

The Students' Union at Newcastle University

Policy of Students' Union Council

Last updated 30 September 2025

Policy	Date Passed
50% Plant-Based Options by 2025	March 2024
Approval of policy idea submitted to National Union of Students	February 2024
Audio-Visual Accessibility	February 2020
Ban Advertising from pay day lenders	October 2013
Beauty pageants	December 2009 and Feb/March 2014
Cheap Non-Alcoholic Drinks	March 2014
Clarification of referenda cycle	May 2017
Communication Access Training	May 2021 (indicatively). Formerly passed Oct 2021
End of Term and End of Year Reports	March 2014
Ending Oil, Gas and Mining Recruitment at Newcastle University and NUSU	May 2023
Equal Opportunity Societies Motion	October 2018
Fancy Dress Policy	October 2015
Fossil Free Student Union	December 2014
Funding Free Menstrual Products Across Campus	December 2018
Honorary Life Memberships	May 2014
Increase Gender Options on University/Union Documentation	December 2016
Increase Undergraduate involvement in Research	May 2019
Lobby the University to implement the It Happens Here Report Recommendations	December 2022
Menstrual Care Bins in All Washrooms	March 2018
Newcastle University Student Union Zero Tolerance Policy Towards Discrimination Bullying and Harassment	October 2014
Newcastle University should implement 'Socially Responsible Licensing of their Intellectual Property (Biomedicine/biotechnology)	December 2014
No to Higher Tuition fees	December 2013
No Bin, No Search	December 2017, updated in October 2024
No Smoking and ban on advertising	March 2014
NUSU response to NHS Changes	November 2013
NUSU to incorporate the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of Antisemitism into the NUSU Hate Crime Policy	October 2021
NUSU to prioritise catering from local catering companies and/or suppliers	January 2021
NUSU to support calls for a legislative ban of "Essay Mills" companies	October 2018
Opposing expansion of the teaching day	May 2017
Opposing The Fit to Sit Policy	November 2015

Playing Newcastle Student Radio in Newcastle University Students' Union	November 2017
Policy of the Union	March 2014
Pornographic publicity and publicity objectifying people	Indicatively passed May 2016 & formally endorsed October 2016
Purposely developed or built faith centre to be a priority for the Newcastle University estates strategy	November 2017
Reiterating our commitment to Fair Pay	May 2014
Remembering the Fallen	Feb/March 2014, updated October 2024
Safeguard Peaceful Protest Rights on Campus	Indicatively passed November 2024, formally passed December 2024
Supporting Humane Refugee Relocation to the UK	March 2021
Supporting Student Sex Workers	May 2022
Students' Union supports and values all degrees	February 2023
To Support Pledge to Support "End Rough Sleeping in Newcastle"	May 2020, updated October 2024
Trade Union Involvement	February 2016
T-Shirted Pub Crawls	March 2014
Wednesday Afternoons Free for all Students	May 2016

BAN ADVERTISING FROM PAY DAY LENDERS

Date Passed: October 2013

Council notes:

1. 'Pay day lenders' lend money over short periods of time at high interest rates, usually via the internet.
2. The 'Pound in your Pocket' research, undertaken by the National Union of Students (NUS) shows that some of the most vulnerable student groups are more likely to access payday loans. These include student parents, student carers, LGBT+ students and others 1.
3. The Office for Fair Trading (OFT) has identified the following areas of non-compliance from pay day lenders 2:
 - lenders failing to conduct adequate assessments of affordability before lending or before rolling over loans
 - failing to explain adequately how payments will be collected
 - using aggressive debt collection practices
 - not treating borrowers in financial difficulty with forbearance.
4. The OFT has recently ordered the 50 biggest pay day lenders to change their practices or risk losing their licences. 2
5. The University of East London has recently made headlines by banning all advertising from pay day lenders on their campus 3.

Council believes:

1. Pay day lenders target the poorest members of society, many of whom end up extending their debts and accruing frightening levels of interest.
2. The Students' Union and University have a responsibility to provide students with sensible and safe financial advice.
3. The Students' Union and University should not be encouraging students to take out loans with pay day lenders.
4. Some pay day lenders have now started targeting students specifically.

Council resolves:

1. To ban all advertising from pay day lenders in the union, on the union website or in any union publications.

This motion also passed with a mandate.

References

- 1 <http://www.poundinyourpocket.org.uk/>
- 2 <http://www.of.gov.uk/news-and-updates/press/2013/20-13>
- 3 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-16513563>

'NUSU RESPONSE TO NHS CHANGES'

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. The Health and Social Care Bill came into effect on 1st April 2013.
2. Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) have been abolished and the responsibility of commissioning health care funds have been transferred to several hundred 'clinical commissioning groups' which will in many cases be led by GPs. ¹
3. Local Authorities will have a responsibility to engage with the public in how healthcare is commissioned and delivered. ¹
4. *Healthwatch* organisations are being set up around the country to monitor and champion health and social care services. ¹
5. That the British Medical Association, Unite, UNISON, the Royal College of GP's and the Royal College of Nurses have all called for the repeal of the Health and Social Care Act on the grounds that it would cause 'irreparable harm' to the NHS. ^{2,3,4,5&6}
6. That the BMA 'has concerns' regarding current changes to medical education, including the introduction of Local Education and Training Boards. ⁷

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. Young people are likely to get missed out in engagement with clinical commissioning groups and Students' Unions provide a perfect organisational group to seek representation for groups.
2. Services particularly relevant to students such as mental and sexual health services are under threat under a new commissioning regime.
3. It is absolutely crucial to monitor the first year under such a new system, where even those leading it are unsure of its direction and implication.
4. The current climate of changes to our health care system poses huge threats in privatisation of health services cuts to key services and closure of clinics and hospitals.
5. NUSU must respond sensibly to NHS reform, opposing cuts and privatisation but using our resource in a pragmatic fashion that will protect services for students.
6. That privatisation of the NHS undermines its fundamental value of providing free, comprehensive and equal care for all driven by compassion not profit.
7. That the constituent parts of the NHS should be publicly and not privately owned.
8. That privatisation presents a risk to the education of healthcare students.
9. That the new Health & Social Care Act will result in increased NHS privatisation. ¹

Students' Union Council Resolves:

3. To engage with relevant bodies in the areas, ensuring close partnership is made with other local HE and FE Students' Unions on the issue.
4. To make the case for proper and accessible healthcare services for students.
5. To ensure the NUSU makes strong links with *Healthwatch*, holding both them and the Local Authority Public Health team to account.
6. To adopt a pragmatic and progressive approach to opposing cuts to and privatisation of our health care system ensuring that the best interest of students and the community lies at the heart.
7. For the relevant sabbatical officers to work with Keep Our NHS Public, and relevant student organisations such as the BMA Students Committee and Medsin to campaign against NHS cuts and privatisation, in particular the Health & Social Care Act.

This motion also passed with mandates.

References:

1. Health and Social Care Act, 2012.
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents/enacted>
2. BMA call for withdrawal of Health and Social Care Bill, 2011.

- <http://www.bmj.com/content/343/bmj.d4701?rss=1>
3. Unite call for withdrawal of Health and Social Care Bill, 2011. http://archive.unitetheStudents'Union.org/regions/north_east_yorkshire_and_humb/news_and_campaigns/more_than_500_gps_sign_petition.aspx
 4. UNISON call for withdrawal of Health and Social Care Bill, 2011. http://www.unison.org.uk/healthcare/pages_view.asp?did=13974
 5. RCGP calls for withdrawal of Health and Social Care Bill, 2012. <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/news/2012/february/rcgp-calls-for-prime-minister-to-withdraw-health-bill.aspx>
 6. RCN calls for withdrawal of Health and Social Care Bill, 2012. http://www.rcn.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/426909/Why_the_RCN_is_opposing_the_Health_and_Social_Care_Bill.pdf
 7. BMA on Medical Education, 2013. <http://bma.org.uk/working-for-change/negotiating-for-the-profession/nhs-education-and-training>
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‘NO TO HIGHER TUITION FEES’

Date Passed: December 2013

Council Notes:

1. That the tuition fee limit for undergraduate degrees has risen to £9,000 per annum for the academic year 2012/2013 and beyond.
2. That Germany has tuition fees of £845, and expects to abolish these in 2014.¹ France charges between £150 and £550. Countries such as Austria and Denmark have no tuition fees.²
3. That Professor Andrew Hamilton suggested raising the ceiling to £16,000.³
4. That this statement was supported by the Russell Group and Newcastle University.³

Council Believes:

1. The increase of the tuition fees limit to £9,000 per annum already represents a significant challenge for students from most backgrounds.
2. The UK's tuition fees are not in line with those of other academically successful European countries.
3. The suggested increase of the tuition fees limit to £16,000 would make the UK's Universities completely unaffordable compared to other European countries.
4. The Russell Group should direct their concerns regarding funding shortfalls towards the Government, and respect students' already substantial investments into their own futures, and the UK's future.

Council Resolves:

1. To mandate all NUSU Officers to highlight NUSU's opposition to increased tuition fees, whenever it is appropriate to do so.

1. <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/unbridled-success-germanys-fee-foes-claim-victory/2003928.article>
2. <http://www.mastersportal.eu/articles/405/tuition-fees-at-universities-in-europe-overview-and-comparison.html>

3. <http://www.independent.co.uk/student/news/we-need-tuition-fees-of-up-to-16000-says-oxford-vicechancellor-professor-andrew-hamilton-8867323.html>
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‘REMEMBERING THE FALLEN’

Date Passed: March 2014

Updated: October 2024

Council Notes:

1. The Second World War took place between 1939 and 1945.
2. The First World War took place between 1914 and 1918.
3. Between these two conflicts alone, millions of lives were lost in the fighting, this included students.
4. The Students' Union has a plaque in the History Room, commemorating those killed.
5. Every year, the University remembers those who were fallen by laying wreaths at the memorial in King's Hall on Remembrance Sunday.
6. Every year many workplaces, schools, universities and other public places in Britain fall silent at 11:00am on the 11th of November in order to commemorate those killed and the people who suffered in making the ultimate sacrifice.
7. Every year, the Students' Union receives a formal letter from the University Military Education Committee, inviting the President and members of the committee to the service. The Students' Union always takes a wreath to the ceremony (on 11th November), and the President or a delegated Officer lays it.

