

Policy Book

This document contains the policy stances and policy positions of the Students' Union in relation to student representation, the student voice and political campaign policy.

Introduction

All membership organisations and associations have “policies” which guide the work of the organisation and set the representational or campaign work of the organisation. Students’ Unions, Birkbeck’s included, are member-led organisations – that is the members (the students at Birkbeck College in this case) – set the agenda for the Union.

Each year, and sometimes more often, new student representatives and Union Officers (students who take on portfolios or areas of representational or project work) are elected, usually with a “manifesto” stating what they intend on doing while in the elected position. If there is “policy” in an area, then the policy of that area sets the agenda for that portfolio or area of work. If there is no policy or the policy is conflicting with what a student would like to work on or do within the Students’ Union, then a policy needs to be amended, created or abolished.

There are three tiers of Policy:

Referendum Policy – agreed by a cross-campus secret ballot of students, and provided that at least 200 people vote, the policy created by referendum supersedes any current policy and out-ranks policy created by the Council or by a General Meeting. Only a subsequent referendum can alter a policy that has been made by a referendum. An example of a policy that would go to a referendum would be whether to disaffiliate from the National Union of Students. Only one Policy to date has been made by referendum, and that relates to ULU and its demise in 2013/14. A referendum can be called by either a petition of requisition of 100 students or a two-thirds majority vote of the Council.

General Meeting Policy – agreed by the approval of an ordinary resolution of a General Meeting. A policy made by a General Meeting supersedes any policy that has been approved by the Council. General Meeting Policy remains in force (unless amended or revoked by a General Meeting) for three academic years. At this point, the Council may decide to continue the policy or to let the policy “lapse”. If the policy is continued, the policy formally becomes a Council Policy.

Council Policy – agreed by the Council from time to time. The Council can also delegate policy-making to its committees, and the rules presently delegate this power to the Executive Committee and also to the autonomous Liberation Committees. A meeting of the Council in a full plenary can over-rule any policy made by any of its committees (there is a special procedure to be followed when challenging policy of Liberation Committees). By convention, the Executive Committee only creates policy when the organisation cannot wait until a full Council meeting, and the Executive Committee refrains from amending policies that have been previously approved by the Council, though there may be urgent occasions when the Executive Committee may need to approve an amendment or suspension of a policy. Ultimately the decision of the full Council is final on Council Policy.

Policy Lapse – General Meeting and Council Policy remains in force for three academic years (to 31 July at the end of the third academic year), at which point it “lapses”. The Council may resolve to re-adopt policy at this point for a further three academic years. This usually happens at the last scheduled meeting of the full Council in the academic year.

Policy Implementation – the Executive Committee is formally charged with implementing the policy of the Union, and is accountable to the Council for this duty.

Policy Interpretation – newer policies supersede older policies and referendum policy out-ranks other policies. The Executive Committee is responsible for the general interpretation of policy. There are further rules set down for interpretation in the Bye-Laws, which must always be followed.

Time-Dependent Policy – there are occasions when a policy is approved that has immediate effect and has no consequences for the future work of the Union. An example of such a policy would be “to send a delegate to a conference” or “to censure an officer for poor performance”. These policies are not included within the Policy Book and are not subject to “lapse”, as they are considered to have been implemented immediately without future consequence. When it is not clear on the temporal longevity on a policy, the Executive Committee makes a ruling, which is subject to approval by the Council.

Regulations – policies that regulate procedure that are not within a Bye-Law are called “regulations” (e.g. election campaign regulations, financial regulations or postering policy). Regulations, unless otherwise stated by the Bye-Laws, are created, amended and revoked by the Executive Committee under delegated authority of the Trustee Board and the Council. Regulations are still subject to the rules around referendums, General Meetings and Council and can be amended by resolutions of these bodies, save that the Executive Committee, in implementing the policy, will be required instead to update the regulations affected.

Contents

Policy Number	Formal Title
000	<i>These policies are created or amended by Referendum and do not expire.</i>
001	University of London Union building, facilities and activities.
600	<i>These policies are due to expire on 31 July 2017 (first approved or re-approved in the 2013/14 academic year)</i>
601	ULU Referendum (Enabling)
602	Vacancy of Education Officer
603	Student Rights and Islamophobia Awareness Month
604	Election Reform
605	Non Student Audience
606	Segregation on Campus and in Universities
607	Marking Boycott and Support for UCU
608	Three Term Teaching and Student Hearing Panels (Education Officer Policy Recommendation Adoption)
609	LGBTQ Early Day Motion on Uganda/Nigeria and Immigration Bill Opposition (Black Members Officer Policy Recommendation Adoption)
610	Support Edson Cosmos (formerly 202)
611	Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment (formerly 203)
612	NO! To the 'NEW COLLEGE FOR THE HUMANITIES' (formerly 205)
613	No Fascists in Our Union (formerly 206)
614	No to Sodexo! (formerly 207)
615	Defend the Right to Protest (formerly 209)
616	Accountability of Executive Committee (formerly 210)
500	<i>These policies are due to expire on 31 July 2016 (first approved or re-approved in the 2012/13 academic year)</i>
501	Support for London Met and HTS
502	ATOS Kills!
503	Gender Neutral Toilets
504	Union Restructure
505	3 Cosas Campaign
506	Censure of NUS LGBT Conference

507	Censure of NUS National Conference
508	Adoption of a Black Students Quota
509	ULU Review
510	ULU Review (Amendment)
511	Student Places on TQEC
100	<i>These policies are due to expire on 31 July 2015 (first approved or re-approved in the 2011/12 academic year)</i>
101	Kicking McDonald's out of Education!
102	Supporting the London Living Wage
103	Switch off "Sexist Sub.TV!"
104	Course Representative System
105	The principle is equality. The reality is we were one tenth, now three-fifths and still don't have our majority voice heard in NUS!
106	Women and Fixed term jobs
107	Student Strikes, Feeder March and NUS Demo
108	Show Solidarity with Maev McDaid and Sabbaticals being Wheeled Out!
109	No to the National Student Survey!
110	No Confidence in Boris Johnson, the Tory Mayor of London
111	London Living Wage for Senate House Cleaners
112	Foundation Day and Picket Lines
113	Kick Off For Palestine
114	The Master's Pledge
115	Supporting the November 30 th Strikes
116	Censure of Sabbatical Officer Jennifer Izaakson
117	Accountable Budgeting and the Budgets Advisory Group
118	Say NO to 0870!
119	Social Space on Campus: Parent & Child Friendly Too!
120	Student Travel (formerly called Student Rights & Welfare Motion in NUS)
121	A Diverse Representation of Disabled Student Parents & Carers
200	<i>These policies expired on 31 July 2014 (first approved or re-approved in the 2010/11 academic year)</i>
201	Society Room Bookings
202	Support Edson Cosmos

203	Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment
204	No Confidence in David Willets
205	NO! To the 'NEW COLLEGE FOR THE HUMANITIES'
206	No Fascists in Our Union
207	No to Sodexo!
208	No to Dr Satoshi Kanazawa
209	Defend the Right to Protest
210	Accountability of Executive Committee
300	<i>These policies have expired at 31 July 2013 (first approved or re-approved in the 2009/10 academic year)</i>
301	Time Sheets
302	Axe Fees! Roll Back Cuts!
303	London Living Wage
304	No to ULU Trustee Autocracy!
305	NUS Conference Motion: Supporting Small and Specialist Unions
306	Burlesque Dancing
307	Allotments
308	Flirt! An Appalling Event Promoted by NUSSL
309	Collectivist Co-operatives: For Modern Grassroots Representation
310	Let's Start Promoting Governance Models Based on Feminist Principles
311	Say NO to 0870!
312	Self-insemination: A Right to Choose
313	Social Space on Campus: Parent & Child Friendly Too!
314	The Brittas Empire
315	The DUP: Representational Failures who are Unfit for Government
316	When is the time to 'kill off' the dyslexia industry, Graham?
400	<i>These policies are expired at 31 July 2012 (first approved or re-approved in or prior to the 2008/09 academic year)</i>
401	A Diverse Representation of Disabled Student Parents & Carers
402	A Word of Advice for Richard Littlejohn
403	Academy Schools
404	Access to Counselling Services

405	Accountable Budgeting and the Budgets Advisory Group
406	Accurate Representations of LGBT People: Emmerdale Farm Beware!
407	Affiliation to British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS)
408	Affiliation to NCVO, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations
409	Afghanistan and the spread of war
410	An Inclusive and anti-racist women's campaign
411	Asexuality
412	Beauty is not a contest! Campaigning against Miss University London
413	Blackpool: An appalling catalogue of inaccessibility, disablism and the Norbreck isn't even in it!
414	BNP
415	Celebrating Pink Parents and Pink Families
416	Childcare in Higher and Further Education
417	Civil Partnerships are Civil
418	Defending Women's Officers: Stop wasting my tuition fees on governance reviews that do not represent my voice
419	Despite hate campaigns lead by the Daily Mail, we thank single parents for their invaluable contribution to society!
420	Don't Blame Booze! Blame Laddish Culture
421	Don't Force-feed Us Your Narrow, Patriarchal Model of What a Family Is!
422	Early Day Motion to Save the Senate House Library
423	Education Funding: 2009 Review
424	Effect of the Recession
425	The Campaign Beyond ELQ
426	ELQ Cuts are an attack on Women
427	Equal Opportunity for BME
428	Equality for LGBT Parents on Maternity and Paternity Rights
429	Equivalent and Lower Level Qualification Funding
430	Expose the Trendy Band-wagons and Lip-service Given to the welfare and representation of Mature Students
431	Feminism and the Fight for LGBT Liberation
432	Fitness to Study
433	Full Membership of ULU

434	Gaydar: A Catalogue of Appalling Objectification
435	Gaza
436	Good work in the community
437	Greasy S E's and Mc 'A' Levels are an Attack on all Students!
438	Kicking McDonald's out of Education!
439	LGBT & Mental Health
440	LGBT-phobia and the Eastern Bloc
441	Liberating Drag Kings
442	Maybe we do love Boris after all? Nope, we talking about yet another broken travel and funding promise!
443	Minimum Parents Charter: NUS Scotland Women's Campaign a Shining Example to Follow
444	NUS democracy
445	Education Motion on ELQ for NUS
446	Policy on NUS Extra
447	NUS Reform: A Disabled Student's Perspective
448	Stop Wasting Our Tuition Fees and Affiliation Fees on Governance Reviews and Reforms That Do Not Represent Our Diverse Voices (Amendment to Motion to NUS Extraordinary Conference)
449	NUSSL: A catalogue of appalling sexism
450	Oppose discrimination with decriminalization!
451	Opposing the "American-style" Student Government model for Students' Unions
452	Our Bodies Belong to US
453	Plagiarism Offences – Representing Students at College Hearings
454	Please represent us! We can't turn up to SU meetings to make our voice heard because we have not got the childcare
455	Porn and condomless sex
456	Racism in Education
457	Relationship with the University of London Union
458	Defending Gail Trimble
459	Safe Space is a Right Not Just a Privilege! (Number 2)
460	Safety on Campus
461	Save Senate House Library!
462	Say NO to 0870!

463	Self-insemination: A Right to Choose
464	Senate House Library – the Last Time to Save it!
465	Sex Workers
466	Social Space on Campus: Parent & Child Friendly Too!
467	Stop the persecution of Women and children as witches Worldwide
468	Stop the War!
469	Support equal rights for all our workers! Equality for our working animals and enablers which is our personal care too!
470	Supporting Reclaim the Night London
471	The Brittas Empire
472	The DUP: Representational Failures who are Unfit for Government
473	The Gender Pay Gap widens even more after women have children
474	The ‘N’ Word
475	This is to thank single mothers for their invaluable contribution to society
476	Student Rights & Welfare Motion in NUS
477	When is the time to ‘kill off’ the dyslexia industry, Graham?
478	Working closely with AMSU
479	Working with AMSU
480	Youth Violence in the inner cities

Policy by Referendum (no expiry)

001

University of London Union building, facilities and activities Referendum (returned on 8 February 2014)

Question asked:

1. "Should ULU's building, activities and campaigns continue to be democratically run by Students?"

Yes: 201 (90.95%)

No: 20 (9.05%)

Total vote: 221 (100%)

No vote/abstain: 8

Turnout 229 (of around 12,000 voters)

Quorum 200 required turnout – met

The question asked was affirmed.

601

Referendum (Order): Paving Motion: "Should ULU's building, activities and campaigns continue to be democratically run by students?"

Union noted

2. ULU president was coordinating a university wide ballot of students with the same question "Should ULU's building, activities and campaigns continue to be democratically run by students?"
3. A referendum could be held under SU rules and create SU supreme policy, or the SU could simply "host" the vote for ULU.

Council resolved:

1. To call a formal Referendum under SU rules, with the Chair of Council as the presiding officer of the Referendum and the Secretary of Council as the chief counting officer and conduit to ULU.
2. The referendum question would be that set by ULU.
3. The ballot would be open in accordance with a timetable set by ULU, with only necessary changes to comply with local SU rules at Birkbeck.
4. The ballot would be online.

602

Heading: Vacancy of Education Officer

Council Resolves:

1. Council resolves that the Executive Committee shall appoint an Acting Education Officer, who shall not be remunerated or serve as a trustee ex-officio.
2. That the Council at its Ordinary Meeting in January shall elect from the student body a Member to serve as Education Officer until 31 July 2014, and that this post shall not be remunerated but the post holder may serve as a trustee ex-officio in accordance with the opt-in provision of the Bye-Laws

603

Heading: Student Rights and Islamophobia Awareness Month

This Union Notes:

1. That November is Islamophobia Awareness Month in the UK.

2. That Student Rights is an organisation claiming to support ‘freedom from extremism’^[1] on UK university campuses and mostly criticised speakers it sees as ‘extremists’ who have been invited by Islamic societies^[2] but has in the past expressed opposition to student union ‘no-platform’ policy for the BNP.^[3]

3. That Student Rights’ most recent report on gender segregation^[4], focusing on Islamic society events, failed in almost every case to determine whether segregation was enforced or voluntary and presented the phenomenon as ‘part of a wider, discriminatory trend’ on campuses^[5] which resulted in headlines in the mainstream media associating gender segregation with ‘extremism’.^[6]

4. That Student Rights is not transparent about its origins or funding but has never refuted allegations in the press that it is ‘a side project of the neoconservative Henry Jackson Society’^[7], a think tank whose associate director, Douglas Murray, has argued that ‘conditions for Muslims in Europe must be made harder across the board’^[8]. Nor has it ever challenged reports that it receives funding from the Henry Jackson Society^[9].

5. That the Institute of Race Relations has noted with concern^[10], that Student Rights’ work and reporting has been used by far-right groups to target a Muslim-student event^[11] which led to reported threats of violence and the event subsequently having to be cancelled by the university^[12].

6. That Student Rights was established in 2009 as a reaction to what it calls ‘increasing political extremism’^[13] on campus – which director Raheem Kassam is reported to have said is a reference to a wave of peaceful occupations that took place on UK campuses to protest Israel’s bombing of Gaza in Operation Cast Lead.^[14]

This Union Believes:

7. That Student Rights activities fuel Islamophobia, by disproportionately and unfairly targeting Muslim students, contributing to their marginalisation and ostracisation, damaging campus cohesion and feeding into a growing trend of Islamophobic discourse in wider society which should always be challenged, particularly in Islamophobia Awareness Month.

8. That the claims Student Rights makes to the press are too often been sensationalist, misleading and lacking in nuance, designed to grab headlines about so-called ‘extremism’ on campus, regardless of the impact on students.

9. That whether intentional or not, it is deeply damaging that Student Rights’ approach – which bypasses students themselves - should lead to a situation in which far-right groups come onto a campus, creating a climate in which students feel persecuted and threatened and potentially endangering students’ welfare.

10. That NUS VP Welfare 2012-13, Pete Mercer, was right to condemn Student Rights’ approach as a ‘witch-hunt’ and NUS Black Students Officer 2013-14 Aaron Kiely is right to support to grassroots student campaign ‘Real Student Rights’ which aims to expose and discredit Student Rights.

11. That Student Rights legitimacy is questionable given its limited or non-existent links to actual students, inconsistency on the issue of no-platform policies, creation as a reaction to peaceful pro-Palestinian activism, lack of transparency about its origins and funding, and in particular its alleged links to the Henry Jackson Society, the think tank which employs Douglas Murray, widely

criticised for making comments perceived as Islamophobic.
12. That it is not the place of any external organisation – particularly one as non-transparent and dubiously connected as Student Rights - to undermine the Student Union’s autonomy or interfere with co-operation between the union and university in their work to ensure that pre-existing guidelines against all forms of hate speech are strictly enforced.
This Union Resolves:
13. To mandate SU officers to release a public statement/open letter addressed to Student Rights criticising their lack of transparency, sensationalism, divisive and counter-productive activities and disproportionate preoccupation with Muslim students and calling on them to drastically change their approach and mentality.
14. To circulate the ‘Real Student Rights’ petition via email / social media.
15. To write to the university management, making explicit their concerns about the group Student Rights, and the effect that their activities have on students welfare, campus cohesion and on freedom of speech on campus as well as re-iterating the union’s policy of opposing and disallowing any form of hate speech on campus and its desire to maintain its autonomy in determining the boundaries of this remit without outside interference.
16. To maintain ongoing communication and for a mandated officer(s) to report back to the SU on any developments including asking the university to inform the SU of any attempts by Student Rights to lobby them regarding any student groups’ activities.
References
<p>[1] http://www.studentrights.org.uk/about_us</p> <p>[2] http://www.studentrights.org.uk</p> <p>[3] http://content.yudu.com/Library/A1nkge/LondonStudentissue10/resources/index.htm</p> <p>[4] http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/141019975?access_key=key-8swxo6lwrun6wnxkqm9&allow_share=true&view_mode=scroll</p> <p>[5] <i>ibid.</i></p> <p>[6] http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/hilary-aked/student-rights-campus-extremism-study_b_3277503.html</p> <p>[7] http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/hilary-aked/student-rights-claims-media-mistakes_b_3303703.html</p> <p>[8] http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/mehdi-hasan/douglas-murray-edl-dodgy-videos-me_b_3675193.html</p> <p>[9] http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/hilary-aked/student-rights-campus-extremism-study_b_3277503.html</p> <p>[10] http://www.irr.org.uk/news/far-right-targets-islamic-events/</p> <p>[11] - http://casualsunited.wordpress.com/2013/01/04/he-reckons-does-he-i-think-this-retreat-is-gonna-run-into-a-few-problems-edl-casualsunited/</p> <p>[12] - http://www.reading.ac.uk/news-and-events/releases/PR490014.aspx</p> <p>[13] http://www.studentrights.org.uk/about_us</p> <p>[14] http://content.yudu.com/Library/A1nkge/LondonStudentissue10/resources/index.htm</p>

ELECTION REFORM

Council believes

1. The members survey indicates that 75% of students were aware of the annual election last year (and in 2011), yet few participate in it by standing or voting
2. The survey indicates that students want more online rich content promoting candidates as well as a good event for hustings, perhaps streamed live
3. The highlight from the survey is that students value the elections, believe their reps should be elected, but elections should be for more important posts with better promotion of what the posts are.
4. In a full officer and General Rep election on one ballot, a voter would be asked to vote for around 24 posts, which is a long process and can be off putting. We need to create a situation where there is a "vote for the sabbs" (and chair) and then a "vote for your reps" and the electorate is better engaged and supported in knowing who will be responsible for what going forward.

Council resolves

1. For the 2014 annual election this term, to elect the seven Sabbatical Officers, the Editor of the Lamp & Owl and the Chair of Council, only
2. To defer the election of non-sabbatical officers (including School Officers) until after a decision is made at the next Council meeting in March, after a working group reports:
 - a. Whether to hold all other elections in October/November?
 - b. Try to create a Summer Term election or to hold meetings of students to elect their officers and representatives?
 - c. Whether to reform the membership of Council as stated in the motion and other amendments

605

NON-STUDENT AUDIENCE

Secretary's note: The Articles of Association already make definition of "clear days" and "working days". The definition stated below would only be applicable locally to the implementation of this policy, if approved. It should also be noted that Bye-Laws presently empower the Executive Committee to invite suitable external persons to students' union meetings. This proposal does not contradict the Bye-Laws neither is it repugnant to any other superior rule.

Council Notes and believes:

1. Wherefore Birkbeck, University of London (BBK) is an Academic College predicated on research; and,
2. Wherefore it may be observed that Faculty and Students are separated by Degrees but with a common goal; and
3. Wherefore there are organs of Governance that are assumed to work for the betterment of the constituent members and that these members are part of part and parcel of BBK; and
4. Wherefore Birkbeck College Student Union (BCSU) returns, as amended from time-to-time, two (2 no.) student Governors with plenipotentiary powers,

Be it enacted;
1. That the BCSU Council extends pro-actively to BBK Governors invitations as non-participatory Audience to such Meetings at the discretion of BCSU Council or such Committee that is meeting subject to Bye-laws that may be amended from time-to-time on a one-time basis.
Be it also enacted;
1. It is expressly enacted that an invite to any one person, body or Meeting is a <i>one-time</i> ticket with no residual Rights; and,
Be it also enacted;
1. Wherefore BCSU returns, subject to conditions noted above student Governors, that if such persons and / or entities who are part of the non-participantr Audience wish to have <i>inter alia</i> Opinions, Motions, or to address the BCSU Council;
2. The Chairman / Chairwoman / Chair of the BBK Governors is to communicate such intention in writing to the Chairman / Chairwoman / Chair of BCSU Council in writing (MS Office and e-mail is acceptable) no less than ten (10 no.) clear days before such Meeting naming each and every person, their office(s) and agenda each and every time to procure a Sponsor. The Chairman / Chairwoman / Chair of BCSU Council is to notify the General Secretary who will publish a Notice of Meeting of the Executive Committee of BCSU on such Matters Arising.
For clarity be it noted;
1. <i>Day</i> is a full day when retail banks are open in the City of London. The Time Zone is Greenwich as in force during the time in question.
Be it further noted that;
1. BCSU reserves the right to refuse entry and / or Platform without requirement of explanation.

606

SEGREGATION ON CAMPUS AND IN UNIVERSITIES

Ratified policy following approval of Minutes from January 2014 Council:

Council Believes:

1. UUK supported the idea of allowing the segregation of students both at events and in lectures/tutorials, stating in their guidance to universities that "segregated seated (on gender [presentation]) would be allowed if requested by speakers" ~~from orthodox religious groups."~~
2. This caused calls for clarity from the government and condemnation from the Labour spokesperson, stating that Labour "would legislate against it"

Council further believes:

1. The hubble-bubble seems to have died away, however, the student body in the UK needs to take a clear and decisive position on this idea and proposal
2. There is a clear difference between self-organised representation and student or staff organisation on campuses and the delivery of events, teaching and research seminars
3. The Equality Act 2010 is specifically disappplied on many areas that ordinarily cover protected characteristics in the delivery of and challenging of academia.
Council resolves:
1. To oppose the guidance from UUK as issued in December 2013 as outlined in CB 1
2. Endorse the policy that delivery of and access to higher education and research, whether in public universities or the private sector, must be based on equality and the principles of the Equality Act (which does not prevent positive action and lawful discrimination to ensure widening access)
3. To back Chuka Umma's call for legislation to block such proposals from UUK

607

MARKING BOYCOTT AND SUPPORT FOR UCU
Council notes:
1. That our lecturers have seen their pay erode by 14.5% of its value since 2009 and that they are now facing a real cost of living crisis, especially those at the start of their careers, employed on short-term or even zero-hours contracts.
2. And they have tried to negotiate and tried taking strike action.
3. And the employers have done nothing to settle the dispute.
4. The employers are represented in the higher education sector by UCEA
5. Many universities are making large surpluses at this time, and have been since the onset of the financial crisis in 2008
The council believes:
1. That if the marking Boycott is to go ahead it will have real impact on our members – the students of Birkbeck College
2. With university fees rising to £9000 a year students should expect to have their assessment marks returned on time
3. Students also expect that higher standard of teaching for higher tuition fees.
4. The lecturers want to mark assessments and should be allowed to do so for decent pay
The council resolves:
1. To support the UCU (the lecturers' trade union) in their current industrial action.
2. To provide a Fact sheet to help students understand why their lecturers are doing a boycott
3. To delegate to the Communications & Activities Officer, the Education Officer and Welfare Officer-elect, be the point of contact and work together to coordinate the SU response to any issue that may arise from the action taken by the UCU
4. to provide all students with truthful and current information from lecturers and the college on how to deal with not having their grades

608

Education Officer – Policy by Recommendation Adoption May 2014

Council resolved to:

1. Support the rolling out of three-term teaching across Birkbeck.
2. That all Panels that hear student cases that require members from the Academic Board, the Academic Board members must be Academic Staff and not central professional service staff members.

609

Black Members Officer – Policy by Recommendation Adoption May 2014

Council resolved to:

1. Support Alliance MP Naomi Long's Early Day Motion on LGBT Rights in Uganda and Nigeria: (<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2013-14/1336>)
2. To oppose the Immigration Bill (now Act) that was approved at Prorogation wash-up: (<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2013-14/immigration.html>)

501

Support for London Met and HTS (approved by Council in September 2012)

Union notes:

1. London Met had been stripped of its Highly Trusted Status by the UK Border Agency
2. Great impact and potential for stranding international students as well as having them turned away from the United Kingdom.

Union resolves:

1. Offer support to London Met SU and NUS on the campaign to support international students affected, and to raise with Birkbeck the possibility of them taking on stranded students affected by the UKBA decision on London Met.
2. Raise at College committees what Birkbeck has in place to check it has safeguards in place to retain HTS
3. Council members to generally 'tweet' support for London Met and international students in the coming weeks over the new year start.

502

ATOS Kills! (approved Council November 2012)

Council Believes:

1. That thousands of sick and disabled people are experiencing immense hardship after being wheeled out of benefits following a work capability assessment carried out by Atos "Healthcare" under a 100 million a year contract;
2. That ATOS Healthcare "registered nurses" that carry out the work capability assessment (WCA) have extremely limited knowledge of mental health difficulties;
3. That they rely on applicants with mental health conditions to explain in face to face interviews their limited capability to work;
4. That this places people suffering from mental health conditions at a very substantial disadvantage;
5. That the Birkbeck Students' Union welcomes the actions taken by disabled people, carers, bereaved relatives and organisations to end this brutality and uphold entitlement to benefits;

Council Further Believes:

1. That a recent court ruling has held that it is at least arguable that the Equality Act 2010 requires the reasonable adjustment of the process whereby there should be the early obtaining of independent medical evidence to avoid the distress and disadvantage currently experienced by those with mental health conditions in WCA interviews;

2. That the Government should instruct and where necessary legislate as soon as possible to require the obtaining of independent medical evidence at an early stage in the WCA, particularly in dealing with clients with mental health conditions;
3. That 40 per cent of appeals are successful but people wait up to six months for them to be heard;
4. That last year 1,100 claimants died while under compulsory work-related activity for benefit and that a number of those found fit for work and left without income have committed or attempted suicide;
Council Resolves:
1. To encourage Birkbeck students to lobby their Members of Parliament (MP) by sending email(s), letter(s), arranging a meeting at the constituency office, and/or visiting the House of Commons to meet their MPs;
2. To condemn the International Paralympic Committee's promotion of Atos as its top sponsor and the sponsorship of the Olympics by Dow Chemical and other corporations responsible for causing death and disability;
3. To condemn the workfare scheme;
4. To send a letter of support to the British Medical Association (BMA) who called for the work capability assessment to end immediately and to be replaced with a system that does not cause harm to some of the most vulnerable people in society.
Motion Text: UK Parliament EDMs Session 2012-13: EDM295: http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2012-13/295 , EDM435: http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2012-13/435

503

Gender Neutral Toilets (approved Council November 2012)
Council Believes:
1. That everyone has the right to safely use toilets.
Council Further Believes:
1. That non-binary students, transitioning students, parents with small children and disabled people with carers may experience threatening behaviour or physical violence while using gendered toilets by people who think gender needs to be policed.
Council Resolves:
1. Birkbeck Student Union works together with the appropriate university committees to create gender neutral toilets in each Birkbeck building which can be used by everyone safely regardless of gender identification.

