

# **UNION COUNCIL AGENDA**

**7.00 pm Thursday 17  
November 2016**

**The Enterprise Centre,  
Lecture Theatre (TEC  
LT)**

# SECTION 1

## HOUSEKEEPING

**This part deals with notices, membership, minutes, matters arising, new Clubs and Societies and appointments.**

### **Expenses**

Remember – the Union (of UEA students) may be able to reimburse you for travel or carer expenses that you incur attending this meeting. Please contact Tony, the Democracy and Governance Coordinator, [anthony.moore@uea.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.moore@uea.ac.uk) for more details.

### **How to access the online meeting facility**

If you cannot attend in person on Thursday and would like to use the online facility, please email Josh at [officerassistants@gmail.com](mailto:officerassistants@gmail.com) before 5 pm on the day of the meeting.

### **Constitution and Bye-Laws**

The Union's governing document, the Articles of Association, and its rule book, the Bye-Laws, can be found [here](#) (Articles) and [here](#) (Bye-Laws).

To note: Starred items are, ordinarily not for discussion in the meeting; any queries on these items should be addressed to the Chair prior to the meeting.

**1994            Membership\***

To note: The list of members notified to the Democracy and Governance Coordinator, by 12 noon on Friday 11 November 2016 who together with the Student Officers make up the Council.

**1995            Guest Speaker**

To note: Jon Sharp, Director Of Student Support Services, will give a presentation of the work of the department and will be taking questions from Councillors.

**1996            Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 3 November\***

To note: That preparation of the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3 November has been delayed due to staff sickness and will presented to the December meeting of Council. For reference a list of the key decisions is provided. (See pages 11-12)

**1997            Matters Arising**

To receive: Any matters arising from previous minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**1998            Club, Society and Peer Support Group Constitutions**

To note: That a standard Constitution has been received from:

**Friendly Runners Club** whose objects shall be: "to create a fun environment for runners of all abilities to run together and socialise."

To consider: Appropriate action.

**1999            Appointment to UUEAS Sub-Committees and University Committees\***

To note: That there are several vacancies on University Committees; applications for these role can be made by emailing [anthony.moore@uea.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.moore@uea.ac.uk)

# **SECTION 2**

## **REPORTS**

**In this part of the meeting, Councillors receive reports on what the elected Officers and the Trustee Board have been doing.**

### **Reports from University Committees**

The Full Time Officers and some Councillors sit on key University Committees, if any big issues are coming up that will affect students, they report them to Council.

### **SOC Report**

The elected Student Officers meet as the Student Officer Committee (SOC) where they decide on how to run campaigns and on how to implement the policies passed by Union Council. This section is your chance to scrutinise the work of SOC and to hold the Student Officers to account for the work they have been doing on your behalf.

### **Trustee Board Report**

The Trustee Board is the governing body of the Union and is responsible for setting the strategy of the Union, ensuring its good governance, overseeing its financial performance and its legal compliance. The Board is made up of Student Officers, Student Trustees elected by Union Council and four outside external expert Trustees. The Chair who is a Student Officer reports to Council and, as with SOC, you can scrutinise the work of the Trustees and hold them to account.

### **Reports from Representatives**

This is where Councillors can bring ANY matter of concern to their constituents directly to the attention of Council.

**2000            Student Leadership Review**

To receive:     A report and draft paper from the Student Leadership Review working group. (See pp. 14-28)

To consider:    Appropriate action.

**2001            University Committee Reports**

To receive:     Any reports from Union Representatives on University Committees.

To consider:    Appropriate action.

**2002            Student Officer Committee Report**

To receive:     Reports from the Student Officer Committee. (To be circulated prior to the meeting.

To note:        That the approved minutes of all meetings of SOC can be viewed at  
<https://www.uea.su/union/governance/studentofficercommittee/>

To consider:    Appropriate action.

**2003            Trustee Board**

To receive:     A verbal report from the Chair of the Trustee Board.

To note:        That the approved minutes of all meetings of the Board can be viewed at  
<https://www.uea.su/union/governance/trusteeboarddocuments/>

To consider:    Appropriate action.

**2004            Union Finance**

To receive:     A verbal briefing on expenditure and income against the financial estimates.

To consider:    Appropriate action.

**2005            Reports from Representatives**

To receive:     Reports from representatives, on major issues not covered elsewhere on the Agenda; that they wish to draw to the attention of Council, especially, where those issues require support or action by the Union, or which are likely to be discussed at University Committee meetings on which the Union is represented.

To consider: Appropriate action.

# **SECTION 3**

## **OPEN DISCUSSIONS: Policy Development Session**

**In this section of the meeting, Councillors have formative discussions in groups on key issues that have possible policy implications.**

**This meeting, the issue is: Mental Health at UEA**

# SECTION 4

## POLICY MAKING

**In the final part of the agenda, Council debates policy proposals known as 'resolutions'. After they are debated, Councillors vote on the resolutions and, if passed, they become official Union policy.**

**Councillors can propose changes to the resolutions, these are called 'amendments'.**

### **Submitting an amendment**

If you would look to propose an amendment to any of the resolutions please send it to the proposer and the Chair at the earliest opportunity before the meeting to see if the proposer is willing to incorporate it into their resolution. If they reject your amendment, please send it to Tony, the Democracy and Governance Coordinator, [anthony.moore@uea.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.moore@uea.ac.uk) as soon as possible after you find out it has been rejected. The deadline for amendments to reach Tony is 48 hours before the start of the meeting.

### **Where you can find current policy**

All current Union Policy is available online at <https://www.uea.su/democracy/unionpolicy/>



**2006 Remember Don't Repeat**

To receive: A resolution from F Northrop (Non-Portfolio Officer) and A Mulcairn (Women's Officer) (attached pp. 30-31)

To consider: Appropriate action.

**2007 Say Yes to NUS**

To receive: A resolution from R Purtil (UEA Pride) and A Rust (Campaigns and Democracy Officer). (attached pp. 32-33)

To consider: Appropriate action.

**2008 The Fight for Votes at 16**

To receive: A resolution from C Mellowes (UEA Labour Society) and A Rust (Campaigns and Democracy Officer). (attached p. 34)

To consider: Appropriate action.

**2009 Scrap Prescription Charges**

To receive: A resolution from K Snape (Students' with Disabilities Officer) and J Swo (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer) (attached pp. 35-36)

To consider: Appropriate action.

**2010 Make Motions Easier**

To receive: A resolution from E Cutler (ECO) and Snape (Student with Disabilities Officer). (attached p. 37)

To consider: Appropriate action.

**2011 Time, Date and Place of Next Meeting**

To note: That the next meeting will be held at 7 pm, Thursday 8 December in the Enterprise Centre Lecture Theatre, the agenda closes at noon, Friday 2 December.