Council Believes:

1. The people who were killed should also be remembered in the NUSU building.
2. That sometimes the silence is not well publicised and as a result only takes place in small areas of the NUSU building.
3. The silence needs to be publicised well in order make sure that the silence is carried out effectively and the memory of the fallen is respected.
4. Many of those killed in these conflicts were students and staff of the University.
5. Those killed and injured were from many different walks of life and nations.

Council Resolves:

1. To hold a two-minute silence at 11:00am on 11th November each year to remember the fallen within the NUSU Building. Music will be turned off, where possible. Instead of turning off all screens, where appropriate and possible, the National Service of Remembrance will be streamed.
2. To signal the start and end of the silence via loudspeaker. There should be a 15 minute warning before the silence.
3. To not send any officers or representatives to attend the memorial service; however officers and other students may still attend if invited.

This motion also passed with a mandate.

‘BEAUTY PAGEANTS’

Date Passed: March 2014

Council Notes:

1. That companies such as ‘Miss Student UK’ and similar franchises have in the past approached the Students' Union wishing to host beauty pageants on the premises.
2. That women have been admitted to University to study on equal terms with men since 1878.

Council Believes:

1. That 'Miss Student UK' and other similar competitions contravene the NUS Equal Opportunities statement.
2. That this is a misogynistic event and should not be associated with NUSU's or the University's name.
3. That those competitions undermine the academic achievements of students and the institutions they represent.
4. That such competitions that offer a monetary prize could potentially target vulnerable students.
5. That whilst students who choose to take part in such events should have their decision respected, NUSU should not endorse or support such pageants.
6. NUSU should have an official stance on such competitions.

Council Resolves:

1. Not to allow beauty pageants to take place within the NUSU.
2. Not to allow advertising of pageants held off campus within the Students' Union building.
3. Not to allow beauty pageant representatives to work within the Students' Union building.
4. To mandate the Welfare and Equality Officer and the Marginalised Genders Officer to support any national campaigns against these events.

'CHEAP NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS'

Date Passed: March 2014

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. That the Union operates various promotional offers, such as Quids Day and Push the Button, when prices of both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks are reduced.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. That given the choice between an alcoholic drink and a non-alcoholic drink of the same price most will choose the alcoholic drink.
2. That the price of drinks and large bar queues encourages mass purchases.
3. That more people would drink sensibly if given a financial incentive.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. To ensure that the price of non-alcoholic draught pints (e.g. coke and lemonade) is always lower than that of the alcoholic options.

'END OF TERM AND END OF YEAR REPORTS'

Date Passed: March 2014

Council Notes:

1. That Sabbatical Officers and Liberation Officers/NUSU Chairs must make reports to council at the end of term and the end of year.

Council Believes:

1. That a standard procedure could help officers develop themselves and make it easier for suggestions of what the officers and future officers can do.

Council Resolves:

1. To adopt the following structure for End of Term reports (Appendix A)
2. To adopt the following structure for End of Year reports (Appendix B)

**Appendix A
Report**

What have you done this term?
What has been your biggest achievement?
What could you have improved on?
What do you plan to do next term?
Any additional sections that the report writer deems necessary.

Appendix B

Report

What have you done this term?
What has been your biggest achievement?
What could you have improved on?
What piece of advice would you pass on to your successor?
Any additional sections that the report writer deems necessary.

NO SMOKING AND BAN ON ADVERTISING

Date Passed: March 2014

Council Notes:

1. That the Smoking Ban in Public Places in England has been in place since 1st July 2007.
2. That research has generated evidence that second-hand smoke causes the same problems as direct smoking, including lung cancer, cardiovascular disease, and lung ailments such as emphysema, bronchitis, and asthma.¹
3. That the Students' Union has a responsibility for the wellbeing of its members, staff and visitors.
4. That e-cigarettes also contain nicotine and may damage a person's health even though they do not contain tobacco.²
5. That while e-cigarettes can be used in smoking cessation, the NHS does not currently offer or recommend them.³

This Council Believes:

1. That the lifting of the smoking ban would be detrimental to the health of those, including the members that we represent, inhaling second-hand smoke.
2. That it would be irresponsible of a Students' Union to promote a cause that advocates smoking in confined public spaces.
3. That such a decision would directly contravene the University's Coherent Campus strategy and no smoking policy.
4. That the promotion of e-cigarettes for anything other than smoking cessation is a mistake because its users can still become addicted to nicotine, which is the addictive substance in regular cigarettes.

This Council Resolves:

1. To refuse any promotion or advertising of any event that encourages smoking.
2. To refuse any promotion or advertising of any event that promotes the use of e-cigarettes for any other purpose than smoking cessation.

This motion also passed with a mandate.

<http://www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/2344.aspx?CategoryID=53>

² <http://www.nhs.uk/news/2012/09September/Pages/E-cigarettes-may-damage-lungs.aspx>

³ [http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/smoking-\(quitting\)/pages/treatment.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/smoking-(quitting)/pages/treatment.aspx)

‘T-SHIRTED PUB CRAWLS’

Date Passed: March 2014

Students’ Union Council Notes:

1. That the below motion was passed in 2008.

Students’ Union Council Notes:

1. That t-shirted pub crawls have increased in number and frequency recently.
2. That these pub crawls sell their t-shirts in and outside of the Union Building.
3. That these pub crawls are advertised in the Union Building.
4. That the majority of these pub crawls are operated by external companies.

Students’ Union Council Believes:

1. That the increase in the number and frequency of pub crawls is reflecting badly on the Union as it is perceived that the Union has organised these pub crawls.
2. That because of this perception the Union could be alienating some student members.
3. That despite the ‘arms length’ approach taken by the Union, by working with these companies we could potentially be implicated if anything goes wrong.
4. That the proliferation of the pub crawls seems to go against our stance on alcohol and our Sensible Drinking Policy.
5. That reneging on the pre-existing contracts could cause more harm than good.

Students’ Union Council Resolves:

1. To stop (after the ones already scheduled) supporting these pub crawls by preventing the selling of t-shirts in and around the Union building and preventing the advertising of these pub crawls inside the building, by external companies.
2. That where T-shirts are mentioned, it also applies to any form of identification which associates students with bar crawls.

Students’ Union Council Believes:

1. That the above motion is still relevant today.

Students’ Union Council Resolves:

2. To uphold the above motion by committing to the resolves outlined above.
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‘POLICY OF THE UNION’ (Originally submitted in March 2001)

Date Passed: March 2014

Council Notes:

1. The bulky nature of the Students’ Union Council Policy Document.
2. The duty of Steering Committee to keep the Policy Document up to date and manageable.

Council Believes:

1. There is no need to include the Honorary Life Members in the Policy Document.
2. That much of Council Policy has lapsed due to newer policy, yet remains in the document.

Council Resolves:

2. To allow Steering Committee to remove all policy that has been made redundant.

This motion also passed with a mandate.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Date Passed: May 2014

Council notes:

1. That honorary life memberships are given out to officers (Sabbatical or Liberation Officers/NUSU Chairs) at the end of their term in office ¹.
2. That the awarding of honorary life memberships is at the sole discretion of Students' Union Council ¹.
3. That Liberation Officers/NUSU Chairs are required to submit termly reports (Strategy and Guidance Documents Annexe I – Officer Job Descriptions).

Council believes:

1. That students should be able to ascertain what their representatives are doing for them and hold them to account.
2. That termly reports are an important way of holding officers to account.
3. That not submitting termly reports is in breach of the officers' job description.
4. That several Liberation Officers/NUSU Chairs have failed to submit a termly report more than once.
5. That honorary life memberships are given out in recognition of officers' service to the Students' Union.
6. That it is difficult to ascertain to what extent, if any, officers served the Students' Union when they have failed, more than once, to submit a termly update.

Council resolves:

1. To deny the award of an honorary life membership to any Liberation Officer/NUSU Chair that has failed, more than once, to submit a termly report.
2. To still award honorary life memberships to members of Council that were affected by extenuating circumstances.
3. To mandate Scrutiny Committee to establish whether or not extenuating circumstances apply. Scrutiny Committee is mandated to do so upon request by a member of Council that would not be awarded honorary life memberships under this motion. This request needs to be submitted within one week of this Council meeting.

1. Strategy and Guidance Document Annexe H – Membership & Members Benefits
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REITERATING OUR COMMITMENT TO FAIR PAY

Date Passed: May 2014

Council Notes:

1. Over half of working age adults in poverty are in work¹.
2. An estimated 30% of children in Newcastle live in poverty².
3. That over a third of students have basic living costs that exceed the amount they can borrow³.

4. That sub-contracted staff work within NUSU.
5. That in the last academic year, the cost of living rose 1% more than the maintenance loan did.

Council Believes:

1. That students, facing increased levels of debt and financial pressure, are at a higher risk of poverty than in the past.
2. That poverty inflicts significant damage upon society and NUSU should combat this where financially and practically feasible.
3. That no student should have to face a choice between eating properly and heating their home in the winter.
4. That students who have to work to fund their way through university should not have their labour exploited.

Council resolves:

1. To encourage employers to act responsibly and fairly when using student labour.
2. To remain vigilant in ensuring that NUSU, as a values-led organisation, is proactive in combating poverty amongst its staff and members.
3. To commit that, when considering tenders for sub-contracted services, NUSU will ask bidders to submit a short statement outlining any measures they take to combat poverty amongst their staff.

¹. <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/monitoring-poverty-2012>

². <http://cvsnewcastle.org.uk/representinginfluencing/poverty-and-inequality-in-newcastle>

³. <http://www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/NUS-HSBC-Experience-report-web.pdf>

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY TOWARDS DISCRIMINATION BULLYING AND HARASSMENT'

Date Passed: October 2014

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. NUSU has a diverse student population. In 2010/2011, the following figures were reported:

At least 1.5% of the UK population define as LGBT+ according to the Office for National Statistics. For many lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans (LGBT+) students, college and University is also a time where they are able to explore and define their gender and/or sexual identities, unrestrained by previous school and family life.

2. One in five LGB+ and one in three trans respondents have experienced at least one form of bullying or harassment on their campus ¹.