504

Union Restructure (approved Council November 2012)	
Council Believes:	
1.	That it is important to regularly review the governance structure and democracy of the student's union to ensure the structure offers effective representation for all union members
2.	The governance structure should be decided upon by a General Meeting in which all union members are invited
3.	That Council members should be given sufficient opportunity to discuss potential governance structures
4.	That a new governance structure proposed by Council should be put to the union in time for it to be in place for the following term
Council Resolves:	
1.	For working group(s) of the Council to meet in order to create proposal(s) for potential new governance structure(s) to be discussed by council at the next council meeting in December 2012

505

3 Cosas Campaign (approved Council by Electronic Resolution Procedure on 3 April 2013)	
Council Believed:	
1.	The workers who clean the university halls, bathrooms, classrooms and grounds, want to be treated with dignity like anyone else, like every other worker employed by the University of London.
2.	The workers succeeded in their campaign to have the London Living Wage implemented at the University of London in July 2012.
3.	The contracted workers are now being pressurized to work harder as the outsourced companies and the University seek to recoup the small additional outlay in wages they are now making.
Council Further Believed:	
1.	Outsourced workers are still much worse off in terms of sick pay, holidays, pensions, payslip problems, workplace bullying and a host of other issues than University employees.
2.	The workers do not get sick pay , holidays and pensions.
3.	The University of London is still under the impression that the 3 Cosas Campaign has no student support.

Council Resolved:

1. That the Birkbeck Students' Union actively supports the struggles of the 3 Cosas Campaign.
2. That we write a letter of support to the 3 Cosas Campaign and publish it on our website.

506

Censure of NUS LGBT Conference (approved in May by the LGBT Committee)

Council believes:

1. That NUS LGBT Conference took place in Manchester on 19th – 21st April.
2. That Birkbeck Students' Union spent around £350 per delegate to represent Birkbeck at the conference.
3. That this year's conference slammed the door on many hardworking, dedicated volunteers/sabbatical LGBT officers, and clubs and societies.

Council Further Believes:

1. That the steering committee didn't seem prepared enough and made many mistakes.
2. That I as a disabled student with mobility issues and my enabler had to keep on going up to the steering desk to correct their mistakes.
3. That the property of certain speeches was given to the wrong delegates.
4. That steering committee chaired and dominated the Black students caucus after making a ruling not to allow two first time Black delegates to do a job-share.
5. That steering committee, made up of six students who do not self-define as Black, made a ruling following the "Phantom Guidelines" which NUS LGBT committee were supposed to produce well before conference.
6. That when steering committee were challenged in the Black students caucus, the NUS Chief Returning Officer, who does not define as Black, defended the steering's decision and dominated some part of the caucus.
7. That the Black students were disfranchised by this and were left disappointed and some Black delegates decided to boycott the caucus and the conference.
8. That a written complaint was put by the Birkbeck delegate (Black place) against the steering committee which the complainant hasn't had a response to to-date.

Council Further Believes:

1. To censure the NUS LGBT Conference 2013 for failing Black students.
2. To censure the NUS steering committee for failing Black students and for making it inaccessible for Disabled students by making the processes confusing.
3. To remind delegates to future conference(s) that they must attend relevant official sessions of conference that effect student life at Birkbeck, and/or if Birkbeck Students' Union has submitted policy to those sessions.
4. This is subject to delegates being able to attend these sessions in line with their access need(s), disabilities or pre-arranged absences between Birkbeck's delegation.

5. To remind those who attended the conference in a delegate capacity to submit a report of conference of up to 250 words to the next Students' Union council.

507

Censure of NUS National Conference (approved by the NUS Delegation 2013)

Council Believes:

4. That NUS National Conference took place in Sheffield from 8th – 10th April.
5. That Birkbeck Students' Union spent around £120 per delegate to represent Birkbeck at the conference.
6. That like every year this year's conference slammed the door on many hardworking, dedicated volunteers and sabbatical officers.

Council Further Believes:

9. That the conference failed Women students by voting down the fair representation motion (women's quota).
10. That the conference failed Black students by not prioritising and debating the Black quota.
11. That the conference failed disabled students in many ways, one of which was the continuance of whooping and shouting ignoring several reminders not to.
12. That most of the National Executive Councillors (NEC) were amongst those making conference inaccessible for disabled students.
13. That the conference failed to have appropriate access breaks which had a detrimental effect on the democratic process for disabled students with array of disabilities.

Council Further Believes:

6. To censure the NUS National Conference 2013.
7. To censure the NUS National Executive Council (NEC) for making the conference more inaccessible for many delegates.
8. To remind delegates to future conference(s) that they must attend relevant official sessions of conference that effect student life at Birkbeck, and/or if Birkbeck Students' Union has submitted policy to those sessions.
9. This is subject to delegates being able to attend these sessions in line with their access need(s), disabilities or pre-arranged absences between Birkbeck's delegation.
10. To remind those who attended the conference in a delegate capacity to submit a report of conference of up to 250 words to the next Students' Union council.

508

Adoption of a Black Students Quota (full Bye-law amending text and graphics removed as implemented) AGM 2013 approved.

AGM Believed:

1. According to the NUS, around 20% of students in the UK are “Black”, however, senior elected student officers in Students’ Unions have only 4% of Black students filling these places.
2. Having reserved places on councils or committees within Students’ Unions is relatively common in the UK, for instance, for postgraduate students, mature students and international students.
3. When Students’ Unions extend these reserved places in to the Liberation Groups (Black, Women, LGBT and Disabled), the arguments against unfortunately are at best naïve and in worst cases homophobic, misogynistic, racist and/or disableist with calls to have a “Men’s Officer”, a “Straight Officer” and of course the “White Students Officer”.
4. In 2009, the BNP wrote to many Students’ Unions asking them to organise a “White History Month” in an attempt to challenge not only Black History Month events, but the to undermine the whole unity within students’ unions supporting Liberation Groups.
5. A Black Students place is in their Students’ Union – at the heart of democracy, at the heart of decision-making and representation and of course within the SU leadership, speaking up for all students locally and nationally.

AGM Further Believed:

1. Presently, the Students’ Union Council Standing Orders provide for a Women’s Quota, in that 40% of members of Council must be Women and that many committees must have one or two reserved places for Women, or in the case of the elected General Members, at least half must be Women.
2. This set-up does not see men’s voices drowned and the adoption of a Black Quota would not see white voices sidelined. It will, though, see all of our representatives working together, sharing a diversity of experiences and knowledge and making better representation of all our members.
3. From the 3000 responses to the Students’ Union Members’ Survey in 2011, the racial profile of our membership then was:
4. *Graphic deleted.*
5. Adding up the “Black” categories, this equates to Birkbeck Students’ Union being 21.2%, slightly above average nationally in higher education (20%).

AGM Resolved:

1. To confirm that the Black Members Officer remains on the Executive Committee and the Trustee Board.
2. To require that each formal Committee of the Council reserves at least one place on it for a Black member to fill.
3. To require that the scheme of membership of the Council has at least 20% Black voting members, by adding to the Standing Orders: *technical details deleted from here, available in*

<i>the Minutes.</i>
4. To champion the Black quota and Women's quota nationally, and to draft motions for NUS National Conference to require the adoption of these quotas in conference delegations, within the National Executive, the NUS Trustee Board and reflected in the NUS staff team.
5. To write to ULU about what action it is taking to employ more representative casual student workers and call on it to release statistics of its current workforce demographics on gender and race.

509

ULU Review (passed by the EGM in June 2013)

This UNION has considered:

1. The University-agreed recommendation to convert the ULU Building into a "student centre", run by the central University, containing services that are "of value to students" and the ULU, as a students' union under Section 22 of the Education Act 1994 is abolished as from 1 August 2014;
2. The submission made by the Students' Union to the Review of ULU Group;
3. The membership and terms of reference of the Review of ULU Group; and
4. The Letter from the Secretary of the Students' Union of the Council to all students at Birkbeck about the implications of the University's decision (dated 22 May 2013).

THAT THIS UNION believed that:

5. Students from across Birkbeck and the University of London as a whole have a strong interest in the future of ULU – both as a students' union, as a student representative body and as a provider of student services and student activities; and
6. With over 200 Birkbeck students signing a Petition of Requisition for a General Meeting of the Students' Union, that the Students' Union must consider the whole report and decision of the University in a members' meeting and vote on the appropriate policy stance that the Students' Union will adopt in representing students both to the College, the University, the National Union of Students and any other appropriate stakeholder and interested body.
7. That the lack of involvement of students in the reviews conducted by the University has fatally flawed the conclusions;
8. That the University of London does not have the appropriate experience or intentions to run a Student Centre;
9. Student services, particularly extra-mural services, should be accountable to the student body
10. That the University does not have the appropriate transparency or accountability to students in order to run such a facility;
11. That ULU does need reform, but fiscal starvation is damaging, ineffective, and a failure of the University's responsibility of care to its students.
12. Sustainable and accountable funding of ULU is the key to its future

THAT THIS UNION resolved:

13. To oppose the abolition of ULU as a Students' Union
14. To request that the Review be referred back to the Review of ULU Group
15. That the Review of ULU Group appoint student members to its body
16. To lobby for the President of Birkbeck to request the same
17. To request ULU to openly appoint its own Review Group to either operate as an alternative to the Review of ULU Group or constitute the student element as proposed in 3) above.
18. That ULU actively and creatively seeks further avenues of funding, such as Alumni, sponsorship, etc.

510

ULU Review (Amendment) (Passed by the Executive Committee to amend 509, on recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee July 2013)

Add to THAT THIS UNION Believes:

1. ULU historically has received a Grant from the University known as the ULU Subscription, which is paid proportionately by each College of the University based on student numbers and a 'weighting factor' agreed annually by the Collegiate Council of the University.
2. The total ULU Subscription for the present financial year amounts to around £740,000, of which £70,000 is Birkbeck's portion.
3. The ULU Subscription is 'ring-fenced' to subsidise certain activities delivered by ULU. The formula for allocation was agreed in principle in 2008, following the last ULU Review.
4. Birkbeck's £70,000 subscription to ULU, based on the 2008 formula is directed within ULU as follows:

Representative Sport	60% (ca. £42,000)
Student Representation & Societies	21% (ca. £14,700)
Swimming Pool Subsidy	12% (ca. £8,400)
London Student newspaper subsidy	7% (ca. £4,900)
Total ULU Subscription (Birkbeck)	Circa £70,000

5. That if the decision to abolish ULU and zero-fund ULU/the proposed "student centre" results in the confirmation that no college will be paying the ULU Subscription in 2013/14 and onwards, that it should be re-directed to local student support and student activities.
6. That the Collegiate Council itself has agreed broadly that any savings on the ULU Subscription should be re-directed to local student provision.

7. That some Colleges have already stated that they will direct all of the subscription saving to their own local students' union – and this includes SOAS, King's, Queen Mary and the LSE.
8. That the ULU subscription itself is recurrent funding, year on year, and is not a one off windfall – that it is important to engage with the College management here at Birkbeck, regardless of the fate of ULU and the proposed 'student centre', to shape their policy on how this subscription is re-directed.
Add to THAT THIS UNION resolves to agree the following policy stances and principles
1. That any re-direction of the ULU Subscription should be transparent to the student body, and that the Students' Union must engage constructively and positively with the College management on how the Subscription is applied, regardless of the fate of ULU and the status of the new 'student centre' or of Pan-London Representation.
2. That broadly the re-direction of the Subscription money should be a membership-wide benefit and support as many students and student activity as possible, and feedback from students in the Members' Survey should form a cornerstone for dialogue for the future.
3. That with more field sports clubs starting at Birkbeck, the mission to ensure each department/course has its own 'academic related' society and the drive to engage students with a diverse range of opportunities to participate, additional funding of 'student representation and student societies/sports' should be part of the dialogue with the College.
4. That the Students' Union recognises the pressures on student welfare services, including the counselling service and disability centre, and that their future funding should also benefit from any re-direction of the ULU Subscription in terms of a membership-wide impact for these crucial support services.
5. The Students' Union should work closely with the College and the University on the future of competitive sports, which are mainly run nationally through the British Universities & Colleges Sports (BUCS) organisation, whilst also lobbying for regional cup competitions and sports leagues (traditionally run by ULU) to be retained in some way, shape or form.
6. In all dialogue and decision-making, this General Meeting resolves that:
a. A service lost at ULU and not retained in the new 'student centre' that is of value and benefit to Birkbeck students, should be created at Birkbeck or in partnership with other institutions;
b. Funding for student societies and student activities (run by ULU and BCSU) should not fall as a result of a re-direction of the ULU Subscription;
c. Funding for student representation (run by ULU and BCSU) should not fall as a result of a re-direction of the ULU Subscription; and
d. Students' Union officials should work at the highest level with officers of the College and the University, with a review annually in the short-term.

511

Student Places on TQEC (approved September 2012)

Council noted that the number of student places had changed from 2 to 1 on the Academic Board's Teaching & Quality Enhancement Committee (TQEC).

Council believed that having student reps on Academic Board and its Executive, changes to schemes of membership would be picked up and reduction of student representation opposed.

To campaign for the reinstatement of two student reps on TQEC and to demand written evidence of the changes and how they were approved and who was consulted.

101

Kicking McDonald's out of Education! (approved by AGM 2009, amended by Council and retained in June 2011)

Union Believes:

1. It is sickening that members of the National Union of Students support McDonald's new role in education, supporting their Hamburger Universities which oppress workers, stripping them of their dignity.
2. McDonald's is an unethical company, unworthy of dictating the content of our education, let alone actually having powers to make awards of qualifications.
3. A simple Google search of McDonald's "greasy education" or "greasy S E's" and "McDegrees" delivers a raft of blogs from former and current McDonald's employees who condemn the Hamburger Universities.
4. Employees report that there is no room for critical thinking, analysis or even secondary sources for what they are being "taught", it is force fed to them like a cult feeding propaganda to brainwash new recruits.
5. This is something we should oppose – it is the mission of this College to oppose McDonald's in education.
6. It is also deeply insulting to see the NUS and its commercial arm, NUSL, promote McDonald's contrary to its ethical policy on NUS Extra, the paid-for discount card brought in in 2006 at a cost of £10 a year.

Union Resolves:

1. Ban promotion of McDonald's on all Union property, including blacking out the Golden Arches and associated McDonald's logos on NUS Extra publicity (and any publicity on Union notice boards and Union controlled media).
2. Campaign to have McDonald's stripped of qualification awarding powers.
3. To give support and solidarity to McDonald's workers who speak out against Hamburger University "education".

102

Supporting the London Living Wage (approved by AGM 2009, amended by Council and retained June 2011)

Union Believes:

1. The Union has officially supported the London Living Wage as determined by the Low

Pay Unit of the Mayor's Office since 2006.
2. The Union has paid all of its staff the LLW from this year, and the Trustees have voted to back-date payments to staff to ensure the new rates are payable when announced by the Mayor.
3. Queen Mary College has declared itself a "Living Wage Campus", which has brought it much acclaim in the local east end community, including extremely positive media coverage in local newspapers.
4. Sadly, Queen Mary Students' Union fails to commit to sign up to part of the Living Wage Campus, which is a disgrace on an organisation which is constituted to promote equality and fairness.
5. Indeed, ULU, the University of London Union also fails to pay its staff the LLW, and in 2007 the then Trustees through the former Finance Committee killed off student representatives' demands to bring in a LLW rate.
6. Birkbeck College calculates that it would cost £250k a year to bring in the LLW for all contracted staff, which is equivalent to the Master's Salary.
Union Resolves:
1. Continue to support and campaign for the LLW across Birkbeck and the University of London campuses.
2. To authorise the Trustees to require ULU to pay its staff in the Birkbeck Bar the LLW to ensure that Union controlled areas are all covered by our LLW commitment.

103

Switch off "Sexist Sub.TV!" (approved by EGM June 2008, amended by Council and retained June 2011)

Union Notes:

1. The Union has a ten year contract with Sub.TV, a commercial subsidiary of Sub.Zone Plc, who has many dealings with the NUS' retail consortium, NUS Services Ltd (which is 75% owned by affiliates of the NUS, which includes Birkbeck College Students' Union.
2. Often, pornographic images, and images objectifying or humiliating women and occasionally men, are broadcast through Sub.TV's screens in the Birkbeck Bar. Sub.TV claim to be able to reach 35% of the 18-23 year olds in education – it is time they stopped forcing the more mature student from watching their trashy, sleazy and sexist media.

Union Resolves:

1. To act to ensure that the Birkbeck College environment is free from sexism and the objectification of women and men.
2. To not allow the broadcasting of Sub.TV's own sexist content on the students' unions premises and controlled areas.
3. To complain to the Directors of Sub.TV and its parent company about the unfit content

being broadcast through its media.
4. To complain to the Directors of NUS Services Limited (the NUS's own commercial arm), that they must act to ensure that partner companies of NUSSL fit within the spirit of democratically decided policy at local students' unions.
5. To demand that NUSSL Directors abide by NUS Policy, which has been passed by both Annual Conference and by Liberation Conferences (e.g. Women's Conference).
Union Further Resolves:
1. To monitor all organisations' publicity and marketing companies which advertise or promote products within the Union's areas or media, to ensure it is not objectifying or sexist.
2. To stop the mainstreaming of misogyny by switching off sexist Sub.TV as soon as possible.

104

Course Representative System (approved by the Council through the Executive Committee in 2008/9, amended by the Council and retained June 2011)

Council Believes:

1. The current Course Rep system is patchy across the College, with some departments and schools actively opposing the creation of formal course representation.
2. It is the policy of the Academic Board to have Course Reps.
3. It is a requirement under the Quality Assurance Agency to have independent student representation on courses.
4. Much work has been put in the last year to build and develop the Course Rep system.
5. There is need for more resources in the Course Rep system, including the acquisition of online relationship management software to enable the SU Council and the Course Reps and staff to easily communicate, collate and deliver better student experience for Birkbeck students.

Council Resolves:

1. To prioritise the development and support of course reps.
 2. To promote the course rep system to our members.
 3. To integrate in line with Council policy, the course rep system into the Union's structures properly.
-

105

The principle is equality. The reality is we were one tenth, now three-fifths and still don't have our majority voice heard in NUS! (approved by the Council in 2008/9 and retained by the Council June 2011)

Council Believes:

1. NUS Reform has scrapped the derisory one-tenth proportion part-time students counted for under the old constitution, compared with full-time students.
2. Research has shown the disabled students, women, parents, carers and mature students are more likely to return to education later in life or for a "second chance", and this has been recognised, for instance, by the Government exempting disabled students from their regressive policy to withdraw funding from Equivalent or Lower Qualifications.
3. The largest population of returners to education, do so on a part-time basis, and thus the part-time sector attracts more mature students.

Council Further Believes:

1. NUS Reform missed the opportunity to equalise the voices of part-time students with full-time students. This negatively disproportionately impacts on disabled students studying part-time in the FE sector – and some HE colleges, such as Birkbeck.
2. Equality of representation is a necessity, not just an aspiration.
3. The NEC must not pander to the large HE SUs at the expense of the enforced silence of the majority of NUS' membership.
4. SUs with large budgets, full-time officers and dedicated staff will always have a loud say within NUS, as they can afford to send more reps, to more events, more of the time.

Council Resolves:

1. To campaign for further NUS Reform to give equality between full-time and part-time students within NUS' student numbers calculation.
2. To lobby the NEC to recognise that equality of representation will give a greater voice to the majority of our diverse membership, namely part-time student, and by extension a greater representation of disabled students.

106

Women and Fixed term jobs (approved by the Council through the Women's Committee in 2008/9, amended by the Council and retained in June 2011)

Council believes:

1. Analysis carried out as part of the gender duty shows that there are many more women than men in fixed term jobs.
2. People in fixed term jobs are lower paid, receive less training and benefits and have lower levels of job satisfaction than those in permanent jobs. They are also less likely to report problems at work and they can't make long term plans.

3. Employees in continuous fixed term jobs for more than 4 years automatically convert to permanent employment, but employers routinely ignore this, as is the employer requirement to give reasons for not renewing a fixed term contract.
4. Keeping women on successive fixed term contracts also means that they can't access promotions and pay progression, but also usually get much lower maternity pay than their permanent colleagues.
5. Fixed term contracts are a huge issue to postgraduate and student staff in academia. Nearly half of academic staff and 75% of university researchers are on fixed term contracts.
Council resolves:
1. To highlight those organizations that have more women than men on fixed term contracts are breaching the gender duty.
2. To campaign against the way that women are disproportionately disadvantaged by fixed term contracts.
3. To run a campaign highlighting the role of fixed contracts on academic student staff and postgraduate employment.

107

Student Strikes, Feeder March and NUS Demo (approved by the Council January 2012)
<u>Union Notes:</u>
1. The UCU has called its next day of industrial action over pensions on March 1st
2. The NUS has called a national lobby of Parliament on Wednesday 7th March 2012 against changes in fees, education cuts, and the debt regime
3. Further, NUS has called a week of action from March 12-16th and for a national student walk-out this term.
<u>Union Further notes:</u>
1. The 52,000 strong national demonstration called by UCU and NUS in November 2010 was the largest education demonstration to date.
<u>Union Believes:</u>
1. The fight over pensions is central to the fight against the HE White Paper as both seek to drive down labour costs. Private providers, for example, have warned Willetts that the HE market is inaccessible due to the current public sector pensions scheme
2. The lobby is an important opportunity to show students' continued opposition to the government in the face of the indefinite postponement of the HE Bill
3. The call for a national student walk-out represents a real shift from NUS in regards to the tactics it employs.
<u>Union Further Believes:</u>
1. We are strongest when the official unions such as NUS and UCU alongside the unofficial networks such as CoR, EAN, NCAFC, No Confidence, Campaign for Public University mobilize and act together.
<u>Union Resolves:</u>

1.	To join others in calling for student strikes on the respective days of industrial action taken by UCU other unions.
2.	To welcome NUS's call for a national lobby and support the call for a feeder march on the day of the national NUS lobby, and work together to ensure that maximum turnout for the day.
3.	To welcome NUS's call for a week of action and help to co-ordinate in local university/colleges general union meetings and student assemblies and meetings to discuss what the most effective strategy and tactics for that week are.
4.	To support the call for NUS to name a day for a national autumn demonstration now. If NUS doesn't follow that call, to work together with those networks to maximize the turnout for such a mobilization.

108

Show Solidarity with Maev McDaid and Sabbaticals being Wheeled Out! (approved by the Council January 2012)

Council Believes:

1. Maev McDaid, President of Liverpool Guild of Students, faced an unfair, prejudiced and prejudged hearing last week over her behaviour towards another sabbatical officer.
2. In November 2010, Ms McDaid had a heated political disagreement with the said officer.
3. The complaint against Ms McDaid is discriminatory and in breach of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Further Believes:

1. Such illegitimate and unfounded allegations are being made against several sabbaticals in the across the country.
2. The complaints panel consists of two members; one sabbatical officer and a lay trustee.
3. The panel member(s) have orchestrated and agreed the outcome before the panel had met and without taking Ms McDaid's representations into account.

Council Resolves:

1. To show solidarity with the President of Liverpool Guild of Students and other sabbaticals in similar situations.
2. To send letters of support to the sabbaticals getting victimised by the Right wing.

109

No to the National Student Survey! (approved by the Council January 2012)

Union notes:

1. That the National Student Survey (NSS) is a key element of neoliberal proposals (such as those in the 2011 Universities White Paper) to transform higher education into a marketable

commodity
2. That the NSS naturalises the idea of students as ‘customers’ and staff as ‘service providers’ and further embeds a culture of ‘measuring’ and ‘ranking’ inside HE
3. That institutions are increasingly using the NSS as a performance management tool with no obvious pedagogic benefits
4. That, as the former head of the Higher Education Academy put it in the THES, the NSS is a ‘pseudoscientific tool purporting to be reliable on the spurious psychologistic grounds that there is some statistical congruence between the responses on a small group of agree-disagree questions around a common topic’.
<u>Union Resolves:</u>
5. To oppose the NSS and to investigate the possibility of running a boycott campaign throughout the University with the support of local Unions.
6. To work with UCU branches in developing a campaign of opposition to the NSS nationally.
7. To work with other student unions and student groups to call for a boycott of the NSS

110

No Confidence in Boris Johnson, the Tory Mayor of London (approved by the Council January 2012)
<u>Union believes:</u>
1. Earlier this month Boris Johnson revealed how out of touch he is by suggesting soaring youth unemployment was caused by “ <i>{not} enough young people who have the skills and self-esteem to take what jobs there are – and there are too many young people who lack both.</i> ”
2. For Tory Boris Johnson, unemployment is the fault of an individual’s lack of “ <i>energy and appetite for work</i> ” rather than a result of the Tories’ cuts to public services and jobs.
3. In reality there are 234,000 Londoners fighting for just 33,000 jobs – that is more than seven people chasing every job vacancy.
4. The Tory Mayor of London’s extortionate tube and bus fare hikes are hurting London students who are already struggling to make ends meet.
5. Boris Johnson’s recent fare hike of 5.6% is yet another unnecessary, socially regressive attack on students’ living standards by the Tories.
6. Now the cost of a single bus fare is £1.35 with an oyster card, yet when Boris came into power it was only 90p – making this a 50% increase over 4 years and also making London one of the most expensive cities to travel around in the world.
<u>This union resolves:</u>
1. To issue a public statement stating that the University of London Union has no confidence in Boris Johnson, the Tory Mayor of London.
2. To demand Boris Johnson apologises to London’s unemployed youth for failing to acknowledge that the Tories’ job cuts are causing soaring unemployment.
3. To write to Boris Johnson inviting him to a public meeting at the University of London Union, so that he has the chance to explain himself to London’s students.

111

London Living Wage for Senate House Cleaners (approved by the Council January 2012)	
<u>Council notes:</u>	
1.	That the majority of London campuses now pay their cleaners London living wage, often after long campaigns by cleaners and students in solidarity
2.	That even Tory Mayor Boris Johnson has supported the London living wage
3.	That Senate House cleaners are still paid less than the London living wage
<u>Council believes:</u>	
1.	That the London living wage is the realistic minimum wage for workers living in London
2.	That the cleaners deserve no less than the London living wage as without them our campuses would soon be unusable
<u>Council resolves:</u>	
1.	To campaign to the University for the Senate House cleaners to receive London living wage, and reconfirm Senate policy of 2009/10 and 2010/11 to fully support and campaign for the LLW throughout the University

112

Foundation Day and Picket Lines (approved by the Council January 2012)	
<u>Council Notes:</u>	
1.	That the University of London held its annual Foundation Day for 2011 on November 30th, attended by UoL Chancellor Princess Anne, a number of eminent individuals to be awarded honorary degrees, and student guests
2.	November 30 was the day of co-ordinated strike action on pensions by several major unions including UCU, and Foundation Day was therefore held behind official picket lines
3.	ULU Senate has policy in support of the November 30 strikes
4.	Although an annual celebration, Foundation Day is in fact in remembrance of the foundation of the University on November 28th, not 30th, 1836
<u>Council believes:</u>	
1.	That ULU was correct to support our lecturers and other workers in the strike
2.	That official picket lines should be respected
3.	That this event should have been rescheduled in order not to be politicised by being held behind the picket lines of a long known major strike
<u>Council resolves:</u>	
1.	To inform the management of the University of London of our displeasure at their strike breaking in continuing with Foundation Day.
2.	To continue to support lecturers and support staff in their struggles.