**SECTION 1  
HOUSEKEEPING  
PAPERS:**

**Key decisions from  
last meeting/**

## **Report on Union Council: 3 November**

Approved constitutions for the following new Societies: **East African Playgrounds, First Love, Gujerati, Healthcare Arts and Performance, Social, UEAXCFN and Ukulele.**

**Aerial Arts** was, again, deferred for consultation

Council heard a talk on Student Finance and the different funding arrangements in place across the UK

Due to time constraints, Council cancelled the open discussions session on Student Finance; if any Councillors have any comments to make: please send them to the Chair

Council passed the following new policies:

**Making Council more Effective:** introduced changes to Council rules and organisation to try to make meetings speedier and more understandable

**Student Club Nights:** aims to give members more say on themes and to ensure all events are Never OK and Zero Tolerance compliant

**Shut down Yarls Wood:** to support the campaign and demonstration to close the Yarls Wood detention centre

**Housing Policy:** aims to lobby to get student input into UEA rent setting, more community engagement with a Good Neighbour Scheme and to raise Home Run Standards

**Talking to students:** range of initiatives for the Union's Officers to engage with the membership

**Brexit:** the Union will lobby for continuation of membership of the single market and the rights of movement for EU citizens to and from the UK; will campaign against anti-migrant violence and discrimination

**World Mental Health Day:** to ensure the event is held each year and is fully inclusive

**Animals on Campus:** any events where animals take part must be risk assessed and animal welfare must be a priority. To encourage groups to find alternative themes rather than using animals; Pet Therapy Sessions will be excluded from this

**LED Lightbulbs:** to ensure all lighting in Union House is up to best energy standards and replace all lower standard light bulbs

**Zero Tolerance to Hate Crime and Racism:** commitment to fighting these, to promoting UEA is United and affiliating to Black Lives Matter

**Changes to the Complaints Bye-Law:** enacted to firm up the timeline for the process and to transfer one level of appeal from SOC to Management Committee

**Assessment and Feedback:** campaigning to get UEA to adopt NUS' principles of student feedback, to back online marking, student rep input into the design of feedback and to lobby for individualised exam feedback.

A resolution on enforcing Union policy on refusing to host tax avoiding companies and extending this to Union activities anywhere on or off campus was defeated

Resolutions on affirmation of support for the NUS and on the re-organisation of Peer Support Groups were withdrawn.

**SECTION 2 REPORTS  
PAPERS:  
REPORT AND PAPER  
FROM THE STUDENT  
LEADERSHIP REVIEW  
GROUP  
REPORTS FROM  
STUDENT OFFICERS**

**(to be circulated prior to  
meeting)**

## Student Leadership Review Interim Report

**NB: This is for consultation and offers an opportunity for students to feed into this work. The proposals will come back to council in January**

### Executive Summary

In April 2015, Union Council resolved that the Campaigns and Democracy Officer should carry out a review of Student Leadership positions within the SU. The mandate was:

- The review should be focussed on, but not look exclusively at, part time roles on SOC.
- The review should adopt similar terms of reference as the one originally launched last October; examine all relevant council mandates on the issue; and look at good and emerging practice from other unions.
- That the review group should be supported by three Union Councillors.
- That the review should undertake preparatory work over the summer; consult with all relevant groups this and next term; and report by the December meeting of 2016 in time for recommendations to be approved for elections in the Spring.

This report represents interim conclusions from the review. We have found:

- That our system is confusing and has developed patchy leadership structures.
- That there are multiple student leadership positions across the Union but we tend to have an unhelpful focus on a single "central committee" (the "student officer committee" or "SOC") whose role and function is confused.
- That the current system creates large barriers to involvement both in terms of elections and workload once in an elected role.
- That there is significant and confusing overlap between Liberation Caucuses, Officers and Societies.
- That there is considerable scope to both expand the number of opportunities available and strengthen and standardise the support available to elected representatives.
- This review is not looking at governance

This leads us to conclude four main things:

1. That an SU of our size, scope and ambition should have a breadth of leadership roles and leadership committees/boards for different types of student and different SU functions.
2. That there is insufficient linkage between Liberation Caucus committees, societies and officers.
3. That we should improve and standardise our promotion of, training of and support for the breadth of elected student leadership positions in the future.
4. There are some clear options on Job Sharing of roles, in particular Liberation Roles.

We will now:

- Take forward **consultation** on this document and the three **broad strands of work** outlined above.
- Bring forward **draft proposals** for constitutional change in December.
- Seek to approve these in good time to implement change in time for the main election season in Spring 2017.

## Part One Introduction and Background

In the recent UEA Students' Union "Quality Students' Union" audit, our democracy was rated as excellent:

"The SU delivers an Excellent support framework to ensure that the democratic processes which support decision-making are delivered to the highest standards. Democratic engagement within the organisation fundamentally exists to represent the opinions of its members. The Union maintains a very traditional structure to policy making and works hard to ensure this effectively engages students from a variety of perspectives through the make-up of the Union Council.

"As a result, it was clear that members believe student control in major decisions is at the heart of UEA Union, upholding their purpose and commitment to act with a "Student Focus" and "Political Awareness." The Union holds fair and open cross-campus ballots for all major office positions in line with the requirements of the 1994 Education Act and has balanced the portfolio of the full-time officer team with a Postgraduate Education Officer.

"The Union's most engaged members were very aware of the role of the elected officers and a number of the key policy discussions from the current year"

However, the system and structures are not perfect. In April 2015, Union Council resolved that the Campaigns and Democracy Officer should carry out a review of Student Leadership positions within the SU. The mandate was:

- The review should be focussed on, but not look exclusively at, part time roles on SOC
- The review should adopt similar terms of reference as the one originally launched last October; examine all relevant council mandates on the issue; and look at good and emerging practice from other unions
- That the review group should be supported by three Union Councillors
- That the review should undertake preparatory work over the summer; consult with all relevant groups this and next term; and report by the December meeting of 2016 in time for recommendations to be approved for elections in the Spring

Following this mandate an online election was held to appoint three members of the review group to work with the Campaigns and Democracy Officer. This group met in early June to agree an approach to the review and discuss key issues.

### Working assumptions

Whilst the motion set out key areas to look at the group agreed some working assumptions to guide the work:

- **We are looking at elected leadership positions.** The review should focus on leadership positions that are elected and/or have a representative role rather than at structures within the student staff team.
- **We aren't just looking at the "Student Officer Committee" (SOC).** The review should focus on Part Time roles on SOC but should examine wider opportunities within the union to be an elected leader of some type.
- **We are looking at culture/support as well as structures and roles.** The review should both look at the structure of roles on offer but also the culture, support and funding around those roles to enable them to succeed.

### Background

A review of Sabbatical Officer roles at UEASU was carried out in academic year 2013/14, leading to a referendum on roles which abolished the "Finance" and "Communications" sabbaticals and introduced new roles for activities and campaigns/democracy as well as splitting the academic officer into PG and UG.

