 qualification
2. NUS should work with NIACE to create a set of guiding principles on access to informal, adult and community learning (IACL)
3. NUS should use the forthcoming BIS/DWP consultation on Universal Credit to highlight barriers to learning existent within the current benefits system



Usman Ali, HE Zone Committee Chair

Sophie Richardson, Queen Mary SU (NEC member)
Paul Abernethy, Liverpool SU
Reni Eddo-Lodge, UCLan SU
Caroline Dangerfield, Salford SU
Luke Durigan, University College London SU
Mo Saqib, Manchester SU

Liam Burns, National President (ex-officio)

Usman Ali NUS Vice-President (Higher Education)

Motion: Education Funding Conference Resolves

1. NUS to provide a range of resources, training and support for all students unions to enable them to have the skills and knowledge to make effective and purposeful contributions to the funding and resource allocations within their institutions.
2. To create a range of campaigning actions that capture the activism created following the 2010 National Demo.
3. To support all unions by working to create national expectations about how Universities are open and accessible in consultation and transparent in considering how they implement cuts, by making all information regarding finances and quality of courses available to students and their unions in advance of decisions.
4. To provide support for unions with large numbers of members on Health and Education programmes, by creating resources and training to help representatives engage in policy discussions and campaigns for non-HEFCE funded provision
5. To demand and lobby for continued funding for arts and humanities.
6. To continue advocating an alternative to the current funding model.
7. For the NUS President and VP HE to lobby the government to remove interest rates, and mandate them to explore alternative 'interest-free' models.
8. To campaign for the restoration of EMA and Aimhigher, or adequate replacements.
9. Produce a guide for student officers on scrutinising access agreements drawn up by universities seeking to charge above the minimum cap.
10. To demand that the Government's forthcoming White Paper on the future of the HE sector outlines what more students can expect from their respective HEIs should their institutions seek to charge higher fees.
11. To work with education unions and anti-cuts campaigning organisations to build, coordinate and support a range of actions including protests, strikes, walkouts and occupations against the cuts.
12. To continue to campaign proactively and innovatively against education cuts in a way which is coherent, does not undermine students unions, and seeks to ensure that demonstrations engage all students and do not become dominated by fringe groups due to lack of leadership from the NUS.
13. To hold the government to account on the whitepaper, widening access and the promise to only allow fees to

NUS have produced a range of resources, training and support for both students and students' unions, including cuts briefings, regular Higher Education White Paper briefings, and bespoke support for unions facing cuts.

Activism 2011 brought together over 400 students and campaigning organisations from across the nations to debate, discuss and share ideas about how to further progress the significant wave of activism seen throughout 2010. NUS provided the space for students to talk about issues that were important to them and how they can make a change. In the same week, NUS launched its "I am the Change" campaign, which provides a platform for students to share their changes with each other and to prioritise where NUS should be focussing support for local campaigns.

NUS have launched a major, membership-wide research project into the future of student support titled "The Pound in Your Pocket". This project is being guided by the Student Financial Support Commission. NUS has publicly admonished the moves by the government to remove money from students' pockets and back into the Treasury through a system of fee waivers instead of bursaries and will continue to do so.

NUS have successfully lobbied to improve the terms of the part-time student loan provision and have lobbied for the removal of real rates of interest from student loans, as this will bar many Muslim students from accessing vital financial support. NUS will continue to put pressure on the government until these this issue is resolved.

The VPHE is working with groups such as Action on Access in order to support the on going work of the old AimHigher partnerships. The VPHE is also leading the "Widening Participation Champion project" which supports local unions in becoming leaders on the widening participation agenda through delivering their own widening participation activities. This project will be showcased at the Widening Participation Conference in February. This conference will also provide unions with an opportunity to learn more about how to approach scrutinising access agreements, using the guidance and support materials that have been produced in the Autumn term.

The VPHE is also conducting a cuts mapping exercise in order to provide the movement with a greater understanding of how cuts are affecting the sector. This has meant the VPHE is able to provide individual support

reach £9,000 only in exceptional circumstances, actively and vocally.

14. To lead the opposition to any move to go beyond a £9,000 cap.
15. To lead the opposition to any closures or similarly regressive developments of HE or FE institutions.
16. To create an NUS Funding Campaign, opposing all forms of tuition fees, marketisation and cuts to both further and higher education sectors
17. The Campaign will make the case for public investment in education, emphasising education as a social good
18. To create a new 4 year strategy to deliver the stated aims and fully incorporating the broader context of the updated campaign priorities
19. To include improved information, advice and guidance on the breath of educational opportunities post 16 as a key strand of the funding campaign.

Motion: Flexible Provision

Conference resolves:

1. To support the investment in and expansion of flexible provision in the higher education sector.
2. To lobby for increased affordable flexible provision as one route to widening access to higher education.
3. To conduct research into learning and teaching experience of students enrolled in flexible provision working closely with experienced providers such as the Open University to promote best practice in supporting distance learners.
4. To lobby to ensure that there are stringent conditions on those in the private sector delivering flexible provision.
5. To encourage increased work in the higher education sector with employers in establishing the needs of the economy and how flexible provision can best support this.
6. To look at best practice models of engaging students within flexible provision working alongside the Union Development Zone.
7. To work with trade unions to improve awareness of students' union membership to learners enrolled in work based learning.
8. To conduct student experience research into the expectations and satisfaction of those students undertaking accelerated degrees to better understand the impact of condensing courses.
9. To encourage the increase of international collaborative arrangements and provision to ensure students have the opportunity to study abroad throughout their lifelong learning journey.
10. To research and explore representation of students studying on campuses abroad accredited or run by UK institutions and to support students' unions work to engage with students in overseas campuses.
11. Through NUS student engagement work to support students' unions in increasing their engagement of foundation degree learners.
12. To lobby for the introduction of national satisfaction surveys for all learners in flexible provision at all levels of study.
13. To conduct research into the quality and employability of students undertaking accelerated degrees to better understand the impact of condensing courses and the consequent impact on three year degrees such as retention and recruitment
14. To conduct research into the learning support, induction and retention of students undertaking accelerated degrees, especially those entering education after a break, to better understand the

to those unions that are facing cuts.

The VPHE has launched a Charter on Organisation and Management to support unions in discussing the diverse needs of students when it comes to the organisation of their course. This charter particularly looks at ensuring the needs of all types of learners are considered in this area.

The VPHE succeeded in gaining funding from the QAA to run a comprehensive student experience survey. This survey looks at all aspects of the learning and teaching experience, including the experience of students enrolled in flexible provision. The survey, focus groups and online discussion forums are currently in progress and the report will be published next year.

The VPHE will be further looking into other areas of flexible provision, distance learning, work based learning and accelerated degrees in the coming year and consideration of these aspects of learning are included in all work produced.

The Student Engagement project is running pilot projects with a range of different types of learner to support unions to develop ways they engage with hard to reach groups. These projects will report in February.

impact of condensing courses

15. To mandate the Higher Education Zone to provide methods of substantial support for distance learners.

Motion: Admissions & Retention

Conference resolves:

1. To lobby for institutions to consider contextual data such as where a student comes from and their social background, in admissions in addition to grades achieved.
2. To ensure that it is possible to bypass UCAS for those from widening access backgrounds in order for contextual data to be considered.
3. To produce research on the historic impact of grade inflation by institutions on widening access and the effect it may have in the new higher education landscape.
4. To lobby for strict access agreements and penalties that are put into practice for institutions to ensure that within the new funding system access is as equal as possible for all.
5. To lobby for the continuation of Aimhigher to ensure access to higher education.
6. To lobby for improved information, advice and guidance and careers information at all levels of education.
7. To ensure institutions invest in retention activities, including within students' unions to prevent disproportionate drop out levels of those from non-traditional backgrounds.
8. To demand and lobby that the government and institutions invest in stronger marketing of bursaries, in particular, to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
9. To work alongside the Society and Citizenship zone to support students' unions in sharing best practice on working on widening participation activities in the community.
10. To ensure the introduction of a mobility credit transfer system to allow those from widening access backgrounds to transfer institutions if they wish to during their course of study.
11. To support students' unions in carrying out Equality Impact Assessments and monitoring participation data in representation and activities to ensure that they are widening access.
12. To work alongside the Union Development zone to encourage the creation of funds in students' union to support widening access in representation and activities.
13. To support Sabbatical Officers with an Equality and Diversity or Widening Participation mandate to lobby their Universities to begin a degree attainment investigation.
14. Ensure that where Universities do not collect equal opportunities monitoring data, NUS supports officers to lobby their
15. University to, firstly, begin collecting this data, including on the grounds of sexual orientation and religion/belief.
16. Ensure that the degree attainment investigation looks at the attainment of different diverse groups including on the basis of ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, caring responsibilities, religion/belief, age, etc.
17. Ensure that the degree attainment investigation looks at Applications to University, Offers, Acceptances, Retention and Degree classification attained.
18. Support Officers in taking the findings of the degree attainment investigation to the heads of faculties where they should help create strategies to address

The VPHE is working with UCAS in support of the introduction of a post qualification admissions process (PQA). NUS are responding to the PQA consultation and actively encouraging and supporting local unions to do the same. The introduction of a PQA system will significantly improve the fairness of the application system.

Following the loss of AimHigher the VPHE is working with a range of organisations such as Action on Access to support work on widening access to continue.

The VPHE is conducting a research project into issues relating to retention and student success in higher education. This work will enable NUS to be better informed about the issue of poor retention amongst different groups and therefore better support unions in developing practices and campaigning for improvements in their institutions that will improve retention rates.

The VPHE is running a Widening Participation Champions project. This project involves nineteen students' unions and looks to develop student-led widening participation activities within the union based on the needs of their local communities. This work will be showcased at our Widening Participation Conference in February, which will be a joint conference with widening participation practitioners from around the UK.

The VPHE and the President have produced a series of briefings to support students' unions in engaging with and analysing access agreements, including conducting a national comparison of institutional spend so unions can better understand their institution's position. The VPHE and the President are also in discussions with OFFA regarding ways in which NUS can formalise students' union involvement in the shaping and commenting on of access agreements.

A degree attainment briefing will be published in the spring as part of the new widening participation hub on NUS Connect.

any differential attainment which should be put into the planning processes of the Universities. This might include getting better language provision, ensuring effective role models, or having better training for lecturers on using different examples in teaching.

19. Similar Universities should be encouraged to work together to share best practice on degree attainment investigations in order to make sure that differential degree attainment based on a person's characteristics is eradicated.
20. NUS will aim to ensure that London weighting for students studying in such an expensive area of the country is not forgotten under the new funding system

Motion: A 21st century teaching and learning experience

Conference resolves:

1. To increase pressure on institutions to deliver change needed to ensure a 21st century learning and teaching experience.
2. To lobby for increased investment in education development in institutions and support both staff and students in improving their teaching and learning experiences.
3. To lobby for wider investment in ICT across the higher education sector.
4. To prioritise research and dissemination of best practice in the use of ICT in institutions within the Higher Education Zone.
5. To support students' unions in their lobbying to improve the availability of training for students and staff in using ICT.
6. To encourage the wider use of PDP programmes as part of personal tuition relationships.
7. To pressure institutions to utilise existing ICT facilities for assessment submission and feedback.
8. To work with institutions and the government to create greater opportunity for students to study abroad to gain a truly international learning experience.
9. To ensure technology complements face to face learning, and doesn't replace it

Motion: Defining a quality experience

Conference resolves:

1. To oppose the consumerisation of the student experience whilst at the same time recognising that students are entitled to minimum standards of the quality of their learning experience.
2. To support the development of student charters which strongly emphasise universities delivering a high quality experience for students.
3. To provide information on best practice in how to use student charters to guarantee a quality student experience.
4. To produce materials to education and empower students of their rights to ensure they get the student experience they expect.
5. To run a national campaign on complaints and appeals procedures to improve institutions procedures and actions
6. To lobby for the introduction of national standards on the provision of public information about postgraduate taught courses.
7. To provide support to unions on lobbying institutions to implement the good practice outlined in the NUS Postgraduate Employment Charter.
8. To support and produce advice on good practice in postgraduate academic representation defined as inclusion of postgraduate voices on union executives and councils, postgraduate societies, and

The VPHE has launched a series of briefings and support documents to help local unions increase pressure on institutions to deliver a 21st century learning experience covering areas such as Technology in Higher Education, Personal Tutors and Academic Support. All of these reports and briefings outlined the importance of face to face learning and how technology should be used to enhance a teaching, not to replace it.

The VPHE held a national course rep conference in December, bringing together over 160 course reps, student officers and representation staff in order to support and develop their understanding of these policy areas. Facilitating opportunities such as this is essential to the development of course reps and course rep systems. This is also why the VPHE is strongly supporting any local course rep event and working with local unions to ensure that they can get the most out of them.

The VPHE is working with the International Students' Campaign to promote opportunities for study abroad. This will include working with the British Council in the new year to produce a range of briefings to institutions and to students unions about how they can better support students who wish to study abroad, and what barriers there currently are to participation.

The VPHE and the President are developing a declaration of student rights which articulates the rights a student has with regard to their educational experience irrespective of whether they are paying a fee or not. Unions will be supported in understanding using these rights, through tools and face to face support to ensure the student academic experience is an excellent one.

The VPHE is providing bespoke support for unions whose institutions are developing student charters as well as having published a range of briefings and information about student charters.

The VPHE has worked closely with the Postgraduate campaign to lobby on a range of national issues including increased public information for postgraduate taught courses and support for unions in gaining a better understanding of issues facing PhD students.

NUS co-delivered with UKCGE, Vitae and the British Library a Postgraduate Researcher Symposium to bring together research postgraduates with academics and staff supporting researchers to discuss how to improve the doctoral experience and how to enhance student-led activity and representation. A joint report will be published in the new year.

The VPHE won funding for two projects focussing on

- postgraduate course and faculty/school reps.
9. To ensure that advice to unions on postgraduate academic issues such as supervision and PhD viva examination is included in any national campaign on complaints and appeals.
 10. To develop resources that promote a nuanced and critical understanding of the complex nature of higher education quality, cognisant of differing institutional cultures, resources and the expectations held by and placed upon students and the differing opportunities and outcomes these may afford.
 11. To stop asking Unions the SUEI 'Killer Question' ('to what extent do you agree the students' union has had a positive impact on your time as a student?') or similar
 12. To refrain from referring to students as consumers, reaffirming Student Rights rather than Consumer Rights

Motion: Postgraduate Funding Conference Resolves:

1. To fight any increase in PGT fees, through lobbying government and providing support for SUs, amongst other methods.
2. To investigate, and lobby for, appropriate funding options for PGT
3. To mandate VPHE and President to establish a campaign on postgraduate funding directed both university managements and the government, to include organising and backing lobbying, demonstrations, and non-violent direct action such as occupations, in pursuit of the following:
 - a. Freeze fees for taught postgraduate courses for home and international students, as a minimum precursor to their abolition.
 - b. No cuts to the postgraduate teaching budget.
 - c. Don't pick on post-grads - Funding shortfalls in education must be made up for by state funding via progressive taxation – masters and international students fees should not be raised in order to plug budgets or cross subsidise other parts of universities' work. Instead of raising fees, universities must join students' call for state funding.
 - d. Transparency now – Students should be told where their fees have gone. Fair deal for part-time students – Part time fees must be proportional to the equivalent full-time course and the course's hours – i.e. set on a pro-rata basis.
 - e. No surprises – Fees for the whole course must be clear at the point of application, students must never be asked to increase payments during a course.
 - f. Proper support, not upfront payment – Give postgraduates access to a similar loan system to undergraduates, and establish national postgraduate bursary and scholarship schemes to ensure able students can always access education.
 - g. No to the unregulated market – the government must regulate masters fees to guarantee accessibility and minimise injustice.
 - h. Training is no substitute for education – while the

developing students' unions and course reps abilities to be involved in the quality agenda. In particular, one project focuses on developing course reps and support for unions during institutional review and the other is a research project looking into the barriers for students and students' union in engaging with quality processes. These projects include developing national training for course reps and providing bespoke support for unions undergoing an institutional audit.

The VPHE also gained funding from the Higher Education Academy to run a Student Led Teaching Awards Project. This project looks to promote and improve the voice of students in shaping the idea of what excellent teaching is and should be. This project is particularly focussed on ensuring that the diverse range of student experiences are included at every stage of a teaching awards project, and therefore reflected by the union to the institution.

The VPHE has successfully lobbied and negotiated with HEFCE to change the wording of question 23 to be "Thinking of all the services, including support, activities and academic representation provided by the Students' Union, Association or Guild at your institution, to what extent do you agree with the following statement: I am satisfied with the Students' Union, Association or Guild at my institution."

The VPHE has worked with the Postgraduate campaign and produced a range of resources to support unions in fighting any increases in postgraduate taught fees. These resources enable unions to establish campaigns directed at their institutions.

In particular the campaign pack includes support for unions to do three main things – resist fee increases and campaign for improved postgraduate financial support; gather intelligence nationally and lobby institutional management to raise issues publically in national forums.

The VPHE will also be supporting the Postgraduate campaign and the International campaign to work together on issues such as fee transparency and rises. They will be holding a joint forum in the early spring in order to discuss these issues with the membership, as well as other cross-cutting issues affecting postgraduate international students.

option of more vocational courses is NUScome, the academic nature of other courses and the intrinsic value of education must be defended regardless of the source of funding.

4. To include postgraduate funding issues more prominently in existing HE funding campaigns.
5. To provide advice and information to CMs seeking to establish similar campaigns on campuses
6. To lobby the government to provide all taught postgraduates with access to low-cost loans, in a similar manner to undergraduates;
7. To lobby the government to introduce legislation to limit and control increases in postgraduate fees;
8. To encourage and support students' unions in lobbying their institutions for more flexible fee payment options for postgraduates;
9. To produce and distribute resources for students' unions to help them refocus their campaigns, activities and governance structures towards the needs and experience of postgraduates.