113

Kick Off For Palestine (approved by the Council in November 2011)	
Council notes	
1.	The ongoing siege of Gaza, loosened but not yet lifted by the Egyptian revolution
2.	The vindictive cutting off of US funds to UNESCO following their admission of Palestine to full membership
3.	The speeding up of settlement construction by Israel to further punish the Palestinian statehood bid
4.	The new “Kick Off for Palestine” initiative launched by Viva Palestina in the wake of the UNESCO vote to bring aid and support to Gaza, intending to raise £250,000 over the next few months to build three sports stadia and playing fields there
Council believes	
1.	That “Kick Off For Palestine” is an excellent initiative
2.	That the student movement should continue to show support for Palestinian human rights and the besieged people of Gaza
Council resolves	
1.	To publicise and promote “Kick Off For Palestine”, encouraging our members to donate at http://www.vivapalestina.org/home.htm and, if involved in sports, to raise the initiative with clubs and teammates
2.	To encourage student unions with more sporting involvement than our own to get on board with the initiative

114

The Master’s Pledge (approved by the Council in November 2011)	
Union Believes:	
1.	That the government’s higher education white paper, released over the summer, has been roundly denounced by voices across the student movement, including NUS.
2.	That academics and unions have vigorously opposed the white paper – including with a detailed Alternative White Paper
3.	That Vice Chancellors have also quietly voiced concerns about the white paper
4.	That prior to the 2010 general election, NUS launched a Pledge, which was signed by many parliamentary candidates – most notably the Lib Dems – promising to vote against any increase in tuition fees.
5.	That on November 9 th the education march brought many thousands of students the streets of London under the banner of defeating the white paper.
Union Further Believes:	

1. That the higher education white paper, along with fees and cuts and the dismantling of sectors of FE funding, constitutes a fundamental threat to education as a public service.
2. That because of the broadness, and the seriousness, of opposition to it, the white paper is politically weak and vulnerable to being derailed before it is put before a parliamentary vote.
3. That because much of the white paper may be implemented without a parliamentary vote, the student movement must struggle against it immediately, and in an ongoing and concerted way.
4. That the issues of funding instability, research concentration and the scale of the market vision make the white paper vulnerable to rebellion from Vice Chancellors.
5. That were Vice Chancellors to come out against the white paper and refuse to implement it, this would have a serious impact on the feasibility of the project.
6. That the student movement should not be afraid of confronting institutions' managements on the issue of HE funding and the white paper should they refuse to recognise the overwhelming strength of negative feeling amongst students, academics and the wider public.
7. That although The Pledge was not on its own an adequate response to the threat of rising fees in 2010-11, it was useful as a tool for forcing decision-makers to take public (and morally accountable) stances.
8. That the demonstration on November 9 was a success, and proved that there is still a serious and mobilised presence of students willing to fight for education as a public service.
Union Resolves:
1. To derail the white paper and reverse what elements of marketisation and privatisation already exist in education
2. To launch a Master's pledge, asking him to publicly condemn the white paper and attempts to marketise and privatise education
3. To ask the Master to undertake to refuse to implement the white paper and its associated measures
4. To support lobbying and non-violent direct action around the Master's pledge, and similar projects

115

Supporting the November 30th Strikes (approved by the Council in November 2011)

This Union notes:

1. Education as we know it is under one of the biggest attacks this country has ever seen. Students are facing crippling debt in order to be educated, courses and departments are closing, and the government is planning to privatise our higher education.
2. Lecturers and university staff are expected to work an average of 55 hours a week and perform many duties that are beyond their contractual duties in order to keep universities running. They do this because they want their students to succeed, students are important to them, and they know the value of education. University staff understand that the cuts to the USS (University Superannuation Scheme) are part of the coalition's plan to restructure education.

3. Both students and lecturers have the power to stop the coalition and management from making these changes, and that it is important and necessary for us to link our campaigns. We have seen this already: the UCU (University and College Union) have frequently supported local and national student demonstrations and campaigns.
4. That the recent UCU ballots (66 other institutions UK-wide) revealed that 96% were against changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS); around 80% ^[7] voted for sustained action short of a strike, and around 60% ^[3] voted for strike action nationally. This action started on October 10 th , with strikes to occur on November 30 th and beyond.
5. That the proposed new pension arrangement could cost current lecturers £130,000 and new lecturers £369,000 over the course of their retirement, and that the ballot for strike action took place because of the government's refusal to offer fair negotiations with the UCU.
This Union believes:
1. That pensions are deferred pay, not an added benefit of employment.
2. That the proposed new pension arrangements will affect the quality of staff attracted to the academic professions.
3. That although industrial action is likely to affect students in the short term, in fighting for their pensions the UCU is fighting for the long-term health of a profession of which students are the primary beneficiaries. Students therefore have a large stake in this dispute.
4. That the threat to the working conditions of academic staff is part of a wider picture of cuts to education funding.
This Union resolves:
1. To give full political support to the UCU and the strike on November 30 th .
2. To inform its members about the pensions dispute and encourage them to support academic staff involved in that dispute, both on the website and on posters around campus and inside the Students' Union.
3. To lobby the National Union of Students to support the UCU nationally in this industrial action.
4. To support any planned protests or picket lines on campus.
5. To release a public statement on the website and on posters around campus and inside the Students' Union to publicise this support.
6. To display a banner from the Birkbeck Bar Balcony supporting the strike.

116

Censure of Sabbatical Officer Jennifer Izaakson (approved by the Council in July 2012)

This Union notes:

1. No reports had been submitted, no timesheets ever submitted and no apologies sent to the Council meeting by elected Sabbatical and paid member Jennifer Izaakson.
2. Jennifer gave an oral report to the January 2012 meeting of the Council, but timesheets to the Chair of Council were still lacking following being chased up.
3. Jennifer had never attended any meetings of the Trustee Board since election at the by-election in November 2011.

4. It is the Chair of Council's duty to bring to the attention to the Council the performance and accountability of paid elected members.
5. The Council has power in the Bye-Laws and set out in Sabbatical Contracts of Employment, sanctions that can be applied to paid elected members, including withholding of pay and removal from office. Additionally the Code of Practice for Trustees set out sanctions that can be applied along with the appropriate procedure.
6. That Jennifer has been elected as Editor of London Student for 2012/13.
Council resolves:
1. To censure Jennifer Izaakson formally, with the Chair of Council writing to her with the Council's grievances
2. To withhold one month's pay from Jennifer Izaakson (£434), representing the 7 hours per week.
3. To inform her of her right to appeal to a Tribunal of Council or to the Trustee Board.

117

Accountable Budgeting and the Budgets Advisory Group (approved by the AGM in 2009 and retained by Council July 2012 at the November 2012 meeting)

Union Believes:

1. The Union's annual budget is submitted to the College's Finance & General Purposes Committee at its Summer Term meeting each year.
2. The Bye-Laws require all Clubs & Societies to submit a first estimate budget and annual plan by 31 March.
3. The Council has decided to establish a Budgets Advisory Group (BAG), comprising three elected members of the Council chaired by the Chair of Council, with the Treasurer acting as the secretary to the committee.
4. The role of the BAG is to steer the budget of the Union to reflect the mission of the Union, the policy priorities of the members and ensure funding for ongoing and core welfare support services and campaigning.
5. In addition, the allocations made to Clubs and Societies are determined by the Council/Executive after being decided by the Subsidy Level Advisory Group (SLAG).
6. Critically, our members must have a say in our budget as it is collectively our money, looked after by our elected Trustees and directed politically by our elected Representatives' Council.

Union Resolves:

1. To order the BAG to make its penultimate report to all members, prior to signing off by the Council and the Trustees, and to enable all members to easily comment, contribute and have a say in budget priorities.
2. That any budget approved by the Trustees and the Council for a financial year, and any alternations made during that financial year, shall include a Membership Benefit Test, with key indicators of impact, value and accountability.

118

Say NO to 0870! (approved by the Council in January 2009 and retained by the Council in July 2012 at the meeting in November 2012)

1. Many students regularly have to dial '08' numbers to get hold of their Bank, the Student Loans Company, their LEA, Government Departments, NHS Direct and even in some cases their College, University or SU/NUS!
2. From mobile phones the rates are significantly higher than from a landline, with even Freephone numbers being charged at around 35 pence per minute.
3. Students, both young and old, rely on mobile communication, which is especially necessary for student parents, carers, disabled students and single students, especially women, moving around.
4. OfCom's most recent reports, published in early 2009, have again failed short of proper regulation of '08' numbers, simply requiring '08' organisations to have tiny writing and lightning-speed statements once a number is advertised stating its cost per minute.
5. This is particularly depressing with the rise in all '01' or '02' numbers being inclusive in most domestic landline packages, yet fewer vital organisations advertise their STD number, only their money-making '08' number.
6. OfCom has a proud history it seems of pandering to organisations and business which drain vital money from our unsuspecting members.
7. Urgent action needs to be taken by the Committee to support our members when bombarded with more and more expensive '08' numbers, particularly now with the recession deepening, more organisations will be looking to covertly pick-pocket our members.
8. The recession's effects have already seen a 40% rise in 'change of circumstance' forms being lodged at Birkbeck – action is needed now, not later to save us money.

Council Resolves:

1. For NUS to promote widely the website www.saynoto0870.com
2. For NUS to Lobby all education-sector and advice partners (SUs, Colleges, LEAs, funding councils, Government Departments and others as identified by the Committee, including NUS HQ) to advertise equally their STD Code number alongside their '08' number, and preferably instead of.
3. Lobby the Government to introduce Secondary Legislation to prohibit Public Bodies (as defined by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (2002 in Scotland)) from solely advertising '08' numbers for their services and offices to the public.
4. Campaign for Freephone numbers to be free from mobile phones.
5. In all NUS campaigning and advice/event materials, to only advertise non '08' numbers, unless it is a Freephone number, in which case in addition with equal prominence.

Council Further Resolves to mandate the NUS:

1. Simple tips saving money for students are available from 'Martin's Money Tips' on www.moneysavingexpert.com, a simple resource which shall be incorporated into the Committee's work, and the best tips regularly sent to SUs in the 'NUS Update' and other media.
2. Appoint the NUS NEC Welfare Zone as the 'money saving Tsars' for students for 2009/10, with target to save students collectively £75million in the next year (£10 a head for students)

based on simple, effective communication of Tsarist Tips to save money!
3. Ensure an ethical policy is observed when publicising or promoting a saving – e.g. no Nestlé/SubTV/McDonalds/Coke etc, as determined by the NEC in line with NUS Conference Policy and all Liberation Campaign Policy.
4. Publish the amount estimated saved to our membership in a manner determined by the NEC.

119

Social Space on Campus: Parent & Child Friendly Too! (approved by the Council through delegation to the Welfare & Rights Select Committee and retained by Council July 2012)

Council Believes:

1. Being located in Bloomsbury and at Stratford, in east London, Birkbeck College students and staff, and indeed visitors need social space to relax, socialise, network, chill and chat between lectures, events and tutorials.
2. The Bloomsbury campus is particular short of social space, offering the Birkbeck Bar (a licensed premise), the Union's Clubs & Societies Room, the Costa Coffee area known as "the café on the square", a small common room in Gordon Square and currently a small lobby in the Department of Computing in Senate House North Block. On the fifth floor of the Malet Street extension, there is also the Eatery.
3. Social space at the Stratford campus is non-existent and with the development of the partnership with the University of East London to acquire preferential brown field land from Newham Borough Council, the proposed building will be space managed by bidding for space, and yet again, social communal space will lose out, as will our members.
4. Year on year, the Union is asked to fight for extra space for student-organised study classes, faith and meditation space, parent-child friendly space and recently, disability-friendly space (after the creation of our new Special Committee for Disabled Students).
5. If we do not act now and build a comprehensive space plan for our members' needs, we will let down the next generation of students at Birkbeck.

Council Resolves:

1. For the Executive Committee, as lead by the Council, to develop a detailed space report, which shall include proposals for all areas to be disability friendly and parent-child friendly, which shall include extra group study space and multi-faith space.
2. The space report shall cover current Birkbeck Estates (including Stratford) and central University-run or freehold, including ULU.

120

Student Travel (approved by the Council in December 2008 and retained in July 2012 by the Council)

following some deletions, and re-named from “Student Rights and Welfare Motion in NUS”)

Council Resolves:

1. To campaign, along with ULU, to extend the Transport for London student discount to day travelcards and single tickets.
2. To ensure this student discount is fully available to part-time students in receipt of hardship funding and all student parents.
3. To campaign that this discount is extended in some form to students studying outside of London universities and colleges, who travel to and within London as part of their education or research.

121

A Diverse Representation of Disabled Student Parents & Carers (approved by the Council through the Disabled Members Committee in November 2008 and retained in July 2012 by Council)

Council Resolves:

1. To demand evidence of how and where the NUS national conference policy on promoting a diverse representation of student parents, including disabled parents, trans and black students is being promoted.
 2. Campaign for a caring responsibilities representative in every union.
-

201

Society Room Bookings (approved by the Council in June 2011)

Union notes:

1. That Birkbeck's Movement for Justice Society organised and hosted a weekend school on 7th & 8th May 2011. At the request of the Society the Students Union made a booking with the College on 5th April for a venue for this school at Malet Street. The event was for Birkbeck students and students from other colleges to discuss and assess the state of the student movement following the student mobilisations around fees in December.
2. That on 6th May the Movement for Justice Society was informed that the College had demanded a fee of £800 for the booking, and as a result the SU was forced to cancel the booking.
3. That the Society had to make an alternative booking at a cost of £300, paid by an individual supporter.

Union Believes:

1. That Birkbeck students have the basic democratic right of freedom of association and that we should be able to invite fellow students from other institutions to our meetings.

Union Resolves:

1. To recommend that the Union agrees to pay the cost of the alternative booking made by the Movement for Justice Society.
2. To discuss with the other college unions joint action to force the College to afford our right to associate and organise by lifting the restrictions imposed by College management.

202

Support Edson Cosmos (approved by the Council in June 2011)

Union notes:

1. Edson Cosmos a prominent, openly gay activist from Tanzania and a member of the Movement for Justice is currently being detained by the UK Border Agency in Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre. Edson was forced onto "Fast Track" procedures after he made an application for asylum. This means he is unable to gather evidence and witness statements to support his claim.
2. Edson came to the UK as a student to be able to develop himself in a country where for the first time he could really be himself as a gay man. He was known to be gay in Tanzania, where homosexuality is illegal and carries lengthy prison sentences. He has been attacked,

stoned, beaten and denounced in Tanzania because of his sexuality. His family have cut all ties with him because of his sexuality and stopped funding his studies. Death threats have been made against him by bloggers on Swahili language websites based in Tanzania.
3. The International Lesbian & Gay Human Rights Commission has described the dangers facing the LGBT community in that country.
4. Despite this the Home Office refused his application and an Immigration Tribunal rejected his appeal, claiming that Tanzania is safe for gay men and lesbians.
5. Edson's experience is shared by very many asylum seekers who are detained, put on fast-track, have their claims dismissed and evidence ignored and face being deported to countries where they face imprisonment, torture or death.
Union Believes:
1. Edson should be released from detention and his case should be taken off fast-track, and his asylum claim accepted.
2. Cases such as Edson's demonstrate the injustice and arbitrary nature of the asylum system and the need of an Amnesty for asylum seekers and migrants.
Union Resolves:
1. To send a letter and make representations to the Home Secretary demanding that Edson is immediately released and given the sanctuary he deserves.
2. Circulate information about this case to our members and other SUs.

203

Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment (approved by the Council in June 2011)

Council Notes:

1. The Hidden Marks report, published in March 2010 by the NUS Women's Campaign, revealed that 68% of women students have experienced sexual harassment while a student at their current institution. Many women students reported experiencing persistent harassment in pubs and club nights of the type held at many unions, and reported that this kind of behaviour was seen as normal at such an event.

2. That the NUS' definition of sexual harassment is as follows:

The defining characteristics of sexual harassment are that it is unwanted, persistent and of a sexual nature. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- Unwanted sexual comments (including comments about your body or private life)
- Unwelcome sexual invitations, innuendoes, and offensive gestures
- Wolf whistling, catcalling or offensive sexual noises
- Groping, pinching or smacking of your body, such as your bottom or breasts
- Having your skirt or top lifted without agreeing
- Someone exposing their sexual organs to you without consent

3. The zero tolerance to sexual harassment campaign has been established by the NUS Women's Campaign. The zero tolerance campaign aims to help unions create an environment where all students can enjoy time in their union without persistent and unwanted attention of a sexual nature.

4. That a number of students' unions including Cardiff and Goldsmiths have already successfully implemented a zero tolerance policy In their Union.
Council Believes:
1. That no student at this institution should be forced to just 'put up' with sexual harassment, and that action must be taken to ensure all students are able to enjoy the union without experiencing sexual harassment
2. That sexual harassment should not be tolerated by the union, and those who commit acts of sexual harassment should be stopped and disciplined for their actions
Council Resolves:
1. To adopt a 'zero tolerance to sexual harassment' policy, and to work with the NUS Women's Campaign nationally in the implementation of this
2. To use the NUS definition of sexual harassment in the zero tolerance campaign

204

No Confidence in David Willets (approved by the Council June 2011)
Council noted:
1. That David Willets, the Universities Minister, has slashed all teaching funding for Social Sciences, and cut University budgets.
2. That he is implementing the Browne Review and tripling Tuition Fees
Council Resolves:
1. That we have no confidence in David Willets

205

NO! To the 'NEW COLLEGE FOR THE HUMANITIES' (approved by the Council June 2011)
Council noted:
1. That humanities subjects in higher education are facing devastating funding cuts, with the removal of entire teaching budgets from departments. This follows the Browne Review, published in October, that called for market-led fees of up to £9,000 per year.
2. The announcement, across the national media, on weekend of 4/5 June, of a 'rival to Oxbridge' to be established in Bloomsbury, called the 'New College for the Humanities'

(NCH).
3. That NCH will charge £18,000 per year for tuition in a number of humanities subjects, plus law and economics, leading to a University of London international programme degree.
4. That the operation is headed up by a number of well-known academics, AC Grayling most prominently, but that actual teaching from them will be limited.
5. That the college is a private company limited by shares - not a charity as has been claimed. It will therefore be expected to deliver a profit to its shareholders, including private backers who are supporting the project with £10m of funding.
6. That a number of courses, advertised on the NCH website, have been pirated from existing University of London courses – including those facing serious funding cuts, such as Royal Holloway. At no point were course material copyright holders approached.
7. That NCH claims it will offer access to facilities across Bloomsbury, including University of London libraries and existing students’ union facilities, but that no agreement has been reached with the University of London, its constituent colleges, and its students’ unions.
Council believed:
1. That NCH represents a serious attack on the very principle of universities as public institutions for scholarship, research and the dissemination of knowledge. If it is allowed to succeed it will undermine the character and ethos of university education.
2. That £18,000 a year fees place this college beyond the reach of all but the very richest. NCH claims it will offer scholarship funding, but – although they have been unclear on the details – it is becoming apparent that this will not cover full fees and will be of limited availability. NCH is therefore also an attack on the principle of access education determined by the ability to learn, not the ability to pay.
3. That the NCH business model depends critically on access to world-class facilities, built up at substantial public expense, located around Bloomsbury - most notably the university libraries, but also including welfare and students union services. It is therefore seeking to enjoy a handsome public subsidy, while turning a private profit.
4. That many of the claims surrounding NCH – including NCH’s own publicity – have been misleading, perhaps deliberately so. In particular, NCH cannot be called a ‘university’ since this is a legally-protected title. At most, it is a species of extraordinarily expensive finishing school.
5. That the welfare and support services to be offered by NCH appear wholly inadequate to the needs of its potential students and that this is plainly irresponsible on the part of its founders.
Council resolved:
1. To issue a statement condemning the NCH project for the reasons as given above, and to disseminate this as widely as possible.
2. To demand SOAS management issue a similar statement, distancing themselves from the project.
3. To demand the University of London refuse to collaborate with NCH, and issue a statement to this effect.
4. To support calls for a “greylist” of those academics involved in NCH, including boycotts and protests at their lectures and seminars.
5. To support action taken by staff unions against NCH.
6. To support ongoing campaigns against NCH and other similar projects.#
7. To reaffirm our belief in Free Education.

206

No Fascists in Our Union (approved by the Council in June 2011)

Council Noted:

1. A group calling itself 'Counter Democratic League claiming to be associated with the SU were giving out leaflets on the Birkbeck Campus on Thursday 9th June
2. That the leaflet advertised a meeting about the benefits and successes of Italian Fascism and Mussolini.

Council Believed:

1. That all Birkbeck Students should be able to enjoy the safe space of our Union and College.

Council Resolved:

1. To give fascists no platform in our Union, whilst respecting the right to free speech, and the safety and welfare of our members.
2. To not allow the 'Counter Democratic League' to become a Birkbeck SU Society

207

No to Sodexo! (approved by the Council in June 2011)

Council Noted:

1. Sodexo is a multinational outsourcing corporation, based in Paris, that operates in 80 countries and employs 380,000 globally. They are the 21st largest employer in the world. Sodexo are best known for food service -- they feed more university students than any other company -- but they also do virtually every privatized service you can name. In the UK, they operate prisons; see <http://bit.ly/kZviq7> for example. The founder and Chairman, Pierre Bellon, is on Forbes' list of the world's top billionaires.
2. Human and labour rights violations: During this past academic year alone, Sodexo's treatment of workers was condemned by a series of independent and third-party reports from:
 - Human Rights Watch - see pages 58-77: <http://bit.ly/f6vVtn>
 - a Commission of Inquiry on Colombia: <http://bit.ly/h9daaf>
 - the TransAfrica Forum: <http://bit.ly/gBzXo5>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Students Against Sweatshops: January, on-the-ground investigation at Barrick Gold Mine in Pueblo Viejo, Dominican Republic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The US government's National Labour Relations Board investigated and announced in May it had found enough evidence to pursue charges against Sodexo for illegally firing, intimidating and spying on their workers engaged in union activity at US universities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colombia's Ministry of Social Protection fined Sodexo for failing to negotiate as legally required with its workers in that country and their union Sinaltrainal: http://yhoo.it/lbvhx5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is overwhelming evidence of a pervasive global pattern of noncompliance by Sodexo with the very United Nations and International Labour Organization standards to which the corporation itself has publicly committed.
3. Sodexo runs all of Birkbeck's Catering facilities, apart from the Union Shop and Bar.
4. That Sodexo is not Unionised.
Council Believed:
1. That Birkbeck College should stand by its founding values and ensure that all workers in its employ, including those of contractors, as treated fairly, paid decently and have access to a trades union.
Council Resolved:
1. To press the College not to renew its contract with Sodexo, and put the contract to full tender.
2. To ask that the College awards the contract to an ethical and trades union friendly company.
3. To join the multinational campaign against Sodexo

208

No to Dr Satoshi Kanazawa (approved by the Council in June 2011)
Council Noted:
1. That Dr Satoshi Kanazawa produced a 'academic report' finding that black women 'were less attractive than white women'
2. That this report was based on simply asking people who they preferred, with no scientific basis.
3. That Dr Satoshi Kanazawa is an Honorary Research Fellow, Department of Psychology at Birkbeck College.
Council resolved:
1. To publically repudiate Dr Kanazawa's 'report'
2. To demand that Birkbeck College ends all association with him

209

Defend the Right to Protest (approved by the Council in June 2011)

Council Noted:

1. That civil liberties are being challenged by the government and police at this time.
2. That peaceful protestors are increasingly being arrested.

Council Believed:

1. That the right to protest is vital and should be protected

Council Resolved:

1. To support the Defend the Right to Protest Campaign
-

210

Accountability of Executive Committee (approved by the Council in June 2011)

Council Notes:

1. That a number of paid Executive officers of 2010-11 have failed to hand in time sheets regularly, or submit regular written reports or provide oral reports at Council meetings.
2. That proper completion of timesheets and their regular submission to the Finance Manager is a contractual obligation of paid officers.
3. That the submission of timesheets and written or oral reports for scrutiny and approval or rejection by Council is imperative for paid officers to be held accountable.
4. Officer reports are required even when a paid officer cannot attend a scheduled Council meeting. Where an officer has to send apologies to a Council meeting, especially if they do so to two or more consecutive meetings, they should send a written report to Council members by email to allow proper scrutiny of their work.
5. That all officers who have held a sabbatical position (paid office) within BCSU are traditionally rewarded with some form of award at the annual 'Colours and Honours' ceremony. This is usually in the form of an Honorary Life Membership of BCSU.
6. The term "paid officers" refers to all officers who sign a contract at the beginning of their term of office and take one of the seven sabbatical positions in the union, regardless of whether those individuals choose to accept their salary or not. Choosing not to take a salary does not alter the amount of work and commitment required of a sabbatical officer.

Council Believes:
1. That Council has formally expressed its disappointment at the lack of respect some officers seem to show towards Council's right to fully scrutinise the work of sabbatical officers - asking for timesheets to be re-submitted when they have been deemed insufficient, and asking for their disappointment at some officers' refusal to offer written or oral reports.
2. That BCSU Honours, especially Honorary Life Memberships, should be reserved as a special recognition of outstanding service to the union or to the interests of its members. They should not be given automatically to those who have taken money from the union without offering documented evidence of the work they have done in return for that money.
Council Resolves:
1. That paid officers who have failed to submit 4 or more of the required 12 monthly timesheets this academic year should be automatically exempt from receiving Honorary Life Memberships as sabbatical officers usually do.
2. That any paid officers who currently hold an Honorary Life Membership and who have failed to submit 4 or more of the required 12 monthly timesheets this academic year should be stripped of this honour.
3. That the College of Fellows, who review nominations for Colours and Honours, shall be bound by these resolves.
Council Further Resolved:
1. That the following Sabbatical Trustees are stripped of their current Colours, Honours and/or Honorary Life Membership: Jack Bovill, Natalie Heppenstall, Bisi Alimi and Jo Sutcliffe.

Policy Valid expired at 31 July 2013

301

Time Sheets (approved by the Council in July 2010)

Council Resolves:

1. This council instructs that all paid Executive Officers, or those elected as paid Executive Officer, submit monthly time sheets, showing a breakdown of their weekly work (meetings, conferences, committees, weekly time spent on paper work etc) to the Executive Committee. These reports will then be presented to Council termly.
2. This is essential to ensure that paid Executive Officers are held to account, and that Council is aware of the work of our paid executive officers. Council will act within its appropriate powers regarding censure or no confidence in Executive Officers with the help of these reports.
3. We also instruct paid Executive Members, and those elected as paid Executive Members, to submit a written report to Council, at least a week before Council.

END

Example:

Jack Peterson, Executive Officer:

April 2010:

NUS Conference: 3 days

ULU Meeting, 3/4/10, 2 hours

Campaigns meeting 18/4/10: 90 minutes

Academic Board: 4 Hours

Paperwork, week of 7/4 (for committees and NUS Conference): 4 Hours

Etc etc

302

Axe Fees! Roll Back Cuts! (approved by the AGM in 2010)

1. This Union believes that education is a right for all according to ability, and not a privilege

based upon money and class. We demand that education should be free at the point of delivery for all, and that barriers to participation be smashed.

2. We actively slam the door on fees which are being imposed upon students by the Government. We strongly object to the disgraceful fees review which excludes a true student voice and is dominated by big business and establishment interests, and which will inevitably result in higher fees via the removal of the cap, and in particular the imposition of enormously enlarged upfront fees for part time students.
3. Further we deplore the swinging cuts that the Government are imposing on Higher Education, and fear the worst from any new government in the current economic climate. We demand that the Students' Union be at the forefront of opposing current and future cuts to Higher Education, as well as promoting the campaign for the abolition of fees completely at every level. We stand with the University and College Union against the growing burden on academic staff, redundancies and cuts, which manifestly have a detrimental effect on students.

303

London Living Wage (approved by the AGM in 2010)

This Union reaffirms its commitment to the London Living Wage (which we currently pay all staff at or above), and demands that all University of London, University of London Union, Birkbeck College and Birkbeck College Students' Union staff and contracted staff be paid at least the full LLW package.

This Union resolves:

1. We congratulate Birkbeck College in adopting the LLW for the cleaning and catering staff, and note their commitment alongside the SU to extend this to their contract with ULU for the George Birkbeck Bar.
2. We censure the University of London Union Trustee Board for their disgraceful rejection of the LLW for all ULU staff and contracted staff after the democratic body of ULU, the Senate, approve its introduction.
3. We note ULU is moving towards paying its cleaning staff the LLW, but deplore the moral bankruptcy of treating bar staff differently.
4. We further condemn the anti democratic and secretive ULU Trustee Board for blocking the introduction of the LLW for Birkbeck Bar staff, despite the College asking that it be implemented at no cost to ULU as part of Birkbeck becoming a Living Wage Employer.
5. We demand that the ULU Trustee Board immediately allow the ULU contracted bar staff at Birkbeck to be paid the LLW by the College, and vary our contract and agreements accordingly.
6. To stand firm on this position and notes that without ULU granting our requests the future of our relationship with them is severely and detrimentally effected.