3. The Hidden Marks report, published in March 2010 by 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 by many unions, and reported that this kind of behaviour was seen as normal at such an event. This report also highlighted that sexual harassment against men can also occur and therefore there should be a gender neutral policy.

4. The Hidden Marks report also revealed that Disabled students also face harassment while they are a student at their current institution.

5. The Race For Equality report, published by NUS Black Students' Campaign, revealed that one in six of survey respondents reported that they had experienced racism in their current educational institution, and focus group respondents provided a range of examples of either experiencing or observing racism while at University.

6. Discrimination can have a serious negative impact for victims. For example, the Hidden Marks report revealed that victims reported a range of different consequences of violence, stalking and sexual assault on their health, experience of learning, confidence, relationships and mental health.

7. A Zero Tolerance policy against discrimination aims to help a union create an environment where all students can enjoy time in their Union without being harassed.

8. We note NUSU has taken disciplinary action against discrimination in the past and have disciplinary policies in place already, including a zero tolerance policy against sexual harassment.

9. Only a third of LGBT+ students (36.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that equality policies with regards to sport were visible at their institution (NUS: Out in Sport Report 2012)

10. 46.8% of LGBT+ students who do not participate in sport find the culture around sport alienating or unwelcoming (NUS: Out in Sport Report 2012).

11. The NUS Hidden Marks report, education beyond the straight and narrow report and the race for equality report all recommend and encourage zero tolerance policies to be taken up by unions and Universities.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. That no student at this institution should be a victim of any sort of discrimination, due to their disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, nationality, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity/paternity or marriage /civil partnership.

2. That bullying, harassment and discrimination takes place on our campus and in our wider community. This detrimentally affects the experiences of our members.

3. That action should be taken to enhance steps already taken to ensure that all students are able to enjoy University life without experiencing discrimination of any nature.

4. That education of our members around our values and policies is crucial to creating a safe environment.

5. That adoption and implementation of a Zero Tolerance policy across all NUSU activities safeguards all of our members.

6. That discrimination of any kind is opposed to the values and objectives of NUSU and those who commit acts of discrimination shall be disciplined for their action.

7. All members, visitors and staff have the right to be in an environment free from intimidation and that the Union upholds the principle of an equal, safe and secure environment for all its members and visitors.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. To enforce a Zero Tolerance policy in disciplinary procedures where discrimination, bullying or harassment has taken place because of one's ability, age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, nationality, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity/paternity or marriage /civil partnership.

5. To provide support to all those who have suffered from bullying and harassment and for when we cannot offer support signpost the member to adequate, professional support.

This motion also passed with mandates.

1. NUS: Education Beyond the Straight and Narrow 2014

Motion on 'NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY SHOULD IMPLMENT 'SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE LICENSING' OF THEIR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (BIOMEDICINE/BIOTECHNOLOGY)

Date Passed: December 2014

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. That a report from the World Health Assembly 2013 states that more than 1 billion people worldwide live without access to essential medicines[1] and that the right to access to essential medicines is recognised in international law as part of the human "right to health" by the United Nations and World Health Organization[2].
2. That the latest independent estimates state that 17-31% of all scientifically novel drug entities were discovered in university laboratories[4,5].
3. That Newcastle University has publicly committed itself to "social responsibility", being "globally ambitious" and "making a contribution to civil society"[6].
4. That socially responsible licensing frameworks have been implemented without reducing revenue[7].

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. That 10 million people die each year because of lack of access to treatments that already exist, and that this restricted access to medicines in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) is largely due to very high and inadequately regulated pricing of patented drugs and medical technologies by the pharmaceutical industry[3].
2. That Newcastle University, a non-profit and publicly funded institution, is an established innovator of biomedical technologies and that it seeks to commercialise such innovations wherever possible.
3. That Newcastle University is in a position to negotiate the terms of any agreements to license University intellectual property for private development through its Technology Transfer Office.

4. That effective frameworks already exist for developing 'socially responsible licensing' policy for universities, which can enable access to innovations in LMICs and that such frameworks have already been adopted at six UK research-intensive institutions.
5. That the access to medicines crisis outlined above is deplorable and that steps should be taken wherever possible to widen access to innovations in countries that cannot afford to pay for expensive patented medicines and health technologies.
6. That whilst universities may have a relatively narrow breadth of influence over technology licensing practices, their impact, individually and collectively, should not be underestimated and can lead to concrete and important gains in access to healthcare products.
7. That it is within the capability of Newcastle University to change to a more sustainable drugs licensing system and help to fix the problem presented.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

2. To support the advocacy of Universities Allied for Essential Medicines (UAEM) in pursuit of this change.

This motion also passed with mandates.

References

1. WHO. *WHA 2013: Universal health coverage - Report by the secretariat* (2013) http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA66/A66_24-en.pdf
2. WHO. *The world medicines situation: 2011* (2011) <http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/en/m/abstract/Js18772en/>
3. WHO. *Equitable access to essential medicines: A framework for collective action* (2004) <http://apps.who.int/medicinedocs/pdf/s4962e/s4962e.pdf>
4. Kneller, R. *Nature Reviews Drug Discovery* 9, 867-882 (2010) <http://www.nature.com/nrd/journal/v9/n11/full/nrd3251.html>
5. Lincker H et al. *Nature Reviews Drug Discovery* 13,92–93 (2014) <http://www.nature.com/nrd/journal/v13/n2/full/nrd4232.html#f1>
6. Newcastle University. *Vision 2021 - A world class civic university* (2009) <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/documents/vision2021.pdf>
7. Kapczynski, A et al. *20 Berkeley Tech. L.J.* 1088-1089 (2005) http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4297&context=fss_papers&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Furl%3Fq%3Dhttp%253A%252F%252Fdigitalcommons.law.yale.edu%252Fcgi%252Fviewcontent.cgi%253Farticle%253D4297%2526context%253Dfss_papers%26sa%3DD%26sntz%3D1%26usq%3DAFQjCNEEI0TC3C_88zhkCKflqWZpLhouoA#search=%22http%3A%2F%2Fdigitalcommons.law.yale.edu%2Fcgi%2Fviewcontent.cgi%3Farticle%3D4297%26context%3Dfss_papers%22

Motion on 'FOSSIL FREE STUDENT UNION'

Date Passed: December 2014

Student's Union Council Notes:

1. That Newcastle University has public commitments to tackling climate change by reducing fossil fuel consumption and promoting good energy practice, as stated in the 'Environmental Sustainability Policy' and 'Energy Policy Statement'¹.
2. That the Vice Chancellor has signed the 'Green Education Declaration' on behalf of the University which commits to take strategic and decisive action within our institution to bring about a sustainable higher education sector⁴
3. That the University has signed a 'Socially Responsible Investment Policy'
4. That in March 2013, Student's Union Council passed a motion calling on the University's full divestment from BP and Royal Dutch Shell over a three year period
5. That Newcastle University has an endowment of £55,200,000 including investments in fossil fuel companies BP and Royal Dutch Shell of £2,311,073 and £1,975,773 respectively.
6. That the CarbonTracker's Unburnable Carbon 2013 report⁵ highlights the overvaluation of fossil fuel reserves and the huge financial risks of investing in fossil fuels.
7. That People & Planet, in partnership with 350.org and others, has launched a Fossil Free UK campaign, calling on UK higher education institutions to divest from fossil fuels and sever their links with these companies.⁶
8. That 6 higher education institutions in the United States in addition to 17 Cities and numerous faith groups have already committed to divesting from fossil fuels for both moral and financial reasons.⁷

Student's Union Council Believes:

1. That BP and Shell are among the world's 200 largest fossil fuel companies, by proven carbon reserves, and that these reserves are well in excess of the amount of carbon that can be safely burned to have a chance of staying below 2°C of global warming.
2. That we are running out of time to keep global warming below 2°C above pre-industrial levels - the limit for ensuring a safe and stable future for the economy, the

¹ <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/estates/about/policy/>

² <http://peopleandplanet.org/green-education-declaration/signatories>

³ 'Carbon bubble will plunge the world into another financial crisis - report', 19 April 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/apr/19/carbon-bubble-financial-crash-crisis>

⁴ <http://peopleandplanet.org/fossil-free>

⁵ <http://gofossilfree.org/commitments/>

planet and all people on it, as recently outlined in the IPCC's 5th Assessment Report.⁸

3. That the fossil fuel industry, by extracting, processing, promoting and facilitating the use of, selling and profiting from fossil fuels, as well as by having a major influence on government policy, is complicit in causing climate change and its catastrophic impacts.
4. That we must do everything in our power to rapidly reduce the global use of fossil fuels and expand clean energy alternatives
5. That our university should be a role model in society, acting responsibly and helping create a safe future that is better for everyone.
6. That Newcastle University's investments in the fossil fuel industry undermine its commitment to tackling climate change and commitments outlined in the energy and Environmental Policies
7. That Newcastle University's commitment to tackling climate change should extend to its investment portfolio, as well as its own operations and research priorities.

Student's Union Council Resolves:

6. To support and encourage other student unions to submit similar policies and launch their own Fossil Free campaigns.

This motion also passed with mandates.

Motion on "NUSU Fancy Dress Policy"

Date Passed: October 2015

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. There is currently no NUSU Fancy Dress Policy.
2. NUSU aims to be a safe, welcoming environment which is specifically inclusive of marginalised groups. NUSU events should therefore be the safest available events for students to attend.
3. NUSU prides itself on being a diverse, inclusive environment, and has held events to promote this (e.g. LGBT+ Awareness Week, Mental Health Awareness Week, Diversity Week etc.), while not actively protecting the students it tries so hard all year to reach out to because there is currently no fancy dress policy.