This is widely believed to have had a positive impact, however no changes were made to the Part Time student officer group ("Student Officer Committee" or "SOC"). Since then a number of motions have been passed and discussions held on further developing the Student Officer team:

- Motion 1526 mandated the Student Officer Committee to do all it can to achieve a **gender balance** in all future elections including looking at quotas.
- The “Women in Leadership” action plan that arose from that proposed investigating introduction a full-time women’s officer.
- In October 2015 the Student Officer Committee created a working group to look at the issue of a Full Time Women’s Officer, as well as to look at other areas of potential reform following a broad piece of research from the Union, proposing to look at **gender balancing** committees in the same way that NUS now does.
- There was also a decision to look at whether or not the current **division of work** between officers is fit for purpose; and looking at the Non-Portfolio Officer roles “and how we make them work **effectively**”.
- Motion 1854 mandated a review of the union’s **democracy and Bye Laws**.
- Until recently the SOC included the “Graduate Students Association President” but the GSA has now been wound up by the University with its functions take on by the SU.

In its motion in April, Union Council resolved the following beliefs about the current situation:

- Union research suggests that students regard the Union as not having a sufficient **number** of leadership positions;
- Our current structures shut out enthusiasm and talent through **a lack of positions** and unnecessary **barriers**;
- **Gender** is a real issue and a mixture of **encouragement, quotas** and **dedicated positions** should be looked at properly;
- Too many of our student leaders come from the **Humanities** and not enough from other faculties;
- **Nursing students** rightly argue that their representation within the union is poor, as do others, including but not limited to students on professional body courses and placement-based courses, who find our democracy **inflexible** and difficult to engage with;
- The issues facing **EU students and non EU students** are sufficiently different for NUS to recognise the difference in their structures, and we should look at these issues too;
- Proper representation for PG students is crucial and we need to look at how we might examine their under representation on the SOC;
- There is a real debate about whether the PG sabbatical should be a general PG sabb or one that focuses on education;
- Many students would struggle to fill a full role on SOC **alone** and we should look seriously at options to reduce those barriers.

### **Summer 2016 work**

Following the working group’s meeting in June four key pieces of work have been carried out:

- **Amy Rust** has conducted a brief audit of the student leadership positions available across the SU; and has carried out desk and face to face research with over 50 SUs around the UK to look at their structures.
- **Lucy Auger** created some dialogue with peer support groups and liberation groups on how to they would like the SU to support their leadership positions and whether a liberation committee of some form would be useful for them.
- **Elliot Folan** conducted a small piece of research into definitions and examples of job sharing, alongside how that could be implemented in our SU.
- **Louise Rudd** undertook to find out more about how mature students are represented in other unions and create a recommendation of how we can improve leadership opportunities for mature students.



## Part Two History and Theory

Since their inception almost all Students' Unions have had structures which include representative deliberation, policy making and accountability bodies (councils, general meetings etc) and leadership positions in the form of an executive committee. In almost every case elections to the executive have been by direct, cross campus ballot with either general meetings or student representative councils providing scrutiny, policy direction and accountability for those executives.

Executives have also followed a similar structure around the UK. Since the late 70s, almost all featured a group of part time officers and full time officers, with full time officers adopting broadly similar roles focused around Welfare, Education, Activities and Priority Campaigns. They traditionally acted both as the political leadership of an SU as well as the trustee body as the committee in control of the "management and administration" of the SU as a Charity exempt from registration.

However over the past decade there have been some interesting developments that have tended to cause SUs around the country to start to revise their structures.

- As a result of Charities legislation almost all SUs created a **Trustee Board** to handle staffing, Corporate Governance, Finance and Risk- enabling executives to focus on political and representative leadership.
- Most SUs have abandoned internal "**infrastructure**" sabbatical roles like Finance and Communications to focus on charitable outcomes like activities or campaigns.
- Many SUs have **abandoned formal democratic structures** outside of elections, with forums and online ideas platforms focussed on research and consultation rather than deliberation.
- Many SUs have created **different kinds of committee and leadership structures** around types of activity, abandoning the idea of a single central committee in control of all activity.
- Many SUs have **abandoned Part Time Officers** altogether, with volunteers and committee members being elected by smaller groups
- Some SUs have been experimenting with **gender balancing; non portfolio blocks** of officers/sabs (that later divide up responsibilities) and **school/faculty based representation**.

In almost all cases there are three commonly given reasons for introducing reform:

- The **size and scale of the SU** as an organisation being beyond the ability of a single FT/PT committee of students
- The **size and scale of the student body** being hard to represent effectively through a single committee structure
- Perceived **barriers to involvement** of representative structures like councils and elections, both generally (ie time poverty) and from an equality perspective

At UEA the SU has adopted some of the above developments, although in piecemeal fashion and without a fundamental review (for example) of the SOC. This means that the Student Officer Committee is characterised as follows:

- It has a **structure** and **candidates manifestos** that suggest it is responsible for the whole of the SU's activities.
- Its **constitutional** status and **meetings** have tended to focus more narrowly on the SU's central campaigning function with other bodies and positions starting to handle other functions.
- This has tended to lead to a significant mismatch between expectations and reality for student officers, especially Part Time Officers who tend to be successful **outside** of the auspices of the committee.

### Three types of activity- three modes of participation

Essentially the SU carries out three key functions, and whilst there is clear crossover between these "functions", any organisational or democratic system has to start somewhere. Most observers accept that each tend towards at least a different **style** of democratic participation from students. The following is an adaptation from an NUS study in 2009:

<p><b>Social Enterprise.</b> The SU runs a number of professionally run services for students, including bars, entertainments, catering, and retail services. The modern day complexity of these services and their role in providing a service for students, coupled with the financial imperative for such services to succeed, command that</p>
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they be run by staff with student involvement in their delivery (student staff) evaluation (student managers) and their direction (at a strategic level).

This type of activity is arguably unsuited to the debate and mandate style of representative democracy; essentially the combination of organisational values and student input ensure that the student voice is heard and that the services remain student led. Put simply, students wanting to become involved with the running of the social enterprises should be able to focus on that rather than the price of student accommodation or the organisation of sports fixtures.

**Representation, Rights and Campaigning.** Whilst there is a recognition above that the definition of representation can become confused dependent upon activity within a students' union, there are a clear set of activities that can be combined into this category. Representation of the views of students to the University is a crucial role, both in formal committee based terms and informal terms through liaison and meetings with key University personnel. In addition the SU will co-ordinate and train student representatives at department and course level, and run campaigns on a local and national level that seek to influence change on students' behalf. Although some elements of the analogy are unhelpful, this section of the Union's work is akin to that of a Trade Union, where acting as a voice for students and promoting and defending their rights are crucial.

This type of activity and its associated models of democratic participation rightly needs to differ from that of the Enterprises element; not only may there be significant debate over the union's position on an issue, there is also a need to have roles that reflect types of student and particular problems or concerns that they may have- often the elected need to represent certain cohorts, concerns or courses. The mindset and mode of participation need to reflect these differences to ensure that student leaders have appropriate fora for raising concerns, debating issues and acting on them through the representational opportunities on offer. Put simply, students wanting to become involved with tackling timetabling issues in the institution should be able to focus on that, rather than being expected to monitor trading or commercial budgets.

**Activities and Opportunities.** The SU offers a number of activities and opportunities through which students are able to enhance their experience at University. This may include participation in sports and societies; involvement in student media; volunteering and other student development opportunities such as student skills training. This area of activity remains largely student controlled and run through groups, clubs and societies, with staff involvement often in administrative support or developmental assistance.