304

No to ULU Trustee Autocracy! (approved by the AGM in 2010)

1. This Union soundly rejects the disgraceful call for a new Trustee led constitution at ULU. We demand that the democratic federal nature of this organisation is preserved, in fact strengthened and made more, not less, meaningful. The imposition of an NUS model constitution intended for 'direct' SUs is totally inappropriate, and even if we were such a body many of its clauses are too trustee led and unnecessary.
2. We abhor the thought of a Trustee clique swanning around and running ULU without the support of the Colleges which ULU is supposed to represent, axing representation, campaigning and student lead democracy. We think that having a proper democracy, instead of simply the very difficult ability to no confidence the entire trustee board in extremis, is far preferable.
3. We demand that any changes to the ULU constitution have a valid and democratic purpose, and are not to the benefit of the Trustees at the expense of democracy. We call for the current, legal and valid constitution to be amended where it is shown to be wanting, not thrown out to suit the extremists who wish to see ULU's democracy debased and replaced with a commercial entity that simply contracts a gym, shops and runs a bar.
4. We note that the ULU constitution has a Trustee Board with power over legal and contractual matters. ULU currently fully complies with all upcoming and current legislation. We must not be intimidated by flowery legal ravings that insist we must throw away the democratic baby with the bathwater.
5. This SU will seek its own legal counsel on the matter if we are further intimidated by legalistic nonsense.

305

NUS Conference Motion: Supporting Small and Specialist Unions

Council resolves to send this to NUS Conference:

This Conference believes:

1. That there are currently many small and specialist college unions affiliated to the NUS.
2. That these unions have specific needs and requirements due to their typically small budgets, the fact that many do not have sabbatical officers and those that do may operate as the single sabbatical officer with little or no staff support.

This Conference further believes:

1. That the special needs of many students' union's from small and specialist colleges are not properly taken into account in much of NUS' policy and training.

2. That this happens because many officers from these unions cannot afford and/or don't find the large summer training events relevant and thus they don't engage in the NUS throughout the year.
3. That NUS fails to properly grant access to officers and activists of these unions, despite the fact that they are eager to engage in, and can contribute to, the NUS.
This Conference resolves:
1. To investigate a system of bursaries and/or pricing structures for small and specialist college unions with restricted budgets with the aim to improve access and involvement within the NUS.
2. To critically evaluate the relevance of all NUS events (particularly training events) for these unions, and that this evaluation should be initiated by way of a national consultation with unions from small and specialist colleges.
3. To mandate the NUS to ensure that it takes responsibility for supporting unions from small and specialist colleges.

306

Burlesque Dancing
The Birkbeck Women's Committee Notes:
1. Its disappointment that the burlesque event which was debated at the council meeting on the 9 th of December was repeated on the 22 nd of January
2. That the motion put forward at that December meeting which supported such events was voted down by at 2 to 1 majority at that meeting
3. That implicit in this was the belief that there would be a moratorium on such events until the Women's Committee had a chance to meet to discuss the issue
4. That the Women's Committee has a meeting scheduled for the 28 th of January, a day after this council meeting
The Birkbeck Women's Committee Believes:
1. That it is disrespectful to women at Birkbeck to ignore their concerns about the burlesque event
2. That women's autonomy means that women at Birkbeck have the right to decide policy and make decisions about issues which effect them, such as sexism, commodification and objectification of women at the college
3. That the Women's Officer who was elected as a representative of women at Birkbeck should be listened to and respected by the council
This Birkbeck Women's Committee Resolves:

1. To mandate the Birkbeck Students' Union Council to put an immediate moratorium on any burlesque event until the Women's Committee has met on the issue and reported back to the council
2. To ask the council to reaffirm its commitment to women's autonomy at Birkbeck which includes the right of women at Birkbeck to decide on policy which directly affects them as women at the college
3. To ask the council to respect whatever decision is made by the women's committee on whether or not future burlesque events should be held
4. To ask the council to re-affirm its commitment to the National Union of Students' Women's Campaign and its fight against objectification and sexism of women and support for women's autonomy on our campuses

307

Allotments

Conference Believes

1. That many Part-Time and Mature students have to pay their fees up front each year. Although many Part-time and Mature students work either part or full time it is also know that a large number of Part-time and Mature students are either unemployed or on long-term health benefits and study as a way back to health.
2. We are constantly reminded to eat well and drink in moderation. Many students cannot afford to eat a well balance diet and, where they have access to a garden will grow they own. A healthy diet allegedly leads to a healthy mind and a health mind helps with student studies.
3. Too many students do not have access to open space where they can attempt to live the good life and roll back their grocery bills, eat healthily, exercise the body and stretch the mind.
4. Conference notes that there aren't enough allotments especially in urban areas. In London the waiting lists are over 26 months minimum and some have closed their waiting lists

Conference further believes

1. Green sites are often picked off and sold for profit. Campaign for green spaces to be publicly held by statute for cultivation not just parks.
2. The is a real danger with the public sector cuts that that other public open spaces as allotments will be sold off for development.
3. Landshare schemes are under used outside of Urbia and Suburbia, yet in our Cities big land owners such as the Church appear to prefer to proliferate safe space by allowing usable green land as gang land hobo areas and zones for trafficking

4. That Part-time and Mature students (and are full time equivalents) are encourage to eat sensible and try and grow their own
Conference resolves
1. Campaign for NUS Services Business & Enterprise Committee to investigate allotments, landsharing and multiple owner spaces for cultivation for Union/students
2. To encourage the use of allotments by all students to grown some of their own food and save money.
3. Don't let our members lose their plot! Let NUS campaign for healthy living and axe and roll back plans by local authorities to cuts in public spending especially where it infringes on public amenities such as allotments and other public spaces.
4. To endorse a healthy living campaign for part-time and mature students to grow healthy items in gardens, planters or have a good old fashioned pot garden (!)

308

Flirt! An Appalling Event Promoted by NUSSLConference Believes:
1. A union wishing to run Flirt! Has to pay £1500 in the first year for a license and then £1000 each year after. Additional fees apply to branded events.
2. Flirt! has branding which includes 'toilet door' figures of a 'man' and a 'woman'.
3. Sexist and heteronormative t-shirts are worn at the events by staff with 'Miss Flirt' and 'Master Flirt' on them.
4. The whole event is built on heterosexuality and absolute heternormativity.
Conference Further Believes:
1. Our Sisters in the Women's Campaign have voted unanimously to "Switch off Sexist Sub.TV" and to "sanction NUSSL for its appalling catalogue of sexism".
2. Our Unions must be safe spaces for our members, all our members! This does not just mean safe for only white, middle class straight cisgendered men!
3. Flirt! operates through NUSSL's promotion branding events which are inherently sexist and deeply heternormative.
4. If only this appalling event's branding stopped there: Flirt and NUSSL promote "Pimps and Ho's", a deeply offensive theme promoting the control and abuse of women.
5. We cannot allow our Union's and students' monies to be spent on the proliferation of LGBT-phobia, sexism, racism and unsafe spaces.
Conference Resolves:
1. To issue to SU staff, through AMSU and NUSSL, a guide on being inclusive and running inclusive events for LGBT students.
2. To promote the need for non-gendered toilet facilities, which are accessible.

3. To censure Flirt! as a deeply offensive event to many LGBT students, and to write to NUSSL outlining our policy towards Flirt! (and similar events NUSSL promotes) and ask them to agree to a Safe Space Protocol, drawn up by the LGBT Committee covering the requirements of Resolves 1.

309

Collectivist Co-operatives: For Modern Grassroots RepresentationConference Believes:

1. Research by Birkbeck College Students' Union suggests that students' unions in higher education who elect hierarchal sabbatical officer structures are more likely to have less liberation campaigning on campus and by extension, fewer LGBT, Black, Women, Mature Students and Disabled people involved.
2. Unions which have hierarchal sabbatical structures that also have a large number of clubs and societies do manage, though, to keep participation higher than those that do not have many clubs and societies.

Conference Further Believes:

1. Many students' unions are looking to ways to involve more students in representation and in how their students' union 'works for them'.
2. Active, visible and campaigning sabbatical officers who support liberation and clubs and societies are the best medicine for our unions.
3. Hierarchal sabbatical officer structures have the effect of electing fewer Black people: Birkbeck's research is backed up by the NUS Black Students' Campaign which shows despite Black students being over 20% of the student population, Black officers and representatives make up only around 4%.

Conference Resolves:

1. To support egalitarian, non-hierarchal models for student union governance.
 2. To support job-shares within students' unions and within the LGBT Campaign.
 3. All trustees of a students' union must be elected in some form by the student members of a students' union in a ballot at a Council meeting, General Meeting or cross-campus ballot, by multi-member STV to promote inclusivity and proportionality.
 4. To issue a briefing to sabbatical officers on being 'active and visible' to their LGBT student community on campus.
-

310

Let's Start Promoting Governance Models Based on Feminist Principles

Conference Believes:

1. There are alternatives to the governance reviews promoted by AMSU (General Managers Union) and associated Consultants.
2. Birkbeck SU (BCSU) is currently transforming from having just one paid sabbatical (president) to a non-patriarchal/egalitarian/collective of seven part-time paid officers
3. This will include the first creation of a paid Women's Officer post for years and the first paid Student Parent Officer post ever, and no president.

Conference Further Believes:

1. Rather than removing a guaranteed women's officer voice from SU decision making bodies, BCSU is trying to integrate Feminist, Pro-Feminist and Student Movement principles throughout their structures.
2. All posts are paid, so no student is excluded from candidature because they cannot financially afford to volunteer.
3. All posts are part time, so no student is excluded from candidature due to the need to work part time because of 'dis'ability or caring responsibilities. This is in accordance with the Equality Act and associated recommendations
4. There is a guaranteed voice for student parents because student parents are not just lacking representation within the student movement, but actively discriminated against.
5. For instance, a mother was thrown off NUS Annual Conference floor in 2005 for breast feeding her baby.
6. AMSU online chat forums were crammed with sexist remarks in 2006 about a student with a baby such as 'sometimes I wonder if it is a SU or a crèche' and other comments stating student parents would not be able to fulfill volunteering requirements and should not stand as SU officers. Statements like these became illegal in the workplace in the 1970s.

Conference Resolves:

1. To widely promote the BCSU model and alternative governance models to those being touted by AMSU/associated consultants.
2. Not to share the NUS website with AMSU or any other organisation that does share women campaign principles.
3. To promote models based on feminist principles and take advice from Feminist organisations on this.

311

Say NO to 0870!Conference Believes:

1. Many students regularly have to dial '08' numbers to get hold of their Bank, the Student Loans Company, their LEA, Government Departments, NHS Direct and even in some cases their College, University or SU/NUS!
2. From mobile phones the rates are significantly higher than from a landline, with even

Freephone numbers being charged at around 35 pence per minute.
3. Students, both young and old, rely on mobile communication, which is especially necessary for student parents, carers, disabled students and single students, especially women, moving around.
4. OfCom's most recent reports, published in early 2009, have again failed short of proper regulation of '08' numbers, simply requiring '08' organisations to have tiny writing and lightning-speed statements once a number is advertised stating its cost per minute.
5. This is particularly depressing with the rise in all '01' or '02' numbers being inclusive in most domestic landline packages, yet fewer vital organisations advertise their STD number, only their money-making '08' number.
6. OfCom has a proud history it seems of pandering to organisations and business which drain vital money from our unsuspecting members.
7. Urgent action needs to be taken by the Committee to support our members when bombarded with more and more expensive '08' numbers, particularly now with the recession deepening, more organisations will be looking to covertly pick-pocket our members.
8. The recession's effects have already seen a 40% rise in 'change of circumstance' forms being lodged at Birkbeck – action is needed now, not later to save us money.
Conference Resolves:
1. Promote widely the website www.saynoto0870.com
2. Lobby all education-sector and advice partners (SUs, Colleges, LEAs, funding councils, Government Departments and others as identified by the Committee, including NUS HQ) to advertise equally their STD Code number alongside their '08' number, and preferably instead of.
3. Lobby the Government to introduce Secondary Legislation to prohibit Public Bodies (as defined by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (2002 in Scotland)) from solely advertising '08' numbers for their services and offices to the public.
4. Campaign for Freephone numbers to be free from mobile phones.
5. In all NUS campaigning and advice/event materials, to only advertise non '08' numbers, unless it is a Freephone number, in which case in addition with equal prominence.
Conference Further Resolves:
1. Simple tips saving money for students are available from 'Martin's Money Tips' on www.moneysavingexpert.com , a simple resource which shall be incorporated into the Committee's work, and the best tips regularly sent to SUs in the 'NUS Update' and other media.
2. Appoint the NUS NEC Welfare Zone as the 'money saving Tsars' for students for 2009/10, with target to save students collectively £75million in the next year (£10 a head for students) based on simple, effective communication of Tsarist Tips to save money!
3. Ensure an ethical policy is observed when publicising or promoting a saving – e.g. no Nestlé/SubTV/McDonalds/Coke etc, as determined by the NEC in line with NUS Conference Policy and all Liberation Campaign Policy.
4. Publish the amount estimated saved to our membership in a manner determined by the NEC.

312

Self-insemination: A Right to ChooseConference Believes:

1. The desire to have a baby is totally natural
2. For women the options are to have penetrative sex with a donor, to have IVF or to self-inseminate.
3. Many lesbians in previous decades put their sexuality to one side and partnered with a man for the purpose of having a baby, sometimes these unions were between a lesbian and a gay man, and for all intents were marriages on convenience to raise a family.
4. Self-insemination using donation apparatus, such as a turkey baster, is extremely poor in targeting semen effectively within the cervical foyer, though it is cheap, and with a willing donor is usually anonymous if needed.

Conference Further Believes:

1. There are horrendously unethical companies available such as Man Not Included, run by straight men, who deliver fresh semen to lesbians via moped.
2. This donation has not been screened for viruses.
3. Lesbians should not have to suffer with the dregs of patriarchal society determining how they should inseminate themselves.

Conference Resolves:

1. To work with our NHS in clear and healthy guidance for lesbians who wish to inseminate.
2. To work with NUSSL at sourcing self-insemination kits for stock in our students' union advice centres.
3. To campaign to shut down companies like Man Not Included as unethical and sexist.

313

Social Space on Campus: Parent & Child Friendly Too!

Beliefs:

1. Being located in Bloomsbury and at Stratford, in east London, Birkbeck College students and staff, and indeed visitors need social space to relax, socialise, network, chill and chat between lectures, events and tutorials.
2. The Bloomsbury campus is particular short of social space, offering the Birkbeck Bar (a licensed premise), the Union's Clubs & Societies Room, the Costa Coffee area known as "the café on the square", a small common room in Gordon Square and currently a small lobby in the Department of Computing in Senate House North Block. On the fifth floor of the Malet

Street extension, there is also the Eatery.
3. Social space at the Stratford campus is non-existent and with the development of the partnership with the University of East London to acquire preferential brown field land from Newham Borough Council, the proposed building will be space managed by bidding for space, and yet again, social communal space will lose out, as will our members.
4. Year on year, the Union is asked to fight for extra space for student-organised study classes, faith and meditation space, parent-child friendly space and recently, disability-friendly space (after the creation of our new Special Committee for Disabled Students).
5. If we do not act now and build a comprehensive space plan for our members' needs, we will let down the next generation of students at Birkbeck.
Resolutions:
1. For the Executive Committee, as lead by the Council, to develop a detailed space report, which shall include proposals for all areas to be disability friendly and parent-child friendly, which shall include extra group study space and multi-faith space.
2. The space report shall cover current Birkbeck Estates (including Stratford) and central University-run or freehold, including ULU.

314

The Brittas Empire
Believes:
1. ULU, the University of London Union is a federal students' union for the Colleges of the University of London: Birkbeck, SOAS, some-Imperial students, King's, UCL, Royal Veterinary College, Institute of Education, London Business School, Queen Mary, Goldsmiths, School of Advanced Study, School of Pharmacy, Institute in Paris, Millport (Scotland), Royal Holloway, the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, LSE, Royal Academy of Music, St. George's, Institute of Cancer Research, Heythrop College, Central School of Speech & Drama and the Courtauld Institute of Art.
2. ULU has a potential membership of over 120,000 students, making it the largest students' union in Europe.
3. Over 30,000 students are postgraduate research students
4. At Birkbeck alone, nearly 20,000 student study part-time, with an average age of 35
Further believes:
1. There has been a Review of ULU by the University, which if approved (happening 18 th March 2008), ULU would only be subsidised (i.e. receive funding from our tuition fees) by £700,000 to provide:
a. Representative Sport
b. A President & Vice President (Sport)
c. Boathouse
d. Motspur Park (field sports)
e. A newspaper with funding halved (London Student)
2. The Review states that ULU will not receive funding to campaign, provide welfare or advice

and that any student Societies formed cannot duplicate ones already provided in a College students' union.
3. ULU closed its Nursery in 2003, which received an annual subsidy of £20,000 as it was unviable.
4. ULU is also not permitted to receive funding for the training of student officers and activists "as the NUS does this for free". Not only does the NUS charge, but not all Colleges are members of NUS, notably the smaller ones.
5. Under a climate of cuts from the University, ULU mercilessly axed its dedicated Postgraduate Caseworker, leaving student defending appeals without support, funded by the students themselves.
6. The Review expects Birkbeck students through their fees, to subsidise "Representative Sport" and associated paraphernalia to the tune of nearly £60,000, when Birkbeck student cannot access this "sport" during the days and at weekends due to work, caring responsibilities and homemaking.
Resolves:
1. If the Review is adopted by ULU and the University Council, ULU is no longer a representative voice of the diverse student population of the Colleges of the University of London.
2. To support those College Unions which are not yet NUS members to become NUS members as soon as possible.
3. To condemn the breaking up of diverse collective funding action by the Colleges, especially UCL and Queen Mary, as an attack on student welfare, especially mature students and part-time students.
4. That ULU would no longer be eligible for places at NUS events as it is no longer constitutionally a diverse student representative body, if the Review and cuts go through.
5. To declare ULU "the Brittias Empire" and to warn our members of the need to collaborate and work together as a National Union.
6. To mandate the NUS Mature Students Committee to investigate and take a report, with recommendation for action to the NEC/National Conference.

315

The DUP: Representational Failures who are Unfit for GovernmentConference Believes:

1. Iris Robinson and Sammy Wilson, who are both MPs and members of the Northern Ireland Assembly are unfit for responsible democratic representative government.
2. The first duty of a representative of the people is to ALL of their constituents, and whilst neither of them agree with same-sex unions, lesbian reproductive rights or LGBT education in schools, we can usually put that down to 'political difference'.
3. However, let us not bury our heads in the sands of bigotry! Iris Robinson is a vile bigot and Sammy Wilson is totally unrepresentative.
4. During 2008, Robinson blew spiteful language around Northern Ireland regarding homosexuality and the fact she could cure 'it' using her psychiatrist.

5. She also wheeled in God to add even more vile insult.
6. Robinson was reported to the Equality Commission, who did not act.
7. During an exchange with the then Health Minister, Ulster Unionist Chris McGimsey in the House of the Northern Ireland Assembly, she refused to withdraw the remarks and actually re-issued them.
Conference Further Believes
1. Iris Robinson is a member of the Democratic Unionist Party, a national socialist and sectarian party of Northern Ireland. She is also a member of the Government of Northern Ireland.
2. Robinson is also a member of the Pentecostal Church in Ireland, a hardline right-wing bigoted sect of Christianity who back up her views.
3. Our Labour Government brought in legislation to stamp out hate crime and our politicians MUST also be subjected to it.
Conference Resolves:
1. For the Committee and the National President to investigate the DUP, Iris Robinson, Sammy Wilson and the Pentecostal Church in Ireland and to bring a report, and if necessary a motion back to this Conference to apply 'no platform' to them for their fascist views.
2. To report Irish Robinson and the DUP to the Equality Commission for LGBT-phobia, and copy the letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons and Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

316

When is the time to 'kill off' the dyslexia industry, Graham?

Conference Believes:

1. Our perceptions, knowledge and realities of our disabilities and differences makes us who we are: proud individuals who are committed to contributing actively to society.

2. People have many different mental architectures, personalities and methods of learning: whilst persecution, torture and vile experiments were the norm until the 1950s for disabled people, particularly practiced by the Nazis, today disabled people are demand to be full active members of society.

3. Some vile organisations still promote eugenics, which must be exposed as followers of neo-Nazi Master-Race wannabes.

Conference Further Believes:
1. It is totally unacceptable for ex-Minister Graham Stringer MP to brand dyslexia as “a myth”.
2. The MP has also stated in the ManchesterConfidential.com article that “if dyslexia really existed then countries as diverse as Nicaragua and South Korea would not have been able to achieve literacy rates of 100%”
3. And stated “Certified dyslexics get longer in exams. There has been created a situation where there are financial and educational incentives to being bad at spelling and reading”
4. Further, he has said “It is time that the dyslexia industry was killed off and we recognised that there are well known methods for teaching everybody to read and write”
Conference Resolves:
1. To celebrate our disability diversity and make this central to Disabled History Month.
2. To inform Graham Stringer of his totally inappropriate comments regarding dyslexia and to extend to him an invitation to educate himself in disabilities, particularly diversity of mental architectures that gives us a wonderful individualism.
3. To stress the importance of multiple learning techniques, notably those developed and researched at the Institute of Education, working with the IoE to be a central part of Disabled History Month.
4. To lead a ‘round of applause’ for all disabilities and disabled people at National NUS Conference in 2009.
5. Adopt the campaign slogan “Diversity represents us! Equality protects us!”

401

A Diverse Representation of Disabled Student Parents & Carers (approved by the Council through the Disabled Members Committee in November 2008)

Council Resolves:

3. To demand evidence of how and where the NUS national conference policy on promoting a diverse representation of student parents, including disabled parents, drag kings and black students is being promoted.
4. Campaign for a caring responsibilities representative in every union.

402

A Word of Advice for Richard Littlejohn (approved by the Council in January 2009)

Council Believes:

1. Conference deplores the attitude of the rightwing hack Richard Littlejohn on his recent outburst in the Daily Mail against the teaching of diversity in schools. There is a major need to educate our young on the differences that there are in the real world. People, hiding behind religious or ethnic views, can and do add to the bigotry that we see around us. Educated the young to respect others, who others are and why people are and they, in turn, will come to respect, the diversity in our communities

Council Resolves

1. To condemn Richard Littlejohn for his continued smallmind, Little England smuttiness in his journalistic scriblings
2. That it is essential that education must start with the young if we are to ensure that respect for this country's diverse communities can grow in peace and safety.
3. That the Daily Mail, rightwing toe-rag of a paper direct from the gutter should be de-registered as a newspaper and reclassified as a comic!

403

Academy Schools (approved by the Council January 2009)

Council Believes:

1. People like Brian Souter who have millions of pounds to promote fake theories like creationism must not be able to pump millions to promote equally fake anti-gay policies as promoted by Iris Robinson, the Catholic Church and Robert Mugabe or Fred Phelps' Westboro Baptist Church, for instance.

Council Resolves:

1. To oppose Academy Schools, period.

404

Access to Counselling Services (approved by the Council through Mature Students Committee May 2009)

Council Believes:

1. It is vital that counselling and advice centres on our campuses are independent of the academic institution.
2. Trust is a vital component of giving advice. Confidentiality is a vital component of any counselling service.
3. With the global recession and financial pressures adding to an already heavy burden, many students are relying more and more on our welfare support services.

Council Resolves:

1. For the NEC and mature students committee to draw up a minimum charter for advice and counselling services, in collaboration with Advice UK (the national organisation for independent advisors and CABs) and Association of University Administrators highlighting ways to support independent IAGs on campus, particularly focussing on students' unions run services.

405

Accountable Budgeting and the Budgets Advisory Group (approved by the AGM in 2009)

Union Believes:

7. The Union's annual budget is submitted to the College's Finance & General Purposes Committee at its Summer Term meeting each year.
8. The Bye-Laws require all Clubs & Societies to submit a first estimate budget and annual plan by 31 March.
9. The Council has decided to establish a Budgets Advisory Group (BAG), comprising three elected members of the Council chaired by the Chair of Council, with the Treasurer acting as the secretary to the committee.
10. The role of the BAG is to steer the budget of the Union to reflect the mission of the Union,

the policy priorities of the members and ensure funding for ongoing and core welfare support services and campaigning.
11. In addition, the allocations made to Clubs and Societies are determined by the Council/Executive after being decided by the Subsidy Level Advisory Group (SLAG).
12. Critically, our members must have a say in our budget as it is collectively our money, looked after by our elected Trustees and directed politically by our elected Representatives' Council.
Union Resolves:
3. To order the BAG to make its penultimate report to all members, prior to signing off by the Council and the Trustees, and to enable all members to easily comment, contribute and have a say in budget priorities.
4. That any budget approved by the Trustees and the Council for a financial year, and any alternations made during that financial year, shall include a Membership Benefit Test, with key indicators of impact, value and accountability.

406

Accurate Representations of LGBT People: Emmerdale Farm Beware! (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009)

Council Believes:

1. Each and every time the token gay or lesbian rocks up in a terrestrial television channel soap opera, the character is cast in an extremely narrow stereotype.
2. For gay men this is extremely camp, usually narcissistic and outcast.
3. For lesbians, this is destructive to heterosexual marriage and eventually outcast.

Council Further Believes:

1. TV producers pander to stereotypes that their audiences recognize or understand, without putting forward the agenda for change.
2. TV, though, is a powerful changer of hearts and minds and it has its place in history with everyone citing "the first gay kiss" or the "first lesbian love".
3. Tragically, producers have to trade LGBT people for audience ratings even though we do have loving and caring relationships on the whole, there is NO EVIDENCE in main stream terrestrial TV soaps for an LBTG relationships lasting, building and being inclusive within the background plot of soaps.

Council Resolves:

1. Write to the BBC Trustees demanding an explanation in line with the believes of this motion.
 2. Complain to OfCom and the Equalities Commission about the persistent negative associations given to LGBT people and LGT relationships in mainstream TV drama and soap operas.
 3. To also demand recognition for polyamorous relationships within the TV soaps.
-

Affiliation to British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS) (approved by the AGM in 2009)

Union Believes:

1. There has been an increase in the number of our members who wish to participate in sports competitions organised by BUCS, however, the Union is not affiliated as historically BUCS has operated a discriminatory policy on age, with no student older than 27 being eligible for selection of the National Student Team.
2. If affiliation is approved, it is likely that we would be entering a number of Individuals into BUCS competitions, allowing them to attend the Student Championships in Sheffield in 2010. In the future, we can also enter Teams.
3. Affiliation fees are calculated on numbers of Full Time Students at an institution, plus previous Individual Entries, plus previous Team Entries.
4. Birkbeck had 18,480 students in 2006-7 (HESA), of whom 715 were full-time postgraduate students and 25 were full-time undergraduate students.
5. According to BUCS, large full-time institutions such as King's College London Students' Union and Imperial College Union pay around £9,270 a year affiliation, and then additional charges apply for each entry to a competition.
6. King's had 21,230 students in 2006-7 (HESA), of whom 3,770 were full-time postgraduate and 11,545 full-time undergraduate (total full-time is 15,315 (c.f. 740 Birkbeck)) and Imperial had 13,410 students in 2006-7 (HESA), of whom 3,880 were full-time postgraduate and 8,350 full-time undergraduate (total full-time is 12,230)).
7. Performing a direct linear relationship of affiliation fee to Full-Time Students (average being 13,772.5), it would be reasonable that a future Birkbeck affiliation fee would be around 18% of the King's/Imperial affiliation fee = £1,700. This is assuming we enter lots of individuals and team each year, so it would be a maximum.
8. £1,700 is a considerable amount of money in relation to our current Grant from the College, representing 0.6% or 10.7% of our Clubs & Societies budget for 2008/9. Whilst the Union receives around £265k per year Grant, King's College London Students' Union, according to its financial statements, received £2.5million in Grant.
9. Any affiliation to BUCS must be weighed against available access to BUCS through ULU, it must not have a discriminatory age policy and it must be approved by the Council.

Union Resolves:

1. To authorise the Trustees to affiliate to BUCS, on recommendation from the Council; provided that annual affiliation is not greater than £1000.
2. To require the Council to investigate the benefit of affiliation to BUCS for our members; to investigate what provision is offered by ULU as access to BUCS competitions; to widely consult with our members as to the value of such an affiliation; to require the Council negotiate a reduced special rate of affiliation if possible for our membership.

Affiliation to NCVO, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations

Council Believes:

1. NUS has negotiated a 20% discount on first year membership of the NCVO, which is a national body supporting the staff, trustees and volunteers in organisations which are heavily reliant on volunteers and its members.
2. Affiliation would be around £130 per year.
3. It is the strong opinion of the Finance & Resources Committee of the Trustees that affiliation will support our Union Manager and our staff in supporting and delivering our mission as a Union as directed by the Council and our Trustees.