⁶ <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2013/sep/27/ipcc-world-dangerous-climate-change>

4. There are certain costumes which are recognised as totally unacceptable, e.g. blackface, dressing as Hitler/ nazis etc.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. Without such guidance, some people dress in costumes which could be construed as inciting racism, transphobia, sexism, homophobia, classism and other forms of hatred towards marginalised groups, for example, blackface, dressing as Caitlyn Jenner, dressing as Ched Evans etc.
2. Costumes like this have the potential to make people from these groups feel unsafe, unwelcome and mocked.
3. Aforementioned costumes mock certain groups of people, which may lead them to feeling alienated from NUSU.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. To enforce a dress code policy at all NUSU events, at which students are not permitted to wear costumes which may incite hatred, mockery, or violence against marginalised groups of the student body. People wearing such costumes will not be allowed entry to any NUSU event. Such costumes include:
 - Wearing blackface (people who are not black painting their skin to look black)
 - Dressing as famous domestic abusers / rapists / paedophiles
 - Dressing as any famous figure who incites hatred / violence against certain groups of people (e.g. nazis, Klu Klux Klan etc.)
 - Dressing as people from marginalised groups in a disrespectful way (e.g. dressing as Caitlyn Jenner in a mocking way.)

Motion on' OPPOSING THE FIT TO SIT POLICY'

Date Passed: November 2015

Students' Council Notes:

1. The University is currently holding a consultation that is looking at the possibility of introducing a 'Fit to Sit' policy for examinations at Newcastle. If a student sits an exam, they will be deemed to have been fit to take it.
2. Students who sit an exam will be unable to submit a Personal Extenuating Circumstances (PEC) form after the exam, even if they feel their performance during it has been negatively affected by physical or mental illness or extenuating personal circumstances.

3. Students experiencing extenuating circumstances during the exam period will have the choice to sit the exam and having their performance be affected by these circumstances, or not sitting the exam and facing the uncertainty of whether their claim for extenuating circumstances will be accepted.

Students' Council Believes:

1. 'Fit to Sit' policies are unfair on students and put students in positions that may have a detrimental effect on both their performance in assessments and their physical and mental wellbeing.
2. Students should not have to choose between sitting an assessment and submitting a PEC form.
3. Not all students are able to accurately assess their own fitness to sit an exam or submit an assessment.
4. This policy will have a particularly detrimental impact on students with mental health issues.
5. Many students will 'solider on' and are reluctant to miss an exam or a deadline. Some students believe this shows dedication to their degree.
6. Institutions should not put reducing costs and red tape ahead of students' rights and ensuring the fairness of assessments.

Students' Council Resolves

1. That it will actively oppose any attempt by Newcastle University to introduce a 'Fit to Sit' policy.
2. To investigate similar proposals at other institutions to ascertain what mechanisms have proved effective when opposing 'Fit to Sit' policies.
3. To engage with resources provided by NUS to campaign against the introduction of a 'Fit to Sit' policy at Newcastle University.

Motion on "Pornographic publicity and publicity objectifying people"

Date Passed: May 2016 (formally endorsed October 16)

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. Parts of the 'NO MORE 'PAGE 3' FOR NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION' motion are lapsing.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. We need policy which is future proof and can adapt to new publications which objectify people.
2. Policy should allow publications to be sold if they drop content objectifying people.
3. Publications objectifying woman are against NUSU values.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. NUSU not to stock pornography.

2. NUSU not to stock publicity that objectifies people.
 3. Should this motion pass to replace the 'NO MORE PAGE 3' motion with Resolves 1 & 2.
-

Motion on “ WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS FREE FOR ALL STUDENTS”

**December 2005, re-affirmed December 2008, re-affirmed December 2011
(General Meeting)**

Reinstated as NUSU Policy May 2016

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. There are over 50 sports clubs at the Newcastle University.
2. There are over 90 societies at the Newcastle University.
3. A high number of Newcastle University's clubs and societies meet on a Wednesday afternoon.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. Wednesday afternoons are a valuable time, when students can socialise and participate in activities with other students.
2. The need for personal and social development at University is as important as academic development.
3. In some cases, Wednesday afternoon is the only opportunity they have to interact with students outside their course.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. The Students' Union will continue to ensure that Wednesday afternoons are kept free of academic activities for the benefit of all students.
2. That the Students' Union will put pressure on the University to look more closely at the 'student experience' so as to improve and enrich that experience for all its student members.

Motion on “Increase Gender Options on University/Union Documentation”

Date Passed: December 2016

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. The 2004 UK Gender Recognition Act allows those who identify as transgender to legally change their gender within the UK.
2. The Act only protects those who “intend to undergo, have undergone or [are] undergoing” gender reassignment surgery.
3. Figures show that 1 in 250 people in the UK identify as nonbinary, i.e. outside of 'man' and 'woman' (approximately 225,000 people).
4. In August 2016, Oxford City Council introduced a gender-neutral title on their paperwork – 'Mx', alongside the traditional Ms/Mr/Mrs/Miss.
5. The Newcastle University Student Self Service Portal (S3P) currently only has two gender choices when a student fills in their personal data – 'male' and 'female'.
6. When applying for online counselling with the Student Wellbeing service, there are only two gender choices – 'male' and 'female'.

7. Newcastle University's 2014-2016 Equality Strategy and Action Plan states that the University aims to "develop a fully inclusive University community [of students]...We will nurture them, ensuring that they can be developed within a positive and supportive culture that encourages everyone to flourish and reach their potential."

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. The 2004 Gender Recognition Act only protects those who identify as a transgender woman or man, and those who intend to get surgery. Nonbinary people are not protected by UK law.
2. Currently NUSU and Newcastle University documentation does not accommodate for genders other than male or female.
3. There are students at Newcastle University who do not identify as 'male' or 'female'.
4. There are students at Newcastle University who do not identify with pronouns such as 'he/him' and 'she/her'. Some students use 'they/their' to identify themselves, or change their pronouns, (e.g. if they are genderfluid).
5. A portion of staff are not aware of alternative genders and therefore regularly misgender nonbinary, transgender, genderqueer and genderfluid students – causing gender dysphoria, emotional upset, anxiety and an invalidation of the student's identity.
6. The University and Union should act to ensure they remain 'fully inclusive' institutions, where all genders feel validated and respected.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. To mandate Newcastle University Students' Union to recognise that there are more gender identities than just 'male' and 'female'.
5. To mandate the Welfare and Equality Officer and the Marginalised Genders Officer to ensure all online NUSU documentation also increases gender options to include the aforementioned genders.

This motion also passed with mandates.

References

- <http://beyondthebinary.co.uk/the-equality-act-2010-are-non-binary-people-protected/>
- <http://practicalandrogyny.com/2014/12/16/how-many-people-in-the-uk-are-nonbinary/>
- <http://beyondthebinary.co.uk/the-equality-act-2010-are-non-binary-people-protected/>
- <https://s3p.ncl.ac.uk/Student/Index.aspx>
- <https://internal.ncl.ac.uk/wellbeing/onlinecounselling.htm>
- <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/oxford-city-council-praised-for-introducing-gender-neutral-mx-title-on-paperwork-a7194046.html>
- http://www.ncl.ac.uk/diversity/assets/documents/equality_strategy_2014-16-jh.pdf

Motion on "Clarification of referenda cycle"

Date Passed: May 2017

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. That Strategy and Guidance document Annexe A states “Every three years, starting from academic year 2013/14, a referendum will be held on whether to affiliate to the National Union of Students. This will be held regardless of whether NUSU is at that time affiliated to NUS.”
2. Newcastle University Students’ Union held a referendum on whether to affiliate to the National Union of Students last academic year.

Students’ Union Council Believes:

1. The annexe is not clear in stating whether a referendum should take place from 2013/14 every three years regardless of referenda called in that time.
2. To ensure a referendum decision has appropriate time to embed, students should have the chance to decide on an affiliation to the NUS at least every three years, at which point the ‘clock’ resets.
3. Petitions from students already allow for appropriate exception to the 3 year timer.

Students’ Union Council Resolves:

1. That the timeframe for an automatic referendum should be three years from date of the last referendum (regardless of its nature).
-

Ordinary Motion on “Opposing expansion of the teaching day”

Date Passed: May 2017

Students’ Union Council Notes:

1. Consultations are currently ongoing within University governance around the possibility of extending the teaching day.
2. Newcastle University’s student population saw an increase this academic year¹, and will increase again in 2017/18.²

Students’ Union Council Believes:

1. Extending the teaching day is an inappropriate and unsustainable alternative to physically increasing the Teaching Estate.
2. A substantial increase to the teaching day would have a detrimental effect on both staff and students in a multitude of ways.
3. Any change to the length of the teaching day should be a last resort, once options around timetabling efficiencies and use of space have been exhausted.
4. Any change to the length of the teaching day should be temporary, reverting to their original arrangements once appropriate increase to the teaching estate has been secured.
5. Within the context of these consultations, the arrangements ensuring teaching does not occur on a Wednesday afternoon must be preserved.

Students’ Union Council Resolves:

1. To oppose an increase of the teaching day beyond 6pm for the reasons outlined above.
2. To commit to the preservation of not teaching on a Wednesday afternoon.

¹ <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/press/about/figures/>

2. <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/media/wwwnclacuk/pressoffice/files/pressreleaseslegacy/economic%20analysis%20by%20Regeneris%20and%20Urban%20Foresight.pdf>
-

Ordinary Motion on “Playing Newcastle Student Radio in Newcastle University Students’ Union”

Date Passed: November 2017

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. Newcastle Student Radio is currently not played in the Newcastle University Students’ Union building.
2. Newcastle Student Radio is funded by and located in the Newcastle Students’ Union building.
3. A motion passed on 7th June 2012 stating that the “union would provide greater support over the coming years.” ¹.
4. The Media Executive Committee approved unanimously the contents of this motion on 23rd October 2017. ².
5. Any complaints should be directed towards the Editor of the Courier as per the Complaints Procedure.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. The Students Union building should play Newcastle Student Radio for the duration of their operation hours during term time.
2. While the Students’ Union building should be expected to play Newcastle Student Radio (via nsrlive.co.uk) during term time they are not expected to play Newcastle Student Radio during the times of year that the radio station is not operational i.e exam periods.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. The Newcastle University Students Union building is under obligation to play Newcastle Student Radio (NSR) in the communal spaces located floor 0, floor 1 and floor 2, for the duration of their operational hours during term time.
2. This does not include Luther’s, private office spaces and does not include exam periods.
3. Newcastle Student Radio (nsrlive.co.uk) is under obligation to provide music and speech content during these operational hours.
4. Any violation of NSR Constitution whilst on air results will result in a review, with appropriate action to be decided by the Media Executive Committee.
5. NSR can be temporarily turned off for the duration of events in the Union that it may hinder.