Motion: Enhance Students' Employability Conference Resolves

1. To lobby the government to work with business to create more work placement opportunities for recent UK graduates to better prepare for permanent positions
2. To lobby the government to create more funded enterprise training programme for recent UK graduates so that they can create their own business, rather than stay unemployed.
3. To lobby the universities to create more sandwich courses which include one year work placements to enhance students' employability
4. To mandate NUS to create a National Accreditation Scheme with universities, business, and the government to recognise all kinds of students activities in the students unions, as invaluable transferable skills that students can use to impress their employers during job-hunting.
5. To encourage perspective students to consider apprenticeships, vocational education, and other forms of training, rather than only focus on degree based qualifications.
6. To lobby the business to create more Summer/Easters/Christmas internships to give current students more real world working experience to enhance their employability

Motion: The reality of cuts for Liberation Students Conference Resolves:

1. For NUS to prioritise fighting on behalf of those who are hit most severely by the cuts - of which members of liberation campaigns will make a significant majority
2. For NUS' priority campaign to include significant focus on the impact of cuts and fees on liberation students, working with the liberation officers
3. For NUS to provide adequate resources and support to the liberation campaigns fighting the impact of cuts on their members

Motion: FE, Undergraduate & Postgraduate International Student Fees Conference resolves:

1. To use the International Students Fee Campaign Toolkit and International Students Fee Chapter to campaign for transparency in international students' tuition fee calculations and distribution in all future campaigns involving UK domestic fees.
2. To include in the national campaign against fees and

The VPHE is working with the Union Development Zone to establish a National Accreditation Scheme, which is explained in more detail in the Union Development report.

The VPHE has received funding from the QAA that looks at improving the training and development of course reps, in order to ensure the gain and understand key employability skills, which is part of the same projects outlined above.

The VPHE and the individual liberation campaigns have jointly produced briefings on the effects of cuts on liberation students and how students' union can work with their liberation groups to fight and protect funding.

The VPHE is looking to work closely with the liberation campaigns on these issues, and many others, including aspects such as the inclusion of liberation issues in the curricula, which is why the Higher Education Zone jointly produced the Liberation, Equality and Diversity in the Curriculum briefing with all four liberation campaigns.

The VPHE has worked with the International Students' Campaign to promote the use of the International Students' Fee Campaign Toolkit unions which included useful discussions amongst international student officers about the issues relating to international student fees at the recent International Students' Officer training day.

The VPHE has also worked with the Postgraduate Campaign in developing a resource pack to support

cuts a campaign against dramatic fee increases for international students and advocate the feasibility of the capping of international student fees in response to rising domestic fees.

3. To mandate the VP FE and the VP HE to work with the sector to ensure that FE and Postgraduate courses specifically are not being taken beyond capacity, resulting in poor quality, in the drive to gain more funding from international students.
4. To include in campaigns against the marketisation of education in the UK, a campaign against the marketisation of international student education in the UK.

National Nursing Campaign

Conference Resolves:

1. To create an NUS Nursing Campaign to address the widespread problems with nursing
2. To look at integration of nursing across many Unions and their campuses to increase nursing representation
3. To provide students unions with information on 'fitness to practice'
4. To work with trade unions to protect placements and future jobs for current nursing students

UK University Overseas Campus

Conference resolves:

1. Mandate NUS VP HE, VP Union Development to work closely with the International Students Officer to work closely with
2. QAA and other relevant organisations to ensure students based in UK universities overseas campus will enjoy the same level of high quality experience as students study in the UK.
3. Mandate NUS VP HE, VP Union Development to work closely with International Students Officer to produce a campaign toolkit to guide students unions to effectively engage and represent students based in distant campuses

Support for European Students and UK Erasmus

Students: Engage the ESU

Conference Resolves

1. To work closely with the European Students Union to ensure targets in the Bologna Process are met by all countries in the EHEA to protect the rights of European students studying in the UK and the rights of UK students studying in Europe.
2. To ensure the broad engagement of European Students, within the International Students' Campaign and Member Unions, in the activities of the European Students Union.
3. To engage the national unions of other European Countries for assistance to address the issue of recognition of UK degrees across Europe and the transfer of credits for those students on exchange programmes facing difficulty upon returning home.
4. To protect the right of mobility within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by campaigning against any loophole or change in European law which could be used to treat students from other EHEA countries differently from the domestic students in that country.
5. To include in work by the VP HE on the widening access agenda in the HE sector, the issue of mobility for widening participation students and campaign for the right of every student to study in the EHEA.

Journal Pricing

Conference Resolves:

unions in resisting increases to postgraduate taught fee increases. The two campaigns will be working closely together, with the support of the VPHE as explained above.

The VPHE has ensured that the diverse funding and fee systems for the different sections of the student body are included and considered in all of the consultations and lobbying work that NUS are currently undertaking.

The VPHE has delivered a number of workshops focussing on the issues effecting students on professional placement at HE Zone and at the Course Rep conference, which included bringing nursing student course reps together to discuss their specific issues together.

These workshops will feed into the professional placement students briefing that will be published early next year. This briefing is a joint briefing from Higher Education, Union Development and Welfare Zones. The VPHE has run sessions at events such as the International Students' Networking day looking at the issue of overseas campuses. In the spring a joint briefing will be published with the Union Development Zone and the International Students Campaign which is aimed at guiding students' unions through the complex issues associated with representing the educational interests, including areas such as quality assurance and course representation, of students studying on overseas campuses.

NUS has significantly increased its engagement with the European Students' Union (ESU), including appointing two dedicated representatives for NUS with regards to attending ESU conferences and events. The VPHE has re-established the European Co-ordination Group, which enables representatives from member unions to advise NUS on ESU policy and decision making processes.

Areas that ESU is currently working on including a widening participation project and a financing of higher education project – of which NUS are research partners in. Our increased engagement with ESU means that NUS are able to influence these policy areas and all other areas regarding the EHEA, mobility and degree recognition.

NUS are also a member of the Erasmus Fee Waivers Working Group, which is looking at the issue of fee waivers in the UK.

NUS have affiliated to the Research Libraries UK campaign, released a public statement of support and

1. To publically endorse the Research Libraries UK campaign for journal pricing restraint.
2. To work with Research Libraries UK, universities and students' unions to pressure large journal publishers to abolish upfront payments, reduce subscription fees and allow payment in pound sterling.
3. To support CMs in meeting with Librarians, building campaigns and developing contingency plans to deal with changes in journal provision.
4. To work with mission groups (e.g. Russell Group) to investigate opportunities for universities and colleges to collaborate or share the costs of journal provision.
5. To produce toolkits and/or briefings for CMs on the issue of libraries and access to journals.

Conference Resolves:

1. NUS should work with the Bar Council and Law Society as well as the United Kingdom Law Students Association to campaign for the return of the Natwest Professional Loan Scheme
2. NUS should discuss these issues with the government and lobby them to put pressure on Natwest to renew the Scheme.
3. NUS should encourage other banks to offer similar schemes to students needing funding for professional study

met with them to discuss how NUS can offer support. NUS spoke at the Society of College National and University Libraries annual conference and NUS will be offering support to unions that wish to tackle this issue in the coming term.

As part of the overall student support work, NUS will be looking into the extent that students rely on private support to fund their studies and will be reporting on this in the new year.

National Conference 2012 | HE Zone proposals

This section outlines the recommendations from the HE Zone Committee to National Conference which you can submit amendments to. If you want to discuss an issue that has not been covered in these recommendations you can submit an ordinary motion.

The HE Zone has live policy on the following issues which are available to read in full at www.nusconnect.org.uk/about/policy

HE Policy 2009 – due to lapse this Conference

Supporting students in the recession
CALL – Campaign Alliance for Lifelong Learning
ULN. Got Your Number!
Postgraduate Study
Arts Education funding and Hidden Course costs
Stop Ripping Off Those on ALG and EMA
The Student Experience
Bin the Broke and Broken Funding System

HE Policy 2010

Higher Education Funding
National Student Survey (NSS) & Postgraduate Taught and Research Surveys (PTES/PRES)
Complaints & Appeals
Assessment and Feedback
Quality
ICT and Technology-enhanced learning
Part time students
Hidden Course Costs
Higher Education Achievement Record
Uniting Education Unions
Research Concentration funding
Academic Support
Mission Groups
Course Reps
Curriculum reform
Fair Access to Journals
Rating the student experience on our terms
Our role in widening participation: Students raising aspirations in communities
Placement students, they're still our students

HE Policy 2011

Education Funding
Flexible Provision
Admissions & Retention
A 21st century teaching and learning experience
Defining a quality experience
Postgraduate Funding
Enhance Students' Employability
The reality of cuts for Liberation Students
FE, Undergraduate & Postgraduate International Student Fees
League Tables: If you can't beat them, change them.
National Nursing Campaign
UK University Overseas Campus
Support for European Students and UK Erasmus Students: Engage the ESU
Journal Pricing
Professional Legal Funding

Postgraduate Funding and Support (301)

The lack of focus on postgraduate study in the recent Higher Education White paper is extremely concerning for all students. Issues of access, funding and support are at risk of being neglected by the Government and the sector. In addition, we are seeing policies that promote the concentration of research funding to traditional research-intensive institutions, rather than funding research wherever excellence is found.

Conference believes:

1. That the government's promise to monitor access to postgraduate courses is too little too late when the repercussions of the undergraduate fee hike and cuts to the teaching grant are clear.
2. That upfront fees for postgraduate taught courses are a contradiction of the principles of equality of opportunity in access to education.
3. That financial support and information for postgraduate taught courses is insufficient and inaccessible and that there is not enough information on how this affects access for underrepresented groups and those groups with more complex financial support needs.
4. That funding councils should fund research wherever excellence is found, whether it is large, research intensive institutions, an early stage researcher or a small and specialist institution with a small research portfolio.

Conference resolves:

1. To develop an alternative funding model for postgraduate taught courses.
2. To lobby for better information, advice and guidance about the costs and financial support available for all types of postgraduate course.
3. To campaign for more Career Development Loans with lower interest rates and longer initial repayment start times.
4. To provide support and advice to students' unions who wish to campaign for increased institutional financial support for postgraduates and against further rises in tuition fees.
5. To work with relevant sector bodies to build a strong argument against the concentration of research funding and principles for funding research excellence wherever it is found.
6. To ensure that NUS participates in future consultations on research funding, arguing against its concentration and to provide guidance to students' unions about these arguments.
7. To campaign for increased opportunities for early stage researchers in funding allocation.
8. To develop principles around what good research-led teaching looks like and support unions to engage with this topic.

The Public Role of Higher Education (302)

Over the past 10 years successive governments have focussed on highlighting the individual benefit that graduates gain from a higher education and the economic value to UK Plc. There can be no doubt that the individual benefits are significant. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in 2010 a graduate could expect to earn, on average 45% more than those who are not graduates. However, this political discourse, used to justify continued increases to tuition fees has sidelined discussions about the value of higher education as a public good. Indeed, the government, whilst making statements about the value of higher education has completely removed public funding for many courses – especially the arts and humanities. Rather than seeing the breadth of higher education and research being of crucial value to society beyond financial gain, the government has made clear statements that the only type of higher education that is of value to the public is those disciplines that can make a financial return on their investment and will boost the economy in the long run.

Conference believes:

1. That the social return on investment is just as important to society as the financial one.
2. That the removal of public funding to arts and humanities courses is wrong and ignores the contribution that these disciplines make to the betterment of our communities- both locally and globally.
3. That whilst there are a variety of organisations and groups that are working to bring these issues to the public attention, there should be a national co-ordination of the campaign.
4. That the removal of the teaching grant for arts and humanities subjects could have a detrimental impact upon specialist institutions or those institutions with a substantial recruitment population within those subject areas.

Conference resolves:

1. To bring together a national coalition of relevant organisations, such as Arts Emergency, to campaign to reassert the public role of all higher education and ensure that adequate funding for HEFCE is reinstated and protected from future cuts.
2. To undertake research into the social and economic impact higher education, particularly arts and humanities, have on local communities and wider society.
3. To provide training and support for unions and institutions to run their own campaigns, working with local community projects to promote the value of higher education in their local areas.

Student engagement in teaching excellence (303)

In the past year NUS has initiated work to improve the quality and standard of teaching in institutions, including a student-led teaching awards project, increased support for unions at institutions undergoing Institutional Review and training and support in using NSS results. Campaigning to improve teaching and to ensure that students are at the centre of the process is core to the works of students' unions and therefore should be core to the work of NUS.

Conference believes:

1. Institutions should clearly demonstrate that excellent teaching is a valuable asset in delivering their strategic aims and objectives.
2. That excellence in teaching should be equally recognised in recruitment and promotion criteria of staff that are required to teach as part of their job description.
3. That, as a rule, all teaching staff should hold a teaching qualification and be provided with adequate Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities throughout their careers. Effective CPD should always include developing knowledge and understanding of liberation, equality and diversity issues and ways of including these in the curricula.
4. That students should be involved in the assessment of teaching at every stage, including being on observation/peer review panels and recruitment/progression panels.
5. Including the student view of teaching practice is a core component of student centred learning and mechanisms and skills to achieve this should be included in CPD training.
6. That student feedback is an appropriate and valuable professional development tool for teachers in higher education.
7. That gaps in the feedback loop, miscommunications or misunderstandings about the nature and purpose of feedback can lead to student feedback being misused or misunderstood.

Conference resolves:

1. To continue to support unions in understanding key aspects of learning and teaching policy through briefings, training, sharing best practice and local support including support for unions to develop an evidence base of what good teaching looks like in their institution.
2. To support students' unions in lobbying their institutions to include teaching excellence in recruitment and progression criteria.
3. To work with students' unions and relevant sector partners to develop good practice and advice on including students at all stages of teaching assessment – including recruitment/progression panels and in observation/peer review panels.
4. That institutions should make publically available information on the proportion of teaching academics that hold teaching qualifications.
5. To work with the Higher Education Academy to provide examples of best practice of including the student view in development and assessment of student centred learning and also in efforts to ensure that good teaching is appropriately supported and rewarded, and that teachers are given sufficient time and support for CPD.

6. To continue the work on liberation, equality and diversity in the curriculum, making recommendations to ensure that relevant and useful training and development is provided for teaching and administrative staff and to assist unions to be able to deliver this training if they wish.
7. To conduct research into how student course feedback is gathered and used, how students' unions can support improvements in the quality of student feedback on teaching and how teachers and institutions can best respond to it.

Access and Admissions (304)

Whilst the government has stated that they are committed to widening participation, the policies that are being implemented is actually detrimental to the widening participation agenda. The National Scholarship Programme (NSP) is badly thought through and ineffective, and the motivation for institutions to use contextual data has been almost completely removed by the AAB policy.

Whilst many institutions undertake fantastic work with regards to increasing participation in higher education from underrepresented groups, it is also a fact that the majority would probably not be doing so if they were not required to. Whilst some institutions fully involved their students' union in the development of their access agreements, the majority only did so superficially or not at all. In addition, as this was the first time this type of access agreement was being developed, there was little understanding within the sector of how the process should work.

Conference believes:

1. That the current admissions system need to change as it is no longer appropriate for the way higher education operates in the UK.
2. A post qualification admissions system is an effective proposal as an alternative admissions system.
3. That the NSP does not meet its original aims and objectives in anyway and should be radically restructured in order for it to do so.
4. That the use of contextual data is a vital tool in ensuring that those who have the potential from low socioeconomic backgrounds are able to access education and that every institution should have a written policy on how they will use such data in their admissions processes.
5. That students' unions should be given the opportunity by OFFA to submit a commentary on their institution's access agreement.
6. That, as a movement, we need to build up a body of expertise on how widening participation activity should be delivered and how to effectively hold institutions to account on their access agreements. This expertise should go beyond understanding issues around increasing participation from low socio-economic background and include areas such as liberation groups, and other groups that are underrepresented in higher education, such as students from care.

Conference resolves:

1. To campaign for, encourage and support a post-results application system.
2. To support unions in lobbying their institutions to develop policies on the use of contextual data in admissions.
3. To work with relevant partners to lobby the government to restructure the NSP, so it can be an effective recruitment and retention tool supporting those students that need it most, rather than a deadweight payment that has no impact on a student's choice of where and if to continue studying.
4. To lobby OFFA and the government to include the opportunity for students' unions to submit a two page commentary of their institution's access agreement at the same time as the access agreement is submitted to OFFA.
5. To create and deliver training and support for students' union officers and staff on critiquing access agreements and holding their institutions to account on their work in this area.
6. To continue work on supporting student led widening participation activity, allowing unions to gain practical knowledge on the challenges and opportunities relating to implementing effective widening participation activity.

Higher Education Bill (305)

The recent White Paper highlighted a range of areas that Government are seeking to legislate on in the forthcoming Bill on Higher Education. NUS has already made clear that it believes that the Bill should be delayed to allow time for the sector to have a full debate about the proposed changes, however it is likely that a Bill will be tabled in the Spring of 2012.

Information about what might be contained in the Bill changes regularly, but there are some key areas that NUS needs to ensure it clearly campaigns on before the Bill is presented and during the passage of the Bill through parliament. These include the role of private providers in the system; enhanced information, advice and guidance; access to higher education and subsequent retention, and the true nature of students as both partners to, beneficiaries of and empowered actors within higher education.

The increase of private providers into our education system is a potential threat to the quality of provision that students will receive as well as equality of opportunity to participate. We also challenge the idea that public subsidy will be used to enable private enterprise to generate and develop profit.

We believe that many issues around access to education are because of poor information, advice and guidance and will be using the HE Bill as an opportunity to demand increased quality provision in this area. In this new environment, we support the more powerful role of the Office for Fair Access, but demand that students have a formalised role in the development and approval of access agreements.

To truly put students at the heart of the system, we believe that students should be in positions of authority within the system, with increased representation in institutional governing bodies and sector bodies.