Council Resolves:

1. To affiliate to the NCVO.

409

Afghanistan and the spread of war (approved by the Council in November 2008)

Council believes:

1. NATO expansion, the war in Georgia and the commitment to fight “the good war” in Afghanistan are the bloody result of the attempt to maintain US global dominance.
2. Over 1 million Afghans have lost their lives as a result of war over the last 30 years yet both the UK and US governments are committed to sending more troops into the country.
3. The US had spent over £110 billion on the war in Afghanistan by the end of 2008 but only 10 billion of the 16 billion in aid payments had been received.
4. Over the winter of 2008 8.4 million Afghans faced starvation and 30 million live in severe poverty.
5. That there was no resistance in Afghanistan immediately after the invasion. The reality of NATO’s occupation has created a resistance out of the same localised forces which had fought the Russian occupation.
6. That the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are spreading instability across the region.

Council further believes:

1. That the links between Afghanistan and West Pakistan are creating tensions in Pakistan.
2. The US army has already launched cross border operations to try and hold its position in Afghanistan. This has created a crisis for Pakistan’s rulers, torn between support for the US and anti-imperialist sentiment at home.
3. The Pakistani government has forced almost 300,000 Afghan refugees back into Afghanistan.
4. If the US continues to engage in operations in Pakistan it could provoke a civil war.
5. That unless we can force our governments in the west to withdraw from Afghanistan and Iraq we will continue to pay the bloody price for their “new world order.”

Council resolves:

1. To actively support the activities of the Stop the War Coalition
2. To support the “No to NATO” protest in France on April 3rd alongside the Stop the War Coalition, Noam Chomsky and others.

- | |
|--|
| 3. To support the call for the withdrawal of all troops from Afghanistan. |
| 4. To organise and promote with Stop the War a series of events on campuses to highlight the reality of the occupation. |
| 5. To oppose the Taliban, a deeply misogynistic and homophobic oppressive regime. |
| 6. To send this motion to NUS conference 2009 in the "Society and Citizenship Zone" deleting resolves 5. To send its proposer or their proxy to NUS compositing. |

410

An Inclusive and anti-racist women's campaign (approved by the Council through the Women's Committee in January 2009)

Council Believes:

- | |
|--|
| 1. The media persists in representing western culture and beauty as the norm, with hardly any positive non-western forms of culture and beauty. This results in the lowering of self esteem within the black community and how they are viewed within society. |
|--|

Council Resolves:

- | |
|--|
| 1. To campaign for more positive and realistic representations of Black people and the Black community within the mass media and throughout institutions such as parliament and education. |
|--|
-

411

Asexuality (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009)

Council Believes:

- | |
|---|
| 1. Asexuality is an absence of sexuality. |
| 2. A person solely self-defining as asexual would not fall within the LGBT categories eligible to attend NUS LGBT Conference. |
-

412

Beauty is not a contest! Campaigning against Miss University London (approved by the Council in February 2009)

Council Believes:

- | |
|---|
| 1. Whilst we may live in the 21 st Century, promoting diversity and equality, many organisations and individuals still cling to the sexist ideals of patriarchy, swallowing our society in a |
|---|

downward spiral of misogyny.
2. The mainstream media still promote a narrow vision and concept of beauty, which is pushed by porn barons and other organisations which see human bodies as a tradable commodity first and foremost.
3. In the Western Hemisphere, beauty is also defined on racial grounds, with a disproportionately tiny number of Black women being put forward in commercial advertising.
4. Recently, sexist lads mags, such as FHM, solicited promotional work from Gail Trimble in the guise that beauty is linked to intelligence.
5. Persistently, Sub.TV, a company backed and promoted by NUS's trading arm NUSL, beams degrading objectifying images of women into our "safe space" environments. Whilst we can "switch off sexist Sub.TV", with NUSL providing these sexist companies a platform and indirectly our money, our bodies will still remain a tradable commodity, treating women as objects.
6. Graphic images have also been broadcast in student and campus media of glove puppets fisting women, performing oral and anal sex on women and this is proudly sanctioned by Sub.TV's favoured laddish channel Fur.TV.
7. This motion is not about telling people what they can and cannot watch, but it is about campaigning for and providing safe spaces for our members in our facilities, without constantly having to censor media we fund due to their sexist, laddish objectifying misogyny.
8. Recently, beauty pageants have been held across the University of London, lining up a narrow selection of women in front of sexist judges and asking them to answer questions, model and pander to heterosexual patriarchy.
9. Our campuses should be a haven for all students to advance their education, not be graded on their "beauty" and traded as cheap objects.
Council Resolves:
1. To support the Miss-Ogynist protests, organised by women's groups across London.
2. To write to organisations such as Object, supporting their continuing campaigns against objectification.
3. To support our Women's Officer and our Women's Committee in challenging sexism and racism wherever it occurs.
4. To hold a meeting with Sexist Sub.TV about their inappropriate content, and to authorise the Council to permanently Switch of Sub.TV if Sub.TV doesn't agree to our Council's broadcasting and media protocol.
5. The broadcasting and media protocol shall be drawn up by the Council and all media available in our space shall adhere to this protocol, including media for sale in the Shop.

413

Blackpool: An appalling catalogue of inaccessibility, disablism and the Norbreck isn't even in it! (approved by the Council through the Disabled Members Committee in December 2008)

Council Believes:

1. The Norbreck Castle Hotel isn't in Blackpool.
2. While NUS continues to hold Annual Conference in the Blackpool Wintergardens,

accommodation for disabled students is needed in close proximity to the venue.
3. Modern transport which is accessible for many disabled students is non-existent most of the time during our NUS events in Blackpool. For instance, there are few examples of newer models of taxi than the TX1 which can accommodate a wheelchair in use. London has TX4s as standard.
Council Further Believes:
1. Expecting disabled students to make the journey from outside of Blackpool for 9 am daily for Annual Conference is totally inappropriate.
2. Separating disabled students from our delegations is not an option: accessible appropriate accommodation near the Conference venue is a 21 st Century reasonable expectation.
3. The same principle applies to those who are enabling, and also to parents and carers who will not wish to be separated by 30 minutes – and in the Norbreck’s case, borough – from their children, medication and equipment.
4. The Norbreck Castle has a smoky atmosphere, inaccessible catering and few 100% accessible rooms.
5. It is time to urgently identify new NUS conference venues and accommodation elsewhere in the UK.
Council Resolves:
1. To make the Norbreck and Blackpool history.
2. To contact local city and town information centres about our requirements – and NUS’ larger events’ requirements – and for this to be regularly reported to Disabled Students Committee, with detailed commentary on potential new locations.
3. To recognise that umpteen, small, twee hotels and B&Bs, which are exclusively inaccessible, as found in Blackpool (and its neighbours!) will always mean, for many students, particularly the numbers that attend Annual Conference, that our access, participation and enjoyment of conferences is significantly reduced and some cases, non-existent.
4. To look at Milton Keynes and the experience of the Open University Students’ Association conference.

414

BNP (approved by the Council through the Black Members Committee in May 2009)
Council believes:
1. This motion is to promote a campaign against misinformation by providing information on the truth about effects of immigration, BME people in jobs etc
2. (Should the Union tackle BNP hostility through information and advice outlining the flaws in its policies?)
Council resolves:
1. The members of the union need to be aware that the BNP uses current immigration, political and economic cycles to lure candidates to support their racist agendas. They blame all the current fiscal struggles on the influx of migrants in an attempt to marginalize ethnic minorities from society. So as a Union we have to inform people about the flaws in the

party's politics and make them aware of realities of the BNP's agendas. They mainly target the unemployed, uneducated, or those with prejudices against ethnic minorities.

415

Celebrating Pink Parents and Pink Families (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee February 2007)

Council believes:

1. The LGBTQAU community has a rich culture of diversity, acceptance, self expression and love to offer children, and this should be celebrated.
2. There should be more positive images and role models of LGBTQAU parenting, for instance images of loving devoted drag kings and scene queen parents. We must challenge the stereotype that the only way to be a loving devoted parent is to model a straight family.
3. Many LGBTQAU people enter into or remain in straight relationships and marriages because they want to have children.
4. Many LGBTQAU people who want children feel that they will not become parents because they are LGBTQAU
5. Student parents are often excluded from SUs activities, events and democracy by a lack of family friendly activities, childcare resources, attitudes or inappropriately timed meetings
6. Student parents are often excluded from SUs bars and cafes because they have no safe space to go to with their children e.g a child friendly café with toys.
7. LGBTQAU parents are often excluded from both parenting events and LGBTQAU events.
8. Many Out and Proud pink parents re-enter the closet as they are overwhelmed by the heteronormativity of services for parents, or concerned that their children might experience homophobic bullying.
9. A wonderful thing about the SU movement is that it speaks up for members who can not speak up for themselves.
10. According to the GLA 41% of children in London live below the poverty line.
11. The government has pledged to end child poverty by 2020, and is presenting a Children's Plan.

Council Further Believes:

1. Despite the fact that student parents constitute a huge proportion of the student demographic we often can't turn up to SU meetings to make our voice heard due to a lack of family friendly resources in SUs.
2. Some of student parents access needs can be easily and cheaply remedied by provision of simple facilities e.g. highchairs and toys in cafes, baby changing facilities, a private area to breast feed.
3. Some needs are legislative changes such as a period of maternity leave from courses and better grants for parents.
4. Due to exponentially rising fees and increasing student poverty, children of students can easily become caught in the poverty trap.
5. LGBTQAU parents should have a central voice in NUS student parents' plan and government Children's Plan.

Council resolves:

1. Mandate NUS LGBT committee to include a dedicated section of the NUS LGBT handbook/website to pink parenting issues. This section should include issues such as personal experiences of student pink parents, and ideas for pink family events to be run by student unions.
2. Mandate NUS LGBT committee to represent student pink parents and to promote a diverse range of positive LGBT parent images, such as butch dykes, lipstick lesbians, drag queens, trans women, men and those who don't define etc. as responsible loving devoted parents in order to combat the stereotypes.
3. To hold a pink caring responsibilities caucus and create a LGBTQAU caring responsibilities rep on LGBT committee.
4. To provide a best practice guide to SU's and a LGBTQAU parent's manifesto to the government.

416

Childcare in Higher and Further Education (approved by the Council through the Mature Students Committee May 2008)

Council Believes:

1. It is vital to work with external organisations who champion childcare, the relief of child poverty and parents in education/work
2. The voice of student parents in our movement is still not heard, despite us making up a greater proportion of both HE and FE institutions.

Council Further believes:

1. Student parents are the experts in their needs and representation, which can never be replaced by third sector charities as these organisation know a lot about childcare but minimal about being a student parent in 2008 in education.
2. Placing student parents with their children in the Norbreck Castle when NUS events are held in Blackpool is a barrier to participation as these students cannot reasonably return to the Norbreck to care and also participate fully in events.

Council Resolves:

1. To directly engage with student parents on the ground and to work with the Women's Committee's elected Caring Responsibilities Representative
2. That the childcare and student parents campaigning and representation agenda be shaped and led by student parents themselves
3. To work with DIUS and DCSF and other government departments, ministries and agencies as appropriate, to fund a Student Parents Conference, where NUS, third sector organisation, TUs and, most importantly, Student Parents (and their elected representatives) can interact, debate policy and structure a Charter for Student Parents which will be championed by NUS.

Council Further Resolves:

1. To find alternative accommodation, other than the Norbreck Castle, for student parents attending NUS events in Blackpool: with caring responsibilities, leaving a child or children

with a carer outside of Blackpool reduced accessibility to NUS events for parents.

417

Civil Partnerships are Civil (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in March 2009)

Council Believes:

1. The way that the continued denial of the validity of Civil Partnerships and the use of the excuse of religion by alleged Christians is tantamount to gay bashing and continued bigotry. Civil Partnerships are civil ceremonies devoid, like civil weddings, of religion and mysticism and are designed to enable Gay men and Gay women to have their loving relationships registered in the public sphere.

Council Resolves:

1. To congratulate the London Borough of Islington for taking a stand against bigotry in its provision of services particularly in the Registration Services and in ending the contract of Lillian Ladele
2. To deplore the fact that the Christian Institute is using the case of Ms Ladele and supporting her case to the Court of Appeal in an attempt to engineer legalisation of religious bigotry into law.

418

Defending Women's Officers: Stop wasting my tuition fees on governance reviews that do not represent my voice (approved by the Council through the Women's Committee in December 2007)

Council Believes:

1. There are annual attempts to axe women's officers in SU's across the UK.
2. Globally, women are systematically denied a voice throughout the decision making bodies of society e.g. although women make up 50% of the population, less than 20% of MPs are women in Britain.
3. Women's officers guarantee a voice for women in the decision making bodies our SUs.
4. In previous years a repetitive series of flawed arguments have been used to justify these attacks on women's officers and on the women's campaign, e.g. women already have equality
5. More recently there has been a new threat to women's officers and women's representation in unions. After carrying out governance reviews many SUs are adopting governance models promoted by AMSU. There are several variants on the model, but in general the model includes removing the liberation officers from the SU's decision making bodies, and dramatically reducing the number of student officers involved in union democracy.
6. The Charities Act is being used as an excuse to push through these changes.
7. AMSU is sometimes jokingly called 'men's conference' due to the low representation of women at AMSU conferences.

8. These governance reviews divert resources in terms of officer and staff time, and also substantial amounts of money away from campaigning.
9. The resultant models silence the voices of the women's campaign.
Council Further Believes:
1. There needs to be women's representation at every single level of the union.
2. Membership organisations, such as students' unions, should be run by and for the members, as we are the experts on our own lives and on what it is to be a woman, in all of our various identities.
3. Decapitating the membership from the governance structures and reducing officer participation should be opposed.
4. That NUS, not AMSU, should be guiding SUs through governance reviews
5. Women's voices must form part of any strong and active union; this should be based on a constitution which gives liberation groups a guaranteed voice, otherwise global history shows that women's voices will be marginalised.
6. While it may be true that all unions have room for governance improvement, governance reviews cost a lot of money, time and resources. SU's limited monies are better spent on campaigns and representation
Council Resolves:
1. To mandate the women's committee to speak to each SU undergoing a governance review about the importance of women's representation in governance.
2. For the women's committee to proactively oppose governance reviews which take power and participation away from women's officers and the women students that we represent.
3. To mandate the women's committee to lobby the NEC to stop wasting time and money on governance reviews, and to focus on campaigns, and to proactively lead SUs on governance issues.
4. To produce a briefing for women's officers explaining that the Charities Act does not justify removing women's officers from positions of power.
5. To campaign against governance reviews that axe women's officers.
6. To report back via the women's officer mailing list of specific actions taken and specific progress after every women's committee meeting.
7. For the women's committee to produce a briefing on good governance.

419

Despite hate campaigns lead by the Daily Mail, we thank single parents for their invaluable contribution to society! (approved by the Council through the Caring Responsibilities & Parents Committee in May 2008)

Council believes

1. A current overhaul of the benefits system has stated it will end the 'something for nothing culture' by cutting benefits to single mothers of children as young as one year old.
2. Arguments that welfare benefits given to single mothers are 'something for nothing' are a reflection of the way motherhood, caring and raising children is devalued by patriarchal

society.
3. Raising children is one of the most valuable contributions to society that a person can make.
4. Abundant government backed research shows emphasises the importance of the role a full time primary carer (usually the mother) for children under 3 in particular.
5. Early in the second wave of feminism, feminist activists campaigned to get women equal rights and pay to men in the workplace. They won remarkable legislative gains and cultural shifts, but this also had side effect of reinforcing the stereotype that looking after children full time was worthless.
6. NUS research shows that student parents often are negatively affected and internalise the negative stereotypes surrounding lone parents on benefits.
7. Not every family fits into a patriarchal heterosexual family. Some women who are fantastic mothers have chosen self-insemination or IVF to become pregnant.
Council further believes:
1. 75% of mothers return to workplace return as part time workers. In 2008 Women's conference passed policy to promote part time work.
2. A high proportion of mothers returning to the workplace need to reskill, but this has been made impossible by the ELQ policy passed by the government. National, Mature and Women's conferences 2008 passed policy to campaign against the ELQ policy as an attack on women, mature students and students generally.
3. For lone parents to return to education or work and upskill or reskill by gaining HE and FE qualifications we need childcare that is not just affordable but high quality (i.e. Ofsted rated Outstanding), which is also flexible e.g. available in the evenings and variable e.g. more is required around exam time.
Council resolves:
1. To be explicit in our campaign materials that parents who look after their children fulltime are contributing to society in an invaluable way.
2. To combat negative stereotypes about lone parents being lazy/trying to get a council flat etc.
3. To oppose any cuts to Lone parent's benefits, the ELQ cuts and attempt to cut back on mothers rights to flexible working.
4. To campaign for Ofsted rated outstanding childcare, which is flexible and variable for student parents, and mothers who are considering returning to education or work.
5. To publically burn a copy of the Daily Mail!

420

Don't Blame Booze! Blame Laddish Culture (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in March 2009)

Council Believes:

1. It is not excessive alcohol or alcohol mis-use which leads to LGBT-phobia, it is prejudice and hate built up in sports teams by years of laddish, sexist traditions.
2. Blaming alcohol is a middle class, petit bourgeois drinking excuse!

Council Resolves:
1. The committee must work with BUCS, the student sport wing in the UK and agree an active campaign to erase LGBT-phobia in sport and to issue guidelines to all sports clubs at Constituent Members how to support LGBT people in their sports teams.

421

Don't Force-feed Us Your Narrow, Patriarchal Model of What a Family Is! (approved by the Council through the Executive Committee in October 2008)

Council believes:

1. There is a diverse representation of different families and family units in Britain, and there has been for centuries, however, politicians, the Church, the tax system, the healthcare system and the welfare state butcher our human rights to building our own families.
2. These narrow aseptic views and policies towards families build discriminatory expectations as to what a family is in the wider society, leading to hate crimes, racism, religious bigotry, transphobia, polyamory-phobia, misogyny and the oppression of liberty and liberation.
3. A family is a safe, loving and caring unit of its own design.
4. Stonewall is often seen as a champion of LGBT rights, and yet it shamefully excludes trans* people.
5. Patriarchy oppresses all people in society, including men.

Council further believes:

1. Marriage is a patriarchal institution.
2. Stonewall is a deeply transphobic organisation.
3. The illegality of polyamorous unions under bigamy laws is typical of top-down State-controlled religion which has no compassion.
4. Single parents should be supported and celebrated, along with all loving and caring parents as they are doing the most important job in society: brining up the next generation.
5. NUS has policy to run awareness campaigns celebrating the diversity of student parents; challenging false media conceptions of motherhood with wide ranging images of mums including drag kings, disabled students and older women.
6. With society becoming increasingly socially atomised, it is vital that NUS steps up the work described in further believes 4, and sets tangible achievable goals for this campaign.

Council resolves:

1. In addition to the policy already in place, the NEC shall ensure the following relationships, family units and person specifications are prioritised on all campaign literature (a non-exhaustive list), within NUS handbooks and photo-supported media releases:
 - a) Physically visible disabled people;
 - b) Polyamorous bisexual relationships;
 - c) Trans* people
 - d) Drag kings and queens
 - e) Lesbian mothers

f) Single parent fathers
g) Ethnic dress parents
h) Orthodox religious dress
i) Dwarves
j) Morbidly obese people
2. And all of these representations shall include Black people, people of all genders and people of all appearances. This shall include people doing as many different activities as possible, including sport, teaching and caring.
3. To adopt the welfare campaign slogan of "Diversity Represents Us! Equality Protects Us!"
4. To picket the government departments of Culture, Media & Sport and Communities & Local Government until they agree to champion true diversity.
5. To publically write weekly to Iris Robinson MP, and other bigots in Parliament with representations of diversity and how proud we are of our members.

422

Early Day Motion to Save the Senate House Library (approved by the EGM in June 2008)

Union Notes:

1. The Heads of all of the University of London Colleges have established a Review of the Senate House Library. This is being undertaken by an external consultant. The Review is in response to funding rules from HEFCE (the funding council of the Government) altering how many University facilities are funded.
2. The Review Group has no student representative on it, despite the University of London Union having two student representatives on the University Library Committee. It is essential to gain student views on how we see Senate House Library, both at present and how we would like to see it in the future, including its relationship with our own College Libraries.

Union Resolves:

1. To contact Birkbeck former students who are now in the House of Commons, in order to table an Early Day Motion calling for a reprieve of Senate House Library and for the Government to specially and directly fund SHL as a National Asset.
2. Through the Class Representatives System and Clubs/Societies, gather information and feedback about students' opinions on the Review of the Senate House Library.

423

Education Funding: 2009 Review (approved by the EGM in June 2008)

1. The Students' Union resolves to call for equality and parity of direct and indirect funding for part-time courses, students and institutions compared with the full-time sector;
2. The Students' Union further resolves to call for the 2009 Fees Commission (for full-time undergraduate fees) to include funding of the part-time sector, including ELQ funding;
3. The Students' Union confirms our opposition to the ELQ funding cuts as an attack on Birkbeck, working students, homemaking students, Black students, women, disabled students, the self-employed, small and medium size enterprises, student parents and carers, those that are career changing covertly, those who have been failed already by the full-time higher education system.

424

Effect of the Recession (approved by the AGM in 2009)

Union Believes:

1. The world economy is weakening quickly and devastatingly.
2. A recent report to the College's Teaching Committee, showed that from October to January, there was a dramatic rise of at least one-third in the number of Birkbeck students filing "change of circumstance" forms, which usually cover change of employment, income etc.
3. More people will be wanting to reskill and upskill to get quickly back into employment, self-employment or in part-time work to support their family's income as their partner(s) income falls.
4. With a considerable rise of reported changes in circumstances, the real numbers will only be known once we add together interruptions and withdrawals from study after the end of this academic year.
5. The savage cuts from the Government to ELQ funding will double the effect of the recession on part-time students who are workers and homemakers.
6. The Government's higher education budget of £7.3billion is dwarfed by the £2trillion the Government has mill-stoned this country with for the next generation by bailing out failing banks. Whilst we do not wish to pass comment on whether the bailouts and toxic debt insurance was right or wrong, we do call on the Government to recognise that in a depression, our wonderful, diverse people will re-enter higher and further education, and the education system is a way of building a future "time share" fiscal stimulus when recovery comes.
7. Our student welfare support services will be inundated by students in the coming year to eighteen months, and the Union must be prepared to deliver our constitutional duties – to represent students and support their welfare needs at every turn.

Union Resolves:

1. Reinvigorate the campaign to reverse the ELQ funding cuts and to make this a priority campaign for the Union.
2. To work with the Careers Group to develop a bespoke support, advice and guidance clinic/centre for our members who are between jobs, self-employed or wish to seek gainful employment or create their own start-up businesses.
3. To order the Executive Committee to increase awareness of the Union's Advice Centre, Counselling Services and Skills for Study, which shall include a stall in Torrington Square in the run-up to and during the Exam Period.

425

The Campaign Beyond ELQ (approved by EGM in June 2008)

Union Believes:

1. We submitted written evidence to the House of Commons' Select Committee on innovation, universities and skills, which was holding an enquiry into the Withdrawal of ELQ Funding.
2. We highlighted the necessity for an equality impact assessment of this policy, and as a result of our work, the Government removed the effects of the cuts from Disabled students studying at ELQ levels.
3. We have taken motions to many National Union of Students' conferences, and it is a priority within the Education Policy Zones, the Women's Campaign, Mature Students Campaign and the LGBT Campaign of the NUS.
4. We have secured much support and political assistance from the outgoing and incoming Presidents of NUS, along with the leaderships of the trades' unions of academic and technical staff. Additionally, we have support from the Confederation of British Industry, the main big-business employers' organisation.
5. We are now working with the Federation of Small Business & Self-Employed (FSB) to switch up the heat across the country.

Union further believes:

1. By campaigning, we must continually re-visit what our goals are and monitor our achievements. Our campaign has to change and be an inferno which captivates students, university leadership, funders, government and the media.
2. We can only change things by being a focussed force for change.
3. Humour (or attempts at humour) aside, the wider Government agenda on education, training and skills is something that we should and must welcome and support. The devil, as always, is in the detail of how to deliver it. As a former ULU General Manager and regular speaker at Students Union managers' meetings, we expect Bill Rammell will know our concerns and how we are going to act. Perhaps he can even second-guess some of our moves and our gut-instinct policy: often immediate opposition, crying foul and disgust.
4. The challenge we face is separating our policy and vision from constructive engagement – you may say this is pandering to a discredited government. We should never rule out tools which will help us achieve our goal: free education at the point of delivery. Free access to research; highly funded centres of excellence and world-class innovation.

Union Resolves:

1. Our campaign from today will be taking on the following new key elements:
 - A demand that the funding of the part-time higher education sector be incorporated into the 2009 Fees Commission – which looks at whether to change the £3000 cap in full-time undergraduate fees.
 - A demand that the currently underfunded part-time sector be placed on equal funding as the full-time sector, including access to student loans and grants.
 - That employer engagement will not exclude the covert career-changers, the self-employed or those volunteering or working in the third sector.
 - That big business will not write the content of our courses, and the Government retracts qualification-awarding powers from companies like McDonald's (handing out so-called Mc-

A-Levels and Greasy-S-Es): employer engagement must not create higher or further education franchises in the private shareholding companies – will we be seeing educational institutions and franchises for sale in next week's Dalton's Weekly??!

426

ELQ Cuts are an attack on Women (approved by the Council through the Women's Committee in February 2008)

Council Believes:

1. Currently all UK and EU students receive funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England HEFCE for all approved courses of study. This funding goes directly to the institution.
2. ELQ students are those who are studying a course which is at an equivalent or lower level to a qualification that they already hold.
3. On 7/9/07 John Denham, the Secretary of State for the Department of Universities, Innovation and Skills (DIUS) instructed HEFCE to stop funding ELQ students.
4. This instruction is in complete opposition to multiple government initiatives and legislation. For instance the Leitch Agenda to reskill the work force and the Equality Act to end the Gender Pay Gap.
5. Some courses may be exempt, but courses including Psychology, Law and Economics will be hit.
6. Some campaigners against the ELQ cuts have suggested a compromise exempting more courses and exempting ELQ learners returning to study after 5 years from the cuts.

Council Further Believes

1. Women returning to paid work after having children or other caring responsibilities will be particularly effected by ELQ cuts because even if we are returning to the same type of job that we had before having children, we almost always have to update our qualifications with an ELQ
2. The Women and Work Commission findings show that one of the primary reasons for the gender pay gap is that well paid jobs, e.g. CEOs, are almost never available part time. Because many mothers return to paid work part time, rather than full time, we often have to change our career completely and retrain with an ELQ.
3. Even if the government agrees to proposals to exempt ELQ students returning to study after 5 years, women returners forced to retrain in new careers that offer more child friendly part time conditions will still be disproportionately effected, as many of us can't financially afford to stay at home for more than the government sanctioned period of 9 months maternity leave.
4. New Tory plans will force lone parents to reskill when their children are 3yrs old and return to work when their children are 4yrs, so even the potential 5 year plus exemption will push these families into an impossible situation
5. Many women returning to study cannot study a 'higher' qualification than we already have because looking after our children is a 24 hour job, so need the option of ELQs.
6. One of the greatest barriers for women returners to work or study is lack of confidence, and

ELQs are a proven track to overcoming this.
Even if the government provides funding for women returners to go back to study ELQs many ELQ courses will be axed as universities and colleges will not be able afford to offer them.
Council Resolves:
1. [For NUS to] Work closely with Birkbeck Students' Union and other key partners to campaign and develop of strategy to oppose ELQ cuts.
2. To sign and promote the Petition at petitions.pm.gov.uk/ELQFunding and the Early Day Motion 317.
3. To oppose and highlight the ELQs funding cuts as an attack on women.

427

Equal Opportunity for BME (approved by the Council through the Black Members Committee in May 2009)

Council Believes:

1. We can win when the playing field is equal, but BME students need equality of opportunity to education, funding and career prospects.
2. (Should the Union provide financial and career advice for black students in financial crisis?)
3. As the union is linked with the career advice service as a fellow group. We would suggest that surgeries could be ran specifically for the union's ethnic members to give career advice. The union should also provide financial advice in itself or through the help of other departments to those who need it.