References

- ¹. Ordinary Motion on NSR SUPPORT FROM THE STUDENTS UNION; 7th June 2012
- ². Minutes: Media Executive Committee Meeting 23rd October 2017

Ordinary Motion on “A purposely developed or built faith centre to be a priority for the Newcastle University estates strategy”

Date Passed: November 2017

Students’ Union Council Notes:

1. That since the closure of some of Windsor Terrace in 2015, there has been a shortage of prayer space for every faith on campus.
2. In July 2017, the University sought to solve this problem by making the King George VI space a multi-faith space.
3. The President has verified that the long term development of a prayer space is absent from the current estates strategy.
4. As part of the Freedom City 2017 programme, legacy projects are being considered.

Students’ Union Council Believes:

1. That the current issues relating to the King George VI largely relate to a lack of faith space on campus.
2. Faith is a hugely important part of the lives of many of our students and staff, and the University should prioritise their wellbeing in this respect.
3. The 50th anniversary of Dr Martin Luther King’s honorary degree, Freedom City 2017, and the subsequent legacy project offers the University the opportunity to permanently commemorate his commitment to diversity, tolerance and equality.
4. Capital development and estates strategy should be reflective of student need, which recent events regarding the King George VI building and Windsor Terrace have highlighted.
5. A strong example of how a multi faith centre has worked is in the case of the University of Central Lancashire and their construction of ‘Oasis’, a student prayer centre.

Students’ Union Council Resolves:

1. That the Students’ Union position stipulates that the University should explicitly prioritise the creation of a purposely built/redeveloped faith centre within its long term estates strategy.

Ordinary Motion on “No Bin, No Search”

Date Passed: December 2017

Updated: October 2024

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. On Wednesday 15th November 2017, Northumbria Police conducted a sniffer dog drug search of Castle Leazes halls of residence.
2. There was an absence of a place where illegal substances could be safely disposed of without consequences.
3. In the 2017 Rent Paper meeting the President was informed of a rise of illegal drug use this academic year.¹

Students Union Council Believes:

1. To ensure NUSU's commitment to harm reduction, a safe opportunity to dispose of illegal substances without legal consequences must be readily available in halls of residences.
2. A lack of opportunity to safely dispose could have extremely serious and long term effects on the future of our students.
3. This notion has been met with initial support by the University Accommodation Services.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. That the SU's position is that no hall of residence at Newcastle University should be subject to drug searches without prior availability of a safe option to dispose of illegal substances.
2. That the SU's position is that the provision of amnesty bins in halls of residences prior to drug searches be a measure that should be looked at by the University.

References

- ¹. Accommodation and Residential Services rent review 2018/19

Ordinary Motion on "Menstrual Care Bins in All Washrooms"

Date Passed: March 2018

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. There are 28,101 students at Newcastle University.¹
2. The Gender Identity Research & Education Society (GIREs) estimates that about 1% of the British population are gender nonconforming to some degree.²
3. Southampton, Birmingham, and Cardiff Universities all put motions forward to implement a similar policy.³

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. People have the right to dispose of their menstrual products cleanly and discreetly.
2. People have the right to use the bathroom that best fits their gender identity.
3. That the Union has a duty to provide a way of cleanly and discreetly disposing of menstrual products.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. To include at least one menstrual care bin for each men's bathroom in the Students'

Union and Students' Union owned buildings.

This motion passed with a mandate.

Proposed by: Hannah Fitzpatrick

Seconded by: Oliver Isaac (LGBT+ Society President) and James Fitzgerald (LGBT+ Society Trans Rep)

¹ Newcastle University Official Figures: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/press/about/figures/>

² BBC Gender Dysphoria: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/XZjhcLhQW08Ylw5b0p9xgH/gender-dysphoria-transgender>

³ Southampton University Trans Inclusive Policy: <https://www.susu.org/representation/policy/1314P21/improving-trans-inclusion->

Equal Opportunity Societies Motion

Date Passed: October 2018

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. Proposer has heard confidential oral reports from students, who have experienced discriminatory election or appointment practices within faith societies, at this University.
2. Discrimination of protected characteristics can lead to unfair, discriminatory election or appointment practices among societies which is illegal in the UK under the Equality Act 2010.¹
3. While religious exemptions have precedent under UK law, the faith societies on campus are funded by NUSU and are therefore accountable to the Students' Union in a comparable way to charities or religious organisations which are providing a service on behalf of a public/governmental authority: "But if the religious organisation is providing a service on behalf of a public authority like a local council, they're not allowed to discriminate against you because of your sexual orientation or religion or belief."²

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. The characteristics subject to discrimination within faith societies may include but are not limited to; sex, gender identity, disability, age, race, faith and sexual orientation
2. Faith societies often have more of an inclination to scrutinise a potential committee or volunteering candidate's personal life and characteristics.
3. While Council recognises that some forms of discrimination are allowed within religious organisations only if they're needed for the way the organisation works, the previously listed characteristics are not intrinsic to the workings of any faith society on campus and therefore do not offer significant basis for exemption.
4. The proposer is living proof that one can be a dedicated person of faith and have a sexual orientation/gender identity which is often discriminated against in religious groups' hiring decisions and still be an effective and passionate volunteer/worker to represent and provide for the needs of people of faith.
5. There is religious precedent appropriate to this motion, for example Jesus publicly protested against the restriction of access of foreigners and non-Jews,

those marginalised by the religious institutions of their day, when he turned over the tables in the temple. ³

6. None of the previously listed characteristics are valid to disqualify a candidate from a position in any job/volunteer position, particularly in a faith society.
7. There are both legal and moral arguments at play. Any form of discrimination is reprehensible and should be discouraged and penalised.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. To mandate all societies ratified by NUSU to have clear non-discriminatory election and appointment processes which are to be enforced in the first instance by the executive committee of the society, scrutinised by the Societies Executive Committee, and enforced by the Activities Officer.
2. To mandate the Activities Officer to ensure all cases brought before NUSU concerning discrimination within election or appointment processes, or discouragement from application based on characteristics listed in NUSU Inclusivity Policy, are thoroughly investigated through the appropriate forums as a matter of importance.

This motion also passed with mandates.

References:

¹ www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights Government published guide on discrimination and your rights

² www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/discrimination-in-the-provision-of-goods-and-services/discrimination-in-the-provision-of-goods-and-services1/goods-and-services-what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/what-doesn-t-count-as-unlawful-discrimination-in-goods-and-services/religious-organisations-and-charities-when-discrimination-is-allowed-in-the-provision-of-goods-or-services/ Citizens' Advice Bureaux

³ NIV New Holy Bible, 1973, Matthew 21 v 12-14, Luke 19 v 45-46

Proposed by: Grace Algar

Motion on 'NUSU TO SUPPORT CALLS FOR A LEGISLATIVE BAN OF "ESSAY MILLS" COMPANIES'

Date Passed: October 2018

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. "Essay Mills" is a blanket term referring to companies that allow students to purchase custom made essays.
2. Over 40 Vice-chancellors have signed a letter to the Education Secretary, Damian Hinds, to ban "Essay Mills" companies.¹
3. The Vice-Chancellor of Newcastle University, Professor Chris Day, also supports this call and has signed the open letter.²
4. Australia, New Zealand and 17 US States have introduced a ban on "Essay Mills".³
5. The Irish Government is already working towards similar legislation.⁴

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. Students should not be targeted and exploited for profit during particularly stressful times at University.
2. Students should feel fully supported at University by staff, and should not feel that they need to resort to “Essay Mills” services.

Students’ Union Council Resolves:

1. That NUSU will publicly support calls for a legislative ban on the advertisement and operation of “Essay Mills” companies in the UK.

This motion also passed with mandates.

Proposed: Jonny Hall

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/sep/27/university-chiefs-urge-education-secretary-to-ban-essay-mills>

² <https://twitter.com/BBCr4today/status/1045212699729309696>

³ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/essay-mills-students-cheating-universities-vice-chancellors-department-for-education-a8557516.html>

⁴ <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/irish-law-clamp-down-essay-mills-could-be-model-uk>

Motion on ‘FUNDING FREE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS ACROSS CAMPUS’

Date Passed: December 2018

Students’ Union Council Notes:

1. A survey by the charity ‘Plan International UK’ found that 1 in 10 women aged 14 to 21 could not afford sanitary towels or tampons.¹
2. There is currently a 5% VAT charge on menstrual products in the country.²
3. Following a motion to Student Council which passed in March 2015, free menstrual products were made available in NUSU’s Student Advice Centre.³
4. Newcastle College, with the collaboration of their University and College Union (UCU) branch, introduced provisions for free menstrual products for students.⁴
5. The Scottish Government have introduced a £5.2m scheme to provide free menstrual products in schools, colleges and universities.⁵
6. The Proposer emailed the Member of Scottish Parliament (MSP), whose Private Members Bill introduced the initiative in Scotland, in the hope of receiving advice on how to implement a similar scheme at Newcastle University.
7. Currently there is a petition spreading among Newcastle students, calling for the University to fund free menstrual products across campus, that has 317 signatures at the time of writing.⁶

Students’ Union Council Believes:

1. The Proposer received no reply from the aforementioned MSP which was a real shame.
2. There is a growing movement among institutions to introduce free menstrual products, and Newcastle University should do the same in line with its new vision and strategy.⁷
3. Providing free menstrual products would aid students with living affordably.
4. Menstrual products are a necessity, not a luxury.

Students’ Union Council Resolves:

1. NUSU and the students of Newcastle should take the stance that Newcastle University should fund free menstrual products across campus for students.

This motion passed with a mandate.