Conference believes:

1. The Government are legislating to open up the 'HE Market' to private providers. Experience from other countries suggests *for profit* education providers can have a negative effect on the quality of provision and the student experience.
2. A part of the forthcoming HE Bill the Government will seek to make changes to the way in which Information, Advice and Guidance is delivered to students. It is essential that IAG is both useful and meaningful for the user. Advice and guidance is an essential way of contextualising the complex information about higher education.
3. Terms and conditions of student loans are currently so loosely defined that the current package is too easily open to unilateral change.
4. Students are currently not at the heart of the HESystem.

Conference resolves:

1. To oppose to an increase in for-profit provision
2. To campaign for legislation to secure strong restrictions on the sales of assets purchased with public funding.
3. To defend the criteria for taught degree awarding powers based on the strength of academic community and pedagogical effectiveness.
4. To oppose any increases in the outsourcing of teaching activities to third parties.
5. To campaign to secure terms and conditions of student loans in statute.
6. To campaign for comprehensive provision of quality-assured advice and guidance for prospective students to support existing public information.
7. To lobby for the HE Bill to cement the role of students' unions in HE institutions and to campaign for fundamental reform of institutional governance reflecting the students' role not only as powerful partners but ultimately as funders of the system.
8. NUS will support students' unions to campaign for redistribution of power to ensure that they are partners with authority over key strategic decisions and documents.
9. NUS will campaign to ensure that bodies within new regulatory framework put student interests and matters at the forefront of everything that they do.
10. We will make sure that entrance and exit of private providers and others protects students both academically and financially.



Danielle Grufferty, Society & Citizenship Committee Chair

James Haywood, Goldsmiths SU (NEC member)
Harry Fox, Canterbury College SU
Jo Johnson, Leeds Metropolitan SU
Paul Tobin, York University SU
Joe Vinson, Cornwall College SU

Liam Burns, National President (ex-officio)

Danielle Grufferty
NUS Vice-President (Society & Citizenship)

Motion: Protecting the student voice Conference Resolves

1. To Research into why students do not vote.
2. To improve the relationships between students' unions, Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and local authorities to maximise student voter turnout.
3. To sustain pressure on politicians who broke the pledge including direct action and 'Right to Recall' activity.
4. To work with the nations to support their voter mobilisation in the devolved government elections.
5. To encourage students and students' unions to organise voter registration activities for the AV referendum and local elections.
6. To continue to lobby against any changes to where and how we can vote which disenfranchise students.
7. To continue to work with Democratic Life to make the case for citizenship education and the role it plays as an essential part of the curriculum.
8. Work with the Cabinet Office to address the issue of under-representation amongst 18-24 year old students.
9. Fight attempts to remove students' ability to register their vote at their home and term-time address.
10. To provide resources and information for students' unions about voter registration and best practice.
11. To condemn the UK Government's boundary review which will weaken the student voice.
12. To mandate the VP Soc and Cit to work on ways to highlight the importance of student engagement in all elections, both
13. at a national level and on a local one to students across the UK.

In May 2011 there were elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as local elections in certain areas in England and a referendum on the Alternative Vote electoral system. For the referendum, guidelines were sent to students' unions. Students' unions were not able to take a stance on AV, but could launch voter-registration drives, educate students on both the 'yes' and 'no' arguments, as well as encouraging them to vote.

We are also continuing to work on the Votes at 16 campaign; I attend the Votes at 16 Coalition Steering group set-up by the British Youth Council and a new website was launched in April which included comprehensive case studies detailing why young people aged 16 and 17 should be able to vote. We have also designed and printed a number of resources for the campaign.

We have also launched a *Save Citizenship* education campaign. Citizenship education is crucial in engaging young people in politics and educating them about their rights and responsibilities as active citizens. We published information about the campaign on the NUS websites asking the Government to keep Citizenship education as part of the national curriculum.

We will:

- Work with the London students' unions to register students for the London Assembly elections next year as well as encouraging them to vote.
- Continue to lobby against any attempts to remove students' ability to register their vote at their home and term-time address.
- Continue to work with Oxfam to teach global citizenship in schools and FE colleges, stressing the importance of being active politically on both a local, and international scale.

Motion: Drugs Patents Conference Resolves

1. Provide information to students' unions on the issue and how they can influence their institution, including a pack for elected officers sitting on governing bodies.
2. Raise awareness of the issue amongst students, including medical students.
3. Work with the British Medical Association (BMA) and other key stakeholders.
4. Lobby universities to ensure every relevant university-developed drug is licensed with a concrete, effective, transparent strategy to make affordable versions available in developing countries.
5. Lobby research councils to encourage university research on neglected diseases and university licensing practices that facilitate development of promising neglected disease treatments.

Motion: Education for all Conference Resolves

1. To highlight to students the inequalities of education across the globe.
2. Co-ordinate and Education for All campaign across students' unions.
3. To run a student peace prize to highlight the struggles of students abroad.
4. To encourage students' unions to twin up with students' unions or universities abroad, and lobby their own institution/ lecturers to share academic resources with the twinned university.
5. Encourage students' unions to fundraise for primary education facilities abroad.
6. Work with the European Students' Union, global student organisations and NGO's to apply pressure to countries that are persecuting those in education
7. To investigate the viability of an officer share programme working with institutions abroad, highlighting the campaign for education as a universal right.

This motion maintains that the research and drugs that are made in university laboratories should be used for the greater good – they should be accessible and affordable to those who need them. Drug patents often mean that medicine becomes prohibitively expensive for some of the poorest people across the world who need them most.

We will:

- Set up a meeting with the British Medical Association (BMA) to discuss working together to lobby universities to ensure that every drug is licensed with a concrete, effective and transparent strategy to make affordable versions available for people who need them most.
- Research ways to highlight this issue to students' unions and look into cases where unions have been successful in lobbying their universities against drug patents, distributing best practice.

Education is a basic universal right. Since National Conference, we have worked to highlight to students the inequalities of education across the world. We petitioned the UK Government and the EU after the Bahraini regime harassed students and their families who were photographer attending a peaceful protest in solidarity with the Bahraini pro-democracy movement. At least nine students attending these protests in the UK had their subsistence grants axed and told that their tuition fee payments would be stopped.

In Chile, students are fighting against inequalities in their education system. We sent a letter of solidarity to Camila Vallejo, President of the Universidad de Chile Students' Federation (FECH) in their campaign against the marketisation of education in Chile. We have also publicised the student uprisings and political protest through the NUS websites.

We have called for the immediate release of the President of Swaziland NUS and we have written to the Swazi Ambassador and launched a campaign toolkit with ACTSA to fight to secure his freedom.

We will:

- Continue to work with ESU, global student organisations and NGOs to apply pressure to countries that are persecuting those in education.
- Develop work with the Helena Kennedy Foundation to lobby the Government to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers in the UK can access higher education – due to a recent policy

Motion: Toxic Fuels and ethical investments Conference Resolves

1. Join with other organisations, such as the World Development Movement, Platform and People and Planet, to work to end the financing of dirty fuels.
2. To use lobbying, demonstrations and direct action to key financial institutions, including the RBS-NatWest, to end their financing of dirty fuels.
3. To help students run their own campaigns against major banks involved in financing fossil fuels by providing resources, campaign, lobbying and direct action training.
4. To provide resources to students' unions to help them be aware of the ethics of companies they use for supplies and banking.
5. To students unions with information about ethical banking and encourage them to switch to an ethical supplier by providing favourable deals.
6. To use lobbying, demonstrations and direct action to pressure expose key financial institutions, including the RBSNatWest, to end financing of dirty fuels.

change, they are classed as 'international students' and therefore face prohibitively high fee levels.

- Develop research with Oxfam relating to student perceptions of the global South and development issues.
- Launch an international strategy for NUS and a toolkit to aid unions to run international campaigns.

Last year we partnered with People & Planet to coordinate Go Green Week, focussing on changing student behaviours to reduce our carbon footprint and tackle climate change.

On ethical banking we have achieved a huge win! The Charity & Social Banking Team from Co-op Bank now have a package for students' unions, providing bespoke affordable banking which are available to unions regardless of size and turnover.

NUS recently completed a major piece of research for the Higher Education Academy (HEA) on student attitudes to education for sustainable development and have been commissioned to carry out a follow-up survey.

NUS has been at the forefront of behaviour change campaigning over the last two years. Our Degrees Cooler project engaged 17,000 students and staff in 20 universities through three projects:

- Student Switch Off, an inter-halls energy competition for first year students
- Green Impact, a departmental environmental accreditation scheme with an awards element and
- Going Greener, a student-led bottom-up greening campaign. It has been regarded as a great success.

We will:

- Work with People & Planet to support and plan Go Green Week 2012, taking place 6 – 10 February 2012.
- Hold an event with HEA on student engagement in February where we will present the findings of HEA's research on student attitudes towards the inclusion of education for sustainable development within the curriculum.
- We will be distributing information to students' unions about how they can move bank accounts from unethical banks across to the Co-op.

Motion: Uprisings

Conference Resolves

1. To build links with student and workers' organisations in Tunisia and Egypt.
2. To salute the millions of brave people in North Africa and the Middle East that are rising up against tyranny, oppression and dictatorship
3. To demand an end to the British and US support for dictatorships all across North Africa and the Middle East.
4. To actively oppose US and British military intervention in the region – no Iraq in Libya.
5. To congratulate those involved in revolutions against Ben Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt and to campaign in solidarity with those struggling for change throughout the region.
6. To organise speaking tours of youth and student activists from these revolutions in our campuses.
7. To investigate and campaign against all support for these regimes by the British government and businesses and organisations based in Britain.

Motion: Local Actions First

Conference Resolves

1. To prioritise achievable local campaigns
2. To consider at how every campaign directly impacts students locally to make them relevant to all unions
3. To provide further resources to support work done around policies Neighbourhoods, Local Citizens and Safe and Cohesive
4. Communities and make them useful and relevant for all unions

We supported the day of action in London on 12 February at Trafalgar Square. Students dressed in black, white or red (the colours of the Egyptian flag) in solidarity with the people of Egypt and the wider Middle East and North Africa in their demands for an end to repression, for their freedom, their basic human rights and immediate reforms.

We will:

- Look at ways in which NUS can build links with student and workers' organisations in Tunisia and Egypt

In November, NUS held the first ever Student Activism 2011. This event gave students activism training to ensure they have the skills and resources to run effective campaigns and to ensure they are empowered and equipped to deliver change locally.

We are also working with NUS Services on a project to identify what turns and individual who has engaged with NUS into an activist.

We have worked with Liberty and Defend the Right to Protest. We collaborated with Liberty to produce a guidance document for students on the right to protest within the law, written in partnership with Liberty's legal director.

The theme for this year's Society and Citizenship zone conference was 'Localism, local action', through which we facilitated delegates' development as local activists through workshops, speakers and training.

We have continued to work in collaboration with the Welfare Zone on the Neighbourhood campaign, publicising resources and best practice on nus.org.uk and NUS Connect.

We've developed close links with Citizens UK, who delivered training for the NEC on basic concepts of community organising. We are also working with Liberation groups on developing activism within Liberation campaigns.

We have affiliated to Citizens UK as part of a strategic partnership to work together to promote local action and community organising. Their aim is

Motion: Don't Attack Iran

Conference Resolves

1. To maintain support for the Stop the War Coalition and their efforts to prevent any attack or non-military sanctions on Iran.
2. To sign the Stop the War pledge to take action against escalation towards an attack on Iran, and for such action to include occupations.
3. For the NUS to organise a first term speakers tour on Iran with the Stop the War Coalition.

Motion: Trade unionisation internationally

Conference Resolves

1. To name and shame companies that prevent workers from joining trade unions.
2. Pressure companies to change its way through lobbying and boycotting.
3. Work together with the Trades Union Congress (TUC) to highlight the importance of trade unions amongst our members.
4. Produce a series of resources to encourage students to become trade unionists.
5. To encourage students' unions to join their local Trades Council.
6. To lobby individual Students' Unions to support the work of the Workers Rights Consortium.
7. To campaign to ensure that all affiliates do likewise.
8. To fight poverty pay in our students' unions by campaigning to ensure that all affiliates pay all their workers at least £8 an hour.
9. To campaign for the abolition of all the anti-union laws, which make trade unionism only semilegal in Britain. We will oppose the introduction of any new anti-union laws by the Coalition government. We demand a positive legal chart of workers' rights: to strike, picket, take solidarity action.

to empower people to work towards common goals through their local communities.

We will:

- Continue to work with Citizens UK over the next year.

This motion calls for NUS to support the Stop the War Coalition and their efforts to prevent any attack or non-military sanctions on Iran. We have been monitoring the foreign-policy situation with regards to Iran, which intensified in early December due to an attack on the British embassy in Iran.

We will

- We will continue to monitor the foreign policy situation with regards to Iran, periodically reviewing our work on this issue.

This motion maintains that NUS should work closely with trade unions to achieve our goals, and continue to support the rights of workers. It also states that students' unions should endorse the work of the Workers Rights Consortium, a US-based campaigning organisation that deploys staff into clothing factories across the world to assess labour standards and resolve issues locally by working with workers and management. NUS Services has now voted to affiliate to the Workers' Rights Consortium.

We have continued to work closely with trade unions and to promote workers' rights. Last year, zone committee attended a stunt in Westminster for the PlayFair campaign to ensure which workers' rights are upheld in the London Olympics.

We are also focussing on how to support the development of a national Living Wage scheme for workers.

We have launched a campaign, *unpaid internships: we can't work for free*, which focuses on challenging the common practice of unfair, unpaid internships. We have also completed a briefing with UCU this, and have provided information and advice to students' unions and local UCU branches about how to exert pressure on their local institutions to encourage good practice across the sector.

We will:

- Continue to develop our unpaid internships campaign, seeking to develop a clear definition of what an internship is, and thus to create clarity on what is legal and what isn't.
- Launch our campaign with the TUC, including lobbying parliamentarians and distributing a phone app to support workers in calculating how much they are owed.

- We will continue to work closely with trade unions, exploring ways in which we work together to achieve common goals.
- We are working with Goldsmith's GMB branch to roll out their student members model.

Motion: Freedom for Palestine Conference Resolves

1. 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.
2. To encourage unions to twin with universities in Palestine and to send an NUS delegation on future convoys to the Gaza strip.
1. To strongly condemn Israel's siege on Gaza and actively campaign for it to be lifted in accordance with international law.
2. To support the Palestinians' right to education by building links with students at the Islamic University of Gaza and other educational institutions in Gaza.

This text was passed by NEC (as referred from National Conference) but subsequently superseded by the motion below. It is included for information only.

Motion: Dialogue on Israel/Palestine Conference Resolves

1. To support self-determination for the Palestinian and Jewish peoples through two states for two peoples as the possible peaceful solution, recognising that there are multiple narratives of national liberation within the region.
2. Supports the right of Palestinians living in Israel (estimated to be 1.5 million citizens, approximately 20 per cent of the Israeli population) to equality alongside other Israeli citizens.
3. To recognise the existence of the many complexities surrounding the conflict and its resolution including the status of: the city of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements, rights to land and Palestinian refugees.
4. To provide education and resources on Israel-Palestine to ensure officers gain an understanding of the complexities of the conflict, and the impact the surrounding debate has on student communities.
5. To show solidarity and build links with those defending the Palestinian right to access education, and humanitarian aid.
6. To recognise that, ultimately, a peaceful solution to the conflict must be a result of dialogue amongst those living in the region and who are directly affected by the conflict.
7. To ask British MPs to help turn the tide on decades of failed peace talks, end the occupation and move towards peace based on two states, through calling for the British Government to support moves from Palestinians to get the United Nations to recognise a Palestinian state.
8. To support the continued building of links and partnerships between students and students'

In September, the NUS NEC passed a motion on dialogue surrounding Israel/Palestine. The motion supports self-determination for the Palestinian and Jewish peoples through two states for two peoples as the possible peaceful solution, recognising that there are multiple narratives of national liberation within the region.

We have run sessions at Zone Conference and Activism 2011 focused on discussing human rights in Israel/Palestine and how the issues do not have to be divisive or controversial.

NUS is currently supporting a research student conducting their PhD on "Student engagement with Israel/Palestine." This research consists of fieldwork on a selected number of campuses and will be completed next year.

We will

- Endeavour to strengthen existing interfaith initiatives to promote good relations between religious groups, working with the Welfare Zone to run an event in Spring 2012 on dealing with conflict connected to this issue on campus

- unions in the UK, Palestine and Israel.
9. To condemn all human rights violations, including those committed by the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authorities.
 10. Through the Society & Citizenship Zone Committee, encourage unions to host 'roundtable' dialogue events on campuses and learning environments.
 11. To strengthen existing interfaith initiatives to promote good relations between religious groups on campus.
 12. To ensure the safety of our members as a fundamental priority.
 13. To provide training, tools and support to officers on dealing with conflict on campus.
 14. To reaffirm NUS's strong opposition to Islamophobia, antisemitism and all forms of racism and discrimination.

Society and Citizenship Research

Other work of the Zone

Internationalism, Gap Years and Volunteerism

In order to take the Society and Citizenship zone forward, we are looking to develop our research and policy remit. This will assist us in being proactive in identifying issues, campaigns and developing policy. As a result, this year we will also be conducting research in different models of gap years and volunteering abroad, assessing where students can have positive impact whilst identifying some of the limitations and issues of some schemes. We will use this to develop guidance for students' unions and students on how to identify projects both in the UK and overseas, and potential pitfalls to look out for.

This will inform some wider work within NUS on our global influence and enable us to support student unions' and students to make a practical impact on issues of global injustice. As part of this work, the soc/cit zone committee has also developed toolkits for unions to roll-out campaigns on global justice issues on their campuses.

We are also in the process of planning and securing funding for an exciting new project which seeks to draw a number of different elements of NUS work and partnerships together. To mark our 90th Anniversary year, and develop our strong links to the Olympics, NUS – in partnership with the ESU – plans to host a Global Summit for student leaders in London in September 2012. The summit will seek to act as springboard for practical action, with delegates developing action plans that address pressing issues on their campus or in the wider civil society. Post-event, we will work with delegates to share and celebrate our collective achievements, and launch a digital platform to facilitate networking by student leaders around the world.