428

Equality for LGBT Parents on Maternity and Paternity Rights (approved by the Council in February 2009)

Council Believes:

1. Department for Work and Pensions Minister Pat McFaddon MP is blocking the introduction of the new EU Directive on maternity rights being extended into the UK, stating that the UK will 'negotiate an opt-out'
2. Whilst the Minister is correct to say that UK maternity rights are greater than the current EU minimum, the thrust of the new Directive is to empower parents, especially women to take decision on how they take their maternity leave, pay and other rights.
3. Currently statutory maternity pay is 90% of salary and the EU proposes to make this 100%, but for a shorter time.

Council Further Believes:

1. Statutory pay rates are a legal minimum and do not bind companies or Member State governments from agreeing higher and more extensive packages.
2. Pat McFaddon should consult someone with experience of maternity, paternity and

parenting campaigning, such as the NUS Women's Campaign, the Fawcett Society or indeed the European Commission!
3. Disproportionately LGBT parents suffer when these rights are restricted or in some way capped.
Council Resolves:
1. Access to maternity and paternity pay, leave and general rights must be enshrined in a Charter of Rights for Parents and not left up to Ministers' good intentions
2. Campaign that maternity and paternity rights are assessed under equality legislation to ensure they are equal for LGBT parents, and to [challenge NUS to] produce evidence of this in the Report and Plan next Conference and in online blogs.

429

Equivalent and Lower Level Qualification Funding (approved by an EGM in May 2008)
Union Believes that:
1. Currently all UK and EU students receive funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England HEFCE for all approved courses of study. This funding goes directly to the institution.
2. ELQ students are those who are studying a course which is at an equivalent or lower level to a qualification that they already hold.
3. On 7/9/07 John Denham, the Secretary of State for the Department of Universities, Innovation and Skills (DIUS) instructed HEFCE to stop funding ELQ students.
4. This instruction is in complete opposition to multiple government initiatives and legislation. For instance the Leitch Agenda to reskill the workforce and the Equality Act to end the gender pay gap.
5. Some courses may be exempt, but courses including Psychology, Law and Economics will be hit.
6. Some campaigners against the ELQ cuts have suggested a compromise exempting more courses and ELQ learners returning to study after 5 years.
Union Further Believes:
1. Mature students will be disproportionately negatively impacted by the ELQ cuts, as mature students are more likely than younger students to be ELQ students.
2. Courses that have high numbers of mature students are most vulnerable to course closure under the ELQ cuts. This includes subjects that benefit from students with more life experience such as psychotherapy e.g. Relate (marriage guidance) would lose 75% of its' counsellors.
3. The ELQ cuts sanction upskilling, but not reskilling. The concept of a 'career ladder' that requires upskilling only is defunct. A 'career climbing frame' is better analogy because people do sideways, up and down career moves that require reskilling at an ELQ level.
4. Mothers and carers are particularly likely to need to reskill at an ELQ level if they return to the workplace after a long period of caring responsibilities.
5. Many careers are child-unfriendly. 1 in 5 women change occupation after having children, and need to reskill at an ELQ level.
6. Inadequate pensions and increasing retirement ages mean older people need to work

longer, which necessitates a disproportionate need to re-skill in this group
7. Increased incidence of disability in older people results in occupational changes, and this leads to a need to re-skill to avoid substantial drops in income and dependence on benefits
8. Many older graduates and postgraduates want to continue contributing to society through voluntary work after retirement. However, they often need to do a relevant course to make their skills, and knowledge bases, truly transferable to the voluntary sector. The voluntary sector is dependant on skilled volunteers, but lacks the funds to pay for the exponential rises in ELQs proposed. The ELQ cuts wastes the skills of older volunteers and undermines the voluntary sector.
9. The ELQ funding cuts also disproportionately negatively affect the self-employed, new entrepreneurs, Black and Asian students, parents/carers, the disabled and women.
Union Resolves:
1. Work closely with the National Union of Students, the Trades' Unions and the Open University Students' Association and other key partners to campaign and develop of strategy to oppose ELQ cuts.
2. To sign and promote the Petition at petitions.pm.gov.uk
3. To oppose and highlight the ELQs funding cuts as an attack on mature students.
4. To welcome the exemption by the HEFCE and the government of disabled students from these cuts, but to continue to campaign until this damaging and sexist policy is withdrawn.
5. To call for the Minister of State, Bill Rammell MP to start to listen and represent us or to resign!

430

Expose the Trendy Band-wagons and Lip-service Given to the welfare and representation of Mature Students (approved by the Council through the Mature Students Committee in May 2008)

Council Believes:

1. The wheat from the chaff needs to be separated from those who claim to campaign for, with and on behalf of Mature Students.
2. Lip-service is easy, but often our needs do not fit in with the political objectives of many students' union and NUS candidates.
3. Too many Trendy Band-wagons are wheeled about, in an effort to look compassionate, understanding and in touch.
4. Often these candidates, once in office, do little to promote the commitments they make – on student parents, childcare, child poverty, access to benefits, education funding, older LGBT/black/women/disabled students
5. Tokenistic gestures quickly are overtaken by underlying ageism and a lack of political backbone (such as dropping the odd mature-friendly statement on a manifesto or in a speech, then denying the mature constituency recognition throughout the year).

Council Further believes:

1. Job shares and flexible working would allow more mature students to be able to become paid sabbatical officers of their unions.

For NUS Mature Students Conference:

1. To create a committee of this conference – “Actions Speak Louder than Words Committee”:
2. Two Mature Students’ Committee appointed members; and
3. Seven members elected from this Conference, by Conference.
4. Elections to take place during this conference, as decided by Elections Committee’s representative.
5. This Committee to investigate, measure and record election candidates’ promises and commitments with their actions. The Committee shall additionally investigate other organisations as requested by mature students and the Mature Students’ Committee.
6. Half-yearly reports shall be published online before end of November and before end of March.
7. The Committee shall support those being scrutinised by publishing appropriate advice and remedies. The scrutiny must have a positive impact, promoting the work of this campaign and the interests of mature students.

431

Feminism and the Fight for LGBT Liberation (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009) Council Believes:

1. Feminism is a central pillar of our Campaign as it’s mission is to campaign for equality between the genders.
2. Gay men particularly feel isolated from feminism: not through their naïvity but because men are shackled by patriarchy, which discriminates against men too!

Council Further Believes:

1. Feminists and pro-feminists annually organize rallies, campaigns and awareness of issues, which are part of building a new, equal society.
2. Often women, like many other groups, need their own space to organize and campaign, for instance events such as Reclaim the Night London, which is a women-only march, followed by a mixed rally.
3. Julie Bindle, a famous feminist and lesbian rights campaigner has made some horrendous comments regarding Trans people. This resulted in Conference 2008 passing policy to ban members of the LGBT Campaign from sharing a platform with Bindle.
4. Our quarrel with Julie Bindle must not dilute our support for feminist events, especially the Reclaim the Night marches and rallies, which are held across the country (and the world).

Council Resolves:

1. To support the Reclaim the Night marches and rallies and for LGBT Campaign members to attend them where possible.
2. To write to organizers of any event that the LGBT Campaign supports and wishes to attend of our policy opposing Julie Bindle’s hateful comments to Trans people.
3. To organize a Feminist Academy for LBT Women in the first term as directed by the Committee in consultation with our Sisters in the Women’s Campaign.

Fitness to Study (approved by the Council through the Disabled Members Committee in December 2008 and amended by the Council in February 2009 and further amended by the AGM in 2009)

Council Believes:

1. There is a small but vocal group of academic administrators in the higher education sector who are preparing to launch a "Fitness to Study" policy, akin to the British Medical Association's "Fitness to Practice", with all its associated discriminatory assumptions and policies.
2. The driving force behind these policies is to allow colleges and universities to determine, at any point from pre-admission to graduation, that a student is not or has become unsuitable to be a student at that institution, based on their "social or medical circumstances"
3. The University of London Ordinances, declare "A student may suffer from a condition which could endanger him/her or other members of the University. The two most common instances of this would be a student with either mental health difficulties or a contagious disease."
4. Similarly, Liverpool John Moores' explanatory guidance issued with its Fitness to Study boasts "it is the University's view that immediate stresses should be removed by temporarily suspending the studies of the student manifesting the problem"
5. Whereas Exeter University details its policy towards "fitness" in a far more accommodating, accessible and inoffensive way.
6. Indeed, Gloucestershire University produces clear, welfare-centred flowcharts summarising its approach.
7. Imperial College, though being required under Medical Act 1983 to monitor "fitness to practise" (medical students), hasn't developed further "fitness" policies (as yet).
8. Academic institutions should focus on academic instruction, support and welfare in taking a student through a course of study, admitting that student and/or graduating them.

Council Further Believes:

1. This policy is being co-ordinated by administrators at Birkbeck College, London.
2. Over time many people will experience changes in their mental health and their mental architecture.
3. The driving force behind this policy to allow colleges and universities to determine, at any point from pre-admission to graduation, that a student is not or has become unsuitable to be a student at that institution, based on their "social or medical circumstances"
4. Academic institutions should only focus on academic instruction, support and welfare in taking a student through a course of study, admitting that student or graduating them.
5. It is worrying that a college or university could determine a student was "unfit" to study without academically assessing/examining that student, yet instead determine that their brand or reputation could be damaged by a student having a qualification from that institution.
6. Fitness to Study policies are unnecessary in modern, well-managed, welfare-centred education institutions which puts student support, counselling, advice, disability and staff training high on their strategic lists.
7. Providing positive support and 21st Century welfare services, as well as supporting and promoting mental health campaigns, alleviates stigmas from people who have mental health changes.

8. Exclusion of a student on the grounds of not being “fit to study” must be a last resort when dealing with a person’s disability, not a convenient route of choice.
9. University of London must be particularly condemned for using such spiteful and deeply offensive language in its Ordinance: mental health “difficulties” and placing our mental health diversity in with “contagious diseases”.
10. Liverpool John Moores’ overly-eager student guillotine is also totally inappropriate.
11. Mental architectures constantly change as we progress through life; different environments, situations and challenges, we have a right to education without fear of the educational sector’s Starzi catching us, stripping our dignity and rights away.
12. Hearings and appeal on “fitness” cannot be fair as once a student is fingered, it is their (the student’s) responsibility to prove their “fitness” to study, unlike other hearings where charges or claims are made.
13. It is worrying that a college or university could determine a student was “unfit” to study without fairly academically assessing/examining that student (or using appropriate disciplinary sanctions), yet instead determine that their brand or reputation could be damaged by a student having a qualification from that institution.
Council Resolves:
1. [For NUS] To work with Birkbeck College Students’ Unions, the NEC of NUS and the Zones to investigate this undesirable proposed new “Fitness” policy and campaign against it.
2. Demand that the University of London and Liverpool John Moores hang their heads in shame!
3. Demand repeals of these disableist policies.
4. Promote best practice in handling welfare issues which carry the gut-wrenching titles of “fitness to study”.
5. Work with the NUS Disabled Students Campaign and mental health charities to refine Birkbeck’s proposed Fitness to Study policy in line with the Beliefs.
6. Oppose any tribunals or hearings under any Fitness to Study policy which is not required to produce evidence and/or is geared to avoiding the Disciplinary Policy, when this would be more appropriate.
7. Council to source an independent assessment of proposed Fitness to Study policies with regards to equality impact, particularly with respect to disability.

433

Full Membership of ULU (approved by the Council in November 2008)
Union notes:
1. The ULU Constitution grants full membership to all Students of the University who are registered as internal students, and further definitions are found within the University’s Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations.
2. At present, ULU denies full membership status to roughly 12,000 Birkbeck Students, despite them being full members of Birkbeck and by extension full members of the University. This issue originates from 1988 when the University’s School of Extra Mural Studies came under the direct control of Birkbeck College.
3. Whilst there is some historic evidence to suggest that some of Birkbeck’s students would

have been “extra mural”, and therefore only entitled to Associate Membership of ULU upon payment of an annual fee (currently £17.50 incl VAT), the take-over of the University’s Faculty of Extra Mural Studies in 1988 by Birkbeck College, effectively afforded all Birkbeck Students the same rights of students’ union membership.
4. Formal representations were lodged with ULU in September 2007 regarding Birkbeck’s Students’ membership rights of ULU and as of October 2008, remain unresolved. The ULU President in 2007/8 was requested to make a constitutional interpretation on the matter, however she never made such ruling. The matter has been referred by both ULU Senior Managers and Birkbeck College Students’ Union to the University for a formal interpretation of the University’s rules, and to date there has been no formal communication from the University authorities.
5. The Birkbeck College Secretary and the Trustees of the Birkbeck College Students’ Union have requested that this matter be resolved to include all Birkbeck Students as full members of ULU as soon as possible.
6. It is unacceptable for ULU to deny full membership of ULU to any University of London student based on their part-time status – the University and ULU rules clearly state that full membership is granted to all internally registered University students. A quick look at the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data, which is freely available at www.hesa.ac.uk , clearly shows the breakdown of Students at Birkbeck and more importantly shows them ALL to be higher education students something which ULU Trustees in the past have stated in not the status of all Birkbeck Students.
Council Resolves:
1. ULU Senate formally recommends to the ULU Trustees that they confirm that all University Students, internally registered at Birkbeck College for University Awards are automatically full members of ULU.
2. ULU Senate further resolves that any Student wrongly charged an Associate Membership fee shall be contacted and refunded in full.

434

Gaydar: A Catalogue of Appalling Objectification (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009)Council Believes:
1. Objectification is the practice where human bodies are purely seen as tradable objects, with people being exploited.
2. Often many people who wish to make some income or extra revenue will sell their bodies, usually to porn barons, who will take 90% of the cut minimum.
3. Many GBT men are subjected to objectification first, which quickly leads to them being fucked bareback and exposed to copious sexually transmitted diseases.
4. Often men who are caught up in this trade and drugged or hypnotized, and the number of sexual partners can exceed 20 a day.
Council Further Believes:
1. Gaydar is a UK “cool brand” and within the Gay community it is well know, and well respected.
2. Gaydar, though, allows membership registrations from pimps, abusers, objectifiers, porn

barons and rapists.
3. Whilst the internet is generally difficult to regulate, responsible Internet Service Providers and companies such as Gaydar must follow even the basic protocols of not allowing people to be knowingly harmed.
4. Gaydar rakes in Pink Pounds every year, and often has a spot at Pride events in the UK, promoting its brand and subconsciously promoting rape and abuse.
5. There are many BGT men that deserve our protection from those out to harm on Gaydar.
Council Resolves:
1. To engage with Gaydar and other internet BGT sites which allow sex selling and agree a safe space protocol.
2. To demand that Gaydar publishes its social responsibility policy to our Committee for comment.
3. That Gaydar runs awareness campaigns about the danger of bareback fucking with different partners.
4. Demand that Gaydar publishes an appropriate help hotline on its website, one which isn't '08' unless freefone and one which the hotline is not charged to be advertised on its site.

435

Gaza (approved by the Council in January 2009)
Council notes:
1. The ongoing Israeli assault against the Gaza Strip, under the pretext of halting Hamas' rocket attacks from within the territory, and further believes:
2. That less than two weeks of continual assault have left many hundreds dead and thousands injured, and have entirely overwhelmed the resources of Palestinian medical facilities and NGOs.
3. The Israel's actions are, at best, wholly disproportionate, and constitute a crime against the people of Gaza. UN representatives have described them as "inhuman".
4. That Israel's actions fundamentally undermine the peace process and any possibility of a just settlement for the Palestinian people.
5. That the US and UK have so far vetoed UN Security Council attempts to call for an end to the violence.
6. The crisis has seen the biggest international protests since the invasion of Lebanon in 2006.
7. That the response of the NUS and its Presidency is wrong to equate the actions of the Israeli State with those of the Hamas led Palestinian Authority, drawing no distinction between the two in terms of scale or political context.
Council resolves:
1. To call on the British Government to demand the immediate withdrawal and unconditional ceasefire from its Israeli allies.
2. To endorse and publicise Saturday 10 th January's Emergency demonstration, under the slogan 'Stop Israel's Crime against Humanity', and other campaign activities.
3. To back an emergency public meeting on the Gaza crisis in collaboration with the Stop the War coalition and other groups.

436

Good work in the community (approved by the Council through the Black Members Committee in May 2009)

Council believes:

1. Using the networks gained in the Union to create a long term strategy for the black community.
2. Should the union attempt to set up a perpetual group so that the work undertaken within the body is not lost when new students arrive?

Council further believes:

1. This could be a group or several groups focussed on particular aspects of black issues. This organisation will utilise the minds within the union by making sure that the agenda/s will constantly be looked upon, adjusted and worked on.
2. We are aware that it may take time to get true progress that can only be achieved through unity. Members have the choice to join at this group at their request and it is not compulsory, but is beneficial.

437

Greasy S E's and Mc 'A' Levels are an Attack on all Students! (approved by the Council in November 2008)

Council believes:

1. Marketisation of Education is not only about how much we pay for our qualifications; it is increasingly about the content of our courses as well.
2. In February 2008 the Government announced that it would be granting powers to three companies to award qualifications equivalent to GCSE's A Levels and Degrees.
3. The three companies are Network Rail, Flybe and McDonalds
4. In September 2007 the DIUS announced that it would financially sanction a narrow range of courses which it considers societally useful.

Council further believes:

1. Workplace learning is of enormous value.
2. The Leitch Agenda and Lifelong learning are positive, not only because they aim to increase skill levels, but also because aim to they enrich our lives through learning.
3. It is appalling that McDonalds is one of the first companies to be allowed to grant qualifications.
4. The government is giving a veneer of acceptability to McDonalds when the reality is that McDonalds block unionisation of their staff, and sell food that is high fat, salt and sugar and against all government healthy eating recommendations.

5. The current UK policy on drugs is problematic, but to be consistent it should include McDonalds's food as a controlled substance.
6. McDonalds aggressively market to children (even sponsoring schools in the USA), and children are extremely vulnerable advertising.
7. McDonalds are not worthy of dictating the content of our qualifications.
8. Universities have a proud history of being safe havens for debate, free thought and exploration of ideas. However, the ELQ cuts, now in force, attack all courses and all students: creating barriers which we have fought so hard to destroy.
9. The global recession requires the HE sector more now than ever to open its doors to new and current students re-skilling, up-skilling, returning to the 'traditional' workplace after giving their family the best possible start in life with full-time 'unpaid' homemaking work.
10. Private companies not in the education delivery sector must be kept out of education, and be prevented from conning a generation of students into poverty and mass-debt by burger-flipping studies.
Council resolves:
1. To campaign for McDonalds to stripped of qualification award granting powers, and launch a stickering campaign to warn against "greasy education".
2. To terminate NUSSL's love affair with McDonalds and ban it from promoting McDonalds on the NUS Extra Card.
3. NUSSL to disengage with McDonalds and cut all links with them
4. To organise a national demonstration against the marketisation of education in 2009.

438

Kicking McDonald's out of Education! (approved by the AGM in 2009)

Union believes:

1. It is sickening that members of the National Union of Students support McDonald's new role in education, supporting their Hamburger Universities which oppress workers, stripping them of their dignity.
2. McDonald's is an unethical company, unworthy of dictating the content or our education, let alone actually having powers to make awards of qualifications.
3. A motion condemning McDonald's and Government policy to get similar companies involved in education has been submitted for debate and decision at NUS Annual Conference in Blackpool. It is necessary for us to ensure that this motion is high up on the Education Zone agenda. An amendment has been submitted from Peterborough Regional College saying that whilst McDonald's may do poor food, it does not follow that they will do poor qualifications.
4. A simple Google search of McDonald's "greasy education" or "greasy S E's" and "McDegrees" delivers a raft of blogs from former and current McDonald's employees who condemn the Hamburger Universities.
5. Employees report that there is no room for critical thinking, analysis or even secondary sources for what they are being "taught", it is force fed to them like a cult feeding propaganda to brainwash new recruits.
6. This is something we should oppose – it is the mission of this College to oppose McDonald's in education.

7. It is also deeply insulting to see the NUS and its commercial arm, NUSL, promote McDonald's contrary to its ethical policy on NUS Extra, the paid-for discount card brought in in 2006 at a cost of £10 a year.

Union resolves:

1. Ban promotion of McDonald's on all Union property, including blacking out the Golden Arches and associated McDonald's logos on NUS Extra publicity (and any publicity on Union notice boards and Union controlled media).
2. Campaign to have McDonald's stripped of qualification awarding powers.
3. Write to all students' unions asking for their support, and to all Vice-Chancellors to create an alliance against Ronald McDonald and his Greasy Education.
4. To give support and solidarity to McDonald's workers who speak out against Hamburger University "education".

439

LGBT & Mental Health (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009) Council Believes:

1. We are here. We are queer. But we are not always happy.
2. Disproportionately, more LGBT people than non-LGBT people suffer depression and serious mental illness, which more often than straight people, sends them towards suicidal tendencies.
3. This is not caused by a person's gender identity or sexuality, but is an effect of negative support given to LGBT people by wider society, for instance no safe space to talk about issues of depression or anxiety, or persistent negative connotations made by work colleagues, fellow students etc about a person due to their sexuality or gender identity.

Council Further Believes

1. Depression is a downward spiralling illness of the mind, and once a person experiences depression, it is more likely that they will suffer from continuing bouts of depression for the rest of their life.
2. Other mental health issues include psychiatric issues, often involving personality.
3. It is now commonly held that mental health issues, which are recognized disabilities, are caused by societal interactions of the environment with a person, thereby changes in society and environments are required to be inclusive of those of us with different mental architectures.
4. Stamping out LGBT-phobia would be the best remedy for LGBT people with mental health issues!
5. We need to take on fascists, bigots and many organized religious doctrines in order to combat LGBT-phobia.

Council Resolves:

1. [For NUS to] Issue to students' unions a briefing on Mental Health and LGBT students, promoting LGBTMind as an excellent organization to contact confidentially.
2. Work with Advice UK and the Nightline organization to provide bespoke training to volunteers, advice centres and counselling services on sympathetically handling LGBT mental health issues.

3. Enter a dialogue with main faith representatives in the UK (including Christian, Islam, Hindu, Jewish, Sikh and Buddhist) in agreeing a universal statement of support and inclusivity of LGBT people within faith communities.

440

LGBT-phobia and the Eastern Bloc (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009)

Conference Believes:

1. The European Union (EU) recognizes that Lithuania is the most homophobic Member State of the EU, and this was supported in August 2008 by the Foreign Minister of Lithuania who commented that "it would take a generation" to take a more tolerant attitude towards homosexuality.
2. In 2007 an international conference on LGBT rights in Lithuania's capital Vilnius was attacked by the discharge of poisonous gas! The gassed building was sealed off by Police, even though delegates at the Conference were continuing to suffocate and be poisoned!
3. In nearby Russia in 2006, neo-Nazi thugs beat up participants in the Pride March in Moscow, including a German MP. In Latvia, stink and paint bombs were thrown at their Pride March in Riga.
4. Worryingly the LGBT-phobia in the Eastern Bloc continues with the 2008 Romanian LGBT rights march being stoned by protesters and for Polish citizens, their leaders regularly use anti-LGBT policies to enhance their popularity.

Council Further Believes:

1. The Eastern Bloc were essentially run by the Soviet Union until 1990, as part of the Warsaw Pact, and evidence shows that Eastern Bloc countries closest to the West and who have been longer in membership of the EU, have the lowest LGBT-phobia and the most supportive legislation (though in many cases still not ideal!)
2. The Marxist ideology of the Warsaw Pact essentially crushed LGBT liberation.
3. Indeed many of the Warsaw Pact countries now part of or neighbouring the EU have some of the most horrendous LGBT abuses in the world, outside of those run by religious fanatics.

Council Resolves:

1. For the NUS to audit all EU Member States, using appropriate statistics available from qualified bodies, in relation to their LGBT-friendly society, policies and rights.
2. For a NUS LGBT Committee member to be appointed to be the Eye on the East, and to regularly report to students' unions on LGBT Liberation in Eastern Europe.
3. To write to the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the Council of the European Union demanding what progress is being made with LGBT Liberation and equality rights in Europe.

441

Liberating Drag Kings (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009)

Council Believes:

1. NUS has policy to promote a diverse range of images of loving parents, and in 2008, National Conference passed a motion for these images to include drag kings.
2. Outside of National Conference, many student representatives and delegates have enquired as to exactly what a drag king is; some have explained that they thought it was a joke and was just a play on 'drag queen'.
3. A drag king is usually a woman who dresses in stereotypically masculine clothes and expresses a male gender, which usually is part of a performance or gender queer act to a wider audience.

Council Further Believes:

1. Even within the LGBT Campaign, there is much misunderstanding of gender identity and trans identities.
2. Often ridicule is the result of the wish to hide a knowledge gap, and this is especially true of student leaders who feel they 'should know' everything as there is an expectation on them from their electors.
3. Gender expression is a complex part of our identities and as a Campaign we must ensure that our members are comfortable to be able to discuss their knowledge gaps in a safe space.

Conference Resolves:

1. For gender expression to be a part of the NUS 2009 Activist Academies and for the NUS LGBT Committee to publish a Briefing on gender expression to Students' Unions.
2. For NUS to include drag kings, as well as other gender expressions, in their images, including drag king mothers.
3. For the NUS LGBT Committee to invite a drag king to LGBT Conference 2010 as a guest speaker.

442

Maybe we do love Boris after all? Nope, we talking about yet another broken travel and funding promise! (approved by the Council through the Mature Students Committee in May 2009)

Council Believes:

1. Pubic transport is increasingly becoming expensive and out of the affordability bracket for many students.
2. In many parts of the country, daily journeys use multiple forms of transport, each one adding its own portion to the overall inordinate price.
3. Research in London has shown that part-time students who are self-employed spend an average of £3,300 a year in transport costs, 75% of which can be reasonably attributed directly to transport to campus (using a correlation of part-time tuition fee is circa 75% full-

time).
4. Government policy, the Leitch and Laird Agendas focus on re-skilling, up-skilling and continued education throughout life, and whilst we welcome the part-time grant introduced by the Labour Government, a more focussed policy which connects the reality of a part-time student's life/routine must be called for.
5. Equality in our society between all genders, sexes, races and people generally can only be achieved if there is equality in education, education funding and access to education.
Council Resolves:
1. For NUS to start representing part-time students' voices
2. For NUS to actively pander to part-time students, with the NEC actively networking and engaging with part-time students on campuses, through our elected representatives.
3. For NUS to create a Shadow Fees Commission of part-time students, with appropriate diversity represented, which shall report formally in an NUS Reception in the House of Commons before the official Fees Commission reports.

443

Minimum Parents Charter: NUS Scotland Women's Campaign a Shining Example to Follow (approved by the Council through the Mature Students Committee in May 2009)

Council Believes:
1. NUS Scotland, through its Women's Campaign, has put together and adopted a charter of minimum rights and demands that it campaigns for for student parents
2. That this target setting is exemplary.
3. This parents charter should be, after being updated to be UK-wide, adopted by the mature students campaign.
Council Resolves:
1. To mandate the caring responsibilities representative on the NUS Mature Students Committee to update this charter.
2. To mandate the NUS Mature Students Committee to then adopt the charter, with key campaign goals, after formal recommendation from the caring responsibilities rep and consent/"blessing" of the NUS Women's Committee
3. To give a round of applause for NUS Scotland.

444

NUS democracy (approved by the Council in November 2008)

Council believes:
1. That the free-market ideology under Thatcher, Blair and Brown has led to growing inequality, an erosion of educational and public services and now economic crisis.

2. This ideology has also seen charities take over areas of social support and adopt more corporate structures.
3. Campaign organisations are either being incorporated into this free-market model or are challenging the logic of the market through mobilising popular support.
4. That putting the constitution that NUS Conference 2008 voted down to an emergency conference was a subversion of democracy.
5. That the NUS executive scandalously has already wasted hundreds of thousands of pounds on its governance reviews.
Council further believes:
1. The government will find it easier to push through hikes in tuition fees under a less democratic and more bureaucratic union, particularly due to the pro-Labour sympathies of the current leadership.
2. The leadership's vision of the NUS is one of highly-paid 'professionals' that are part of the policy debate within government - operating within the limits of "mainstream" Westminster opinion.
3. The idea that this can win real change is refuted by history. Social change has always been won by popular democratic action, from the US Civil rights movement to the recent student struggles on the continent.
4. That scrapping democracy in favour of bureaucracy from above will destroy NUS as a union for students.
5. The debate around external trustee boards, "best practice" and liability are a smoke screen for destroying democratic accountability within the student movement.
6. The NUS can overcome its problems by supporting and extending existing campaigns on campuses.
Council resolves:
1. To condemn the NEC's arrogance at ignoring the decision by annual conference and holding a less-representative emergency conference.
2. To make sure that annual conference remains the sovereign decision-making body.
3. To support initiatives such as "public services not private profit" and the "People before Profit Charter" as well as opposing education cuts.
4. To back grassroots campaigns against the effects of the recession.