This type of activity and its associated models of democratic participation rightly needs to differ again from the other two; here the elected role is more about co-ordination of groups and support for their development than advocacy or speaking up on behalf of others. Again, the mindset and mode of participation need to reflect these differences, such that students can focus on activities and the co-ordination and promotion of them, through organising committees and creating appropriate policies and strategies. Put simply, students wanting to become involved with the running of societies should be able to focus on that, rather than being expected to also consider the University's response to the HE White Paper.

### **Being effective at Representation, Rights and Campaigning**

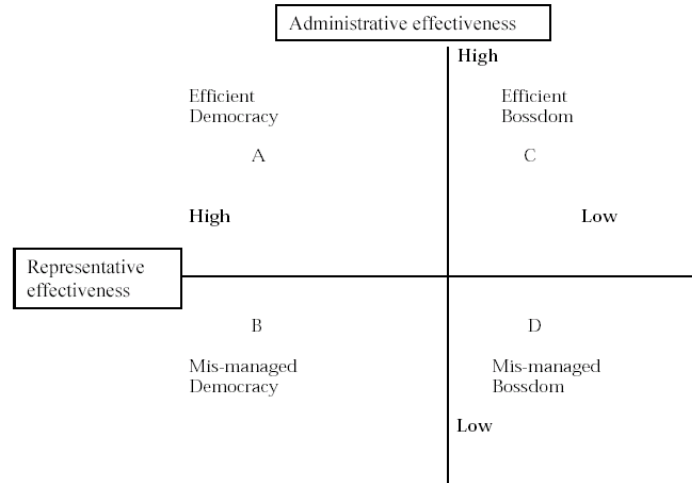
In the Representation, Rights and Campaigning function there is some useful underpinning theory from the Trade Union movement that can help us understand how to develop the structures.

Trade Unions' organisational capacity has long been seen as shaped by the tensions between representational functions and bureaucratic forms. Child, Loveridge and Warner (1973) take this tension as central factors affecting union capacity. They define **administrative** rationality as 'the logic of a goal-implementation or operational system, while **representative** rationality is the logic of a goal-formation or policy-deliberating system' (1973: 78). The "representative" rationality was characterized by a multiplicity of communications methods and strategies to reach as many people as possible; holding back on decisions until the maximum amount of consultation; lots of democracy, committees, etc. It required the union leaders, and thus the organisation, to be representative of members' aspirations and wishes.

But given that to run an organisation that needed to actually carry out the tasks of representation, there was also an "administrative rationality" required. This was characterized by carrying out tasks efficiently, employing experts, budgetary control, etc. It made the trade union efficient.

As illustrated, they pose representational effectiveness against administrative effectiveness or rationality.

Figure 1 Model of administrative and representative effectiveness



Source: Adapted from Child et al. 1973: 80.

They essentially define trade union effectiveness as an outcome of good union representation and good union administration. They point out these goals are frequently in direct conflict though they are not always at odds. In their model (see figure 1), an effectively representative trade union will be driven from the bottom, while an administratively efficient large organisation will be driven from the top.

The “ideal” trade union would be an “A” union- a hard thing to achieve, given it must be democratic and involving as well as efficient and managed well. A “B” union would be highly democratic, but perhaps with poor financial control, little in the way of effective HR policy or a lack of delegation to experts. A “C” union might have a tightly controlled sabbatical and management team with no truer involvement in democratic decision making, poor election turnouts, etc. A “D” union would simply fail on all counts.

Arguably in an SU context the SU staff hold the principal responsibility for administrative effectiveness, with elected officers holding the principal responsibility for representative effectiveness. This is reflected in UEASU’s two lead bodies- the Board handling administrative effectiveness and the SOC handling representative effectiveness.

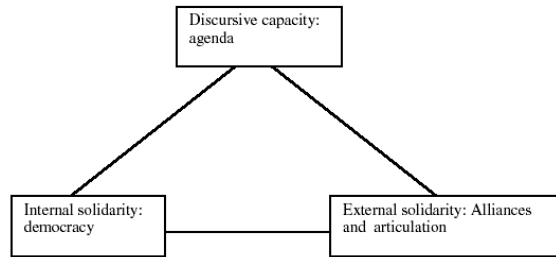
### Improving representative effectiveness and political leadership

Again trade unions have also been looking at the issue have adopted a model. This is a model that places the mobilisation of different resources at the centre of the analysis of power, arguing that the success of union officers crucially depends on their power and that this power is the result of a variety of particular resources that can be mobilized to alter the terms of its relationship with other actors, organisations or services (ie in our context the University, Government, etc)

- First, it names ‘agenda’ or discursive power as the capacity of officers to shape and put forward their own agenda.
- Secondly, it names ‘internal solidarity’ which refers to cohesion: the mechanisms developed in to ensure democracy and collective cohesion members’ participation, student officer profile presence and structures, and communication between general students and their officers.
- The final source is called ‘external solidarity’ referring to the capacity of officers to work with their communities and to build horizontal and vertical coordination with others on both a local and national level.

Whilst this model can apply to all types of SU officer it is hard to believe that an officer working Part Time will be able to develop in all of these areas successfully, particularly if their portfolio covers the whole student cohort or a large part of the SU administration. Hence many SU structures have tended towards smaller roles.

Figure 4 Local union power resources



Source: Levesque and Murray 2000

### The four roles of a sabbatical officer

Over the past 15 or so years the role of student officers has become increasingly diversified and complex. The majority of an officer's role can be split into four categories or 'hats' which has allowed officers to understand better the different facets of their roles.

- **"Minister"** Role: This involves being politically responsible for an area of work, ie sports or communications.
- **"Trustee"/"Director"** Role: This is the oversight role of the SU operations and can include areas such as employment, legal compliance and financial responsibilities.
- **"Activist"** Role: Taking action around key rights issues and building campaign commitment for students outside of formal structures.
- **"Representative"** Role: Being a member of committees and meeting key people in the round as a representative of students.

In theory Part Time Officers hold smaller versions of the above, but whilst it is well established that Part Time Officers no longer carry out the **"Trustee"/"Director"** there is still an underpinning assumption that they hold the other three **"hats"**. This is very difficult to achieve and arguably has set up PT officers to fail unless significant extra support is on offer.

### Man in the mirror

In 2013 NUS produced a landmark report on participation in democratic structures in SUs ("Man in the Mirror"). It found:

- The representative democracy models tended to be dominated by men
- That deliberative structures had significantly different participation patterns for different diversity groups
- That students are starting to trust representatives less and favour more local and direct forms of democracy and consultation

### Summary

The above tends to cause us to consider:

- Whether the "Central Committee" assumption around SOC is unhelpful.
- Whether the SU might create more opportunities for leadership of smaller groups or functions.
- Whether we might adopt some of the models around different types of Governance for different functions albeit with overlap.
- Whether we could improve training and support for elected student leaders, and its consistency.
- Whether it is possible to create more elected positions that are more informal (ie without having to stand in a "big election").