(cont...)

Access and citizenship

James Haywood and I have been working on a funding proposal to roll out the Goldsmiths' Open Book scheme from which we will be rolling out a pilot the scheme in a number of unions - as well as delivering local training through the Activism programme with Open Boo - to encourage unions to develop the scheme themselves. We have also developed a leaflet on the history of the scheme and a toolkit on how unions can roll it out.

We have met with Shadow Cabinet Ministers and Trade Unions and are planning with the FE, UD and Welfare campaigns on how a number of pilot unions could deliver citizenship programmes in local schools.

Defending the Right to Protest

We produced and paid for joint Bust cards with DTRTP for the 9th November Demo on 'know your rights' and we launched a joint 'Know your rights' guide with Liberty

Unpaid internships

We soft launched the campaign on the 5th December with a webpage dedicated to the campaign and a question to MPs on how many interns are employed in their constituencies. University careers services will be the focus of our campaign and we have produced resources such as posters, to help unions put pressure on their institutions to not advertise them.

The main launch of the campaign is in collaboration with the TUC in January. We have created a smart phone app where workers can calculate how much they are owed by the HMRC.

Asylum Seeker Access

We are carrying out research into Access Agreements and provision for asylum seekers at HEIs. We have launched a campaign around putting pressure on HEIs to provide one fee waiver for an asylum seeker every year. We are getting support from the women's campaign in this, as women asylum seekers are particularly badly hit.

Soc/Cit 'on the ground'

We were proud to work with Jon Snow of Channel 4 news fame on a video capturing the civic engagement of students on the ground. This was both part of the 'I am the Change' campaign as well as being something to generally showcase how students have always, and continue to be, at the heart of civil society.

National Conference 2012 | S&C Zone proposals

This section outlines the recommendations from the Society and Citizenship Zone Committee to National Conference which you can submit amendments to. If you want to discuss an issue that has not been covered in these recommendations you can submit an ordinary motion.

The S&C Zone has live policy on the following issues which are available to read in full at www.nusconnect.org.uk/about/policy

Society and Citizenship 2009 – due to lapse this Conference

Operation Student Vote
Students Want to Go Green
Improving HE in Iraq
Fight ID Cards for International Students
Our House in the middle of the street
Campaigning against Mosquito Boxes
Ethical Investments in Universities and Colleges
Make Our Colleges Fair Trade
Justice for Colombia
Action for Southern Africa- A Focus on Swaziland's Students

Society and Citizenship 2010

Votes at 16
Electoral Reform
Neighbourhood
Local Citizens
Safe and Cohesive Communities
Students in Burma
Anti-racism, Anti Fascism (first passed in 2007)

Society and Citizenship 2011

Protecting the student voice
Drugs Patents
Education for All
Toxic fuels and ethical investment
Uprisings
Freedom for Palestine
Local Action First
Don't Attack Iran
Trade unionisation internationally

Access and Citizenship in the Community (401)

Access is about championing citizenship and building a stronger society. The Society and Citizenship zone particularly want to widen the debate to recognise the needs of offenders and asylum seekers. Goldsmiths has pioneered an innovative scheme designed to attract and facilitate the participation of ex-offenders to enrol at the university. The 'Open Book' Project has over 300 registered students engaged and to date has enabled 60 ex-offenders to enrol on an undergraduate course. Similarly Middlesbrough College has done access in prisons to Further Education. In terms of asylum seekers, under current proposals they face having to pay international rather than home student tuition fees, both of which are well above their means, and women are particularly hit hard.

Widening participation is not just a social justice issue in terms of widening access and removing barriers to education. It is also a civic engagement issue; education plays an important role in equipping young people with the necessary tools to engage politically and participate in society. This seems increasingly important in light of threats to citizenship education in schools, the recent riots and the demonization of young people within the media.

Conference believes:

1. That widening participation is, amongst other things, about building a stronger society and championing citizenship
2. Education is central to equipping people with the necessary tools to engage in political and social civic life
3. The growing diversity of access schemes, including work with prisons, represents an opportunity for NUS to highlight one of many ways in which students' unions can increase access to groups we have never engaged with before and develop programmes of outreach that transcend our traditional school leaver focus
4. In keeping with our democratic values, we have a responsibility to highlight the need for improved representation of young people and actively help educate students about their civic rights
5. The Open Book scheme presents an opportunity for the NUS to highlight good practice and encourage other institutions to adopt similar schemes.

Conference resolves:

1. That NUS supports students' unions to drive activism and citizenship in schools, youth groups and beyond
2. For the Society & Citizenship zone to work with the FE and HE zones to champion access as a means to build a stronger society and more cohesive communities through volunteering and community organising
3. To work with the 'Open Book' Scheme and highlight good practice, while encouraging others to adopt similar schemes
4. The Soc/Cit zone will work with the women's campaign to put pressure on Universities to investigate fee waivers for asylum seekers, with a focus on women.

Defending the Right to Protest (402)

Peaceful protest has a long and noble tradition in the UK. It has played a major part in bringing about social and political changes; including the extension of voting rights, the establishment of the welfare state, and the development of union rights.

However, the last year has seen a sustained attack on our right to protest: Canterbury has banned protest in the city, the student demonstration on 9th November 2011 saw police announce the sanctioning of rubber bullets before the event, and there was a heavy police presence on the march; with officers employing the intimidating 'total policing' approach. In previous demonstrations, police have used kettling and horse-charging tactics against students.

On our own campuses, the right to protest is being threatened. Local action, occupations and marches have consistently been threatened with police intervention. On certain campuses, basic human rights such as access to water have been denied to protesters.

These tactics point to a worrying trend which has seen a crackdown on protest. We must campaign to defend the right to protest, which is a universal right and the cornerstone of a democratic society.

Conference Believes:

1. That the right to protest is a universal right and should be defended and that any attack on the right to protest is an attack on democratic values.
2. That peaceful protest has played a major part in bringing about many important social and political changes in the UK.
3. That there is a difference between civil disobedience and criminality.
4. That student protest and action in November 2010 and November 2011 has exemplified a passionate engagement with political life in the UK.
5. That the police presence on 9 November 2011 was disproportionate.
6. That the decision by Scotland Yard to announce before the student march on 9 November that rubber bullets had been sanctioned to use on students was intimidating and ill-advised.
7. That before 9 November march, police showed a clear political agenda to stop attendance by confirming use of rubber bullets, and highlighting the cost of policing.
8. That 'total policing' tactics do not sit well with notions of freedom to protest and can be intimidating and unnecessary.
9. That the use of kettling, horse charging and rubber bullets on protestors is fundamentally wrong.
10. That students on their own campuses should be able to protest peacefully without fear of inappropriate interventions.
11. That strengthening links and building solidarity between students and lecturers and with the UCU and other trade unions is essential to defending our right to protest.

Conference Resolves:

1. To increase the effectiveness of high profile demonstrations by winning the case for less, but appropriate, police interventions.
2. To increase safety of protesters by banning inappropriate police tactics such as kettling, horse charging and the use of rubber bullets.
3. To openly condemn and campaign against 'total policing' including kettling, horse charging and batoning of protesters and actively oppose the threat or use of new tactics including rubber bullets and water cannon.
4. To continue to work with Liberty, Defend the Right to Protest and other relevant campaigning organisations and student groups to defend the right to protest.

Fair Pay (403)

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.

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.

Eden Springs (404)

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.

Gap Years (405)

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 resurgence 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.



Ed Marsh
NUS Vice-President (Union Development)

Ed Marsh, Union Development Committee Chair

Rebecca Bridger, Loughborough SU (NEC member)
Craig Clements, Leeds City College SU
Thomas Hollick, City College Norwich SU
Aidan Mersh, Hull University SU
Yasser Ranjha, Leeds Met SU
Lori Wheatman, Teesside SU

Liam Burns, National President (ex-officio)

Creating a generation of changemakers Conference Resolves

1. To consult unions about the best times, dates, places and content of activist days before announcing them and in good time – we would rather they were well thought out than fast!
2. To ask the Liberation Campaigns to consider how they can support unions who wish to engage their wider range of members and help them to become activists, possibly through the activist days
3. To focus on developing activist training and access to campaign tools for campaign leaders and not just campaigners, so that students can self-organise on their campuses or, with their union's support, engage in national campaigning
4. To make a deal, where if students want to get involved students' unions will support them, and if students' unions support activists then NUS will come on to campus to help you harness their engagement
5. NUS will run 20 activist days in cities across the UK, in term 1 of the academic year 2011-2012 where at the most local level it will support students' unions to give the tools to students to make a change. Wherever demand lies NUS will provide support, we will give the tools to students to be activists, to engage there peers, and to win on the issues which matter to them
6. NUS should train over 2000 campaign leaders next year, who can lead campaigns around the country ensuring students make change
7. This training will be relevant to every student, but will benefit students' unions by improving their societies, sports, school and course reps and part time officers
8. These events will be in addition to those run for student officers, and should target students and not student officers

9. NUS will assist students' unions in the marketing of this event, aiming to create a movement of change makers on the ground

10. NUS will use its networks and databases to promote these events directly to students as well as through students' unions

11. That S&C and UD needs to provide opportunities for greater link up with trade unions, young trade unionists and broader coalitions

12. That NUS develops an activist programme specifically for those students campaigning against cuts, as well as those campaigning on issues of social justice through student groups and societies

13. To develop regional frameworks to drive partnerships on specific campaigns with community groups

14. NUS needs to provide wider training locally beyond sabbatical officers, providing ways for activists to link up and share their work, and provide a platform for creative and innovative campaigning.

15. To place greater focus on the needs of part-time, postgraduate and international students as part of the NUS Summer Training Programme

16. To invite representatives from the Sections into the development of the NUS Summer Training Programme to guide the training to include approaches better suited to deal with issues unique to these students.

17. To invite representatives from the Sections into the NUS Summer Training Programme to encourage enthusiasm for the Sections' campaigns.

18. To mandate full-time NUS officers to promote Sections campaigns beyond the International, Part-time, and Postgraduate Students' officers, with a specific focus on sabbatical and non-sabbatical student leaders who are not from these sections but have a wider remit which includes sections students.

The Future of Students' Unions – surviving and thriving

Conference Resolves

1. NUS will provide personalised information on what impact cuts will have to each institution, and will work with each union to create a strategy to survive and thrive in the coming years
2. Where students are not getting enough from their local students' union NUS will help them to get involved and to change it for the better,
3. Students' unions need to diversify their income streams, and NUS should lead the way on this by reducing its reliance on affiliation fees

4. NUS will create an online talent bank for members of staff in students' unions, trustees and friends of NUS to register their areas of expertise in order to share their services with other students' unions.
5. NUS will give explicit advice to students' unions in how to diversify income streams and will point out where current funding models are unsustainable
6. NUS will facilitate the sharing of best practice in relation to fundraising at a regional level.
7. NUS will give members access to staff members with expertise in crisis aversion and management.
8. NUS will offer a toolkit for students' unions helping improve board officer awareness of board level responsibilities
9. NUS will offer detailed guidance to students' union officers with responsibility for performance management and organisational leadership
10. NUS will offer an introduction to the student movement for external trustees
11. To produce a 'winning the arguments' briefing for students' unions who are facing funding threats to their student activities
12. NUS will provide practical advice, assistance and staff support on fundraising in Student's Unions, linking in with local charities and charitable trusts.
13. To defend itself and its constituent members against any attacks upon our legitimacy or autonomy
14. To reshape the NUS led students' union quality model such that the management, and finances of students' unions can be independently and regularly assured for all unions
15. To develop tools to enable students' unions to better measure and promote their impact on students and their education

Finding the voices of the unrepresented millions Conference Resolves

1. NUS will formally invite the student board member on the BUCS Board of Directors to attend the Union Development Zone Committee as an observer
2. NUS will look to create specific student joint membership of the NUJ for those involved in student media, and will actively promote this because trade union membership is the best form of protection
3. NUS will revive a conference for Student Activities Development in Action (STADIA) which will act as a specialist
4. conference to develop policy, create networking and training opportunities for this key group of officers involved in delivering student activities
5. Future NUS media training will specifically include legal training about libel laws and students' union governance
6. NUS will produce case studies of where student media have changed students' unions for the

better by highlighting where students' unions need to do more

7. NUS will roll-out a national accreditation scheme for students who volunteer in students' unions in 2011, (not investigate, not look into but actually do!)
8. NUS will work to find another respected partner (or partners) who can joint badge the accreditation to add value to any sector wide certificate of achievement
9. To fully support a national accreditation scheme for volunteers, but instruct NUS to research, consider and produce a scheme which does not compete with local alternatives but instead complements it or seeks to do something different
10. To consider whether a University may be a suitable partner for accrediting the scheme

Finance, New Income & Fundraising Conference Resolves

1. NUS to do a national research on the financial structure, income sources and fundraising activities of all students unions in the UK. This research should be used to identify key issues of the financial structure of all students, sharing good practice on more viable financial models to help students unions to survive major funding loss and ensure high quality students experience will be made available
2. NUS to help students unions to explore new areas to generate income to finance students' union activities besides alcoholic drinks sales, entertainments etc.
3. NUS to research and propose more sustainable activities and structures for students unions to fundraise
4. 4. NUS to lobby the local government to have more favourable policies such as tax reduction to encourage local business to sponsor the campaign and activities of students unions in their area

For Campaigning and Inclusive Unions Conference Resolves

1. Re-affirm support for NUS Liberation campaigns, defend their autonomy and resources.
2. Work with religious and cultural student bodies to ensure events are timed appropriately, with necessary prayer facilities and food provision.
3. Support students' right to organize on campus. Oppose measures that unfairly stigmatise any group of students or restrict their legitimate activities.
4. Support initiatives such as Student Go Green week, organized by People and Planet and the Mayor of London; work with NUS's Sound Impact programme to encourage students' unions to improve their environmental performance.
5. Support the VP Further Education in campaigning for improved student union

Annually, NUS undertakes an in depth survey of students' unions and their financial situation. This information is analysed and sent to members for noting. Similarly, NUS is always working to bring more funding into the student movement and we are looking to work with students' union staff to put in more joint bids for funds in future. NUS is also supporting the development of the National Student Fundraising Association which will help move student fundraising groups on considerably.

At all NUS events, the safe space policy and zero tolerance policies are explained and where there is any possibility of them being abused, we take serious and expedient action. NUS monitors our carbon emissions and we have plans in place over the long term to reduce our carbon footprint.

representation in FE.

6. Campaign for student unions to be guaranteed a fixed minimum proportion of their institution's government funding.
7. All NUS and NUSSL events shall abide by a Safe Space Policy, drawn up by the NEC, with direct input from all the Liberation Campaigns, which shall include strict guidance (and not be limited to) on appropriate social events, which shall not include the objectification of women, contain homophobic innuendo or be inaccessible by disabled students.
8. Where an event has alcohol present, there shall be a suitable non-alcoholic alternative offered at the same level.
9. There is no place for sexism in our students' union!
10. Organisation or events, which break this policy, shall be condemned and exposed and ultimately the NEC shall consider boycotting them.
11. AMSU shall be encouraged to support this policy and promote it within Constituent Members and their own organisation and mailing lists.
12. For NUS to consult with the representative student faith groups on how the current system can improve
13. NUS to send out the religious festivals calendar as early as practicably possible for 2008 to give Student Union's the maximum amount of time to organise for freshers' events.
14. For the National Secretary to attach a letter to the religious festivals calendar with best practise guidelines and the contacts of the major student faith groups
15. That NUS needs to grab the agenda and provide leadership on communication, targets, research and policy.
16. That NUS needs to take the lead in creating a think-tank on climate change for the Further and Higher Education sector, bringing together the relevant bodies within the sector.
17. That NUS continues to endorse the Sound Impact Awards as a fantastic tool to improve the environmental practices of students' unions
18. That we celebrate the success of the 2007 Sound Impact Awards Scheme where Loughborough, Goldsmiths and Queen Mary's achieved the Gold Award
19. NUS works with the EAUC and all other relevant organisations to improve the sustainability of colleges, directly impacting upon students' unions in FE
20. NUS will systematically reduce its own carbon emissions as an organisation

The Constitution, it's certainly not for dummies Conference Resolves

1. NUS Should work with Unions to help produce "Student Friendly" constitution documents, clearly describing key sections, how to submit motions, and get involved in all areas of Union activity as outlined in the constitutions.

Through the democracy toolkit research so far, we've been collecting key information about constitutions as the structure and language can be so varied and in many institutions mean different things. In future, when producing legally binding

2. NUS should also make a "People Friendly" version of their governing documentation, meaning the "average student" can easily give feedback and input on policy locally and nationally.

documents, we will take into account the language barriers that may affect the ability of a student to engage with the document. Despite all of this, often, the constitution is not the problem – the broader language used within the student movement is the real problem and NUS is working to shift language from being totally inaccessible to being simple and easy to understand.

Mission Groups

Conference Resolves

1. For NUS create a way of proactively supporting unions that may not currently have a network/mission group.
2. To encourage and help facilitate Students' union mission groups sharing best practice, detailing discussions and promoting positives.
3. That Education Information would be a good way of capturing a summary of discussions at mission group meetings and circulating to whole membership. This would allow the committees of mission groups to be better known as well as facilitating cross mission group best practice.
4. The need for mission groups' work to be better captured and communicated via NUS connect as some issues discussed are of great value and importance to the whole student movement.

Within the past three months (at the time of writing) NUS has supported the 1994 Group of Students' Unions to begin meeting and NUS has now divided up responsibility for the mission groups across the organisation so that there is a key member of staff responsible for each of these events and groups.

The majority of data NUS requests from students' unions is held centrally against mission group information now, which helps with analysis.

Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free

Conference Resolves

1. That NUS should lobby for Wednesday afternoons to be kept free for more reasons than simply participation in sport
2. That free Wednesday afternoons will aid student welfare
3. That a movement towards student engagement in the local community on a Wednesday will improve public perceptions of students
4. That the NUS should work in partnership with BUCS with an end goal of Universities agreeing to keep Wednesday's free for students.

Discussions on keeping Wednesday afternoons free are ongoing with BUCS, however we have started to collect data on where students' unions have the afternoon off timetable and where they don't in order to compile a detailed briefing and then give advice on how to win the arguments.

Engage the Alumni

Conference Resolves

1. Lobby university/college to create a prospective alumni database among current students to lay a good foundation of effective alumni network before they graduate
2. Lobby university/college career centre to create a Alumni Employability mentoring scheme, to link alumni who have years of real world working experience to mentor current students who are interested in working in the same professions as the alumni mentor, so as to enhance the employability of current students, while keep alumni closely linked with the university/college
3. Lobby university/college international office to create a country based alumni database, to use the global alumni network of the university to promote the recruitment of international students based on different nationality
4. Lobby for the joint partnership between

Through the pilot Student Skills Award, we have been encouraging students' unions to talk to their alumni departments to improve employability and over the long term look to gain funding from those alumni who look to the students' union as a key part of their university career. When the Student Skills Award is rolled out nationally, we endeavour to include specific guidance on how best to engage alumni, however, we wanted to trial it first to ensure it works.

students unions in the establishment of effective alumni network with the university/college.

5. Lobby for universities/colleges to create more initiatives to encourage alumni to contribute to the long-term sustainable development of students union through sponsoring various students' unions campaign, project and activities.
6. Lobby for NUS to create a campaign toolkit on effectively engaging Alumni, share best practice on how students unions can effectively engage alumni, to allow them to make greater contribution to the development of university/colleges, current students and students unions.

National Nursing Campaign

Conference Resolves

1. To create an NUS Nursing Campaign to address the widespread problems with nursing
2. To look at integration of nursing across many Unions and their campuses to increase nursing representation
3. To provide students unions with information on 'fitness to practice'
4. To work with trade unions to protect placements and future jobs for current nursing students

Our approach to campaigning this year has been to help empower student activists and changemakers on the ground by doing so enable them to create change at a local level which has the most impact. As part of the democracy and governance team's work, we will be looking at structures of students' unions in the 'democracy toolkits' published quarterly and nursing will be specifically addressed there.

Union Development Zone Report

This report provides an overview into the work of the Union Development Zone in the past year and highlights the impact we are having on students' unions. It shows what work we are doing that National Conference has mandated us to do, and other ongoing projects and activities that are having a positive impact on our members.

Policy area	Delivered
Activist Development	<p>In House Activist Training We are offering free training delivered for students in their own union to give them the skills to run effective campaigns. We are aiming to deliver training to 2000 students, supporting unions to build their campaigning capacity.</p> <p>Activism 2011 Took place at Goldsmiths SU with hundreds of students attending workshops and becoming part of the national picture, satisfaction rates were high, and this is the first step in a new direction for activism in NUS.</p> <p>I am the change Was launched at Activism 2011, allowing students to link up the changes that they wish to see and to put there issues onto NUS's agenda. So far the website has had hundreds of changes submitted on a whole variety of issues.</p> <p>Funding for Partnership Projects Partnerships of unions have been invited to apply for up to £2k funding to run their own innovative activist development projects. We have allocated 7 grants so far and will be inviting unions to apply in a second round later on this term.</p>
Apprentices	<p>The NUS apprentice work is only just beginning, but is gathering momentum, we have launched the NUS apprentice card, the sales of which will be ring-fenced for the National Society of Apprentices. We will be conducting research into the lifestyles and learning experiences of apprentices in the new</p>

National Conference 2012 | UD Zone report

	<p>year, and I hope that the NSA will grow as a new voice for this under represented section of our membership. To date we have 107 providers signed up.</p>
Employability and Skills	<p>The NUS Student Skills Award pilot scheme launched at the start of October. This scheme will increase the employability of students involved, increase capacity of students' unions to positively affect this area of work, record and demonstrate the volunteering students are undertaking and it will also bring in a reporting mechanism for student fundraising groups around the UK. The pilot includes 22 students' unions from all around the UK including one from NUS-USI, two in Scotland and four in Wales. We will be evaluating its success in the new year, but I still intend a full national roll out in September. In addition we will ensure that the model is adapted to be applicable for Small and Specialist, FE and under resourced unions shortly.</p>
Affiliations	<p>Ensuring NUS retains students' unions within membership is something that we are always working on. We have been embedding the new first point of contact system for unions and are developing ways to demonstrate the benefits of affiliation to all our member unions, and ensuring each union has members of the National Executive Council allocated to them. So far we have had several referendum's on NUS re-affiliation and have won them all with a 90% plus majority.</p>
Greening Students' Unions	<p>This is an environmental accreditation scheme with an awards element that over 100 unions are taking part in this year. Last year over 60 unions reached the at least the Bronze Standard, demonstrating that they have taken action to address common bad environmental practices</p>
Arts and S&S unions	<p>A number of the projects which are currently running, such as Activist training, volunteer accreditation and in-house training program disproportionately benefit small and specialist unions who don't have the resource to deliver the activity themselves. I think that there is a need for guaranteed representation for small and specialist unions within NUS, and will be working with the arts mission group to establish whether this can be a reality. I am aware that the VP HE is doing work in this area.</p>
Student Activities	<p>This year we have laid the foundations for working within student activities, with new and improved working relationships with BUCS, NASTA, the SRA and RAG (or national equivalents) ensuring that we are once again able to operate in this area without replicating existing work. The policy which the zone committee has written outlines how a strategic approach to these area's should be taken forward.</p> <p>In addition the Olympic projects has taken shape and goes from strength to strength, with local champions' the Olympic torch and seed funding all occurring on campuses up and down the UK.</p>
SU Governance	<p>We are focussing on developing guides for unions to develop and strengthen their governance and through our new consultants we are providing specific support to unions, using the Good Governance Code which launched in January. In addition bespoke consultancy is now being provided for unions which have issue's in this area; such as those creating trustee boards or piloting new governance models.</p>
Communications Officers	<p>We introduced a specific course in the Officer Development Programme for Communications Officers this year, which fed back with an average score of 8.04 out of 10. We are committed to providing a course for every type of elected officer in our training provision.</p>
Support Student Council Chairs	<p>We are delivering Chair of Student Council training at this Zone conference as part of broader work improving students' union democracy, and resources will be made available to those who cannot attend.</p>
FE Union Development	<p>We are working closely with the FE team to develop materials and briefings on improving democracy and governance that are relevant for FE unions. The training programme includes 3 FE specific courses that continue to grow in attendance and feedback, achieving a combined average of just under 9/10 with 100% of delegates willing to recommend it. We also supported the FE team on the Student Governor Support Programme, which involves 64 colleges, and 12 FE unions are reviewing their governance structures using the NUS FE Model Constitution.</p>

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Bilingual Unions	NUS Wales continues to develop materials in both Welsh and English and we are working closely with them to ensure all relevant materials coming from NUS are translated.
Mission Groups	We are supporting unions in the 94 Group and Million + to meet to network and plan activities, while also looking at non-aligned unions to see how they can fit into the work of other mission groups, or share experiences themselves.

Other work	Activity
Democracy Toolkit	We will be producing 4 issues of a Democracy Toolkit across the year. The first will include information on last years students' unions sabbatical officer elections where over 80 students' unions gave us data. This will be a tool to share best practice, as well as to monitor and improve diversity within the movements democratic structures. This will sit alongside the publication of a fortnightly Democracy and Governance briefing with various news, resources, case studies and more.
Officer Development Programme	578 officers attended these courses from 127 students' unions. Feedback from 431 delegates was received on all aspects of the course with delegates giving an average score of 8.42 out of 10 when asked how satisfied they were with the overall experience of the course. Furthermore, 98% of delegates would recommend our courses.
Supporting elections in Students' Unions around the UK	We directly supported over 100 HE and students' unions in their elections this year, and ran training events for Deputy Returning Officers. This year we are training more Deputy Returning Officers, Returning Officers, creating a complaints panel to ensure consistency of decisions and focussing on strategic support for generating involvement in elections as well as the actual process itself. We also supported 66 FE Students' Unions to improve their election turnout and processes by benchmarking against other colleges.
Developing new ways of improving students' unions' democracy and governance	We are producing various materials and resources for our new consultants to take to students' unions to help in the development of stronger systems and processes. We will monitor trends and produce materials that best suit the needs of each member union.
Internationalising Students' Unions	<p>The Internationalising Students' Unions project has involved over 40 HE unions and 4 FE unions over the past two years. NUS has worked with staff and officers in each participating union to complete an internationalisation self-audit to identify areas for improvement and areas of good practice.</p> <p>NUS will shortly be releasing updated internationalisation toolkits for HE and FE as well as a training package for staff and officers. This will all be available through an online resource hub, alongside a facility for completing the audit and creating an action plan online. The project will finish at the end of 2011, culminating in a networking day and awards evening.</p>
Supporting RAG UK	We attended RAG UK '11, to offer support to RAG groups around the country. Of the 45 RAG societies in attendance, they raised £9.5M. We are developing a plan to offer support to RAG in development and growth in the coming year.
London 2012	In the lead up to the Olympics in July 2012, the 'Be A Champion' project has engaged over 100 students' unions across the UK. A regional training programme for ambassadors is taking place during October and November. The future flames bus tour is visiting 20 students' unions during the first term. In the second term, engagement projects will be delivered through the network of ambassadors and students' unions will be able to apply for bronze, silver and gold recognition of their work.

National Conference 2012 | UD Zone proposals

This section outlines the recommendations from the Union Development Zone Committee to National Conference which you can submit amendments to. If you want to discuss an issue that has not been covered in these recommendations you can submit an ordinary motion.

The UD Zone has live policy on the following issues which are available to read in full at www.nusconnect.org.uk/about/policy

Union Development Policy 2009 – due to lapse this year

Campaigning for Change: The Activist Academy
Greening Students' Unions
The Future is in Our Hands? We'll Have Representation Then!
NUS Arts Representation and support for small and specialist students' unions
Student Activities Development
Initiations: To Ban or Not to Ban
Safe Space is a Right Not Just a Privilege

Union Development Policy 2010

Campaigning and Activism
Student Activities
Participation and Engagement
Changing membership
Finance and Governance
Communications
Conference, RAG and Alumni funding
Engage Postgraduate students in student activities
Supporting Council Chairs
FE Union Development
Globalise all students' experience in the UK
Engaging Part Time Students
Bilingual Unions
Getting Involved in NUS
NUS Access for Ordinary Students
Enhance Diverse Students' Groups Representation Locally and Nationally

Union Development Policy 2011

Creating a generation of change makers
The Future of Students' Unions; surviving and thriving
Finding the voices of the unrepresented millions
Student Activities; improving the students experience, improving unions, improving NUS
Finance, New Income & Fundraising
For Campaigning and Inclusive Unions
The Constitution, it's certainly not for dummies
Mission Groups
Wednesday Afternoons
Engage the alumni
National Nursing Campaign

Don't Just Widen Participation – Deepen Participation (501)

NUS National Conference has previously focused on 'Widening participation' as the key policy area, which looks primarily at the processes behind helping students take their first steps into Higher Education, and in some respects, has overlooked the necessity of work within retention and integration.

Experiences for students from a widening participation background going to University will be varied. For some it is an intensive, inclusive experience, providing an opportunity for an individual to truly develop, whereas for others it exists alongside the pressures of employment, family responsibilities and other priorities. There is a role to be played by NUS and Students' Unions in aiding these students in overcoming some of the challenges that they face once they've entered HE and FE, preventing drop out, discrimination and feelings of oppression. The role of the Union Development Zone within NUS and of students' unions more broadly is, we believe, to be in ensuring that once students are in further and higher education, that the process of widening participation becomes one of deepening participation in their chosen institutions.

It is important, therefore, to ensure that students from a widening participation background feel empowered within their institutions to participate, fully engage and co-create their environments, which will result in not only them having a deepened experience but that also they are also able to deepen the experience of others from non-widening participation backgrounds.

Conference Believes

1. If widening participation is about getting students to study further in education, then deepening participation is about getting those students to engage more whilst they are at university or in further education.
2. When we talk about 'widening participation students' we really mean traditionally disengaged students and that we must have different solutions to related problems for pre-arrival and post-arrival.
3. That a variety of different barriers including, but not limited to social, cultural and economic inhibit the engagement of traditionally disengaged students and that it is the duty of students' unions to remove those barriers
4. That students' unions are diverse organisations whose strengths lie in the ability of people of all backgrounds being able to mix, learn and create the environment within which everyone exists. This relationship is not one-way, but that all students from all backgrounds are active contributors.
5. A students' union in further or higher education will be effective if it increases the ability of its members to mix, learn and create their experience within their institutions – this requires strong, inclusive students' unions.
6. Students will respond most positively where they feel able to co-create their environment; this requires a concerted effort to deepen participation in our students' unions; engaging current members more and engaging new members for the first time in a way that allows them to contribute effectively to their experience.
7. Students' unions are engines of social change; deepened participation further increases the opportunity and propensity at which change will occur.
8. Traditionally disengaged students will have markedly different experiences depending on their university, college and students' union experience and will need different support once they have made the decision to stay in education; we need to have a better understanding of some of the unique challenges that are faced and awareness of the diversity of needs, and cultures of these students.
9. There is a demand from the membership for NUS to provide examples of best practice in deepening participation.
10. No student should feel as though they have to change to be involved with their Students' Union.

(cont)

Conference Resolves

1. A research project will be undertaken by NUS to explore the impact that higher education has upon the identities and experiences of WP students across the UK, the barriers they faced, and the reasons they continued to study at the institution from a variety of different demographics
2. NUS will support students' unions to work with their parent institutions to have access to detailed demographic information which will allow them to fully understand the profile of their members which will act as a catalyst for focussed work to deepen the participation of all members.
3. NUS will work with students' unions, umbrella organisations and institutions to ensure they are aware of the role they need to play in supporting students' unions
4. NUS will work alongside Students' Unions to ensure they are aware of the benefits that deepening participation will have upon their membership
5. NUS will work with Students' Unions to engage local, national and international businesses in order to secure funding and sponsorship that can be used to remove financial barriers that may prevent students from taking part in services such as societies, sports clubs etc.
6. NUS will take the evidence found through the best practice search and use this to assist a small selection of pilot unions to implement similar changes before rolling out key advice nationally.
7. NUS to commission research into the barriers and assumptions made about engagement in order to see who is involved and why. This research will look at levels of involvement of traditionally disengaged students and will draw upon qualitative and quantitative research to ensure that good practice can be identified wherever it exists. Similarly this research should also look at why people don't get involved in volunteering and other aspects of students' union life.

Students' Union Development; More Important Now Than Ever (502)

Developing students' unions has been the focus of NUS in recent years, helping students' unions in crisis, running various projects to expand the capacity of students' unions and providing support through the charity registration process. To these ends, NUS Charitable Services was created to specifically support this work alongside the development work delivered by the Democracy and Governance Unit, improving students' union governance and democratic processes and driving students' unions to find new ways of involving students, especially those not traditionally engaged, in their decision making processes. NUS believe that students' unions have a key role to play in society, developing the social conscience of students to participate in democracy, realise the potential strength of working collectively and developing talented officers and staff who will go on to become leaders across the voluntary sector.

At a time when the sector which Unions operate in is facing cuts and attacks the role of NUS in both championing and challenging students' unions becomes critical. Students' Unions do not exist in a vacuum away from the world and the policy developments around them. This motions seeks to place student unions in the correct context and to empower them to survive and thrive.

In order to develop students' unions further, NUS has to look not only to the roots of what students' unions are, and their core purpose, but that NUS should help students' carry out this exercise for themselves. In an ever changing HE and FE landscape, it is important to remain sure of our own identity to be able to move forward.

Conference Believes:

1. There should be a similar method of evaluating the effectiveness of students' unions, which is like the key information sets in universities.
2. There should be mechanisms in place for people to trigger a strategic review of their students' union. This review should be able to be triggered by ordinary students or the university.
3. That the Young Britons Foundation still seek to make the case for the end of automatic membership to students' unions and regularly challenge the legitimacy of students' unions: this is an ideological attack. As unions we should be held accountable by our members and we should deliver for our members; whilst it is appropriate for external organisations to be interested in our work, we are ran by students for students and this principle is inalienable from our core beliefs.
4. At this time, we must stop talking about building stronger links between HE and FE Students' Unions and forge those links now, helping to make the route between involvement in FE and involvement in HE easier by cutting down "barriers" to deepen participation. TO achieve this we must ensure that Further Education Students' Unions have reliable processes and access to NUS, as the majority of NUS members exist in the further education sector.
5. That for this to happen HE has a very valuable role to play in aiding these Students' Unions in developing and building strong links across cities and geographical regions.
6. At the current time, both FE and SSU's (Small and Specialist Unions) feel set apart from the movement due to attitude and funding, amongst other issues.
7. That this will strengthen NUS with a wider amount of participation from FE. This participation will also be of greater impact due to a greater understanding of NUS amongst the Further Education sector.
8. FE and SSU's must be able to work with local HE Unions and the wider sector in order to develop, progress and fulfil their purpose despite occasional problems between institutions and unions.

Conference Resolves:

1. That all HE work that involves bidding for funding, whole or part, from NUS must be done in conjunction with at least one FE Students' Union and if possible a small and specialist Union as well. Internal guidance on bidding for funding should be amended to incorporate this and this policy should be enforced rigorously by NUS.
2. That NUS should invite the Convenor of the National Student Fundraising Association to join the Union Development Zone Committee as a non-voting ex-officio member.