445

Education Motion on ELQ for NUS (approved by the Council in January 2009)

Council Believes:

1. About 1/3rd of Birkbeck students are classified as ELQ (Equivalent or Lower Level Qualification) and as such Birkbeck is vulnerable to significant funding cuts being proposed by HEFCE under the direction of the government to re-direct £100 million of funding from these students' places.
2. That Birkbeck was established over 100 years ago to educate Londoners part-time in a way which fitted around the students' lifestyles of caring responsibilities, work and other lifestyle choices and it is still in a unique position, along with the Open University (established in the

late 1960s by the Wilson government), to deliver education and training to the more mature student.
3. That the re-direction of this funding will narrow access to education for many students seeking, especially those who are bringing up young families or caring for other relatives and those who are taking courses to bolster their career prospects.
Council Further Believes:
1. Society is strengthened by lifelong learning, which has public value as well as individual benefits.
2. That widening participation and lifelong learning go hand-in-hand, as part of educational opportunity the country needs – NUS deplores claims that this funding re-allocation will be moved and attain widening participation.
3. Cuts on ELQ today will wipe out opportunity for current younger students to access specialist extra courses in the future, damaging their career progression and work-life-training balance. Further, the “skills balance” requirements identified by the Leitch Report will be utterly unachievable with cuts or the threat of cuts.
Council Resolves:
1. To affirm the crucial importance of real access to lifelong learning for all, enabling every member of society to fully participate economically, socially and culturally in the life of the nation.
2. The need for access to education to be open throughout an individual’s lifetime; for every student to be able to enter or re-enter education and gain relevant skills or retrain in response to an ever-changing world.
3. Mandate the NEC to campaign vigorously and prioritise the “maturer student in education and lifelong access to education”.
4. Work closely with Birkbeck College Students’ Union and other key partners in the formulation of the campaign and development of strategy in this area.
5. To welcome the Enquiry launched by the DIUS Select Committee in the House of Commons and the Petition at petitions.pm.gov.uk/ELQFunding and the Early Day Motion 317.
Council Further Resolves:
1. Consult CMs and NPC on a national standard for research degree theses, recognising the diversity of research within theses.

446

Policy on NUS Extra (approved by the Council through the Executive Committee in October 2008)

Council Believes:

1. NUS Extra needs more value added to it and NUS needs to identify more key national partners and discounts need to be more diverse, recognising that 70% of the UK’s students are mature students.
2. NUS Services needs to engage and listen to smaller turnover unions, listening to both union officers and staff in these unions.

3. Part-time students are technically not eligible for the ISIC, however, buying an Extra Card allows us this advantage
Council Resolves:
1. NUS to lobby NUSSL to seek out new additional partners for NUS Extra Card, notably benefits which would recognise the diversity of our membership, such as products for parents, home-making students and student workers/self employed.
2. NUS to lobby NUSSL to consider a major partner such as “Nectar” or “Tesco Club Card” to protect NUS Extra from future student marketplace competition.
3. Mandate the NEC representatives on the NUSSL Board to develop a “small unions engagement policy” for NUSSL.
4. To add more “maturer discounts” onto the Extra Card, including for parents, carers, self-employed and homemakers: all of whom are students!
5. To continue to issue the “democracy card” and not to allow NUSSL to close it down as it is seen as a brand threat and competition to Extra.

447

NUS Reform: A Disabled Student’s Perspective (approved by the Council through the Disabled Members Committee in February 2009)

Council Believes:
1. A national Extraordinary Conference was held on 12 November to pass constitutional amendments, aimed at improving NUS for the future.
2. The National President stated that the reforms give Disabled Students a voice in the new structures.
Council Further Believes:
1. A culture-change of how we campaign, represent and organise on campuses is what is really needed, not the destruction and creation of bureaucratic new rules and regulations.
2. Implying that Disabled Students currently have no or little voice in the NUS is insulting to the Disabled Students Campaign and the many active Disabled Student groups and officers up and down the country.
3. Short notice of Extraordinary Conferences of two to three weeks is far more silencing to Disabled Students than the current constitution.
Council Resolves:
1. If further Extraordinary Conferences are called, the NUS notice must be the constitutional maximum and not the minimum to enable all students, but especially Disabled Students and representatives to take part in the democratic processes.
2. To mandate the NUS Disabled Students’ Officer and NUS DS Committee to promote a new NUS culture of co-operation and abject openness in place of the shady deals and stitch-ups which have engulfed the Reforms and previous “governance reviews”.

448

Stop Wasting Our Tuition Fees and Affiliation Fees on Governance Reviews and Reforms That Do Not Represent Our Diverse Voices (Amendment to Motion to NUS Extraordinary Conference) (approved by the Council November 2008)

Council Believes:

1. Ratification failed despite NUS devoting huge staff time and resources selling it all year, including £1000+ from NEC coffers to buy “pro-governance” Orange T-shirts.
2. Despite being short of cash, the NEC has wasted hundreds of thousands of pounds since 2004 on “reform” or “governance reviews”.
3. Conservative estimates put this at £2million, including staff time, officer time, conference time and our Unions’ costs in having to be burdened with wasting their money in engaging with reform.
4. NUS should prioritise its resources on campaigning and representation, not on lining the pockets of consultants, lawyers and providing Presidents with more bureaucracy to shield themselves from their members, and hide NUS from grassroots activists, whilst massaging their egos with rule changes.

Council further believes:

1. Trustee Board remains controlled by the President and Officers, cementing politicising of the Board’s decisions, backed up by hand-picked Lay Trustees, who will at best neuter the NEC or worst, decapitate it from any real dynamic political leadership.
2. Current NEC is abolished in favour of full-time officers and Zone Committees. It will become a distant student council, alienating activists, promoting rubber-stamping as the new face of national student campaigning.
3. Non-campaigning, bureaucratic Presidents from “big unions” are able to hamstring officers elected by Conference through “one union, one vote” Zones. Again, smaller, less-developed Unions will not be able to devote resources to attend these old boys Presidents’ Networks.

Conference Resolves:

1. Stop wasting our tuition/affiliation fees on Governance Reviews that don’t represent our diverse voices!

449

NUSSL: A catalogue of appalling sexism (approved by the Council through the Women’s Committee in December 2008)

Council believes

1. NUSSL is an organisation that describes itself as a ‘student marketing specialist’ and supplies stock to SU bars and shops.
2. NUSSL has an appalling history of sexism.
3. For example, NUSSL has arranged for a TV channel called SubTV to be exclusively beamed into SU bars. In 2008 SubTV broadcast adverts showing a woman in a transparent bra and a

thong receiving oral and anal sex from a glove puppet amongst numerous other objectifying images.
4. At NUS women's conference 2007, women's conference voted overwhelmingly to switch off sexist SubTV.
5. More recently, NUSSL's magazine published an article for SU bar managers about sexual harassment. Instead of advising bar managers how minimise sexual harassment of employees in SU bars and support employees who have been harassed. The article focused on how bar managers could avoid being sued by employees who have been sexually harassed.
6. A recent Xmas ad reinforced the gender stereotypes the women's campaign fights against, by recommending that women should be brought gifts from underwear shops or handbags whilst men should be brought DIY or sports gifts.
7. NUSSL's Articles of Association (Constitution) is bound by NUS decisions, but NUSSL openly flouts this commitment to NUS policy.
8. NUS is an organisation rightly trusted by students, but NUSSL views NUS as a trusted brand, which it uses to sell (not even very cheap) Pepsi and other products to SUs.
Council further believes
1. The way we experience and express our sexuality and gender should not be defined and by advertisers and marketing companies such as those supported by NUSSL.
2. NUSSL is legally bound to reflect the policy of the women's campaign
3. Women's groups running campaigns combating gender stereotypes and challenging body fascism are constantly being undermined in our own SUs by output from NUSSL
Council resolves:
1. It is now time to sanction NUSSL.
2. To mandate NUS women's committee to explore and report on a range of suitable sanctions to NUSSL in term 1.
3. To mandate NUSSL to publish a public apology for on their website for their sexist output, and maintain this apology on their website throughout the academic year 2009-10.
4. For NUSSL to visit NUS Women's Committee and explain their implementation of the gender duty, and how they are meeting the needs of feminist and pro feminist students, and explain why they keep producing such sexist output.

450

Oppose discrimination with decriminalization! (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009)

Council Believes:

1. That illegal drug use is common amongst the LGBT community
2. That addiction is not necessarily due to drugs themselves but a number of other factors such as previous mental health issues and depression
3. That members of NUS LGBT are more than capable of responsibly using drugs and can decide for themselves what type of substances they would like to use for their personal

pleasure
4. Conference Further Believes:
5. That LGBT people are unfairly targeted by the illegality of drugs due to discrimination in society at large
6. That the laws which make drugs illegal are repressive and discriminatory
7. That NUS LGBT has a duty to oppose policies which negatively target its members
Council Resolves:
1. To actively oppose the criminalisation of all drugs
2. To support campaigns which seek decriminalisation of drugs
3. To support advice services for LGBT NUS members on how to use drugs safely
4. That NUS LGBT should support facilities to assist those who become addicted or need assistance

451

Opposing the “American-style” Student Government model for Students’ Unions (approved by the Council through delegation to the Welfare & Rights Select Committee in May 2009)

Council Believes:
1. Students’ Unions in the USA are significantly different from SUs here in the UK, as they elect a “president” who then self-appoints an Executive to run the Union. Generally US “student governments” are not recognised as the Student Representative Body by their Colleges and Universities.
2. These “elected presidents” and the Executive are accountable only to a special majority of a scrutinising Student Senate, otherwise they have free reign over all policy and representation.
3. Rightly, many Students’ Unions in the UK are proud of our membership-base, being the chief owners of our policies, representational needs and general decision-making.
4. Birkbeck College Students’ Union has received commendation from the Equality Challenge Unit for Higher Education on its changes made in 2008, which created a non-hierarchal Executive leadership within a co-operative-style governance model.
5. Worryingly, King’s College London Students’ Union’s Trustees Annual Report has floated the strategic idea of abolishing their elected Sabbatical Officers and elected Student Council; there is no mention of what would replace these elected student representatives.
6. The Local Government Act 2000 replaced Borough Councillors’ control over services with paid staff members, with the Councillors become “scrutiny committees” with no power to make decisions on the electorate’s behalf.
7. We know from governance reviews within UK Students’ Unions that many AMSU-groomed consultants (AMSU = Association of Managers of Students’ Unions) have looked at the American-style Student Government model of student “representation” as well as the Swedish Model, which separates welfare and representation out of the core mission of a Students’ Union.
8. The atomisation and separation of students’ union run or provided services from the representation mission will weaken students’ unions: elected officials will have less access to everyday needs and views, members will disassociate themselves from the wider SU

package of benefits and this will increase the likelihood of “individual membership”, as has happened in Australia after the Howard Government abolished automatic membership Students’ Unions.
Council Resolutions:
1. To campaign in line with the beliefs to promote Birkbeck’s model of representation and governance within the NUS.
2. To write to the Chief Executive of King’s College London Students’ Union asking for clarification of their Trustees’ Annual Report with regards to their future strategy towards student representation at King’s, if necessary using the Freedom of Information Act to secure this information.
3. As an affiliate of AMSU, to demand what policy AMSU has towards further governance changes in students’ unions, requesting a meeting with an appropriate official on how we can work with AMSU to promote our governance model.

452

Our Bodies Belong to US (approved by the Council through the Women’s Committee in December 2008)

Council believes

1. In 2003 several SUs held topless poll dancing contests breaching their own equal opportunity policies.
2. In 2007 and 2008 several unions have started holding beauty contests.
3. Playboy, the soft porn company, now markets products at young girls. Argos are the main UK retailer of Playboy children’s toys, and advertise Playboy products in the toy section of their catalogue
4. School text books rarely label the clitoris

Council further believes

1. Our experience of our sexuality and gender can be diverse and wonderful, but all too often it is hijacked by images marketed by the sex industry from our early teens onwards (and even earlier).
2. Only 4% of women are happy with their bodies.
3. Owners of poll dancing clubs and other sex industry spokesMEN often argue that feminists’ arguments against the industry are tantamount to censorship.
4. The reality is that it is pretty much all images of women’s sexuality are censored other than those sanctioned by the sex industry and marketing agencies.
5. Misogynistic images of women are so mainstream that it can be difficult for SUs to identify which images are sexist.

Council resolves

1. For NUS to explore which legislation and policy is breached by SU’s involved in beauty contests.
2. To campaign against Argos for promoting Playboy toys for girls.
3. For NUS to produce materials reflecting diverse sexuality and gender images, and provide

training for SUs in how avoid sexist posters and events.

453

Plagiarism Offences – Representing Students at College Hearings (approved by the EGM in May 2008)

Union notes:

1. Teaching Committee discussed a paper from the Working Group looking into Common Awards Scheme, a part of which specifically dealt with new regulations to prevent and, if required, punish offenders who copy and plagiarise.
2. Due to a series of objections from both the Students Union and some academics from the Schools, the paper was rejected and referred back to the Working Party, which does not have a student representative on it.

Union Resolves:

1. To draw up our own paper for dealing with the prevention of, treatment of and penalties for plagiarism, and submit this to the Working Party, and if necessary to senior College Committees, including other committees of the Academic Board.
2. To launch, both online and in written form, guidance for plagiarism, outlining a student's rights.

454

Please represent us! We can't turn up to SU meetings to make our voice heard because we have not got the childcare (approved by the old Council in January 2008)

Council Believes:

1. Representations of motherhood are often narrow and unrealistic.
2. Mature, Part Time and Postgraduate students are the biggest growing demographic of students. High numbers of these groups are student parents.
3. Student parents are often excluded from SUs activities, events and democracy by a lack of family friendly activities, childcare resources, attitudes or inappropriately timed meetings
4. Student parents are often excluded from SUs bars and cafes because they have no safe space to go to with their children e.g a child friendly café with toys.
5. According to the GLA 41% of children in London live below the poverty line.
6. The government has pledged to end child poverty by 2020, and is presenting a Children's Plan.
7. According to the NHS the leading cause of death of women under 35 in the UK is suicide due to postnatal depression.

Council Further believes:

1. Diverse representations of motherhood should be celebrated.

2. Despite the fact that student parents constitute a huge proportion of the student demographic, we often can't turn up to SU meetings to make our voice heard due to a lack of family friendly resources in SUs.
3. A wonderful thing about the SU movement is that it speaks up for members who can not speak up for themselves.
4. Student mothers are best represented by a student with a caring responsibilities officer in every union.
5. Some of student parents access needs can be easily and cheaply remedied by provision of simple facilities e.g highchairs and toys in cafes, baby changing facilities, a private area to breast feed.
6. Due to exponentially rising fees and increasing student poverty, children of students can easily become caught in the poverty trap.
7. Student parents should have a central voice in the Children's Plan.
8. Student mothers are doubly hit in terms of our tuition fees, as after having children women are more likely to do part time paid work (or no paid work at all) than before we had children. So it will take us longer to pay back our fees.
Council Resolves:
1. To run an awareness campaign celebrating the diversity of student motherhood, and to challenge false media conceptions of student motherhood with wide ranging images of student mums e.g. drag kings, disabled students, older women.
2. To run an awareness and lobbying campaign about the practical needs of student mothers.
3. To campaign for crèche facilities to be available at every union/ college for children from 3 months and over.
4. To campaign for crèche facilities at every union/ college to be open the same hours that the library is.
5. To campaign for highchairs in every union, college restaurant, and bar
6. To campaign for a realistic grant to be awarded to student parents and carers to cover their childcare costs while studying, or volunteering for the union.
7. For NUS to provide a briefing pack and training sessions on student parent needs
8. For NUS to campaign for a caring responsibilities rep in every union.
9. To mandate NUS women's committee to lobby for a student parent voice as part of the Children's Plan.

455

Porn and condomless sex (approved by the Council in October 2008)

Council Believes:

1. Timely diagnosis of HIV is often missed by GPs; consequent long-term untreated HIV, with its associated increasing viral load, leads to increased potential for onward transmission of HIV, together with increased likelihood of hospitalisation with a life-threatening illness.
2. Condomless sex has become a transgressive commodity in the porn industry, earning higher short-term financial reward for the participants but at risk of contracting STIs including HIV.

Council Resolves:

1. For the SU to provide a supply of free condoms, gloves, femidoms, dental dams and appropriate lubricant to members through the SU offices/advice centre.

456

Racism in Education (approved by the Council in November 2008)

Council believes:

1. Racism is an institutional feature of the education system. Black students are systematically failed by our schools, colleges and universities. Black students are three times more likely to be excluded from school than white students.
2. The government is responding to economic crisis and war with increased anti-immigrant scapegoating, similar to that of the Tory party.
3. The British National Party is attempting to profit from this situation and create a street presence for its nazi members with street stalls and demonstrations.

Council further believes:

1. The increased marketisation and elitism of education has reinforced class and race inequality. Recently the top 20 Universities combined were shown to have less black students than just London Metropolitan University.
2. Blaming black people for gun and knife crime in the press recently has helped legitimize racist attitudes.
3. NUS' apolitical culture has allowed racism to be tolerated in universities. Officers too often tick 'anti-discrimination' boxes in speeches but fail to recognize or challenge racism.
4. The lack of disciplinary action by the NUS leadership taken over racist King's Student Union President Chris Mullan was a disgrace.
5. That we need an anti-racism movement that builds the maximum unity against the BNP, while opposing all racist myths and manipulations.
6. That the 'n' word is always derogatory.
7. That we need to be prepared to take action on the streets and in the campuses to keep our universities fascist-free.

Council resolves:

1. To celebrate the removal of racist Chris Mullan from office.
2. To demand accountability from the NUS leadership for its failure to act against him.
3. To condemn and remove from office any other individuals who make racist comments.
4. To adopt a policy of no-platform for the BNP and other fascists in our union.
5. To continue to support Unite against Fascism and Love Music Hate Racism and actively promote their activities.
6. To submit this motion to NUS conference (deleting resolves 4) to the Welfare Zone. To send the proposer of this motion or their proxy to NUS compositing.

Relationship with the University of London Union (approved by the Council through the Executive Committee in April 2009)

Council Believes:

1. There is ongoing debate surrounding the freehold and occupation of the ULU building on Malet Street, which houses the swimming pool, the University of London Union and some central services of both UCL and the Central University, such as the Careers Group.
2. The Heads of the 19 Colleges of the University of London approved a reduced funding model for ULU in January 2008, which slashes 30% of ULU's core funding, allegedly re-directing this funding to local services within the Colleges.
3. Birkbeck's annual subscription for ULU in 2007/8 was £73k, which reduced in the interim to £65k and from 2009/10 will be £57k (22%)
4. UCL's annual subscription for ULU will fall from over £300k to just under £200k, a reduction of over one third in two years (34%).
5. UCL Union has been in "temporary accommodation" in 25 Gordon Street, a five storey student centre since 1959.
6. ULU phase one was opened in 1955, with the second wing opening in 1957.
7. UCL and UCL Union have complained that their "temporary accommodation" since 1959 means they are not effectively supporting their students, and as a result have for many years sought to occupy the ULU building for their student services.
8. UCL/UCL Union published in November 2008 their plans for the ULU building, including a guaranteed £15million investment in the building, provided the building was handed over to UCL; UCL committed to keeping the services then offered in the ULU building open to all University of London students (including Birkbeck), on a pay-and-use agreement.

Council Resolves

1. Oppose the UCL 'takeover' of the ULU building, campaigning to keep the ULU building in ULU hands and ULU in the collective hands of the College Unions of the University of London.
2. However, the Union must consider supporting plans to increase the investment in the ULU building.
3. Work with other Bloomsbury Colleges and the Small & Specialist Colleges of the University to secure the ULU building and ULU for our collective support and our collective future.
4. To engage at all levels within the governance of ULU actively and communicate with our members on developments.
5. Promote a change of constitution of ULU fulfilling the following requirements:
 - Student Trustees to be elected on two-year renewable terms by the Senate, not cross-campus election, in staggered terms (currently four are elected annually for one year terms, which does not provide continuity)
 - For Liberation & Campaign Officers to be created and elected for one-year terms in a manner determined by the Senate, and for part-time payment of these officers to be considered (as below).
 - For the Sabbatical Trustees (currently President & Vice-President) to become co-presidents, with one being only elected from and by the Small & Specialist Colleges, in line with Senate's previous Resolution in Feb/Mar 2008.
 - For consideration to be given to removing full-time paid officers from ULU and replacing them with more, part-time paid posts and/or full-time sabbaticals open to job-shares.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all the Trustees of ULU to be non-voting members of Senate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For only the Senate to be able to approve Constitutional changes to the ULU Constitution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For ULU to have an additional category of Member, which shall be “Corporate College Union Members”, being the (at the present time) 19 students’ unions of the Colleges of the University of London and additionally “Corporate Central Institute Members”, being the Institute in Paris and the School of Advanced Study, collectively known as the “Corporate Members”, who shall be able to exercise powers in relation to the “qualified voting arrangements” for ULU and for some elections.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For new Democratic & Representational Regulations to be drawn up, replacing the current Standing Orders for the Senate, Job Descriptions of Officers and committees, duties of the Trustee Board and policy/campaigning decision making voting rules.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For new Election Regulations to be drawn up, alleviating the issues which have dogged ULU since the first online election in 2001, including students just simply not being able to vote by not having reasonable access or time to vote, including the creation of an independent Elections Committee to scrutinise the fairness of the election.
<p>6. To request as far as possible that all members of the Executive Committee of the Union attend all ULU Senate meetings, and that all duly elected Executive Trustees (including Women’s Officer and Caring Responsibilities Officer) attend ULU Training in the Summer at Royal Holloway in addition to other officers as determined by the Executive Committee.</p>

458

Defending Gail Trimble (approved by the Council in May 2009)

Council Believes

The Birkbeck College Student Union congratulates the team from Corpus Christi College Oxford on their University Challenge victory. It is with dismay, however, that we feel it necessary to submit this motion condemning unreservedly the sexist and misogynist attacks against the team’s captain Gail Trimble. The treatment of her in the press and on various blogs is evidence of the continuing effect of patriarchy on the participation of women in higher education. Trimble has had a great deal made of her personal appearance up to and including offers from lad mags and equally pernicious sexist comments about her not being the ideal women, but attractive nonetheless because of her intelligence.

Council Resolves

It is our view that it is necessary for the NUS to oppose these misogynistic attacks which promote the view that a woman must either conform to a stereotypical ideal of beauty or be smart enough to transcend it, instead of being treated as equals to their male counterparts. This leads to a completely skewed and sexist treatment of women throughout higher education and must be completely opposed by the NUS.

459

Safe Space is a Right Not Just a Privilege! (Number 2) (approved by the Council in December 2008)

Council resolves to submit this motion to the NUS Annual Conference:

Conference believes:

1. Annual Conference 2008 passed a clear instruction for the NEC to draw up, with direct input from Liberation Campaigns, a Safe Space Policy which would be binding at all NUS and NUSSL events (Motion 601).

Conference further believes:

1. Despite the NEC having a generic Safe Space Policy in place, it is vital that the NEC carries out mandates made by Conference, one of which is to work on promoting Safe Space and developing Safe Space Policy.
2. Safe Space protects us all, allowing us all to participate in all NUS events, provided that Safe Space is defended and this Policy is enforced.
3. The rise in racism and intimidation would be reduced by the NEC taking an active and decisive leadership role in Safe Space, particularly taking decisive actions against racist incidents within our own National Union.
4. Signs stating "Bring Back Slavery", the use of racist language such as "nigger" on campuses and role plays at training events referring to Black Students as "undesirables" as "there would be an increase in knife crime" must result in these racists being expelled from the Union.
5. The racist BNP feeds off inaction against racism, attacking our Black, LGT and Jewish students particularly and with the NEC's poor leadership recently on Safe Space, the vile BNP will further infiltrate and thrive on our campuses.
6. The persistent mainstreaming of misogyny and objectification of people, especially women through NUSSL-backed Sub-TV; bullying of and spitting at LGBT delegates; the continuing isolation of mature students in many SU activities; the persistent anti-parent access policies of Unions are all further examples of problems which the NEC has failed to show effective leadership on recently.
7. Worryingly all mandates from the Mature Students Conference have simply been air-brushed from the NEC's radar, notably those directing the NEC's work on democratic events, reform, mature student representation and parents.
8. The main duty of a representative membership organisation is to follow and be bound by the policy decisions of the membership, otherwise confidence is once again lost by the many committed student representatives who are not on a penny a year let alone the generous NEC allowances and expenses paid.
9. The NEC leadership must represent us or resign!

Conference resolves:

1. To order the NEC to prioritise the development and implementation of the Safe Space Policy.
2. Racists in the NUS are expelled.
3. To censure the NEC leadership for its inactions in rooting out vile racists who attend NUS events.

460

Safety on Campus (approved by the Council through the Women's Committee in December 2008)

Council Believes:

1. That women are 4 times more likely to be made a victim of attack, then their male counterparts.
2. On average more than half of violent or sexual attacks against women are committed by someone they know.

Council Resolves:

1. To mandate the NUS Women's Campaign to lobby the government to fund support services for women, which should be accessible to every FE/HE institution in the UK. Offering Free assistance to students.
2. To campaign for all FE/HE institutions to offer Free mandatory self-defence classes and personal alarms. This service should also provide training for security personnel.

461

Save Senate House Library! (approved by the Council in January 2009)

Council resolves to submit this motion in the name of Council to ULU Senate:

Background

1. ULU Senate has policy for ULU to co-ordinate campaigning activities and representation of members regarding the review currently underway of the funding of Senate House Library (SHL).
2. SHL has recently lost its status as a HEFCE (funding council) special collections library, entitling SHL to dedicated funding. The University has appointed a firm of consultants to review the viability and future funding arrangements of the SHL, with a report due out in November 2008.
3. The University's new governance arrangements, which came into force in August 2008, have removed all student representation from all University Committees, including denying student observers from key governing meetings of the University Trustees' Board.
4. It has been announced by the Vice-Chancellor that the defunct University Libraries Committee (formerly a committee of the University Senate – the academic board of the University), will be re-convened as a one-off meeting to receive the Consultants Report. This meeting is due in mid to late November, according to reports given to the Birkbeck College Library Committee.
5. ULU members Sol Gamsu and Peter Brett have led a high profile campaign, lobbying members and supporters of the Colleges and University to Save Senate House Library, with thousands of signatures online supporting this campaign. Both Sol and Peter have in depth and intricate knowledge of the effects of any funding changes to the students of our

Colleges and University.
6. The re-convened University Libraries Committee will have two Student Representatives committee places, and it is vital that knowledgeable representatives are given the opportunity to promote our campaign to Save Senate House Library.
7. Both Sol and Peter have confirmed that they would be willing to represent us at this Committee if asked.
Senate Resolves:
1. ULU Senate resolves to appoint Sol Gamsu and Peter Brett as the two Student Representatives on the University Libraries Committee.