### Part Three

#### Auditing the current UEASU Picture

To inform the review we have carried out a short, surface level audit of existing elected student leadership positions throughout the SU. The overall finding is that the current practice reflects:

- An **unspoken understanding** that both the collective role of SOC as the **central committee**, and the **individual role** of its members had become “too much”.
- That as a result a number of other leadership “experiments” have emerged which divide up roles, functions or part of the student body.
- That these have not been considered “in the round” and that inconsistencies in the level of support, funding, training and profile exist across the roles.

#### Activities and Opportunities

The most obvious area of development away from the “central committee” in recent years has been on **student activities and opportunities**.

- It is true to say that already the A&O area offers the highest number of student leadership positions within the SU- those on the committees of Clubs and Societies make up over 1000 student leadership positions.
- Some of these are “hogged” by some committee-happy students.
- These leaders may not see themselves as leaders or even part of the SU, and our training and support for them tends to focus on compliance and risk rather than leadership, skills and development.
- Over the past year a new coordinating body has been created for Sport (Sports Exec) which has been seen as successful and offering important leadership over a particular area.
- The intent is to develop a similar success out of the Societies and Media collectives.
- Med Soc has become part of the SU and also offers coordination amongst societies within a particular school.
- All of the success in these areas tends towards the “participative” style of Governance referenced in earlier sections- these students want to **get things done** and view the structures as a way to **organise** rather than **deliberate** or **debate**.

These developments are not dissimilar to other SUs although our research over the summer suggests some questions:

- Should the SU **restrict** the number of committee positions (or Presidencies) a single student holds?
- Are there some areas where the SU should **insist** on positions (ie E&D)
- Can the SU improve its **training and support** officer for both group committees and coordinating “umbrella” committees?
- Can we do more with **participative budgeting** with these groups?
- Can more be done around **student leadership** of SU wide charity fundraising and volunteering?

#### Undergraduate (and PGT) Education

A large group of course reps exist within the University. These are not necessarily seen as SU reps although they are trained and coordinated by the SU and carry out a key representative function.

- The University continues to underfund delivery of a **Code of Practice** on student representation but the Union will have clear staff support in this area in the year ahead.
- There are poor formal links between this group and the SU’s **Education Officers** or **policy making** structures.
- Separate rep structures that divide up **schools and faculties** exist on the Union Council but are not usually filled and the process for election lacks legitimacy.
- A group of **convenors** in faculties are given a bursary from the SU (part funded by the University) but cannot be elected given rules in the Education Act 1994 on paid union office holders.
- **University committees** are largely populated by **sabbatical officers**; those that are not are generated through uncomfortable, long winded elections at Union Council.
- The union’s work in this area tends to lack real profile amongst the student body.

Work with other SUs suggests that there is significant scope for development here:

- Can a more formal structure of **education focussed reps** “surround” the Education Officers?
- Can leaders in this area take a role in **Policy Development**?
- Can more be done to support work at **School and Faculty level**?
- Can the union to more do support this group with **research and tools** to generate it?
- Is there a better way to **distribute and elect** positions on University Committees?
- Can more be done to **build the profile** of this work amongst students?

### **Liberation Caucuses and Assemblies**

The Union has made solid progress in this area over the past couple of years.

- **Autonomous caucuses** for LGBT, Women, BME and Disabled Students have all been created with a leadership and policy development function.
- **Assemblies** for Mature Students, International Students and PG students have also been created.
- Whilst there has been some **depth** to their work, they have all suffered variously from a lack of **breadth** of student participation.
- The Liberation officers and groups share a budget and many intersectional aims but do not meet regularly or coordinate effectively.
- The SU E&D committee has not been meeting regularly and has a confused role.
- **Standing for office** in a Cross Campus ballot for one of the Liberation positions is intimidating and especially difficult where those campaigning are forced to attempt to “guess” whether someone self defines into a group.
- Evidence suggests that students are **confused** about the respective purpose of a caucus, a related society, a related PSG and the SU officer of that group.
- Anecdotal evidence also suggests that the **core of people** active in a caucus are also active in related societies.
- It is possible for a society to disagree with an SU officer on an issue and there are not at present suitable or satisfactory structures through which that group of students can resolve the conflict.
- The current system implies that societies don’t or shouldn’t discuss political issues.

Research over the summer suggests some key questions:

- Can we resolve the “**crossover**” issue with related **societies**?
- Are there other ways to **elect Liberation Officers** than through a large “**Cross campus Ballot**”?
- How important is **breadth of participation** and are there other ways for students to contribute than attendance at meetings?
- Can **coordination** of the groups be improved?
- Is there a way to **clarify and strengthen** the leadership of E&D within the SU both as an employer and as an organisation?
- Can we find a solution that builds on UEA’s historic strength in societies and have a system that is simple to understand, allowing students in Liberation groups to organise themselves appropriately?

### **Ethical and Environmental**

Both the University and the SU itself have a good history on E&E work however there has been little development in this area in recent years:

- There are two **part time officers** for each of the two “words”.
- The University **coordinates a group of students** in this area and that can be seen as rivalling the SU’s work.
- The role of **Ethical Issues officer** is highly confused and lacks real purpose.
- A large **People and Planet group**, along with some society activity, underpins much of the activity across campus in this area.

Research into other Unions suggests that the UEA’s approach here is uncoordinated and disparate, and there may be opportunities to bring together aspects of this work both across UEA and within the SU to improve impact and coordination.

### **Community**

Building structures based around the **student living experience**, and the relationship between that and local communities, has been a key development at other SUs in recent years.

- At UEA the only manifestation of work in this area is held in the title of the **Welfare Sabbatical** and in previous years the distribution of a community newsletter.
- Unlike in other Universities with large on campus populations there are not any structures that **coordinate or represent** those in UEA Accommodation.
- **Community relations** are taking on increased importance as the University grows and the council considers planning regulation to cope with the expansion.

Again learning from other Unions throws up interesting opportunities:

- Can **housing/community strategies** be developed at UEA that involve student leadership?
- Should the Union experiment with **coordination/representation** structures for on campus accommodation?
- Is there scope for structures out in the **community** to improve **communication** and **coordination**?

### Student Staff

At the outset we deliberately resolved to not look at employed roles. However it is worth reflecting briefly on two issues:

- The creation of **student managers** in SU outlets, focussed on collection and dissemination of student feedback, has been seen by some as blurring the lines between representative and employee.
- The Student Staff teams lack **Trade Union representation**.

Work with other unions suggests there may be options therefore on these two issues:

- How can we best clarify the respective roles of those **elected** with the Social Enterprises and those **employed** to gather student feedback?
- Are there ways to encourage and normalise **Trade Union membership** amongst students and the participation of Student Staff reps in Union bodies and Boards?

### Social Enterprise

Following a review of these areas to improve student input there have been some ground-breaking developments in these areas in recent years:

- Employed **student managers** in each outlet/area are responsible for gathering, synthesizing and disseminating student feedback.
- Following a review corporate governance, **Development and Oversight Boards** have been created to look at strategy for Ents/bars and Retail respectively.
- These include students elected (by Council in 2014, by cross campus ballot in 2015 and hybrid in 2016)
- A number of initiatives have been successfully delivered in these areas arising from **Council mandates** (including sanitary product pricing, sexual harassment, vegan range etc)
- **Non portfolio officers** have tended to want to focus here but have only really been able to do so through DOB membership
- The University has traditionally **lacked involvement** of or representation from students in its equivalent services- but has agreed to a new student forum.

