

Policy Number: 2434 Policy Date: 28th OCT 2020

Change protected places on Postgraduate Committee to reflect student diversity

Summary:

To adapt the protected places on the postgraduate committee to be more reflective of postgraduate student diversity and adopt more appropriate terminology.

- The Postgraduate Committee's 2 x Women plus protected places become 1 x Women's protected place and 1 x Trans* protected place.

Council Notes

1. The term 'Women plus' protected place is unclear without definition, and clusters nonbinary people with women unnecessarily feminises them.
1. There has historically been a lack of engagement by distance learners, PGCE and NBI students from the postgrad community in the PG Committee. Some of the reasons for this are geographical, however, as the PG Committee will be meeting online for the foreseeable future it is possible these geographical reasons will be less of a constraint to participation.
2. The union has committed to stand in solidarity with all transgender and non-binary members of the student community (e.g. see this recent blog post condemning the government's decision not to implement reforms on the Gender Recognition Act
3. <https://www.uea.su/blogs/blog/part%20time%20officers/2020/09/23/Gender-Recognition-ActStatement/>).

Council Believes

1. The creation of a protected place for both women and trans* people overcomes multiple issues surrounding the 'women plus' term: it clarifies exactly whom the places are protected for and also does not feminise nonbinary people by effectively 'adding them on' to women.
2. By creating a Trans* protected place this opens the space up to people of all trans identities,
3. including nonbinary people who are included in the trans* banner.
4. PG Committee should take advantage of the current situation with online meetings to maximise possible engagement across a diverse postgraduate student body.
5. This review of the term 'women plus' indicates the need for a wider evaluation of language and terminology like this across the union.

Council Resolves

1. To change the Postgraduate Committee's two women's plus protected places to one women's protected place and one trans* protected place, in all instances where these are referenced on the website and in documentation.
2. To update all references to the postgraduate committee's protected places to include both of the above changes.
3. [1] <https://www.uea.su/blogs/blog/campaigns/2020/08/28/an-introduction-from-your-new-campaigns-officer/>

[2] <https://www.uea.su/pageassets/democracy/unionpolicy/1398-Updated-Sun-and-Star-Boycott-12-Feb-15.pdf>

[3] <https://www.uea.su/pageassets/democracy/unionpolicy/2302.pdf>