Proposed by: Raff Marioni

Seconded by: Charlotte Boulton (NUSU Marginalised Genders Officer); Newcastle University Feminist Society; Jack Green (NUSU Welfare & Equality Officer)

References

- ¹ <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/one-in-10-young-women-struggle-to-afford-pads-and-tampons-a8008671.html>
 - ² <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/tampon-tax-ban-tory-vow-11873971>
 - ³ <https://www.nusu.co.uk/pageassets/yourunion/resources/alldocuments/Copy-of-current-Policy-Document-last-updated-March-2018.pdf>
 - ⁴ <http://thecourieronline.co.uk/students-in-newcastle-receive-free-sanitary-products/>
 - ⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/24/scotland-to-offer-free-sanitary-products-to-all-students-in-world-first>
 - ⁶ <https://www.change.org/p/nusu-fund-free-sanitary-products-at-newcastle-university>
 - ⁷ <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/media/wwwnclacuk/whoweare/files/vision-and-strategy.pdf>
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Motion to “INCREASE UNDERGRADUATE INVOLVEMENT IN RESEARCH”

Date Passed: May 2019

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. Undergraduate students at Newcastle University can gain extracurricular research involvement in their free term time or during holidays.
2. Getting involved in research requires making contact with a research-active member of staff and getting their agreement.¹
3. Newcastle University currently provides a summer research scholarship. Applications closed for summer 2019 on 8th March 2019.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. Involvement in research at an undergraduate level provides students with vital transferable skills and an insight into post-graduate education.
2. Research involvement can increase student satisfaction with their course and can improve the reputation of the University through methods such as the National Student Survey (NSS), Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and Research Excellence Framework (REF).
3. The current uptake of the summer research scholarship could be improved by increasing student awareness and through modernisation of the process.
4. The current system of research placements and scholarships is not fit for purpose. It can create additional barriers for Widening Participation (WP) students or students who are only taught by pedagogical research staff, such as Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) and Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS).

5. Other universities have alternative ways of engaging students in research which publicise opportunities to students, instead of requiring students to search.²

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. That the NUSU stance regarding research involvement for undergraduates should be that the system requires modernisation and greater student engagement.

This motion passed with mandates.

Proposed by: James Prowse

Seconded by: Raff Marioni, Jonny Hall and Adam Lowery

References:

¹. <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/students/wellbeing/finance/researchscholarships.htm>

². <https://www.connectproject.co.uk/>

Motion on “AUDIO-VISUAL ACCESSIBILITY”

Date Passed: February 2020

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. That Newcastle University and Newcastle University Students' Union put out video marketing via social media and that these videos only in some occasions have visual description, subtitles or transcripts.¹
2. Without subtitles or transcripts, neurodivergent, blind, visually impaired, hard of hearing, and deaf students are excluded partially or fully from partaking in or appreciating audio-visual content.
3. Our Student Council elections are coming up in a month, and only some of these videos have subtitles or transcripts.
4. The Student Charter 2018 says that the Students' Union pledges to 'support all students to ensure they receive equal treatment' and that they will 'support student representation in a wide range of contexts to ensure that students contribute to the development and improvement of provision'.²

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. The lack of subtitles and transcripts in Student Council election videos leaves hard of hearing and deaf students out of a key part of the election process on our campus.
2. That our Union promises to promote equality of treatment and opportunity for all students and that by not having subtitles, transcripts or visual description for audio visual material ultimately this promise is not being fulfilled.
3. That by not having subtitles, transcripts and visual description options we are directly discriminating against disabled students on our campus.
4. This directly affects students who are hard of hearing, deaf, blind, visually impaired, neurodivergent etc, and thus a range of students with different needs will be catered for with this change. Without this change, we continually send the message that their input is not valuable or wanted, this is especially problematic with regard to our elections and related video material or any campus tour videos etc.
5. That adding subtitles actually increases engagement of people of all abilities.³

6. That all currently used campus tour and other informational videos etc should be redone to include these accessibility measures and that all future media output by the Union should include subtitles, transcripts and visual description.
7. That the subtitles, and transcripts must be word for word, and not simplified or shortened phrases – those with disabilities deserve to appreciate the full content and all of its connotations; without full transcription this is not fulfilled.
8. That although Newcastle University does put subtitles on some videos, it does not add transcripts or visual description and isn't consistent across media and websites.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. That all currently used informational videos on NUSU should be redone to include transcripts, subtitles and visual description – including campus tour, accommodation tour etc videos.
2. That all audio-visual material created and published by the Newcastle University Student Union, and its staff when operating in their capacities, whether to social media, website or other, must contain subtitles, visual description and transcription.
3. NUSU will support student media in obtaining these above listed access requirements to its releases.

This motion passed with mandates.

Proposed By **Georgia Corbett**
Seconded By **Tobias Lawrence**

References:

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/NewcastleSU/videos/2763229070408572/>

² <https://www.nusu.co.uk/pageassets/yourunion/resources/alldocuments/Student-Charter-for-2018.pdf>

³ <https://hear-me-out.cc/benefits-subtitles-captions-transcriptions/>

Motion on “NUSU to prioritise catering from local catering companies and/or suppliers”

Date Passed: January 2021

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. Coronavirus regulations and lockdown has had a devastating impact on small, local, and independent businesses in the United Kingdom with over 234,000 small business already ceasing trade. [1,2]
2. The North East has been one of the hardest hit areas in England. [3]
3. A considerable amount of the Students Union's function catering is performed by large international companies such as M&S.
4. There are multiple local catering companies in Newcastle Upon Tyne. [4,5,6]
5. Catering of Student Council meetings is already usually undertaken by local, independent takeaway shops.
6. Many SU events have already been successfully catered for by local businesses.
7. Catering refers to the catering of fresh hot/cold food, not items such as Coffee, Tea, Juice, Water, Biscuits etc.

8. Organisations such as BIRA have launched National Shop Local Campaigns already.^[7]

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. It is the moral duty of Newcastle University Students Union to support local businesses as this will help boost the economy of Newcastle and improve the livelihoods of residents of Newcastle.
2. It is in the Student Unions best interests to support local businesses for the benefit of the local area and the students of Newcastle University who may have used these businesses before lockdown and may wish to continue using them after lockdown.
3. Utilising local businesses is usually better for the environment due to a reduction in food miles and carbon footprint.
4. As Local caterers have been used before, this motion's suggestions would be completely feasible.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

That NUSU Will:

1. Stop using the catering services of larger multinational corporations for centrally organised events.
2. Prioritise the use of local, independent, Newcastle based businesses for all catering of centrally organised events taking place at NUSU.
3. Only utilise larger non-local corporations if no other alternatives can be found.

This motion also passed with mandates.

Proposed by: Christopher Winter

Seconded by: Alexander Wang-Evans

References:

- [1] <https://www.simplybusiness.co.uk/knowledge/articles/2020/06/covid-19-and-small-business-how-has-your-area-been-impacted/>
- [2] <https://www.simplybusiness.co.uk/knowledge/articles/2020/09/new-covid-19-report-impact-on-uk-small-business/>
- [3] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-54892161>
- [4] <https://www.catering-northeast.co.uk/>
- [5] <http://www.sheer-elegance-catering.co.uk/>
- [6] <http://www.newcastledeli.co.uk/catering/index.html>
- [7] <https://bira.co.uk/shop-local/>

Motion on "Supporting Humane Refugee Relocation to the UK"

Date Passed: 18th March 2021

Students Union Council Notes:

1. 'Newcastle Must Act' is a 'City Chapter' of a larger, Europe-wide organisation 'Europe Must Act' and is an apolitical organisation with a goal to encourage local council and MPs to show their support for more humane reception and treatment of refugees, specifically for relocation of asylum seekers from the Aegean island hotspot camps

2. Newcastle Must Act also aims to raise awareness of the humanitarian crisis with regards to asylum seekers on the Aegean Islands via action days and campaigns, currently working within COVID regulations
3. The initial Europe Must Act petition in March 2020 led to a meeting with the European Commissioner for Home Affairs, Ylva Johansson, and this concluded that there was no political appetite in the EU for taking more refugees ^[1] this helped form our current strategy and city chapter organisational structure
4. The recent fire at the Moria camp in early September 2020 in Lesbos has highlighted the urgent need for action to decongest the Aegean islands, and offer sanctuary to the most vulnerable in our global society ^[2]
5. Moria camp was built for less than 6000 people and was sheltering more than 20,000 ^[3]
6. A 'Moria 2.0 camp' was built to receive the refugees who were displaced by the fire, and the conditions here are even worse, camps on other islands are equally overcrowded: Vathy on Samos had 3,206 residents in mid-February 2021 in a camp built for 648 ^[4]
7. At least 79.5m people are displaced worldwide, 73% of these are hosted in neighbouring countries ^[5]
8. Multi-Purpose Reception & Identification Centres (MPRICs) are being built to shelter asylum seekers, these include only 4m² of living space per individual, and internees are under constant surveillance ^[6]
9. These have a projected capacity of 13890, and there were 40,000 asylum seekers on the Greek islands before the pandemic ^[6]
10. The EU Migration Pact for the European Union has recently been released, which features the premise of 'flexible options' for member states, whereby some countries can choose to be responsible for deportation of unsuccessful asylum seekers and forego reception of newcomers ^[7]
11. One year delay in the implementation of the UK Resettlement Scheme, which was intended to replace the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) and was supposed to come into operation in April 2020, the UK government has still not committed to a budget or numbers to be received ^[8]
12. Newcastle University has recently applied for University of Sanctuary status, showing solidarity with refugees

13. Our University has a strong history of student action advocating for refugees evidenced by award-winning student-led organisations such as NEST, SolidariTee and many other societies

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. Our country, and Newcastle community has a responsibility to advocate for asylum seekers who are unable to do so for themselves, and to express our support of welcoming newcomers in desperate need
2. Current conditions for refugees, on the Aegean islands specifically, are inhumane and we must advocate for their decongestion, taking our fair share of asylum seekers coming to Europe
3. 79.5m people may be displaced, however this only constitutes 1% of the world's population
4. Furthermore, 73% of these displaced persons are hosted in neighbouring countries, highlighting how much more must be done by the UK as one of the world's richest countries ^[5]
5. As a comparison, of Syria's 4m refugees, 2m are in Turkey and 1m are in Lebanon and Germany with their current reputation for high rates of refugee resettlement have resettled a number equal to only 1% of their population ^[9]
6. The routes to the UK for asylum seekers are unnecessarily perilous, some risking death by drowning in the absence of safe and legal routes. Improving the impact of our refugee policy would improve the situation in Greece, allowing improved policy formation and safer routes to be created for refugee movement, decreasing the number making these perilous journeys
7. Due to geographical and logistical reasons, certain countries experience more irregular entry of newcomers, this situation has meant some countries, notably Greece have shouldered the majority of the number of asylum seekers, and we believe they have largely been abandoned to deal with this by the rest of the EU
8. The new European Union Migration pact creates an incentive for countries to deport more asylum seekers due to its principle of 'flexible options', and despite their focus on flexible tools, it includes no permanent legal relocation mechanism to distribute newcomers across the EU ^[7]
9. The application process for asylum in the EU is inherently unfair given the lack of access to proper legal aid, lack of transparency and massive bureaucracy in place to hinder asylum applications ^[2]

10. Lack of access to interpreting and translation services, and lower levels of educational attainment in refugee populations, with at least 65% having reduced attainment in a UNHCR/UNESCO study, exacerbate the unfairness of this process, generates further inequality which leads to unfair deportation ^[10]
11. Refugees and asylum seekers make amazing contributions to our society, working notably within health sector for the NHS and as entrepreneurs, and it has been demonstrated that they benefit host countries' economies ^[11]

Student's Union Council Resolves:

4. To continue ongoing cooperation with Newcastle Must Act and Newcastle University in supporting asylum seekers and advocating for their safe and humane reception, collaborating with University of Sanctuary work

This motion also passed with mandates.