UEA is an **important innovator** in this area although there are some questions arising out of SU research and experiences this year:

- Can we improve **coordination** of and **support** for the DOBs?
- Is there a way to "**close the feedback loop**" on the work done by **Student Managers**?
- How can we ensure we **retain and bolster** the "radical edge" of initiatives generated by mandates at **Council**?
- How can we make the most of the new **Estates forum**?
- **Entertainments** is an area that lots of students want input on- how can we harness that energy whilst **managing expectations**?

### Wider areas

A number of other areas have emerged during the research:

**Corporate Governance:** In this area- encompassing the Trustee Board and its HR and Finance Sub Committees- we have tended to adopt other unions' structures which see Sabbaticals, PTOs and "ordinary" students elected by council on the bodies. However the profile of elections to these bodies is low and "ordinary" student engagement hard to sustain- are there ways to improve here?

**Welfare:** Unlike many other unions the SU has not developed any structures that surround the Welfare portfolio outside of the Sabbatical Officer. This is however a key concern for many students and a rich source of involvement both the union (through societies). Can something be put in place to improve support for and accountability for the Welfare sabbatical and portfolio?

**Nursing:** Whilst other groups suffer from time poverty and distinct educational issues this group has an acute set of issues that the Union has recognised in recent times. The union is leading the way on staff support for Nursing students it is behind on political/representative structures although progress has been made on an academic society. What can we learn from other unions that have created specific SU structures/officers? And should there be a joined up approach on all Medical related students?

**Priority Campaigns:** In recent years the SOC has tended to operate as a feedback body for union services and a grant making body for campaign budgets. Is there a case for formally supporting its role as the Union's campaigns committee- and are there ways to involve more students in the leadership of our campaigns that go beyond having to stand (and win) a cross campus ballot?

**Union Council:** Many of the issues above relate back to Union Council, and other wider meetings like Sports Presidents and the Graduate Assembly. These are not in scope of this review but an eye should be kept on developments in these areas as they are closely related.

**Elections:** A number of Unions are now using technology to run smaller elections online- either for student groups, liberation positions, committees and school/faculty based elections. Many are held in the Autumn term to gather "new student involvement". Is there scope for that at UEA?

**SU Insiders:** Some unions have begun to hold events for all student leaders on campus- elected and employed. For example At Middlesex SU an annual residential is held to improve understanding of the union and bolster communication of the SU's key priorities and messages. We only tend to bring this group together at the end of the year in the form of the SU Awards. Is there scope for such year round events/programmes at UEA?

**Postgraduates:** The PGSU set up is not in scope of this review, although it is clear that there remains a tension between the "general PG" role and the "PG Education" role that the sabbatical undertakes. In addition committee places have tended to be hard to fulfil. What can we learn from other unions on generating PG involvement in general structures and leadership of PG specific functions?

**ACTION POINTS:**

- Expand
- Campaigning rules



## **Part Four**

### **Job-Sharing**

This part summarises what “job-sharing” is, examines its use in broader politics, its use in specific student unions and some positives and negatives. It concludes by laying out how job-sharing could be practically implemented in UEA SU.

#### **What is Job-Sharing?**

Job-Sharing is a mechanism by which two or more individuals (usually two, or three at most) are able to serve in a position that would ordinarily be occupied by a single person. In organisations in which the position holds a vote on a democratic body, the two individuals share a single vote on that body between them.

The Civil Service broadly describes job-sharing as “a form of flexible working which enables two employees to voluntarily share the responsibilities and duties of one full time job”; the idea was similarly defined by Rosie Campbell and Philip Cowley as when “two or more people working on a part-time basis share the same full-time position”.

The practice of job-sharing is encouraged by the ATL in education fields; they argued in 2015 that “that job sharing is important in achieving equal opportunity in employment practice in educational establishments”.

#### **Job-Sharing in British Politics**

Job-Sharing has been raised as an issue in British political life since at least the late-1990s, when Lorraine Mann sought to stand on a job-sharing basis for membership of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 (it was rejected by the Returning Officer and the courts). The Fabian Women’s Network, the Fawcett Society, Disability Rights UK and Rethink have all since endorsed political job-sharing, and the Labour MP and current Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell put forward a private members’ bill to allow job-sharing in 2012 (like most private members’ bills, it failed to pass). The concept has since been endorsed by both the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party of England and Wales; indeed, two Green Party parliamentary candidates fought a court case in 2014 to be allowed to stand as a job-share (the case failed). The Greens routinely practice job-sharing within the party; several members of its national executive currently serve as, or are seeking election as, job-shares, including two leadership candidates.

In a 2014 academic article examining job-sharing, Campbell and Cowley conclude that as regards Members of Parliament, “Offering MPs the opportunity to job share does not challenge demand-side barriers to women’s selection and will only boost the representation of women in Parliament if accompanied by other measures. However, offering MPs the opportunity to work part-time may improve the supply of women standing as parliamentary candidates...there is an argument that job shares ought to be included in the battery of measures advocated by feminist campaigners in order to better represent women’s interests”.

#### **Job-Sharing in British Student Unions**

There are several examples of Student Unions that have adopted job-sharing options for some of their Union Officer positions:

##### **Mid Kent College's Students' Union**

The positions of Disabled Students’ Officer and Women’s Officer have been occupied by job-shares in recent years.

##### **Bristol Students' Union**

In 2015, Bristol SU had two candidates standing for Mature & Part-Time Students’ Officer as a job-share.

##### **Swansea University Students' Union**

In 2011 the part-time Events & Entertainment Officer position was occupied by two individuals job-sharing, as was the position of International Students’ Officer.

##### **Birkbeck Students' Union**

The current part-time Global Citizenship Officer position is occupied by two individuals as a job-share.

Warwick Students' Union

In 2012/13, Warwick's LGBTIA+ Officer position was a job-share.

Nottingham Students' Union

In 2013 and 2014, the Women's Officer position was job-shared between two women. One of the job-sharers stated: "It was a lot better doing a job share, I don't think I could have done it by myself".

Hull University Students Union

The LGBT+ Officer position is currently subject to a job-share, as is the part-time students' officer.

University College London Union

In December 2014 two students at UCLU successfully proposed an amendment to the constitution to allow job-sharing for part-time positions. The amendment argued that "the workload for a part-time officer can be incredibly high... Those with other commitments whilst they study, from caring responsibilities to clubs and societies to part-time jobs, should not be unable to get involved in the Union through lack of time".

Job-sharing for part-time positions is now an option. The UCLU website describes it thus:

"You have the option of running for all Part Time positions jointly with another student as a job-share. In terms of the election you would be a single candidate. If elected you would share the role and the duties that it requires. If you are concerned about the time commitment of a particular role this might be an option which you may want to consider. (Please note that this option is not available for Sabbatical and Student Trustee positions)."