462

Say NO to 0870! (approved by the Council in January 2009) Council Believes:
1. Many students regularly have to dial '08' numbers to get hold of their Bank, the Student Loans Company, their LEA, Government Departments, NHS Direct and even in some cases their College, University or SU/NUS!
2. From mobile phones the rates are significantly higher than from a landline, with even Freephone numbers being charged at around 35 pence per minute.
3. Students, both young and old, rely on mobile communication, which is especially necessary for student parents, carers, disabled students and single students, especially women, moving around.
4. OfCom's most recent reports, published in early 2009, have again failed short of proper regulation of '08' numbers, simply requiring '08' organisations to have tiny writing and lightning-speed statements once a number is advertised stating its cost per minute.
5. This is particularly depressing with the rise in all '01' or '02' numbers being inclusive in most domestic landline packages, yet fewer vital organisations advertise their STD number, only their money-making '08' number.
6. OfCom has a proud history it seems of pandering to organisations and business which drain vital money from our unsuspecting members.
7. Urgent action needs to be taken by the Committee to support our members when bombarded with more and more expensive '08' numbers, particularly now with the recession deepening, more organisations will be looking to covertly pick-pocket our members.
8. The recession's effects have already seen a 40% rise in 'change of circumstance' forms being lodged at Birkbeck – action is needed now, not later to save us money.
Council Resolves:
6. For NUS to promote widely the website www.saynoto0870.com
7. For NUS to Lobby all education-sector and advice partners (SUs, Colleges, LEAs, funding councils, Government Departments and others as identified by the Committee, including NUS HQ) to advertise equally their STD Code number alongside their '08' number, and preferably instead of.
8. Lobby the Government to introduce Secondary Legislation to prohibit Public Bodies (as defined by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (2002 in Scotland)) from solely advertising

'08' numbers for their services and offices to the public.
9. Campaign for Freephone numbers to be free from mobile phones.
10. In all NUS campaigning and advice/event materials, to only advertise non '08' numbers, unless it is a Freephone number, in which case in addition with equal prominence.
Council Further Resolves to mandate the NUS:
5. Simple tips saving money for students are available from 'Martin's Money Tips' on www.moneysavingexpert.com , a simple resource which shall be incorporated into the Committee's work, and the best tips regularly sent to SUs in the 'NUS Update' and other media.
6. Appoint the NUS NEC Welfare Zone as the 'money saving Tsars' for students for 2009/10, with target to save students collectively £75million in the next year (£10 a head for students) based on simple, effective communication of Tsarist Tips to save money!
7. Ensure an ethical policy is observed when publicising or promoting a saving – e.g. no Nestlé/SubTV/McDonalds/Coke etc, as determined by the NEC in line with NUS Conference Policy and all Liberation Campaign Policy.
8. Publish the amount estimated saved to our membership in a manner determined by the NEC.

463

Self-insemination: A Right to Choose (approved by the Council through the LGBT Committee in February 2009)

Council Believes:

1. The desire to have a baby is totally natural
2. For women the options are to have penetrative sex with a donor, to have IVF or to self-inseminate.
3. Many lesbians in previous decades put their sexuality to one side and partnered with a man for the purpose of having a baby, sometimes these unions were between a lesbian and a gay man, and for all intents were marriages on convenience to raise a family.
4. Self-insemination using donation apparatus, such as a turkey baster, is extremely poor in targeting semen effectively within the cervical foyer, though it is cheap, and with a willing donor is usually anonymous if needed.

Council Further Believes:

1. There are horrendously unethical companies available such as Man Not Included, run by straight men, who deliver fresh semen to lesbians via moped.
2. This donation has not been screened for viruses.
3. Lesbians should not have to suffer with the dregs of patriarchal society determining how they should inseminate themselves.

Council Resolves:

1. For NUS to work with our NHS in clear and healthy guidance for lesbians who wish to inseminate.
2. To work with NUSSL at sourcing self-insemination kits for stock in our students' union advice

centre.
3. To campaign to shut down companies like Man Not Included as unethical and sexist.

464

Senate House Library – the Last Time to Save it! (approved by the AGM in 2009)

Union believes:

1. The report to the Consultant who reviewed the options for the University of London-run Senate House Library reported that there were four realistic options:
2. Closure;
3. Status quo with additional funding from the Colleges;
4. Take-over by UCL and run as a central service; or
5. Reduction of the service and dispersal over time of the Collections across the Colleges.
6. Most worrying was that the Consultants (CHEMS) reported that they felt the University would not be able to make a decision (i.e. the Colleges would not be able to agree on the way forward) and therefore there would be “closure by default” due to inaction.
7. The review of the Senate House Library came about due to the funding council’s (HEFCE’s) withdrawal of special funding from the Library as a “special collection”, leaving a hole of £1.5million in the future Senate House Library budget.
8. Shamefully ULU failed to campaign to Save Senate House Library, to the extent that student representatives from LSE and Birkbeck proposed a motion to the ULU Senate to replace the ULU representatives on the defunct Library Committee with two student campaigners, Peter Brett (SOAS) and Sol Gamsu (UCL).
9. Policy resolutions made by the ULU Senate, proposed by UCL Union and Birkbeck Union in 2008 required ULU to co-ordinate campaigning activity and solicit opinions from retiring and incoming student representatives over the Summer of 2008.
10. ULU failed to do this.
11. The ULU President must be held to account for this abdication of his simple duties “to represent students” and “lead on educational policy”, after all he is a full-time elected student representative on a salary which we pay from our fees of around £21k per annum.
12. The Collections in the Senate House Library extend far beyond usefulness to the arts, law and humanities of the University of London; the Library is a world famous resource.
13. The Birkbeck Library has built up its collection so as to minimally duplicate the Collection at Senate House.
14. The potential withdrawal of Senate House Library would be devastating to Birkbeck and to our members.
15. The Union must have a clear priority within the Save Senate House Library Campaign of which options are favoured.

Union resolves:

1. To censure the ULU President and mandate our Senate Representative to take appropriate action to bring this to attention of the Senate.
2. To recognise that the Status Quo will eventually end in the Senate House Library closing in the next few years, and is therefore not an option.
3. For the Council to explore the possibilities of a Trust being established to govern and run the

Senate House Library, outside of the governance structures of the University, with Colleges appointing independent trustees and the ULU appointing two student user trustees to the Trust.

4. To work with the College Librarian to develop a formal policy position on Senate House Library, which may include supporting the UCL bid to run the Senate House Library.
5. To adopt the policy that there can be no reduction in the Collection at Senate House Library, nor a restriction on access to these Collections.

465

Sex Workers (approved by the Council in January 2009)

Council Resolves:

1. We oppose criminalisation of sex workers which is forcing women to work alone increasing their vulnerability and to condemn and oppose those parts of the Policing & Crime Bill 2009 which seeks to oppress and criminalise our sex workers.

466

Social Space on Campus: Parent & Child Friendly Too! (approved by the Council through delegation to the Welfare & Rights Select Committee)

Council Believes:

6. Being located in Bloomsbury and at Stratford, in east London, Birkbeck College students and staff, and indeed visitors need social space to relax, socialise, network, chill and chat between lectures, events and tutorials.
7. The Bloomsbury campus is particular short of social space, offering the Birkbeck Bar (a licensed premise), the Union's Clubs & Societies Room, the Costa Coffee area known as "the café on the square", a small common room in Gordon Square and currently a small lobby in the Department of Computing in Senate House North Block. On the fifth floor of the Malet Street extension, there is also the Eatery.
8. Social space at the Stratford campus is non-existent and with the development of the partnership with the University of East London to acquire preferential brown field land from Newham Borough Council, the proposed building will be space managed by bidding for space, and yet again, social communal space will lose out, as will our members.
9. Year on year, the Union is asked to fight for extra space for student-organised study classes, faith and meditation space, parent-child friendly space and recently, disability-friendly space (after the creation of our new Special Committee for Disabled Students).
10. If we do not act now and build a comprehensive space plan for our members' needs, we will let down the next generation of students at Birkbeck.

Council Resolves:

3. For the Executive Committee, as lead by the Council, to develop a detailed space report, which shall include proposals for all areas to be disability friendly and parent-child friendly, which shall include extra group study space and multi-faith space.
4. The space report shall cover current Birkbeck Estates (including Stratford) and central University-run or freehold, including ULU.

467

Stop the persecution of Women and children as witches Worldwide (approved by the Council through the Women's Committee in March 2009)

Council Believes:

1. That a minority of exploited cult practices have proliferated the abuse of women and children, which is taking place all over the world and in the UK.
2. Vulnerable children, women and families are the most likely to be exploited in this way.
3. The lack of understanding in Mental health awareness, within these communities leads to the vulnerable being more susceptible to abuse.

Council resolves:

1. To campaign for and support those with mental health illnesses and to raise awareness of Mental health issues through education.
2. To ensure the women's conference plays an active role in greater education for those who believe these rituals are correct religious practices.
3. To publicise and support institutions that protect vulnerable children, people and families.
4. To campaign for Greater International UN/EU and National laws to STOP these practices, Support the victims.

468

Stop the War! (approved by the Council in November 2008)

Council believes:

1. NATO expansion, the war in Georgia and the commitment to fight "the good war" in Afghanistan are the bloody result of the attempt to maintain US global dominance.
2. Over 1 million Afghans have lost their lives as a result of war over the last 30 years yet both the UK and US governments are committed to sending more troops into the country.
3. The US had spent over £110 billion on the war in Afghanistan by the end of 2008 but only 10 billion of the 16 billion in aid payments had been received.
4. Over the winter of 2008 8.4 million Afghans faced starvation and 30 million live in severe poverty.
5. That there was no resistance in Afghanistan immediately after the invasion. The reality of NATO's occupation has created a resistance out of the same localised forces which had fought the Russian occupation.

6. That the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are spreading instability across the region.
Council further believes:
1. That the links between Afghanistan and West Pakistan are creating tensions in Pakistan.
2. The US army has already launched cross border operations to try and hold its position in Afghanistan. This has created a crisis for Pakistan's rulers, torn between support for the US and anti-imperialist sentiment at home.
3. The Pakistani government has forced almost 300,000 Afghan refugees back into Afghanistan.
4. If the US continues to engage in operations in Pakistan it could provoke a civil war.
5. That unless we can force our governments in the west to withdraw from Afghanistan and Iraq we will continue to pay the bloody price for their "new world order."
Council resolves:
1. To actively support the activities of the Stop the War Coalition
2. To support the "No to NATO" protest in France on April 3 rd alongside the Stop the War Coalition, Noam Chomsky and others.
3. To support the call for the withdrawal of all troops from Afghanistan.
4. To organise and promote with Stop the War a series of events on campuses to highlight the reality of the occupation.
5. To also condemn oppressive regimes, including the misogynistic Taliban

469

Support equal rights for all our workers! Equality for our working animals and enablers which is our personal care too! (approved by the Council through the Disabled Members Committee in December 2008)

Council Believes:
1. It has been long-standing convention and best practice for many organisations, buildings and businesses to say "No dogs. Except guide dogs."
2. The stereotype of a guide dog owner is blind, two-legged and wearing dark glasses.
3. Many aspects of personal care extend beyond this narrow, yet popular societal experience.
4. Outside of the home, enabling provides challenges to organisations, including the education sector.
Council Further Believes:
1. If it were possible to launch a "Reclaim the Campus" campaign, we would, but sadly we have never had total, universal and unhampered access to campuses, or other public spaces.
2. Whilst many education institutions have equality and disability policies, the effective implementation of them is at best tokenistic and at worst bungled making it even more inaccessible.
3. For instance, health and safety rules have prevented disabled students with working animals taking up laboratory courses; this despite "reasonable adjustments" being made successfully for another disabled student.
Council Resolves:

1. To work with UUK, teaching trade unions and other appropriate bodies as determined by the Disabled Students Committee, to advance a Disabled Access Charter, specifically targeting access for disabled students (and staff) in laboratory-based courses, so-called “wet” environments (i.e. not just chalk-and-talk) and in medicine.
2. To actively promote a series of diverse images of working animals with disabled people.
3. To stress to all Students’ Unions their duty to ensure all their facilities are accessible – and access friendly – for disabled people with working animals and other forms of mobile personal care, including enablers.
4. To ensure that all Students’ Unions – and NUS’ – democratic events also follow the principle in resolves 3 (above)

470

Supporting Reclaim the Night London (approved by the Council through delegation to the Welfare & Rights Select Committee in May 2009)

Council Believes:

1. Annually, the London Feminist Network (LFN) organised Reclaim the Night London, which is held on the nearest Saturday evening to the International Day to End Violence Against Women.
2. In 2004, when ULU used to campaign, ULU re-started Reclaim the Night march and rally, which saw hundred of women march the streets and hold a mixed gender rally at ULU. This was co-ordinated by Heythrop College student Polly Mackwood and Birkbeck College student Joanna Fried.
3. Since 2004, the march and rally have grown, however, the new organisers, the LFN, still wished to hold the rally at the “founders home”, namely ULU. However in 2007, ULU started charging LFN, a collective of volunteers for use of the rooms, totalling nearly £2,600!!!
4. ULU also charged commercial rates on drinks.
5. Reclaim the Night is an event we must support and endorse.
6. The Union must support the Women’s Officer and Women’s Committee in every way possible to ensure that Reclaim the Night happens in 2009.
7. Some speakers, namely Julie Bindle, have attracted much criticism for their deeply offensive views towards Trans* people, however, our quarrel with Julie Bindle must not detract from supporting events such as Reclaim the Night.

Council Resolves:

1. The Union shall endorse and promote Reclaim the Night London, affixing our logo to publicity if possible.
2. Condemn ULU for axing campaigns and charging volunteers for hosting events which ULU members wish to see organised.

The Brittas Empire (approved by the old Council in March 2008)

Council Believes:

1. ULU, the University of London Union is a federal students' union for the Colleges of the University of London: Birkbeck, SOAS, some-Imperial students, King's, UCL, Royal Veterinary College, Institute of Education, London Business School, Queen Mary, Goldsmiths, School of Advanced Study, School of Pharmacy, Institute in Paris, Millport (Scotland), Royal Holloway, the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, LSE, Royal Academy of Music, St. George's, Institute of Cancer Research, Heythrop College, Central School of Speech & Drama and the Courtauld Institute of Art.
2. ULU has a potential membership of over 120,000 students, making it the largest students' union in Europe.
3. Over 30,000 students are postgraduate research students
4. At Birkbeck alone, nearly 20,000 student study part-time, with an average age of 35

Council Further believes:

1. There has been a Review of ULU by the University, which if approved (happening 18th March 2008), ULU would only be subsidised (i.e. receive funding from out tuition fees) by £700,000 to provide:
 - Representative Sport
 - A President & Vice President (Sport)
 - Boathouse
 - Motspur Park (field sports)
 - A newspaper with funding halved (London Student)
2. The Review states that ULU will not receive funding to campaign, provide welfare or advice and that any student Societies formed cannot duplicate ones already provided in a College students' union.
3. ULU closed its Nursery in 2003, which received an annual subsidy of £20,000 as it was unviable.
4. ULU is also not permitted to receive funding for the training of student officers and activists "as the NUS does this for free". Not only does the NUS charge, but not all Colleges are members of NUS, notably the smaller ones.
5. Under a climate of cuts from the University, ULU mercilessly axed its dedicated Postgraduate Caseworker, leaving student defending appeals without support, funded by the students themselves.
6. The Review expects Birkbeck students through their fees, to subsidise "Representative Sport" and associated paraphernalia to the tune of nearly £60,000, when Birkbeck student cannot access this "sport" during the days and at weekends due to work, caring responsibilities and homemaking.

Council Resolves:

1. If the Review is adopted by ULU and the University Council, ULU is no longer a representative voice of the diverse student population of the Colleges of the University of London.
2. To support those College Unions which are not yet NUS members to become NUS members as soon as possible.

3.	To condemn the breaking up of diverse collective funding action by the Colleges, especially UCL and Queen Mary, as an attack on student welfare, especially mature students and part-time students.
4.	That ULU would no longer be eligible for places at NUS events as it is no longer constitutionally a diverse student representative body, if the Review and cuts go through.
5.	To declare ULU “the Brittias Empire” and to warn our members of the need to collaborate and work together as a National Union.
6.	To mandate the NUS Mature Students Committee to investigate and take a report, with recommendation for action to the NEC/National Conference.

472

The DUP: Representational Failures who are Unfit for Government (approved by the Council in February 2009)

Council Believes:

1. Iris Robinson and Sammy Wilson, who are both MPs and members of the Northern Ireland Assembly are unfit for responsible democratic representative government.
2. The first duty of a representative of the people is to ALL of their constituents, and whilst neither of them agree with same-sex unions, lesbian reproductive rights or LGBT education in schools, we can usually put that down to ‘political difference’.
3. However, let us not bury our heads in the sands of bigotry! Iris Robinson is a vile bigot and Sammy Wilson is totally unrepresentative.
4. During 2008, Robinson blew spiteful language around Northern Ireland regarding homosexuality and the fact she could cure ‘it’ using her psychiatrist.
5. She also wheeled in God to add even more vile insult.
6. Robinson was reported to the Equality Commission, who did not act.
7. During an exchange with the then Health Minister, Ulster Unionist Chris McGimsey in the House of the Northern Ireland Assembly, she refused to withdraw the remarks and actually re-issued them.

Council Further Believes

1. Iris Robinson is a member of the Democratic Unionist Party, a national socialist and sectarian party of Northern Ireland. She is also a member of the Government of Northern Ireland.
2. Robinson is also a member of the Pentecostal Church in Ireland, a hardline right-wing bigoted sect of Christianity who back up her views.
3. Our Labour Government brought in legislation to stamp out hate crime and our politicians MUST also be subjected to it.

Council Resolves:

1. For the NUS and the National President to investigate the DUP, Iris Robinson, Sammy Wilson and the Pentecostal Church in Ireland and to bring a report, and if necessary a motion back to this Conference to apply ‘no platform’ to them for their fascist views.
2. To report Irish Robinson and the DUP to the Equality Commission for LGBT-phobia, and copy the letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons and Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

473

The Gender Pay Gap widens even more after women have children (approved by the old Council in March 2008)

Council Believes

1. Financial penalties for women who raise children are immense.
2. Research behind the Gender Duty found that post-childbirth/adoption/fostering the Gender-Pay-Gap gets even wider.
3. They concluded that the affects of systemic sexism via workplace culture/organisation/employment law on women returners are main causal factors for the Pay-Gap
4. 30,000 women are forced into resigning, redundancy, or are sacked due to pregnancy annually in GB. 50% of pregnant women face discrimination and disadvantage at work and over 70% keep silent about it.
5. Unsurprisingly many women do not return to work, but 1 in 5 of those that do are forced to completely change career and employer due to the child-unfriendly nature of their 'pre-children' careers usually taking a pay cut in doing so.
6. 75% of women returners return as part time workers, but higher paid jobs are rarely available part time. Part time pay is lower that full time on an hourly rate comparison.

Council Further Believes:

1. Raising children is one of the most valuable contributions to society a person can make.
2. Raising children and caring responsibilities generally are devalued in a patriarchal society because caring is a responsibility that has been traditionally associated with women.
3. This devaluation is reflected in the widening of the pay gap after women have children.
4. Any equal pay campaign must call for a radical overhaul of employment-law/workplace-culture/best-practice taking into account women's workplace needs post-children.
5. Women are more likely than men to choose first degrees that lead to low-paid jobs. Labour recommendations to reduce the pay-gap state that women require lifelong opportunities to retrain throughout our life-times, but this is impossible under the ELQ cuts.

Council Resolves:

1. For NUS to campaign/supply materials highlighting that when women have children the pay gap widens even more, as a prominent part of the Equal Pay Campaign
2. To campaign against the ELQ cuts as maintaining the Gender-Pay-Gap.

474

The 'N' Word (approved by the Council through the Black Members Committee in May 2009)

Council believes:

1. Banning of the word 'Nigger' in the Union ...Use of the "N word" on campuses is highly inappropriate and offensive, and in no way should its use be tolerated from students, staff or in any medium including music or student newspapers .
2. Furthermore, NUS Officers (including Wes Streeting) who make racist homophobic, sexist or xenophobic comments or actions should be subject to a full and open investigation, make a full apology and be removed from their position within the SU if found guilty..

Council resolves:

1. We would like to propose the disuse of this word among all members attending the union and will have the right to remove members who use such derogative terms.
2. The union is aware that many people use this word in colloquial terms, however we believe that this is part of the systematic brainwashing that has been used to normalise the effects of racism within our community.

475

This is to thank single mothers for their invaluable contribution to society (approved by the Council in January 2009)

Council believes

1. A current overhaul of the benefits system has stated it will end the 'something for nothing culture' by cutting benefits to single mothers of children as young as one year old.
2. Arguments that welfare benefits given to single mothers are 'something for nothing' are a reflection of the way motherhood, caring and raising children is devalued by patriarchal society.
3. Raising children is one of the most valuable contributions to society that a person can make.
4. Abundant government backed research shows emphasises the importance of the role a full time primary carer (usually the mother) for children under 3 in particular.
5. Early in the second wave of feminism, feminist activists campaigned to get women equal rights and pay to men in the workplace. They won remarkable legislative gains and cultural shifts, but this also had side effect of reinforcing the stereotype that looking after children full time was worthless.
6. NUS research shows that student parents often are negatively affected and internalise the negative stereotypes surrounding lone parents on benefits.
7. Not every family fits into a patriarchal heterosexual family. Some women who are fantastic mothers have chosen self-insemination or IVF to become pregnant.

Council further believes:

1. 75% of mothers return to workplace return as part time workers. In 2008 Women's conference passed policy to promote part time work.
2. A high proportion of mothers returning to the workplace need to reskill, but this has been made impossible by the ELQ policy passed by the government. Women's conference 2008 passed policy to campaign against the ELQ policy as an attack on women.
3. For lone parents to return to education or work and upskill or reskill by gaining HE and FE qualifications we need childcare that is not just affordable but high quality (i.e. Ofsted rated

Outstanding), which is also flexible e.g. available in the evenings and variable e.g. more is required around exam time.
Council resolves:
1. To be explicit in our campaign materials that parents who look after their children fulltime are contributing to society in an invaluable way.
2. To combat negative stereotypes about lone parents being lazy/trying to get a council flat etc.
3. To oppose any cuts to Lone parent's benefits, the ELQ cuts and attempt to cut back on mothers rights to flexible working.
4. To campaign for Ofsted rated outstanding childcare, which is flexible and variable for student parents, and mothers who are considering returning to education or work.

476

Student Rights & Welfare Motion in NUS (approved by the Council in December 2008)
Council Believes:
1. 70% of the UK's students are mature students and the majority part-time.
2. A significant number of students are parents and/or have caring responsibilities.
3. Student Parents are an important part of our unions, however they consistently find barriers to accessing both education services and students' unions' facilities and democracy.
4. NUS needs to campaign for and advance the rights of students who work and study, including regarding their tax and National Insurance.
5. The cost of travel in London is high and currently the student discount, won by ULU in 2001, is only available to full-time students on medium and long term travelcards, paid for completely in advance.
6. Many students own or wish to own pets, and being responsible guardians will want to access affordable pet care and veterinary services.
Council Resolves:
1. To campaign for the rights of student parents in accessing education and accessing their students' unions, producing a "Student Parents in the Union" guide including advice on removing barriers to democratic participation.
2. Work with CMs to provide access to crèche and childcare facilities for students, convenient and cost-effective for students to use.
3. Source information for CMs on manufacturers and installers of baby changing facilities and write a briefing for CMs about their responsibilities of provision of facilities required by law and government regulations, including the Equality Act Regulations.
Council Further Resolves:
4. To campaign, along with ULU, to extend the Transport for London student discount to day travelcards and single tickets.
5. To ensure this student discount is fully available to part-time students in receipt of hardship

funding and all student parents.
6. To campaign that this discount is extended in some form to students studying outside of London universities and colleges, who travel to and within London as part of their education or research.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. To lobby the PDSA and other charitable veterinary clinics to include students as a group who can take advantage of free and/or subsidised pet treatment.
10. To send this motion to NUS Annual Conference

477

When is the time to 'kill off' the dyslexia industry, Graham? (approved by the Council through the Disabled Members Committee in January 2009)

Council Believes:

1. Our perceptions, knowledge and realities of our disabilities and differences make us who we are: proud individuals who are committed to contributing actively to society.
2. People have many different mental architectures, personalities and methods of learning: whilst persecution, torture and vile experiments were the norm until the 1950s for disabled people, particularly practiced by the Nazis, today disabled people are demand to be full active members of society.
3. Some vile organisations still promote eugenics, which must be exposed as followers of neo-Nazi Master-Race wannabes.

Council Further Believes:

1. It is totally unacceptable for ex-Minister Graham Stringer MP to brand dyslexia as "a myth".
2. The MP has also stated in the ManchesterConfidential.com article that "if dyslexia really existed then countries as diverse as Nicaragua and South Korea would not have been able to achieve literacy rates of 100%"
3. And stated "Certified dyslexics get longer in exams. There has been created a situation where there are financial and educational incentives to being bad at spelling and reading"
4. Further, he has said "It is time that the dyslexia industry was killed off and we recognised that there are well known methods for teaching everybody to read and write"

Council Resolves:

1. To celebrate our disability diversity and make this central to Disabled History Month.
2. To inform Graham Stringer of his totally inappropriate comments regarding dyslexia and to extend to him an invitation to educate himself in disabilities, particularly diversity of mental architectures that gives us a wonderful individualism.
3. To stress the importance of multiple learning techniques, notably those developed and

researched at the Institute of Education, working with the IoE to be a central part of Disabled History Month.
4. To lead a 'round of applause' for all disabilities and disabled people at National NUS Conference in 2009.
5. Adopt the campaign slogan "Diversity represents us! Equality protects us!"

478

Working closely with AMSU (approved by the old Council in December 2007)
Council Believes:
1. Governance and Representation are two pillars of a students' union.
2. Inherently without strong and resourced representation, there will be little focus and drive for good governance
3. Some SU officers believe that "governance reviews" have to be in place by 2009 otherwise the 2009 Review on "lifting the cap" will not be a successful campaign for the SU movement
Council Further believes:
1. Some consultants and AMSU leaders are inadvertently mixing pure representational matters with governance, and in some cases deliberately indoctrinating our elected representatives into believing that "governance reviews" are a core necessity in fighting the lifting of the cap (and other priority campaigns SUs run).
2. As usual, smoke and mirrors, which are put in place by consultants/AMSU leaders, replace the cold hard facts that representation is not subservient to governance reviews or dependent on them: representation is promoted by good, well supported officers, who are not continually undermined or briefed against.
Council Resolves:
1. To call for an end to the Consultancy Culture, where a self propagating gravy train of former senior managers of students' unions are parachuted into SUs, through AMSU, and promote governance models which obliterate core representation.
2. To support the many dedicated and professional SU staff and senior managers who invest in their elected officers and support their work, mentoring them throughout the year.

479

Working with AMSU (approved by the old Council in December 2007)
Council resolved to send this motion to NUS National Conference 2008:
Conference Believes:
1. AMSU, the Association of Managers in Students' Unions is the collective professional body for many students' unions General Manager, other Senior Manager, Marketing Manager,

Membership Managers and so on.
2. Locally, students' union staff have an obligation to uphold students' unions constitutions and policies, including safe space, no-platform, anti-racism, anti-fascism, anti-sexism etc and to promote an environment and culture expected in a membership-led, representative charitable organisation – a students' union.
Conference Further believes:
1. In recent times, there have been actions and activities which have questioned the legitimacy of AMSU, by some local union staff, who rely on AMSU for advice and resources.
2. This includes the promotion of sexist poll-dancing, objectification of women, the bad-mouthing of feminist events, the de-prioritisation of LGBT activist events, the reduction of support for election administration, the mis-handling of governance reviews, work-place bullying and sex discrimination.
3. NUS needs to support AMSU in all matters of student/staff and staff/staff relationships, promoting the core mission, values and vision of both NUS and local students' unions.
4. The vast majority of student union staff are highly motivated and dedicated supporters and ambassadors of our work as students' unions and should not have their reputation tarnished by a small collection of self-preservationists.
Conference Resolves:
1. To work closely with the Liberation Campaigns and the National officers of NUS to ensure we can embrace AMSU as a formal part of NUS, in the future.
2. Promote Diversity & Equality Training for AMSU members and NUS members for all staff.
3. Demand that there is a diverse voice of students on the steering group of the AMSU Governance & Strategic Review, including the President and VP Welfare.
4. Call for a breakdown in the "old boys network" and the culture of the self-preservation society, which leaks from AMSU at present.

480

Youth Violence in the inner cities (approved by the Council through the Black Members Committee in April 2009)

Council Believes:

1. (Should the union be more involved with campaigning for and writing policies that will help to reduce black on black violence and youth violence?)

Council resolves:

1. The members of the group need to be aware that their experience, education and abilities, can have a very big impact on the development of the black community.
2. We are aware of the statistics that many of the young people come from dysfunctional and single parent homes.
3. We can see that there is a lack of support within the family structure which causes young people to be led astray and commit hideous crimes against their fellow black person.
4. There is lack of self love involved, lack of parental guidance and systematic oppression from the educational and criminal justice system.

5. So as members we have to be aware that these people need to be educated and empowered. Thus, we need to start campaigning for change in policy and also encourage change by unification, rather than from outsiders.