References:

- [1] <https://www.change.org/p/as-covid-19-spreads-europe-must-act-now-for-the-immediate-decongestion-of-the-aegean-islands>
- [2] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-54082201>
- [3] <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/mar/21/fears-catastrophe-greece-migrant-camps-lockdown-coronavirus>
- [4] https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58e2b73fb3db2bb2904ca55b/t/6033b91bfadbfd7cdae382df/1614002460708/GRC_Samos_WeeklySnapshot_20210214_EN.pdf
- [5] <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>
- [6] https://www.linkedin.com/posts/europe-must-act_europe-must-act-mprics-report-activity-6769546681542332416-tbkF
- [7] https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/new-pact-migration-and-asylum_en
- [8] <https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/latest/news/refugee-council-says-the-government-announcement-on-the-resumption-of-resettlement-falls-short/>
- [9] <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/evidence-shows-refugees-contribute-economies-their-new-homes-10499122.html>
- [10] <https://en.unesco.org/news/new-release-literacy-assessment-report-syrian-refugee-youth-lebanon>
- [11] <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-05507-0/>
- [12] <https://www.change.org/newcastle-must-act>

Motion on “Communication Access training”

Motion passed indicatively 20th May 2021 (formerly passed 21.10.21)

Students' Union Council Notes

1. Communication Access is a UK initiative in partnership with charities and organisations that share a vision to improve the lives of people with communication difficulties ^[1]. Communication access is a free course that aims to provide individuals with the skills and confidence to engage with people with communication difficulties
2. The impact of communication difficulties and disabilities is varied; some people may find it hard to ask a question, name an object or ask for help, others may have difficulties processing information, and others may use communication devices and require time to create their message ^[2,3].

3. Communication difficulties affect millions of people, with up to 14 millions people in the UK, 20% of the population experiencing communication difficulties at some point in their lives^[2]
4. The Equality Act 2010 requires that providers of services take steps to ensure those with communication disabilities get information in a format that is accessible ^[4].
5. Communication difficulties can lead to smaller social networks, fewer positive social exchanges, less frequent participation in social activities and higher levels of loneliness ^[5,6]

Students' Union Council believes

1. NUSU works to promote inclusivity for all students. Ensuring those with disabilities have equal opportunities to access NUSU buildings, events and societies. Having a communication difficulty is no different to having a physical disability in the way it can impact individuals ability to access everyday things.
2. Having a communication disability leaves individuals without a voice and denies them equal access to opportunities. NUSU currently does not provide any training or knowledge about communication disabilities. Therefore, this quick and easy communication access training could revolutionise the learning of committee members and in turn allow equal access to societies/sports clubs for all.
3. Communication is something you use every day for almost every task. For example, talking to a friend, reading an email, writing texts. There are also lots of different ways to communicate e.g. gesture, drawing, typing which we don't consider and can take a little bit longer to do. The training will allow committee members to be more aware of the needs of those with communication difficulties and adjust their communication as needs be.

Students Union Council resolves

1. For at least one (if not all) executive committee members of NUSU societies and sports clubs to have completed the individual Communication Access training and e:mail the certificate to the relevant Sabbatical Officer.

Proposed by Olivia Ridgway

Seconded by Ellie Pearce

References

[1] <https://communication-access.co.uk/about/>

[2] <https://www.rcslt.org/policy/communication-access-uk/>

[3] <https://www.crregistry.org.au/Communication/Communicationdifficulties.aspx>

[4] <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

[5] Garcia, J., Diez, E., Wojcik, D., & Santamaria, M. (2020). Communication support needs in adults with intellectual disabilities and its relation to quality of life. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.

Motion on “NUSU to incorporate the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of Antisemitism into the NUSU Hate Crime Policy ”

Date Passed 21st October 2021

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. Over the last ten years, antisemitism has become a more prominent force within society, on every side of the political debate.
2. There are increasingly complex debates on how campuses should respond to these shifting forces in a way which protects both freedom of expression and the safety of students from intolerance.
3. The Union itself needs to be protected from criticism when dealing with issues relating to antisemitism in a disciplinary setting, and when choosing public speakers, given the criticism that other institutions have faced in the past.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. Campuses play a major role in the academic and ideological debate, and should therefore set clear boundaries on what subjects and stances are appropriate.
2. The adoption of these clear boundaries is an essential process if we are to maintain the values of free and fair debate and protect students from antisemitic hatred.

Students' Union Council Resolves :

1. For NUSU to adopt and use the widely accepted IHRA definition of antisemitism, and incorporate this definition into the NUSU Hate Crime Policy, and apply this definition both internally and externally.
2. For NUSU to consult and reference these clear boundaries when deciding the appropriate way to deal with non-Union Members (e.g Public Speakers) who may have expressed complex or questionable views that could be construed as antisemitic.
3. For the Scrutiny and Disciplinary Committees to consult these guidelines when ruling on relevant debates.

Proposed by Alexander Walker

Seconded by William Hayes

IHRA definition of Antisemitism:

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed towards Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for "why things go wrong." It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

☐ Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.

☐ Making mendacious, dehumanising, demonising, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.

☐ Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.

☐ Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).

☐ Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.

☐ Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.

☐ Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.

☐ Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

☐ Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterise Israel or Israelis.

☐ Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

☐ Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law (for example, denial of the Holocaust or distribution of antisemitic materials in some countries).

Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property – such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries – are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews.

Antisemitic discrimination is the denial to Jews of opportunities or services available to others and is illegal in many countries.

Motion to “Lobby the University to implement the It Happens Here Report Recommendations”

Date Passed: 8th December 2022

Students' Union Council Notes

1. Last year It Happens Here conducted a campaign, Do Better Newcastle, which included a survey to ascertain the prevalence of sexual violence at Newcastle University. SU President Mady Baugh has since taken this research into her role and the findings will be released as a report on the Student Union website the week commencing the 5th of December. It Happens Here will relaunch the Do Better campaign this year with a focus on lobbying the university to ensure that the recommendations within this report are committed to. All recommendations are based on testimonies provided by the 409 individuals that took part in the survey, with an aim to reduce the prevalence of sexual violence at Newcastle University and ensure sufficient support is in place.

Students' Union Council Beliefs

1. The report not only reveals the scale of the issue but also that survivors at this university are frequently let down by current University measures. Until the University makes a financial commitment to provide survivor-centric policies this lack of trust will only continue. It Happens Here believe that the recommendations not only ensure a greater level of support for student survivors but also education around consent for all students. We believe that it is crucial that this work remains a priority of the SU, not being lost with the arrival of new Sabbatical Officers.

Students' Union Council Resolves

4. That NUSU should embed work around sexual misconduct into a consistent practice so it continually develops as a part of the Unions work for students, so work from previous sabbatical officers doesn't get lost or dropped once their post is up.

This motion also passed with mandates.

Proposed by Aimee Bond

Seconded by Abigail Hardcastle

References:

It Happens Here Report

AMENDMENT 1: (Passed and additional resolves added into above)

Amendment to IHH Motion

Students' Union Council Notes

1. The resolves part of the motion from It Happens Here asks the Union to lobby for the recommendations in the #Do Better Newcastle Uni survey and report.

Students' Union Council Beliefs

1. The Students' Union should always advocate for survivors and allies against sexual misconduct
2. Work around sexual misconduct should be embedded into NUSU practices and not solely down to sabbatical officers who are interested in the issues
3. The IHH motion should also require NUSU to lobby the university for improvements around sexual misconduct policy, procedure, prevention, education and support beyond the recommendations in the IHH survey
4. That all institutions and unions need to continually develop their own policies, and procedures so NUSU should similarly work on their own

Students' Union Council Resolves

1. This amendment seeks to add additional resolutions to the It Happens Here motion to further embed tackling sexual misconduct beyond the surveys recommendations.
3. **That NUSU should embed work around sexual misconduct into a consistent practice so it continually develops as a part of the Unions work for students, so work from previous sabbatical officers doesn't get lost or dropped once their post is up.**

This motion also passed with mandates

Proposed by Madeline Baugh

Students' Union supports and values all degrees

Date Passed: 9th February 2023

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. The Prime Minister (as of 30/01/2023) Rishi Sunak has been reported stating he intends to phase out University Degrees that do not improve students' earning potential⁹
2. Rishi Sunak noted he did not want students to be burdened with debt for a degree that did not increase their income in the long term

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. Studying in Higher Education and achieving a degree is not valued solely in students' potential income
2. If this were the case, those studying Education degrees to become a teacher would not be considered 'high value' due to their relative income
3. How you value a degree is subjective and plans to phase out those with lower earning potential would harm the Arts and Humanities which hold significant value beyond looking through a narrow lens of 'earning value'
4. Many students studying in Higher Education do so for a love of learning rather than for a desire of a higher income

⁹ <https://news.sky.com/story/sunak-vows-to-crack-down-on-university-degrees-that-do-not-improve-earning-potential-12667369>

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. The Students' Union will support all degrees, not limited to those regarded as having 'earning potential' and release a statement as such.
2. The Students' Union will lobby the University, if or when necessary, to ensure degrees deemed not 'high value' due to lower 'earning potential' are protected

Proposed by Mack Marshall

Seconded by Mady Baugh

Motion on Ending Oil, Gas and Mining Recruitment at Newcastle University and NUSU

Passed 18 May 2023

This SU notes:

1. That the operations of the oil, gas and mining industries cause immense environmental harm, by accelerating the climate and ecological crisis, polluting the water and permanently destroying landscapes. For a precise definition of the companies we refer to when we say 'oil, gas, and mining companies' see the [Fossil Free Careers Targets](#) page.
 - a. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has published several scientific reports on climate change: its causes, its impacts, and its solutions.
 - b. The IPCC found that 'emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities are responsible for approximately 1.1C of warming since 1850-1900' and that 'carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the main driver of climate change, even as other greenhouse gases and air pollutants also affect the climate'.
2. That these extractive operations also cause direct social harm, by displacing people from their homes and lands, destroying livelihoods, demolishing sacred Indigenous sites, and leaving workers and communities with severe health problems.
 - a. There are many examples of the social harm caused by oil, gas and mining companies.
 - b. In 2020, mining company Rio Tinto blasted a cave in Juukan Gorge, Western Australia, which was an ancient Aboriginal sacred site for 46,000 years, while expanding an iron ore mine.