Goldsmiths University Students' Union

Goldsmiths has operated a job-share system long enough for it to be cited as a useful system by UCLU; in 2013, for example, the Women's Officer position was a job-share.

### **Arguments for Job-Sharing**

There are four main arguments for job-sharing:

1. It allows those with disabilities, mental health issues, caring responsibilities, intense workloads, part-time jobs or a combination of those to take up the campaigning activities of being an Officer without committing to 100% of the responsibility and stress. As an SU, we are committed to increasing diversity and this is a mechanism to do that.
2. UEA SU has long had a problem with women candidates putting themselves forward or being elected. Job-sharing is considered by feminist campaigners, politicians and major political parties to be an important tool in increasing the representation of women in politics.
3. UEA SU Officer elections have repeatedly seen instances of students seeking election but then standing aside for friends, pulling out after the deadline and seeing who was standing, or declining to stand due to not wanting to stand against their friends. This has been particularly pronounced in Liberation elections where communities are close-knit. This has meant that talented individuals have been lost as potential Officers and this is something we should seek to prevent.
4. The workload for a Part-Time Officer can be very high, and even if an officer has average responsibilities, it can still be very stressful and in one case led to the Women's Officer resigning and UEA SU being without an official Women's Officer for a number of months. Job-sharing would allow students to split the workload.

### **Arguments against Job-sharing**

1. There's a democratic concern that less-popular candidates may seek joint election off the back of the popularity of better-known candidates. This is currently playing out in the Green Party, with ex-Leader and current Green MP Caroline Lucas seeking election as Leader in a job-share with less-known running mate Jonathan Bartley. This has attracted intense criticism from some Green Party members.
2. If job-sharing is expanded to all part-time officer roles, and the option is utilised for all of them, it would expand the Student Officer Committee from 18 people to 31. While each job-share

would still have 1 vote, it would make the situation rather unwieldy in SOC meetings. However, this could be ameliorated by having each job-share only send one person to each meeting.

3. Candidates wielding one vote between them could make it harder for them to make decisions. There would need to be a solution as to what happens if they disagree.

4. There are other options beyond a wholesale rewriting of the election process – more staff support, the creation of committees for officers and other such ideas. Union Officers are not the only mechanism for democratic involvement in the SU and we could instead look at encouraging participation in other areas.

**How would Job-sharing be implemented?**

There are three options for implementing job-sharing, as I see it:

1. Allow all part-time officer candidates to job-share;
2. Allow only Liberation Officer candidates to job-share;
3. Leave the option of job-sharing up to Liberation Caucuses.

## **Part Five**

### **Summary Conclusions and next steps**

The above material might be summarised as follows:

1. That an SU of our size, scope and ambition should have a breadth of leadership roles and leadership committees/boards for different types of student and different SU functions.
2. That there is insufficient linkage between Liberation Caucus committees, societies and officers.
3. That we should improve and standardise our promotion of, training of and support for the breadth of elected student leadership positions in the future.
4. There are some clear options on Job Sharing of roles, in particular Liberation Roles.

We will now:

- Take forward consultation on this document and the three broad strands of work outlined above
- Bring forward draft proposals for constitutional change in December
- Seek to approve these in good time to implement change in time for the main election season in Spring 2017

# **SECTION 4 POLICY PAPERS:**

**All the Policy  
Proposals that Council  
will be debating**

## 2006 Remember Don't Repeat

Proposer: Finn Northrop (Non-Portfolio Officer)

Seconder: Abbie Mulcairn (Women's Officer)

### Union Notes:

- 1.) That only the red poppy was sold in SU outlets this year
- 2.) That in previous years the SU sold both the red and white poppy
- 3.) That all students and staff at UEA have the right to mourn the loss of life in conflict in the way they deem most appropriate as long as it is in line with the values, ethics and policy of the union and British law
- 4.) That there has always been a certain level of pressure to wear a red poppy, particularly in recent years, those who choose not to wear a red poppy have been demonised. This is made clear by multiple high profile examples of celebrities and news readers refusing to wear the red poppy <sup>1 2 3</sup>
- 5.) The red poppy is considered by many to be a political symbol
- 6.) That Red poppies are stocked widely, whereas there are a very limited number of stockists of the white poppy, usually it is only stocked by community and religious groups <sup>4</sup>

### Union Believes:

- 1.) That the Union defends the right of students and staff to wear the red poppy if they wish
- 2.) That the red poppy is considered by many to be a political symbol with multiple offensive, upsetting and actively negative connotations:
  - a.) The imperialist nature of the British armed forces throughout history means many see the red poppy as a celebration of the atrocities of the British army and those who perpetrated it<sup>5 6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/if-you-dont-wear-a-poppy-youre-sent-to-the-social-guillotine-is-this-what-british-soldiers-died-for-a6720786.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.channel4.com/news/by/jon-snow/blogs/wear-poppy-air>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/red-poppy-debate-5-famous-people-exercised-freedom-of-choice-over-the-commemorative-symbol\\_uk\\_58186d11e4b0672ea689e508](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/red-poppy-debate-5-famous-people-exercised-freedom-of-choice-over-the-commemorative-symbol_uk_58186d11e4b0672ea689e508)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ppu.org.uk/whitepoppy/outlets11xx.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/worst-atrocities-british-empire-amritsar-boer-war-concentration-camp-mau-mau-a6821756.html>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/apr/23/british-empire-crimes-ignore-atrocities>

b.) Many believe the red poppy is used to justify current and future wars and is used to crush and silence dissent to modern wars such as Iraq and Afghanistan <sup>7</sup>

c.) Many believe that the red poppy was used to legitimise the actions of the British Army in Ireland including atrocities committed there and thus many Irish people choose to reject the red poppy<sup>8</sup>

d.) That as part of the 'war effort' which is glamourized by the poppy, 16,000 people were arrested as CO's. These CO's were subjected to gross invasions of privacy, psychologically damaging "evaluations", hard labour and in some cases execution. Thus the red poppy is a symbol of this oppression and persecution <sup>9</sup>

3.) It is distressing for students affected by one or more of the above issues to be surrounded by something they see as a symbol of oppression and persecution

4.) We should not add to the distress caused to students who find the poppy distressing and already have to walk around in an environment in which it is highly prevalent

5.) That the white poppy exists for those who wish to mourn the loss of life, but who feel the red poppy is a deeply offensive symbol for one or more of the above reasons (or other reasons not listed) <sup>10</sup>

6.) That the bravery of CO's should be recognised and the suffering they faced at the hands of the state was an atrocity

7.) That given the connotations the red poppy holds for many, to only stock the red poppy amounts to an unacceptable political stance

### **Union Resolves:**

1.) That if poppies are to be stocked in any Union Outlet then both Red and White poppies must be sold

2.) That the union must order and display an equal number of boxes of red and white poppies and display them in the same locations

3.) For the union to produce a small but appropriate number of leaflets to be placed with both sets of poppies to explain why both poppies are being stocked