3. That further education unions should be matched with partner HE unions, where possible, to ensure that where collaboration, partnership and cooperation can occur, it is encouraged and facilitated by NUS
4. That within twelve months a pilot further education students' union evaluation scheme should be created
5. That the model constitution for further education unions should be enhanced to ensure that all types of students' union can be incorporated into it; if a single constitution is thereby not possible, a series of model documents should be created.
6. That there should be a mapping exercise of different types of union in further education to record the diverse range of organisations that exist which should inform the development of unions in future.
7. That NUS should work to demonstrate the value of students' unions to their members and to the broader public.
8. That NUS should research the detrimental effect of 'opt-in' membership to students' unions in Australia
9. That NUS should support students' unions to survive and challenge education and broader public sector cuts.
10. That NUS will evaluate legal routes which may not relate to becoming charities or remaining unincorporated associations, but looking at alternative options such as becoming a social enterprise in FE.
11. NUS will record the type, amount and impact of student volunteering in all its forms across the UK in order to create a national picture of what's going on to assist students' unions in demonstrating value, impact and change.
12. The relationship between SUEI and the intervention work the charity undertakes to help struggling unions must be outlined;
13. NUS should produce a briefing on 'How to make the argument about the worth of students unions' for students to use with institutions.

NUS; Developing Students as well as Unions (503)

This year has been an enormous year for student activities within NUS, with the new working relationships with national bodies, with the launch of the NUS Skills accreditation framework and with the Olympic games 'be a champion' project we have genuinely engaged student activities for the first time. Its this context that this motion fits into. As well as developing unions, NUS has an important in role to play in the development of students. Throughout the year, NUS has been working on a variety of projects and events from running specific training for sports, volunteering, and activities officers in summer 2011 to running a specific Student Development Conference in October and by working with organisations such as BUCS, SRA, NaSTA (and equivalent bodies in the nations) and now, the newly formed National Student Fundraising Association, NUS is continuing work to enhance the ability of students' unions to deliver for their members. Similarly, the Student Skills Accreditation scheme has entered its pilot and we must work to ensure that this important project carries on and works for all students' unions. Students' unions have always existed with values of collectivism and individual empowerment at their core. Students' unions provide a vast array of activities, opportunities and experiences which provide enormous individual empowerment. This motion is about supporting a wide range of activities whilst not forgetting their importance in achieving a broader goal.

Conference Believes

1. That NUS is in a unique position to create a step-change in the areas of volunteering, student fundraising, student media, societies and sports clubs.
2. That there should be an NUS Student Skills Strategy, which encompasses the organisations work on employability and skills development looking specifically at the development of students' skills involved in student activities within students' unions. It should also comment on entrepreneurial skills, internationalisation and sustainability and outline how NUS will develop student skills work over the next three years.
3. That there should be an NUS Student Development Strategy looking at forming strategic partnerships with other organisations to help enhance NUS' capacity to deliver for students in these areas and outlines how NUS will develop student development groups over the next three years.
4. That there should be an NUS Student Media Strategy which helps develop the work NUS does already with student media groups and professional organisations outlining how NUS will develop students media groups over the next three years.

Conference Resolves

1. NUS will work with students' unions to broaden the perspective of employability from a UK perspective to an international perspective, pursuing projects and schemes which further these aims.
2. NUS produce a society toolkit, similar to the course rep toolkit, which will provide resources for societies all around the UK.
3. NUS will work with a range of student-led organisations to provide national awards and recognition for students around the UK.
4. NUS should assist students' unions in the introduction of alumni-mentoring schemes within activities departments to help improve the employability of students
5. NUS will begin to map the work students' unions and universities are doing in relation to employability in order to provide a clear picture of national activity highlighting best practice to others
6. NUS will work to ensure that student volunteering progresses in the UK and work to provide infrastructure support to student-led volunteering within unions.
7. NUS should raise the profile of student activities nationally in the press to assist students' unions in doing the same locally and to open new funding streams as a result through the NUS Student Media Strategy

(cont)

8. NUS should continue to work with BUCS and Sport England (and equivalent bodies in the nations) on projects to help improve student sport at an elite and participatory level across the UK
9. NUS should target specific employability work at small and specialist students' unions including seeking ways to reduce any administrative burden for those unions
10. NUS should run a national volunteering conference open to all student volunteers and staff members, which profiles opportunities to get involved, debates and training with other expert organisations.
11. Following the Olympic games legacy funding will be available and NUS should create a national student development bursary fund or similar for those students who aren't able to participate in activities because of financial worries. By tracking the retention rates of students involved in activities and sport NUS can once and for all demonstrate the immense value of this activity to students, universities and society.
12. NUS should promote students' union run job shops as a service to members, based on various successful operations around the UK
13. NUS to release guidance on working together in student and staff volunteering and how best to manage that relationship
14. NUS to advocate sharing of services between unions and other organisations in order to increase the ability of students to volunteer and unions to support that activity

Building a Generation Ready To Shout 'I AM THE CHANGE!' (504)

Students' unions should be synonymous with change, identity and action so how 'activism' is defined should be determined as locally as possible. Each students' union is unique and each of their students motivated by different things. When thinking about bringing about change, whether locally, nationally or internally different language, different tactics and different approaches are deployed and a one size fits all approach simply doesn't work. Students who want to lead change shouldn't be pigeon-holed, they should decide the what and the why whilst NUS should simply facilitate their development. Whether a student is a course rep, a seasoned campaigner or a student fundraiser – each of these is a different type of activist.

The discussion at this conference should be about how we move forward in helping students' unions adopt the most inclusive definition of activist. Let's recognise that the term 'activism' isn't appealing to every student and some students find the term exclusive and not relevant to them. NUS should be clear to define the term activist to ensure that it is all-encompassing. Let's help all students realise that they too are activists in their own individual way.

Conference Believes:

1. There are broadly three types of student-led change that should be addressed, they are; student-led change, students' unions enacting change and change at a national level
2. NUS should facilitate student-led change whether by recruiting developing and then networking individual students who want to make a difference. NUS should help student activists communicate with one another from around the UK on similar issues or where they can share valuable lessons
3. NUS should facilitate students' union-led change by helping unions identify their activist base, to constructively challenge them to constantly improve and innovate and to support students' unions to work with existing networks of activists such as anti cuts groups and political societies
4. NUS should provide student-led leadership by co-ordinating student officers and students' unions who want to see the same change, by embedding and joining up change work in all that we do and encouraging the decentralisation of power from organisations to student-led groups, NUS should take a lead in decentralising influence
5. It is important that NUS takes a lead in developing a culture of activism across the whole of our movement
6. Where possible NUS should work with other organisations who have expertise in this field
7. It is important to join up all of the work which NUS undertakes in developing activists, across the zones, liberation campaigns, sections and nations so that we are all sharing best practice and maximising the number of people being supported to lead change across the movement.
8. NUS needs to understand the different routes that people take in first getting involved and then making change, for this to happen longitudinal tracking of those who have attended NUS activism events, registered through the 'I am the change' website or have received local training needs to occur

Conference Resolves;

1. Based on the success of student activism 2011, NUS should ensure that in 2012/13 it develops this area to ensure that it delivers a programme of work that involves more people.
2. NUS should fully evaluate the activist partnership funding and roll-out best practice guidance based on the evaluation. It should also fund a similar scheme again in 2012 with more funding being made available directly to student groups.
3. NUS should ensure it maintains the momentum created with the activist training days it has delivered and seek to increase the capacity to be about to deliver more training on a local level.

4. To run a national networking event for people who want to lead the way on activism
5. To run a master-class for student officers aimed at supporting them to develop activism through working with existing activists, such as political societies and anti-cuts groups
6. To provide specific training and support on 'working with activists' for staff in FE Unions
7. For the VP UD to work with officers from across Liberation, Nations and Sections to develop a cross-organisational approach to activist support and development



Pete Mercer, Welfare Committee Chair

Steph Johnson, Reading University SU (NEC member)
Leo Boe, Warwick SU
Victoria Kettlewell, Mid Cheshire College SU
Colum McGuire, Kent University SU
James Phillips, Mid Kent College SU
Sean Rillo Raczka, Birkbeck College SU

Liam Burns, National President (ex-officio)

Pete Mercer NUS Vice-President (Welfare)

Housing: shifting the focus Conference Resolves

1. That NUS should provide guidance - or signpost to guidance – to enable students’ unions to defend their members’ housing rights at the local level.
2. To ensure that NUS continues to monitor the impact that housing benefits cuts are having on students, and reporting this to CMs and Government, and lobbying to reverse or revise the changes that have been made.
3. To provide support and guidance to unions looking to develop or improve current housing provision through area-wide or institution specific accreditation or management.
4. As the localism agenda drives the focus from national policy making to local, it’s vital that NUS provides timely updates and advice for student students’ unions on how to engage with local decision making processes, and campaign locally on housing and community issues.
5. To lobby Government around tighter regulation of letting agencies, with regards to client money in particular, to ensure our members in the PRS are better protected in the future.
6. NUS should set out clear guidance on challenging the rising costs of housing, setting out steps for unions to take to begin to reverse the trend on the rising cost of housing. This should include but be limited to the consultation process in the establishment of partnership agreements, and how unions can negotiate a better deal.
7. NUS should set out guidance on how to lobby MP's/Local Councillors on driving up the standards of HMO's and create tougher regulation on landlords that do not adhere to these

We have been working hard to ensure that we are broadening how we represent student housing needs. We have joined up to a housing alliance called Housing Voice, chaired by Lord Whitty, to explore the issues of affordable housing, covering social housing, owner-occupier households and the private rented sector. In December, we spoke at a housing enquiry chaired by Lord Whitty in which we focussed on the broad diversity of students, across all housing sectors, and then went on to focus on particular elements of the private rented sector and the student accommodation sector.

I have also attended a conference on Localism, to ensure that I am building networks and links with the appropriate organisations and individuals to ensure that we are on the cutting edge of policy making and discussion on this agenda, which is changing local decision making structures and powers as we speak.

In response to some potentially damaging developments, we have successfully lobbied against proposed changes to the government’s recognition of the ANUK Code, whilst working with other organisations and partners to tighten legislation on tenancy deposit protection in England. Furthermore, we successfully lobbied with Shelter and Citizens Advice to ensure that amendments were made to the Localism Act to ensure that Tenancy Deposit Protection remains robust and continues to protect tenants’ money/ I am pleased to announce that these amendments made it into the Bill, which is now an Act.

We’ve also continued to provide tailored support to students’ unions with responding to local consultations and discussions around article four directions, HMO quotas and other issues likely to disproportionately impact students. I went to Manchester to support all three unions in that region with an appeal to the use of HMO quotas. The council had actually enlisted the help of a QC to defend their case, which made for a very long and

rather exciting debate! I think we really showed some of the gaps in data and weaknesses in assumptions and hope this will lead to some movement on this.

NUS have joined up with Unipol and Accommodation for Students to develop an accreditation scheme for off-street properties. This is a scheme that will for the first time aim to provide a general list of standards for student housing, complementing accreditation schemes where they currently exist and operate successfully, and providing a framework for places where they do not. It has now launched, with the first cohort of landlords beginning to get accredited on this scheme

We will:

- Develop a 'neighbourhub' with resources for dealing with housing and community issues locally
- To publish a briefing on the Localism Act and what it means for students' unions and local communities
- To ensure there is timely information available for unions on housing benefit changes coming in January 2012 (shared room rate) and January 2013 (all other changes to house size and rates)
- To continue to lobby Government for tighter regulation of letting agencies
- For the Accommodation Costs Survey 2012/13 to be underway
- To have launched an accommodation cost matrix to guide officers when lobbying their institution on hall prices

Getting to the heart of student health Conference Resolves

1. For NUS to develop a 'Health Gateway' – an online portal that would link through to a number of organisations who could provide information, resources and campaign materials to CMs.
2. To build a healthy students' union model – a framework for how students' unions can audit their effectiveness impacting positively upon student health.
3. To work with NUSSL and offer guidance and resources to support students' unions becoming responsible retailers
4. That NUS should work with British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) to champion the positive health impacts that sports and recreational activities can have, whilst helping to limit the negative impacts.
5. To affirm our stance against commercial pub crawls and damaging to individual health and safety, local services and community relations, as per previous policy

Over the past few months, we have met with a number of organisations to develop relationship with a view to be able to provide more comprehensive links through to organisations involved in raising awareness on health issues, or shaping policy in this area.

We have also continued to work on our Measuring Welfare work – looking at what students' unions deliver to support students, and how we can measure this to ensure we are delivering services that work for students. This work is now in NUS' three-year strategic plan.

NUS Services are also re-writing their CSR strategy which will be ratified at Convention. This will no doubt contribute to the ways in which we can support students' unions becoming responsible retailers.

We have released commercial bar crawls guidance for license enforcement officers and have been lobbying locally in those areas affected by these events. We have also started meetings with the Home Office to explore how we can work together

Help! We can't afford our education! Protecting students' financial support in a time of cuts, cuts, cuts.

Conference Resolves

1. For NUS to lobby Government and sector bodies such as the SLC to ensure that there is clear and well positioned information, advice and guidance for prospective, current and past students in FE and HE about what changes to student support will have and what they will receive.
2. For NUS to engage with SLC to redesign the student loan package, including campaigning for changes to payment arrangements, such as monthly instalments.
3. To continue to survey and review the impact that benefits cuts are having on our members and use this evidence to lobby and campaign to decision makers.
4. To continue to campaign to save EMA and work with the Further Education Zone to reinstate this crucial support for so many of our members.
5. To work with the NHS and other governmental departments on the reviews taking place of support for those training for professional practice.
6. That NUS should lobby for a national student discount on transport, or free travel, not only for students studying in a particular city or town but also for students who come from those areas but study elsewhere
7. That NUS should work with national rail to ensure the fact that the 16-25 railcard is available to mature students is clearly advertised
8. That NUS should campaign to make sure the student Oyster discount remains in place and affordable travel for students in London is high on the mayoral agenda
9. That NUS should lobby for more affordable bike schemes
10. To campaign and actively encourage Transport For London to offer subsidised Barclays Cycle Hire membership for students, in order to encourage healthier transportation methods

nationally to ensure such events occur without damaging community relations or proving significant risk to students.

We will

- We will have started to design implement a series of pages on nusconnect and nus.org.uk signposting to health organisations.
- Launch a mental health toolkit, in conjunction with the Disabled Students and run a Mental Health Day
- Campaign, to include specific references to self harm and loss of hearing to fulfil our mandates on these areas.

This has been a key area of work for the Welfare Zone since national conference. This area, now known as 'The Pound in your Pocket' has become the priority campaign for NUS, with me and Liam leading on this area.

Work we have already carried out includes setting up a commission to look at students' finances and planning research to identify what our policy direction should take. This will continue to be the priority campaign for NUS.

Additionally, we have also launched the Get on the Bus campaign. assisting FE students' unions locally to lobby their local decision makers to protect travel subsidies for 16-19 year olds where under threat and nationally challenge decision makers to consider how we can ensure that further education remains accessible for all. We launched this campaign at FFestival, then ran petition signing events at Prior and Pursglove College, Plymouth City College, Bridgwater College, and Coleg Llandrillo. We have also completed a toolkit to accompany this campaign, to ensure that other colleges can carry out campaigning activity in this area when the timing is right.

We have also continued to engage with the SLC and student finance bodies to air concerns around loan and grant processing, for "non-traditional" students in particular, for example with cases of late payment and over-payment. We are also in continuous talks on how to plan for the new regime in 2012, including contingency planning.

Additionally, we have worked with the FE zone to report to the Low Pay Commission outlining our opposition to differential pay across age brackets.

We will:

- Launch research on the student support landscape, steered by the Student Support Commission.

Championing diversity in our movement Conference Resolves

1. To work with the Liberation Campaigns on campaigns to champion diversity and campaign against discrimination on our campuses and in wider society
2. To campaign – in partnership with Liberation campaigns - against any dilution or limitation to the Equality Act.
3. To publish advice and guidance for students' unions on how to ensure we are creating accessible services and experiences for all students, and enshrining rights in policies and procedures.
4. To maintain links with the Equality Challenge Unit
5. To continue to support SUs with their Interfaith work and events and encourage SU's to promote interfaith activities
6. Implement the recommendations of the Hate Crime report
7. To ensure that we are reflecting the society we want to see through championing diversity within our own students' union staff and officer profile and working practices
8. To help students' 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.
9. To improve diversity training for Union officers, ensuring students of all cultural, faith and religious backgrounds are a welcome part of campus life.
10. Provide a series of briefings on how to tackle the threat of fascist groups on campus.
11. Work with UAF and the NUS Liberation Campaigns to mobilise students to defend the Muslim community under siege to confront the EDL and other racist, far right groups and drive them off our streets.
12. To add NUS to the signatories of the statement initiated by Unite Against Fascism (UAF) in defence of multiculturalism.
13. Affiliate to One Society Many Cultures and work to organise celebrations of multiculturalism on campuses.
14. Support students' unions that are facing an increased presence of EDL and BNP supporters on campus.
15. Encourage students to register to vote in order to ensure that fascist groups are not electorally successful.
16. Oppose attacks on civil liberties, cultural and religious freedoms including the right to wear religious symbols.

- Put together policy proposals for the future of student financial support, based on research undertaken.
- Campaign against Local Authorities that are attempting to remove travel subsidies
- Publish this year's CPAG student support handbook

The Welfare Zone has spent a great deal of time ensuring we are linking up and crossing over with Liberation campaigns where possible.

A fantastic example of this includes the launch of the Hate Crime reports, 'No Place for Hate'. The reports cover incidents of hate crime related to gender and social orientation, ethnicity, faith or belief and disability.

In terms of our interfaith engagement work, we have run two large training events with HE sabbs and staff and two FE union staff training days. This training also has helped to increase unions' participation in Interfaith Week, happening between 20th and 27th November 2011. Following this we have ran a two-part training course on building good interfaith relations and advanced facilitator skills.

We have also launched guidance on tackling hate speech. We have also designed and distributed multi-faith calendars to support unions in ensuring they are creating space for different faith groups throughout the year.

We have continued to work with ECU on briefings to keep students' unions up to date on powers in the equality act, including a briefing on the Equality Act and what it means for students' unions.