- c. Despite significant resistance by a range of groups, led by Indigenous Environmental Human Rights Defenders, the Dakota Access Pipeline, crossing several US states, finished construction in 2017.
 - i. This pipeline crossed through the Standing Rock reservation, which is home to the Indigenous Sioux nation.
 - ii. It also ran underneath Lake Oahe, the sole source of drinking water for the Standing Rock Sioux.
 - iii. During construction, the pipeline had 3 separate leaks, contaminating Indigenous water supplies.
- 3. A 2017 study showed the number of graduates taking jobs in the industry had dropped by 60% in four years.
- 4. The University Careers Service does not have a publicly accessible policy that excludes the promotion of careers in the oil, gas and mining industry through its website, careers fairs, emails to the student body and other recruitment events.
- 5. Birkbeck, University of London was the first in the UK to exclude the oil, gas, and mining industry from all recruitment activity in September 2022. Four UK universities have now taken this step, and a further 20% of all UK universities have made similar exclusions for other industries, including the tobacco, sex, and gambling industries.
 - a. Newcastle University is included in those that have excluded tobacco companies from recruiting.
- 6. The university has made a public ethical and sustainability commitment. This includes a commitment to fully removing its investments in fossil fuel companies. In a statement made on 10th April 2019, the University stated it was aiming to reduce its own emissions and “pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase”.
- 7. Fossil fuel companies have been recruiting on campus.
 - a. On 2nd November 2022 Norwegian oil giant Equinor were recruiting on campus at a Careers Fair in the Engineering School.
 - b. Equinor are the UK's biggest gas supplier and are currently trying to develop several oil and gas projects in the world, including the Rosebank oil field in the North Sea.
 - c. Rosebank is the biggest undeveloped oil field in the North Sea and if developed would have the same emissions as the 28 lowest-income countries in the world in a year.

This SU believes:

- 1. Inviting oil, gas, and mining companies to advertise with the careers service adds legitimacy to the idea that these companies are an acceptable part of our society and our future.

2. The University Careers Service should ensure that its recruitment activities and events are in line with the university's publicly stated ethical principles of sustainability.
3. The University Careers Service has a responsibility to its students to promote jobs with a future. There is no future in oil, gas and mining as these industries need to decline in order to reach emissions targets in the climate emergency.
 - a. While oil, gas and mining companies claim to support renewable energy efforts, in reality this is not happening. For example, less than 1% of Equinor's energy production is from renewable sources.
4. Ending this university's complicity in career pipelines into the oil, gas, and mining industry is an effective method of showing solidarity with communities affected by these companies' operations, particularly Indigenous communities.
5. That young people see oil and gas as the most unappealing sector to work in. They associate it with responsibility for the climate crisis, and believe there is no future for jobs in the industry.
6. That graduates are increasingly turning away from the oil and gas sector.

This SU resolves:

1. To publicly support the Fossil Free Careers campaign.
6. To never allow oil, gas, or mining companies access to SU-organized events, or to lend the SU name, logo or endorsement to events which include these companies. For a precise definition of the companies we refer to when we say 'oil, gas, and mining companies' see the [Fossil Free Careers Targets](#) page.
7. To refuse the presence of oil, gas & mining companies in any SU controlled physical or digital spaces except for any maintenance issues.

This motion also passed with mandates.

Proposed by Jemima Elliott
Seconded by Lucy Lawrence

Approval of policy idea submitted to National Union of Students

Passed 8 February 2024

Student Council Notes:

1. NUSU rejoined NUS September 2022
2. The National Union of Students (NUS) Conferences are coming up with the main conference being held on the 17th-18th of April in Blackpool
3. As NUSU is a member of NUS, we are asked to submit a policy idea to be considered for NUS policy.

4. NUSU submitted a policy idea to NUS which was surrounding support for disabled, mentally ill and neurodivergent students.
5. The deadline for submitting the policy idea to NUS was the 9th of Jan.
6. If this motion fails to pass, then NUSU will withdraw the policy idea submitted to NUS.

Student Council Believes:

There is currently a lack of the following:

1. Awareness surrounding mental health, disabilities, neurodiversity.
2. Structural support being available (e.g. having difficulties accessing adjustments for accommodation)
3. Lack of resources available for disabled students (e.g. specialist equipment, bursaries etc)
4. NUS is a unique position to lobby on behalf of students and if council approves this motion, it will provide strength to our policy idea.

Student Council Resolves:

2. Student Council supports the submitted policy motion to NUS Conference: '49, Newcastle University Students Union: Supporting disabled and neurodivergent students.'

This motion also passed with a mandate.

Proposed by Leo David (Disability Officer)

Seconded by Shah Yaseen Ali (President)

50% Plant-Based Options by 2025

Passed 14 March 2024

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. Newcastle University [1], the UK Parliament[2] and the United Nations[3] have declared a Climate Emergency.
2. Sustainability is one of the 4 NUSU campaign priorities[4]. The NUSU Sustainability Plan 2022[5] commits to the United Nations Sustainability Goals[6], and under the UN's Act Now information they promote 'eating more plant based foods'[7]. Despite this, the plan does not mention the adverse environmental impact of animal agriculture.
3. Plant-Based Universities (PBU) is a student-led campaign active in over 80 Universities in the UK and abroad, with 10 universities having passed a PBU motion since its launch in late 2021[8], (nine in the UK, including the University of Cambridge[9] and University College London[10]).
4. "Plant-based" food contains no animal-derived products (i.e. meat, fish, dairy, eggs etc.).
5. Animal agriculture is responsible for 18% of all greenhouse gasses worldwide[11], more than all forms of transportation combined, which are

responsible for 13% of global emissions[11]. Emissions from transporting food represent a very small proportion, accounting for less than 10% of its overall emissions[12]. Therefore eating locally sourced food is much less significant to decreasing emissions than eating foods with low carbon footprints such as plant based foods[12].

6. Transitioning to a 100% plant-based food system would reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural production by 61%[13], as well as freeing up 76% of global farmland for rewilding[14], and this land would draw-down as much carbon dioxide as is currently emitted through fossil fuels each year[15].

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. NUSU has an opportunity to align with its social and sustainability commitments, following in the footsteps of other universities taking this necessary step. Universities influence broader society's ethical views and sustainable practices, so should lead by example acting on scientific evidence they produce.
2. 84% of 16-24 year olds are worried about climate change[16], and with limited financial power it is difficult for students to make sustainable swaps in their day-to-day lifestyle. By transitioning to a plant-based food system, NUSU takes institutional responsibility for their environmental impact across all sections of activity. Students are still able to bring their own food to campus as this institutional change is to show NUSU is starting to work to protect the future that students inherit, not continue to damage it.
3. Many students have other dietary requirements, plant-based food is almost always halal[17] and kosher[18] and eliminates 5 of the 14 most common allergens[19]. PBU is connected with the Plant Based Health Professionals network[20], who provide guidance ensuring this transition can be inclusive to all students - including, but not limited to, students who are disabled, neurodivergent, have allergies, or eating disorders. Transitioning menus provides an opportunity to prioritise inclusivity.
4. In high-income countries, plant-based diets are the most affordable and reduce costs by up to one third[21], alleviating financial burdens on students in the cost of living crisis and SU financial constraints.
5. Donations to the pantry will not be affected by this motion.

Students' Union Resolves:

1. For NUSU to publicly endorse the Plant-Based Universities campaign and support student campaigning.
2. For ticketed events run by NUSU, at least 50% of the menu will be plantbased and all other events will move towards 100% where possible.
3. Make training available to club/society committees to empower them with resources and information to offer more sustainable and inclusive plant-based options[22].
6. Where options are available, prioritise plant-based catering businesses when selecting new partnerships.

7. Encourage our external partners to increase the percentage of plant-based options available on their menus.

This motion also passed with mandates.

Proposed by Ella Spray

Seconded by Alex Theodosiou (Activities Officer)

Safeguard Peaceful Protest Rights on Campus

Passed indicatively 21 November 2024, formally passed 5th December 2024

Students' Union Council Notes:

1. On May 29th 2024 Newcastle Apartheid Off Campus (AOC) protested on campus alongside the community to raise awareness about the University's investments.
2. Northumbria Police, supported by further police deployments, including K9 and anti-riot units, were present on site during the protest.

Students' Union Council Believes:

1. That keeping students safe on campus and during a protest is essential. Students involved in the protest did not feel reassured by the presence of multiple police units (including K9 and anti-riot units) or the behaviour of some of the police officers, as seen in the video footage [referenced below].
2. The university has a responsibility to address the student body's concerns about police activity on campus.

Students' Union Council Resolves:

1. To Advocate for policies that ensure peaceful protest rights and increase transparency regarding campus policing practices.

This motion also passed with mandates.

Proposed by: Hafsa Niaz

Seconded by: Basil Almashharawi

References:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C7wZLbfMgzO/>

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/gaza-war-uk-universities-police-crack-down-protesters-why>