4.) For the union to formally support International Conscientious Objection Day (15<sup>th</sup> May) every year and to mandate SOC to fully support ICOD.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/nov/08/popy-last-time-remembrance-harry-leslie-smith>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/sport/football/football-news/west-broms-james-mcclean-causes-12098770>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.quaker.org.uk/about-quakers/our-history/quakers-and-wwi>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ppu.org.uk/whitepoppy/index.html>

## **2007 Say Yes to NUS**

Proposer: Rhys Purtill (UEA Pride)

Seconder: Amy Rust (Campaigns and Democracy Officer)

### **Union Notes:**

- 1) A wave of student unions across the country have engaged in NUS disaffiliation referendums.
- 2) NUS has been under increasingly negative media and even government scrutiny in recent months.
- 3) That calls for 'One Member One Vote' (OMOV) within NUS have been repeatedly rejected due to concerns over how it would be implemented.
- 4) NUS has been a successful voice and champion of students, securing council tax exemptions, fighting against the marketization of education, and the creation of a student rail card.
- 5) NUS VP Further Education Shakira Martin has expressed disappointment in NUS for not representing FE students well enough.

### **Union Believes:**

- 1) NUS is an incredible institution that has achieved many great things in its history.
- 2) All organisations should be under constant scrutiny and should evolve to become better.
- 3) No organisation is without it's faults and therefore it is our job as members to help fix those faults.
- 4) That a national union for students should be truly representative of all students, both in terms of policy and democracy.
- 5) That this representation should cover FE students with the same priority as HE students.
- 6) The democratic power of students is one of UEASU's highest priorities.

### **Union Resolves:**

- 1) To review how NUS delegate elections are run, focusing on numbers of students voting, student's understanding of what NUS does, and how transparent candidates are about their voting intentions.



- 2) To mandate the campaigns and democracy officer to launch a "Reform NUS" campaign, talking to students directly about what they want from NUS and how we could help achieve that vision.
- 3) To mandate SOC to campaign alongside other student unions for OMOV within NUS, and to collaborate towards the research of how best to implement OMOV in the interest of all students.
- 5) To publicly reaffirm its commitment to NUS.

## **2008 The fight for Votes at 16**

Proposer: Cameron Mellowes (UEA Labour Society)

Seconder: Amy Rust (Campaigns and Democracy Officer)

### **Union Council notes:**

1. That currently over 1.5 million 16 and 17 year olds are denied the vote in public elections in the UK
2. That 16 and 17 years old were given a vote in the Scottish independence referendum
3. That the campaign to lower the voting age is long established and supported by thousands of young people across the UK, including the Votes at 16 Coalition (a wide range of youth and democracy organisations)<sup>11</sup>
4. The many actions being undertaken by the government that have a huge impact on 16 and 17 year olds, including sweeping changes to Further and Higher Education

### **Union Council believes:**

1. 16 and 17 year olds are knowledgeable and passionate about the world in which they live and are as capable of engaging in the democratic system as any other citizen
2. Lowering the voting age to 16, combined with strong citizenship education, would empower young people to better engage in society and influence decisions that will define their future
3. People who can consent to medical treatment, work full-time, pay taxes, get married or enter a civil partnership and join the armed forces should also have the right to vote
4. That our country and society is stronger for listening to the voices of young people and allowing them to engage in our democratic processes
5. That a key purpose of UEA SU should always be wider community work, and a campaign around Votes at 16 presents the opportunity for us to engage with people in our local community that we otherwise would not engage with

### **Union Council resolves:**

1. To mandate the Student Officer Committee to support the campaign for Votes at 16 on a national level
2. To promote this policy to students, local residents and local community groups as resolved in the community engagement strategy
3. To run activities to raise awareness of and support for Votes at 16 both on campus and across Norwich

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.votesat16.org/>

## **2009 Scrap Prescription Charges**

Proposer: Kate Snape (Students' with Disabilities Officer)

Seconder: Jo Swo (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer)

### **Union Notes:**

1. According to NUS research more than 50% of students struggle to meet the cost of living at University. <sup>12</sup>
2. Prescriptions in England cost £8.40 (per item)
3. In the last five years medication costs have increased over £1
4. Only students under 18 in fulltime education are automatically exempt.
5. Students can apply for a discount through an HC1 form
6. International Students have to pay £150 to just access the NHS
7. For students requesting 'Extenuating Circumstances' for medical/personal reasons, they often require a doctor's note which they have to pay for
8. Students who suffer ongoing illness are far more likely to drop out than their peers, and the financial weight of prescription fees is an unnecessarily added burden.
9. NUS has launched the 'Scrap Prescription Charges' in 2016

### **Union Believes:**

1. Everyone deserves free and accessible provision to medication that they require to live and everyone deserves a life free of pain, including International students.
2. Medication is a human right that should be free.
3. That whilst many students can apply for discounted medication through the HC1 form, this is an unnecessary barrier that many find complicated and often results in very expensive fines.
4. Students from lower-income backgrounds should not have to decide between food or medicine
5. Prescription charges have a disproportionate effect on liberation groups and students from lower-income backgrounds, which is grossly unfair and condemnable.
6. The increased fees of prescription charges, doctor notes and contraception is an indicator of the slow privatisation of the welfare state and the NHS.

### **Union Resolves:**

1. For Student Officer Committee to join the 'Scrap Prescription Charges' NUS campaign and support students who want to go to Bursary Not Bust
2. For SOC to support students who wish to attend and promote national and local demonstrations in relation to protecting the NHS and HSC students, such as Bursary Not Bust

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<sup>12</sup> [https://www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/PIYP\\_Summary\\_Report.pdf](https://www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/PIYP_Summary_Report.pdf)

3. To mandate SOC to write a statement in support of fully scrapping prescription charges, condemning the high fees International Students have to pay and the cost of doctor's notes.
4. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer and Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to work with and lobby the University and local NHS branches to offer free doctors notes.
5. To mandate all the full time officers and the Students' with Disabilities Officer to write to relevant councillors and MPs on this issue and urge them to speak and vote against any future increase, and speak and vote for scrapping prescription charges.
6. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy, Welfare, Community and Diversity and Students' with Disabilities Officer to campaign against the current prescription charges and any attempt to increase them
7. To mandate Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to advertise the HC1 form and how to make it more clear, and support any students who need help.

## **2010 Make Motions Easier**

Proposer: Emily Cutler (ECO)

Secunder: Kate Snape (Student with disabilities officer)

### **Union notes:**

1. That some motions, especially ones that consist of several pages, can be confusing.
2. That it can make Union council inaccessible for those with SPLDs.
3. Around 10% of the population have Dyslexia, this can cause text to appear distorted and words or letters appear to move or become blurred

### **Union Believes:**

1. It isn't democratic if people are voting on motions that they don't understand.
2. That we need to do everything we can to make union council accessible to all.
3. Disabled people must be able to access all areas of society

### **Union Resolves:**

1. That the proposer should write a brief summation, of no more than 200 words, at the top of every motion, to make the motions easier to understand.
2. That all motions should be in double spaced format.
3. All motions must be in size 12 font minimum and Arial typeface.