Although not strictly bound within this area of work, we have also spoken at a number of conferences on the Government Prevent agenda, outlining areas of concern, and guiding SUs to mitigate against any implementation that have a negative impact on their students.

We will

- Publish all four hate crime reports, and toolkits to support students' unions dealing with hate crime locally
- Release guidance on tackling hate speech and have organised a national hate speech training conference
- Continue to support student officers with the Prevent agenda, providing briefings and one-to-one support where needed

17. Localise campaigning, working within the communities where the BNP and EDL are attracting support.
18. To promote exchange of ideas between different cultures, promoting multiculturalism on campuses.
19. To develop policies on how universities can accommodate diverse needs.
20. To mandate NUS leadership to take a public stance against the government's policy of conflating culture with security.
21. To ensure campuses are free for the exchange of ideas and combat any form of extremism

Looking out for our students

Conference Resolves

1. Continue Measuring Welfare research on the future of welfare services in a post Browne environment, which will report back to the welfare zone committee and conference.
2. The research should look at the issues such as collaborations, digital delivery of welfare services, external partnerships as well as working with institutions
3. To re-run the pastoral support research that the welfare zone has carried out this year, so that we begin to plot some of the changes to services over this period of cuts
4. For NUS to develop tools and resources to enable unions to audit and monitor the impact and value of their support services to assist with decision making, lobbying and signposting in the future.
5. To continue to issue information and encourage best practice and information sharing to ensure our welfare and student services are all providing excellent
6. Information and support to our members.
7. To continue work with AMOSSHE and NAMMS
8. To campaign for minimum standards for pastoral care in the government white paper on HE funding
9. To continue to campaign and support the Every Child Matters agenda.
10. To campaign for a basic level of service provision in FE.
11. To share best practice regarding strategic and preventative work to help to prevent students from getting into crises.
12. To work with students' union advice services to map what issues students are seeking advice on and to identify national trends.
13. To encourage students' union officers to develop close working relationships with student advisors (whether based in their institution or union), to enable unions to base their campaigns on local evidence.
14. To highlight issues when they arise and facilitate the sharing of best practice between advice services to deal with issues.
15. To support advice services to deliver awareness campaigns (for example Housing Weeks) alongside students' unions and in partnership

Finished analysis on the Measuring Welfare survey, and reported back on the findings so far to delegates at SU 2011.

We have also worked with AMOSSHE on their delivery of the Value and Impact project, speaking at their events on student service provision.

We continue to work with Advice UK on the Advice Pro project, and have set up a steering group to find out more about to deliver a national case reporting system.

Launched Student Safety Net

We will

- Conduct interviews to explore this area in more depth with unions
- Develop a plan for delivering support tools to unions within the next few years
- Release an SOS Toolkit, guiding student unions on how to save student services
- Develop ways in which unions can share resources easily through NUS websites to facilitate the sharing of best practice.

with relevant organisations to free up welfare officers to concentrate on delivering change.

16. Call on the government to introduce caps on the total lending rates that can be charged for providing credit
17. To attempt to collect evidence of the growing problem from Students' Union Advice Services
18. To provide a briefing and to support students' union wishing to campaign on this issue.

International students

Conference Resolves

1. To campaign against any restriction on the numbers of international students being allowed to study in, government recognised, further and higher education institutions.
2. This includes campaigning against explicit restrictions, such as the introduction of a cap on numbers, or implicit restrictions, which could include limiting working rights or bringing dependents.
3. To campaign for a visa and immigration system that is based on the principles of recognising the value and importance on international students to the UK education system and enabling genuine students to be able to make the most of the world-class UK education system.
4. To campaign to allow international students to have work experience opportunities in the UK after finishing their studies.

We will work with the International Students campaign to identify the best ways to deliver our work supporting international students.

Students with dependents and students with children and caring responsibilities (2009)

Conference Resolves

1. That the title of Student Parents be changed to Students with Dependants
2. That the historic opinion that students are 18-21 be set aside to allow acceptance of the realistic diversity of individuals who make up the university population.
3. To ensure that going forward all policies/decisions encompass the needs and voice of all students regardless of age, race, gender, disabilities AND personal situations.
4. To accept that individual needs may cross over between various areas of the NUS policy sections and this is why all student types/groups be considered when making proposals and ultimately decisions.
5. That father students, regardless of relationship status, should be represented equally as students with dependants as they are currently under-represented as parents.
6. That NUS lobbying on accommodation take students with dependants into account.
7. That the NUS should explore the creation of an internal pressure group for Students with Dependants

This was a motion that was due to lapse at last National Conference. It was proposed that this motion should be saved from the policy lapse, which it was to ensure that there remained over-arching policy on student parents and carers. This provides a general policy steer for the campaign, however there are some parts which are not applicable due to having been done (e.g. research and report) or no longer relevant (e.g. references to particular Government departments or agendas which have subsequently changed).

Continued to provide tailored advice to individual students/students unions on issues relating to students parents and dependents.

Been invited to sit on a steering panel for research being undertaken by Claire Calender into student parent childcare.

Supported a growing number of students' unions (successfully!) lobbying for their institution to collect data on students with caring responsibilities, or conducting their own research with their members. This has been a really exciting development over recent years and really adds to our knowledge about

how we can better support this group.

We will:

- Plan further work required to gain more insight into the experiences of student carers nationwide
- Support the work being undertaken by NUS Scotland into student carers

Defend the welfare state

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

We have continued to campaign and lobby regarding the cuts agenda, including through a coordinated response with our different interactions with various Government departments and in consultation responses.

We have also supported the Disabled Students Campaign in their work with the Hardest Hit campaign.

We will

- Provide briefings on changes to benefits and the impact on students
- Continue to work with the liberation campaigns in campaigning against cuts and the disproportionate affect it will have on their members

Money

Conference Resolves

1. To lobby Endsleigh to redesign the Prepaid Mastercard for International Students so that
 - It uses competitive exchange rates when transferring international currency into an account.
 - It does not charge users to withdraw money at British ATMs.

Update to be delivered in March

Self Harm

Conference Resolves

1. That March 1st is recognised as Self-Harm Awareness day in line with the U.S. campaign.
2. That NUS work on campaigning for better support for those who self harm and educate students on:
3. The causes and consequences of self-harm;
4. The alternatives to self-harm;
5. The help available to those who self harm.
6. That NUS work with the NHS and other relevant organisations to collect statistical data on self-harm.

See Getting to the heart of student health

Loud Noise and Hearing Loss

Conference Resolves

1. To support RNID's Don't Lose the Music campaign.
2. To mandate the VP Welfare Officer to make sure that information about safe listening practices are available to all Students' Unions Welfare Officers.

See Getting to the heart of student health

3. To mandate the VP Welfare Officer to promote safe listening practices at all zone and national Welfare conferences at workshops.
4. To mandate the VP Welfare to send safe hearing guidelines to Students' Unions before the start of each academic year.

Schedule 7

Conference Resolves

1. NUS should campaign for proportionate port policing policy that strikes a clear distinction between innocent people and those suspected of terrorism.
2. To campaign for a review of the current police powers under Schedule 7 with all the relevant stakeholders.
3. To campaign especially for the right of innocent people to refuse to have their DNA & fingerprints.
4. To write to the Home Office, DBIS, IPCC and other relevant bodies to affirm the above.

We will be working with other zones/campaigns to discuss how we can resolve some of these issues in collaboration

Mature Students' Rights

Conference Resolves

1. To campaign for more financial support for mature students.
2. To campaign and lobby for a Government package for childcare allowance for students.
3. To actively encourage and help facilitate Student Unions' across the country to push their institutions into creating bursaries for mature students and those with childcare responsibilities.
4. To mandate the NEC to actively engage with mature students on all levels, and help and encourage Student Unions to involve and engage with mature students at their institutions.
5. To carry out research to be able to see the current numbers of mature students, and also the problems faced, and the amount of mature students that have to leave education due to these problems
6. To research the impact of being a mature student with regards to National Insurance contributions, especially part-time students and to brief CMs via a "Working Students" briefing on the research and campaign as appropriate.

To lobby the government regarding students who lose out on NI contributions because they undertake education or training at the expense of some of their working hours.

We will be working with other zones/campaigns to discuss how we can resolve some of these issues in collaboration

Challenging Racism on campus and in our communities

Conference Resolves

1. Continue supporting Unite Against Fascism, maximise student opposition to the BNP at May's London Assembly and local elections and support no platform for fascists.
2. Support Rise Against Racism initiatives

So far I have worked with liberation campaigns to join demonstration against the EDL, having spoken at the anti-EDL demo in Tower Hamlets.

I have also worked with organisations, such as UAF,

organised by Student Assembly Against Racism, Mayor of London and NUS Black Students Campaign.

3. Work with the Muslim Council of Britain and others to campaign against Islamophobia and the demonisation of the Muslim community.
4. Oppose attacks on civil liberties, cultural and religious freedoms including the right to wear religious symbols.
5. Encourage students' unions to become hate crime reporting centres.
6. Work with NUS Black Students' Campaign to ensure colleges/universities implement the RRAA and anonymous marking.
7. Work with Student Action for Refugees and others opposing the deportation of student asylum seekers
8. To support the NUS Black Students Campaign in their campaign around issues of gun and knife crime
9. To affiliate to Love Music Hate Racism
10. To support students facing fascist activity on campus.

To reaffirm our 'no platform policy' against the BNP and help students' unions enact their own by co-ordinating a No Platform speaker roadshow with UAF.

Spying on Campus

Conference Resolves

1. That the NUS president writes a letter to the police, MI5 and home office opposing the anti-terror legislation and spying on campuses.
2. The NUS reaffirm the right of freedom of expression and provide free guidance literature to students, advising how to act if approached by security services
3. That NUS start a new campaign called 'War on Terror Week' to highlight the effects of such draconian anti-terror laws that exist in the UK.
4. That NUS start a new campaign called 'Stop Spying on our Campuses' to highlight the effects of such draconian anti-terror laws that exist in the UK. It will do this through a national campaign and provide materials and support to Students Unions

OCMC and the Muslim Council for Britain, on dealing with the Prevent agenda and the effects it has on minorities, religious groups and local communities.

Substantial and ground-breaking research has been undertaken on hate crimes against students, having released the Interim Report detailing top-level findings.

We will

- Publish all four hate crime reports, and toolkits to support students' unions dealing with hate crime locally
- Release on tackling hate speech and have organised a national training event on how to implement this
- Continue to support student officers with the Prevent agenda, with briefings and one-to-one support where needed
- Continue to share best practice on interfaith projects and run training sessions, as well as promote events in the run up to National Inter Faith Week

National Conference 2012 | Welfare Zone proposals

This section outlines the recommendations from the Welfare Zone Committee to National Conference which you can submit amendments to. If you want to discuss an issue that has not been covered in these recommendations you can submit an ordinary motion.

The Welfare Zone has live policy on the following issues which are available to read in full at www.nusconnect.org.uk/about/policy

Welfare 2009 – due to lapse this conference

Student Employment
Student Housing, It's Our NeighbOURhood Too!
Responsible Drinking is More than a Poster!
No to Stop and Search
Access for All Students
Racism in Education

Welfare 2010

Accommodation
Housing: Private Rented Sector, Tenancy Deposit Schemes and Accreditation
Neighbourhood and community
Crime- not on our watch
Health Services and Costs
Sexual Health
Mental Health
Pastoral Care
Money, Finance, Debt, Benefits and Banking
Transport
Students as Workers
Student Parents
Faith and Safety
Part-time Student Inequalities

Welfare 2011

Shifting the focus
Getting to the Heart of Student Health
Help! We can't afford our education! Protecting students' financial support in a time of cuts
Championing the diversity of our movement
Looking out for our students
Protecting internationalisation in our education system, fighting visa changes
Students with dependents
Defend the welfare state
Money
Self Harm
Loud Noise and Hearing
Schedule 7
Mature Students' Rights
Students with children and caring responsibilities
Challenging Racism on campus and in our communities
Spying on Campus

The Pound in Your Pocket (601)

In December 2010, a vote was passed to raise the cap on tuition fees to £9,000 per year. This was at the epicentre of wholesale changes to the future funding and organisation of higher education.

However, there was not an equitable discussion about the financial support of students within this new system. Indeed, student loans have not increased above the rate of inflation in the last five years, despite huge increases in the cost of living including 17%-above-inflation increases in rent in university accommodation, the increase of VAT, and general increase in cost of living over this period.

In further education, the removal of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and the Adult Learning Grant (ALG) has led to questions about how the new system will support students to participate. Furthermore, Care to Learn, the income support package for young parents, predominantly mothers, is also currently being consulted on and vulnerable to cuts.

Conference believes:

1. Tuition fees are not the only threat to widening participation and adequate student support is a key driver for the access and retention, particularly of the most disadvantaged students.
2. Student support in both HE and FE in England has not risen at all over the past three years, despite sharp rises living costs – and the increase in the maximum maintenance loan available to new students in HE in 2012 only makes up for the value lost over that period.
3. Calculations reveal that, on average, students in HE experience an annual financial shortfall of £8,037, presumably to be made up by parental contributions, savings or income from part-time work.
4. EMA and ALG were vital sources of support for FE learners.
5. Threats to Care to Learn funding and local authority travel subsidy budgets open the most vulnerable students up to even greater barriers to accessing and remaining in education.
6. The loss of these sources of support is already taking effect – there have been significant decreases in college applications in at least 50% of colleges since the abolition of EMA
7. The implementation of the Article 4 Directions in the Private Rented Sector, which gives Local Authorities the power to restrict the number of rented properties in any given area, will inflate rent in typically ‘student areas’.
8. In the new access agreements under the National Scholarship Programme (NSP), institutions should opt for forms of income support, i.e. bursaries and/or accommodation discounts, mainly because immediate maintenance support represents much greater value than fee waivers that will both depreciate vastly over time in value, but also not even be realised by a predicted 40% of graduates who will never repay these anyway.
9. The NSP, which was one of the few concessions of the new fee regime, promising students an injection of £300 million a year in student support, has now been undermined by the government’s pressure on institutions to adopt fee waivers instead of bursaries, which actually represents a net real-term reduction of the money in students’ pockets of roughly £70 million from the old system.
10. That the government and institutions would impoverish students and con them out of the much needed support that they were promised under the reforms, by trying to lessen the financial burden of fee loans on the treasury, is utterly disgraceful.
11. Student support needs to be considered within the wider cuts agenda; against the backdrop of the Coalition’s attack on the welfare state; in particular on employment, disability, housing and childcare benefits. The impact of student

income support generally - or rather lack of - hits those who are already disproportionately affected by the cuts, i.e. women, disabled, black and LGBT students.

12. Any working system of student support should not rely upon, or consist solely of, merit-based awards systems. They should be based on the needs of students rather than their attainment, and should consider the barriers that parental means testing poses, as well as how this money should be administered.

Conference Resolves:

1. To draw together all existing knowledge of the student support landscape and its various components in a comprehensive literature review.
2. To present an alternative vision of how student support should operate that supports those that need it when they need it - across the entire spectrum of post-16 education; from further education through to the post-graduate level.
3. To lobby the Government to increase state investment in student support, making a case against student hardship and student inequality, based upon this alternative vision.

Localism (602)

'Localism' has been a key part of the Coalition Government's agenda since election in 2010. On 15 November 2011, the Localism Bill became an Act. This Act seeks to increase the power that local authorities and local people have over decision making in their local communities.

As part of this agenda, there will be huge changes to the ways in which transport, housing, health and crime reduction and service provision is delivered.

In housing, we have already seen through the rolling out of Article 4 Directions (controls to restrict the development of the private rented sector - the housing sector which houses over 1.5 million students across the UK) how this agenda can completely overlook the needs and opinions of students and students' unions. We have also seen people being removed from social housing or having their housing benefit cut through being connected with the riots which took place in summer 2011.

For crime-related outputs, local community members will be able to vote for their Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), thus giving people the ability to determine who should be responsible for the entire budget, strategy and implementation on this. Whether the student voice and need is considered a priority by whoever wins this appointment in each local authority will have a huge impact on provision.

In terms of health, localism sees GPs having commissioning powers for local services, rather than Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities. This means that again, depending on whether students' unions and students are vocal on what our members need, and whether these voices are listened to, may mean the difference between some crucial services existing or disappearing altogether.

The Licensing process will also be affected by the Localism agenda, by way of the 'Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011'. The Act will give licensing authorities, local health bodies, local residents and the police more power in the licensing process, and license applicants will be required to give further consideration to the interests of the local community when setting out the steps they will take to promote the licensing objectives.

A late night levy is also being introduced to cover the costs associated with the night time economy such as extra policing and clean up. Licensing authorities will have the discretion to offer exemptions or discounts in certain situations.

(Cont...)

Conference believes:

1. The localism agenda offers both an opportunity and a threat on the local and national level.
2. Local health services need to be accessible for all students in the vicinity, and that depending on population size or student need, there may need to be student-specific services.
3. Provision of transport needs to be sufficient to ensure that students are able to attend college, university and extra-curricular activities, assessing the needs of students in a meaningful way.
4. That the commissioning of both policing and health provision needs to have included consultation with students and students' unions.
5. That students' unions need specialised support to enable them to meet the new demand of enhanced local policy making.

Conference resolves:

1. To produce briefings updating student unions on the changes to local policy development and implementation.
2. To develop a strategy for how to support unions operating in a post-Article 4 Direction world.
3. To support unions by producing guidance on local authority processes and by identifying a sharing best practice on engaging with local authorities.
4. To lobby ACPO (the Association of Chief Police Officers) to ensure that student unions are engaged with local crime commissioner democratic processes.
5. To produce guidance on how to lobby for a range of local crime initiatives at a local level, for example 'safe havens'.
6. To lobby the Department of Health to ensure that student unions are consulted on changes to local health service provision and that they are engaged with health commissioners so that they can make efforts to inform local service provision.
7. To build on the Get On The Bus campaign to extend the fight against the removal of travel subsidies in FE wherever these cuts are proposed.
8. To work with the Campaign for Better Transport to fight the removal of essential transport services upon which students, both HE and FE, depend upon to get to and from university or college.
9. To ensure that consideration for "non-traditional" students is given when guiding student unions on all local planning and policy, including those with dependents, disabled students, international students, or those that live at home, are in social housing or commute.

Finally, in terms of transport, this will mean that local authorities continue to have complete autonomy and no national guidance on to what extent local authorities should be supporting students' transport requirements to college and university.

Faith and sexuality (603)

There are real and perceived tensions between religion and belief and sexual orientation equalities.

Recent research has outlined that there is a shortage of good practice in the sector on how to manage these relationships

The degree of anticipated conflict is disproportionate to the actual conflict found in practice.

The anticipation of conflict can exert a powerful inhibition on operational leadership as well as work with the two groups, both separately and together. This research also concluded that students' unions could play pivotal roles in supporting their institution in bridging the gap between these two equality groups.

Conference Believes

1. Good mutually respectful relationships between the two groups are more likely to be developed when people can express and explore their personal experiences rather than rehearse fixed opposing principles.
2. Students' unions are eager for more support and information on how to facilitate such activities.
3. The student movement can be pivotal in improving the experiences of LGBT students and students with a religion or belief (or both) and the relationships between these groups.
4. Students should be given the opportunity and be encouraged to express their values, beliefs and opinions and hear others' through dialogue.

Conference Resolves

1. To deliver a project in FE which trains individuals to facilitate conversations where personal experiences are explored, rather than rehearsing fixed, opposing principles.
2. To develop a resource bank for students' unions in both FE and HE to facilitate their work in this area.

Prevent (604)

Prevent is one of the four strands of the Government's counter terrorism strategy and aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

A key delivery area of Prevent has, and will continue to be, further and higher education institutions as the Government considers these environments to be places where "radicalisation" can take place.

The Government defines the term "radicalisation" as the "processes by which a person comes to develop or adopt beliefs and views supportive or terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism".

Conference Believes

1. NUS does not believe "radicalisation" to be widespread across universities and colleges in the UK; however, we recognise that it might take place on some occasions, and that universities and colleges have a responsibility in ensuring the safety of all students and staff.
2. Open debate, the exchange of opinions and the development of student ideas and understanding are central to the culture of universities in promoting freedom of speech and ensuring academic freedom. Similarly, freedom of expression and speech are basic human rights to be protected and are protected by law.
3. It is NUS' belief that although universities provide obvious fora for those who seek to radicalise students, universities are one of the only places where such views and opinions can be challenged effectively in open forums and debates.
4. Students' unions are at the heart of ensuring our colleges and universities are places in which a diversity of people and opinions are not only heard, but celebrated. The range of activities and events that take place in students' unions demonstrate this diversity of interests, ideas and opinions and this is to be generally encouraged, not restricted.
5. NUS should continue to work with its member students' unions to ensure that where there are risks posed by speakers these risks are identified and mitigated.
6. The language, concepts and unspecific terms of definition used in the Prevent strategy are unhelpfully generalist and in some cases problematic, and could well be open to discriminatory interpretations.
7. The Government does not offer sufficient advice and guidance for institutions, Student Unions, or any other student organisation, on how to implement a strategy for dealing with hate speech, non-violent extremism or those with radical views on campuses in a positive way; yet is quick to condemn any institution or organisation that allegedly fails to meet a set of standards – standards that they haven't even laid out.
8. That the refusal to work with and engage in dialogue with student groups, or the condemnation of these groups on the grounds of so-called non-compliance will only further marginalise and potentially "radicalise" wings of their these groups.

(Cont)

9. There have been a number of instances, although not necessarily widespread, wherein local implementation has been inappropriate and has implicated certain students as being “vulnerable to radicalisation”, such as Muslim students. For example, Student Unions have been approached by local Prevent officers asking for details of student Islamic society members, and institutions and/or community groups have issued information that is by nature prejudice against these groups. This is totally unacceptable.
10. There is a direct link between the Prevent strategy, the concepts and assertions within it and its inability to properly define its terms and objectives, and this poorly conceived implementation.

Conference Resolves

To stand in solidarity with those negatively affected by Prevent, by broadly opposing the Prevent narrative and condemning any specific local implementation that threatens the rights of our members.

1. For NUS to continue to support students’ unions to implement the guidance, ‘managing the risks associated with external speakers’.
2. For NUS to continue to facilitate dialogue between different student organisations and to continue to support student unions in doing the same.
3. To ensure student unions are equipped with legal advice so that they understand their rights in relation to requests from police officers and produce guidance on how to engage with them.



Steven Findlay, DPC Chair

Yemi Makinde (vice-chair)
Marcus Crawley
Simon Darvill
Mark Foster
Thea Graham
Fatima Junaid
Dan Swain
Will Watson
Ed Marsh (NEC non-voting)

The Democratic Procedures Committee (DPC) has the ability to submit motions relating to the running of Conference, the policy processes and other items relating to the administration of the National Union. It also submits text on behalf of the Chief Returning Officer relating to elections.

Rule changes (701)

This motion proposes a number of amendments to the constitution that are designed to make it easier to take part in NUS.

These include widening the places where FE members can be elected to Zone Committees and for the option for a non National Executive Council member to be appointed as chair of that council.

Currently the President has no power to submit motions for the priority campaign meaning that one of the 5 zones has to have their motion allocation reduced by one. This motion seeks to allow the President, via resolution of the NEC to submit such a motion.

Additionally the rule changes correct a misprint concerning the powers of the Returning Officers of elections.

Conference Believes

1. That attendance from FE unions is low at Zone Conferences.
2. That as a result it is hard to legitimately fill the two reserved places at every Zone Conference
3. It would be preferable to elect one of the two FE reserved places on each committee at FE Zone Conference itself
4. That the intent of the original constitution was to give an appointed Returning Officer for a given election full authority over decisions surrounding that election, with the Chief Returning Officer only able to appoint or remove Returning Officers for a given election or to propose to Conference that the outcome of an election should change
5. However a misprint in the document that was then approved to National Conference lives on to this day
6. That during the policy making process, it is possible that the priority issue facing the student movement is not properly prioritised for discussion, submission and amendment
7. That the way to solve this is to allow the National President, via resolution of the NEC, to act as a "Sixth Zone", able to make priority policy recommendations on the priority issue of the day
8. Issues prioritised in this way would then not be raised inside the Zone(s) they were taken from
9. The President would like to be able to appoint a neutral, external chair of NEC meetings but the constitution currently prevents this

Conference Resolves

1. Amend Zone Conference Rules 814, inserting at the end of the first sentence "save that one of the reserved FE places on each of the Society & Citizenship, Welfare and Union Development Conferences will be elected by delegates to the FE Zone Conference"
2. Amend Election Rules 616, removing the letter

- “C” from the reference to the “CRO”
3. Amend Conference Rules 396 adding c. “Policy Recommendations on issues which it believes are a priority for students and students unions to a maximum of 500 words”
 4. Insert Clause 407 and renumber as appropriate “For the purposes of Ordinary Motions and Policy Recommendations Amendments, the Priority Policy Recommendations will be treated as a Sixth Zone”
 5. Clause NEC Rules 136 change “a member of the National Executive Council” to “any other person”

Zones and the Guillotine (702)

National Conference can change the time it allows for different zones. This can lead to some zones being ‘squeezed’ and the amount of policy passed in that are being reduced.

This motion seeks to limit the number of times a guillotine can be moved to ensure that all zones have at least 30 minutes of debate for them at National Conference.

Conference Believes

1. Delegates decide the order of policy discussion at National Conference and that this order therefore determines the priority of those motions.
2. Delegates decide the order in which the different zones are discussed and that this order therefore determines the priority of those zones.
3. One of the first acts of National Conference is to accept the Order Paper and therefore the timings of the Conference
4. The Guillotine allows for the movement of National Conference and to ensure it keeps to these timings.
5. The ability to extend the Guillotine allows National Conference to debate the business it wishes given changing priorities during the Conference itself.
6. Extension of the Guillotine can lead to there not being sufficient time to debate some zones work
7. That a diversity of policy is important to the National Union

Conference resolves

1. That the extension of the Guillotine should not reduce the policy debate in any zone to less than 30 minutes
2. To add “Extensions of the Guillotine shall not allow any zone policy debate to be reduced to below 30 minutes” to section 370 of the NUS Constitution and renumber accordingly.

Administration of elections at politically autonomous events (703)

This section outlines a protocol for dealing with elections at all events to ensure they are run fairly.

Conference Believes

1. That although several of NUS' Democratic events are devolved or politically autonomous, the legal liability for finance, health and safety and staffing of events is held with NUS centrally.
2. In addition all elections (save for those in NUS Wales and NUS-USI) in NUS are held under the auspices of the NUS Chief Returning Officer.
3. There is a potential for accountabilities and duties to overlap, particularly in the area of the responsibilities of the Chief Returning Officer and a devolved steering or democratic procedures committee
4. That the DPC should devolve its duties to politically autonomous steering committees under rule 50.1 in a way that facilitates free and fair elections and good administration

Conference Resolves

1. To adopt the following guidelines in the operation of elections inside politically autonomous areas and to require that the standing orders of politically autonomous areas reflect these provisions.

Delegate Registration & Credentials: Staff, events and venue support for devolved or politically autonomous events is provided centrally by NUS to liberation, and student sections events.

In doing so there is a need for a direct relationship between the relevant devolved or politically autonomous steering committee given that this committee will usually act as the "credentials" committee of the conference.

The provision of staff, events and venue support is carried out on the basis that the staff of NUS will directly:

- Handle registrations prior to the event.
- Carry out relevant and required process relating to Health and Safety and Safeguarding in relation to registrations.
- Register delegates on the day and allocate accommodation as necessary.

They will carry out these functions on the basis of any agreed processes, provisions or concerns raised by a politically autonomous steering committee.

Before each democratic event the chair of a devolved or politically autonomous steering committee is encouraged to meet with the duty manager for the event to discuss processes and concerns.

However during these processes, a devolved or politically autonomous steering committee should not seek to directly "inspect" or interfere with individual staff carrying out these processes.

Where a conflict arises about the entitlement of a delegate to be at an event, the devolved or politically autonomous steering committee must resolve the matter paying due regard to any Health and Safety/Safeguarding procedures laid down by the National President. Delegates cannot be admitted to an event "on the day" and must have registered prior to the event via the registration system.

Where a concern arises during the event as to the process of registration, credential issuing or accommodation allocation being carried out by staff, the chair of a devolved or politically autonomous steering committee must raise the matter first with the duty manager at the event but not directly with staff. If the matter is not resolved the provisions of the NUS Staff Protocol shall apply.

Elections: It should be noted that in the NUS Constitution, “The Chief Returning Officer of the National Union shall be responsible for the good conduct and administration of elections to officer and committee positions of the National Union and shall have the power to govern and interpret all matters relating to elections in accordance with the Rules”. In addition they are required to “keep under review measures to enable and maximise participation in elections and measures to restrict activity of candidates and campaigns to ensure fairness”. They “will have the power to interpret all election regulations and issue rulings and interpretations to this effect to all members and appointed election officials”

Where elections are held at a Nation, Liberation or Section event, although the Chief Returning Officer or deputies endeavour to attend at events, they do appoint a returning officer for each election and, whether in attendance or not, they are required to ensure that Voting Papers are issued to all registered delegates.

However, the issue arises where an autonomous or devolved steering committee chooses to issue credentials to delegates that have not fully or properly registered. This is an issue both in relation to Health and Safety/Administration/Safeguarding, but also an issue in relation to potential electoral fraud.

In addition the Chief Returning Officer is keen to ensure that candidates or their supporters are prevented from obtaining lists of delegates attending at an event in order to ensure that a devolved steering committee cannot be accused of exercising inappropriate powers.

Thus, where an election is held under the auspices of the constitution at an event other than National Conference, the Chief Returning Officer will only authorise the issuing of ballot papers to named delegates that have properly registered by the appropriate deadline.

Where for reasons of administration and/or in conjunction with the Events staff a deadline for registration is extended, the extension of the deadline must include the opportunity to verify a registration with a host union and must never be any later than 3 working days before the start of an event.

For the purpose of the issuing of ballot papers, no new registrations or changes to names of registered delegates will ever be accepted any later than 3 working days before the start of an event, or the formal registration deadline if an extension is not agreed.

In order to prevent electoral fraud and to ensure a fair election, a list of registered delegates will not be issued to any member of a liberation or section committee or steering committee and will be regarded as confidential until the day of the event itself. Any questions relating to the registration status of a union or delegate will be fielded by the events staff. Any conflict as to the entitlement of a registered person to hold delegate credentials shall be referred to the relevant steering body.

“One Member” One Vote Group

At National Conference 2011 a motion to alter the voting system for the National President and vice-presidents fell. However, Liam Burns the National President asked the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) to investigate the reasons for the calling of the motions, the feasibility of election by one student member (OMOV) for each vote rather than by delegations from students’ unions. As such the CRO set up a ‘task and finish’ group to look at the issue.

Who sat on the group?

Chair: Joe Oliver, (NEC) (3/3)
NEC members : Mark Bergfeld (0/3), Michael Chessum (2/3)
Members from SUs: Josh Clare (3/3), Reni Eddo-Lodge (3/3), Jez Harvey (2/3), Jack Matthews (3/3), Gareth Oughton (1/3), Tony Payne (2/3)
CRO appointee: Colina Wright (2/3)

When did the group met?

The group met on the 21st September, 12th October and 16th November as well as running a consultation with students’ unions at Union Development Zone Conference on Friday 28th October.

Remit

- Consult with students’ union Officers, staff, and students on their views on this issue
- Consider the polling system that would be required to implement OMOV and consider its security, fairness, accessibility, legal implications and cost
- Research the possibilities of carrying out ballots, consultations or policy debates online
- Consider the legitimacy issues of using union Delegates as voters in NUS Elections
- Consider the appropriateness of alternative systems from both a principled and practical point of view

Findings

Consult with students’ union Officers, staff, and students on their views on this issue

As well as selecting a committee made up of these groups, the group ran a consultation workshop at the Union Development Zone Conference that explored the issue of OMOV and explored the ways unions and NUS can support the National election process.

Consider the polling system that would be required to implement OMOV and consider its security, fairness, accessibility, legal implications and cost

Research the possibilities of carrying out ballots, consultations or policy debates online

Across the student movement there remains a chronic lack of access to comprehensive membership details. NUS estimate that only about a third of all students’ unions have access to university of colleges database of students’ details. This access is even rarer within the small and specialist and FE unions where suspicion often exists on the part of the parent institution that the union does not have the systems or capacity to handle the data confidentially.

NUS commissioned Bates Wells & Braithwaite (BWB) to research the potential legal barriers students’ unions face trying to persuade their parent institution to share their database of student details with them. The law states that the first time a union uses the institutional data they must offer an opt-out button so that unless the voting registration system is the first mailing the union does it would not be able to be confident that a significant proportion of its members have not already chosen to opt-out from the database.

Students are a highly mobile group that frequently change both their home and email addresses maintaining any database to a degree of accuracy that would be satisfactory for a vote registration is difficult and time consuming. The accuracy of many university and colleges email database are not necessary good enough to be used for a voting system.

Universities and colleges use different criteria to build their own databases than a student union would if building their own membership databases. An institution may list the same student against multiple courses, short courses and summer courses for example. This would present a range of democratic challenges ensuring that student didn't receive multiple vote options.

Concerns were also raised that One Member One Vote might alienate students at smaller institutions, as election candidates might focus on HE and FE institutions with large numbers of students, rather than having to appeal to delegates from across the country. Some candidates could also benefit from large numbers of voters from their 'home' institutions rather than have to appeal to students nationally

For these operational reasons the group found that the option of OMOV was not feasible in the format proposed. The group were not ideological opposed to the idea and believed if the infrastructure was in place the suggestion should be reconsidered as well as the importance of ensuring cross campus ballots occur to confer legitimacy.

Consider the legitimacy issues of using union Delegates as voters in NUS Elections Consider the appropriateness of alternative systems from both a principled and practical point of view

The panel talked at length about the legitimacy of delegate elections. Information on turnout in elections at a student union level is not nationally collated but the group have asked for this to occur. The group identified the importance of proper training being carried out by unions for their delegates as well as the importance of cross campus elections to increase legitimacy.

It was noted that it was the property of the students' union itself, not the democratic procedures committee, to ensure that any delegates who were mandated to vote in a certain fashion carried out their union's wishes.

A number of proposals from the group were suggested as outlined below

NUS should

- Student media should be given the ability to question presidential and vice-presidential candidates at the point of candidature. This proposal has been accepted by the Chief Returning Officer and will take place at the same point as the president and vice-president candidate podcasts next year
- Encourage the monitoring of delegate elections by local students' unions and national sharing of this information with NUS
- Monitor how many students' unions are denied access to their student data by institutions and support sharing of this information from universities and colleges
- Support the use of student media in promoting NUS elections and discussing the candidates for president and vice president
- Increase scrutiny of the 'Block of Fifteen' councillors by asking for responses to questions to be placed on the NUS website.
- Look into producing IT resources based around National elections, such as widgets which students' unions could use on their websites to help make students aware of the candidates and process
- Work to ensure information on elections is readily accessible and promoted to anyone interested rather than just to Presidents or delegate leaders

Students' unions could

- Developed unions could hold a proper consultation with their electorate to inform their delegates votes, at least first preferences, for candidates at National Conference
- Students' union websites could include opinion polls on a number of issues and possibly details of candidates themselves
- Students' unions could ensure they are properly debating the issues discussed in candidate manifestos to give a steer to their conference delegates votes
- Students' unions could encourage officer elects to attend conference as observers

Democratic Procedures Committee (DPC) could

- Investigate timings at National Conference for vice president and 'Block of Fifteen' councillor scrutiny

Your notes

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