

Strath Union Standing Policies

Updated 7.12.2018

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USSA Equal Opportunities Policy

Updated Emergency SRC May 2010

1. Introduction

1.1 USSA is committed to equal opportunities for all individuals who use USSA services and access its premises, by taking a proactive approach to equality, supporting and encouraging underrepresented groups and promoting an enjoyable, comfortable, inclusive and diverse culture which enhances the student experience. USSA aims to develop an organisational culture where everyone recognises their personal responsibility to uphold equal opportunities and this contributes to the success of USSA. We are committed to a positive policy of equal opportunities and the delivery of its services and employment of staff, USSA will not condone bullying in any form. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all members are valued and respected for their differences and to create a climate of greater confidence and one free from hostility. We must ensure that equality of opportunity is at the core of all activity, to further enhance the student experience. USSA is a campaigning organisation that needs to represent its diverse membership. USSA recognises that inequality, oppression and discrimination exist and aims to work towards elimination of discrimination for its members and employees.

1.2 Definition of Discrimination

To treat one particular group of people/ an individual less favourably than others on the basis of age, gender, gender orientation, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, religious belief, culture, belief system, disability, learning difficulty, sexuality, sexual orientation, age, marital status, economic status, health status (including where a person has AIDS or a related condition or are HIV positive), parenting/caring responsibilities, politics and/or trade union interest or activity, social background or any other irrelevant distinction.

Direct Discrimination:

Where an individual or group of people is treated less favourably than others in circumstances which are the same or not materially different.

Indirect Discrimination

Where a requirement or condition, or circumstances or behaviour, has a negative or disproportionate effect on an individual or a group of people.

Positive Action

This takes into account the causes and effects of discrimination and the need to take steps to positively redress the imbalance and to promote equality of access and opportunity.

Institutionalised Discrimination

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people in different equality groups. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviours which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping which disadvantage equality groups.

1.3 All students, student groups and members of USSA agree to abide by the terms of this Policy.

1.4 Disciplinary Action

Members of USSA are bound by the policies and regulations of USSA. Students, Student Groups or individuals who are in breach of this Policy will be subject to a disciplinary hearing which may result in disciplinary action.

2. Student Activities

2.1 Aims:

- a) USSA requires all student groups and societies to acknowledge that their responsibilities regarding Equal Opportunities affect more than just their own members but the membership of USSA as a whole
- b) That all organised student groups within USSA abide by this Policy

2.2 Implementation:

- a) Membership of a group will be taken to imply an understanding to commitment and acceptance of this Policy.
- b) It will be the responsibility of each group's committee to ensure that all meetings, publications, communications and activities of its respective club or society are fully in line with this Policy
- c) Part of the responsibility of a group is that at least one member of its governing committee attends an Equal Opportunities training session organised by USSA.
- d) All incoming Executive members and Convenors/Presidents of student groups/clubs and societies are obliged to sign their commitment to uphold and promote the Equal Opportunities Policy which will be kept on file.

2.3 Liberation groups

- i. (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT), Race Relations, Students" With Disabilities (SWD) and the Women's" Group) exist to provide a safe space for and support to students who self define into these groups.
- ii. Liberation groups campaign for equality, and are core to USSA"s values as an Association.
- iii. Autonomy is crucial to any liberation campaign; autonomy is the idea that oppressed or disempowered groups of people organise for themselves.

3. Elections

3.1 Aims:

- a) USSA aims to ensure that all aspects of practice in relation to elections abide by the requirements and guidelines set out in this Policy
- b) USSA considers that members from all areas of the student body should be encouraged to stand for and vote in elections

3.2 Implementation:

- a) USSA regards the Democratic Services Body/Elected Officer as responsible for ensuring that all aspects of practice within the election process comply with this Policy
- b) The Equality and Diversity Forum will work with the Democratic Services Body/Elected

Officer to improve participation of underrepresented groups in elections.

4. Services

4.1 Aims:

- a) USSA aims to recognise the wide-ranging diversity of tastes and interests held by the student body and seek to ensure that services and entertainment within USSA reflects such diversity and to provide a welcoming atmosphere without fear of harassment to all members of the student body for all USSA events

4.2 Implementation:

- a) USSA events which are organised by an USSA student group or any event organised by USSA members for predominantly non USSA members must adhere to this Policy at all times
- b) Events organised by outside bodies, within USSA premises, should adhere to this Policy at all times. No bookings should be made in respect of organisations known by reputation to breach this Policy.

5. Publications

5.1 Aims:

- a) USSA aims to ensure that all practice in relation to publications complies with this Policy
- b) Publicity and the student media should reflect the diversity of USSA's membership

5.2 Implementation

- a) it is the responsibility of the Editor of any publication to ensure that all articles or publicity abides by the Equal Opportunities Policy
- b) If a publication is found to be in breach of this Policy, the Editor will be subject to a disciplinary hearing which may result in disciplinary action.

6. USSA Access

6.1 Aims:

- a) USSA aims to enable all students and visitors to access the facilities on the premises and, wherever possible, to be of practical assistance
- b) USSA believes that, wherever possible, the services of USSA should cater for students and visitors with disabilities and that this aim should be reflected in managerial decision making and training

6.2 Implementation

- a) Pending any difficulties with accessibility, complaints should be submitted to the Equality and Diversity Forum/Officer who will work with the Services Officer so that a long-term solution can be found
- b) This should be dealt with as soon as possible.

7. Responsibility and Monitoring

7.1 Responsibility

The Vice President Equality and Diversity will be responsible for being the primary representative and spokesperson for Equal Opportunities in the USSA

7.2 Publicising Equal Opportunities

- b) the Equal Opportunities Policy will be readily available and extensively publicised
- c) an Equal Opportunities statement will be distributed to all Freshers in their Freshers' Pack

8. Complaints Procedure

8.1 Any person or group who believes that they have been discriminated against on any of the grounds specified in this Policy should keep a record of any instances of discrimination. A detailed record should be kept in respect of what happened, where and when it happened, how that individual or group felt at the time, whether there were any witnesses to the discrimination and if so the identity of the witnesses

8.2 Where discrimination occurs individuals and/or groups should bring the matter to the attention of the Vice President Equality and Diversity (VPED) immediately. Where the person about whom the individual wishes to complain is an Executive member, the individual should bring the matter to the attention of the Association President as follows:

The formal complaint should be in writing and should contain:-

1. the name of the alleged offender
2. the nature of the discrimination
3. dates and times when the discrimination occurred
4. the names of any witnesses to the alleged discrimination
5. any action taken to seek to stop the discrimination

The relevant officer will investigate and follow disciplinary procedures, if appropriate.

2000/01

Nestle Products In The USSA

6TH Statutory Meeting of Council, 7th April 2003

Policy maintained at the 2nd Meeting of Policy Council 2013

Policy maintained at Student Parliament, 28th of March 2017

COUNCIL NOTES.

1. USSA currently stocks Nestlé products
2. Nestlé products have been banned from 80 student unions in the UK.
3. Nestlé's marketing practices of selling powdered baby milk, providing free samples until the mother cannot feed from the breast, has led to even more poverty for these families.
4. This has led to condemnation because Nestlé has failed to comply fully with the letter and the spirit of the WHO/UNICEF International Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitutes.

COUNCIL FURTHER NOTES

1. That every conscious decision to boycott Nestlé products harms their business.
2. That student associations need to encompass the opinions and views of their students
3. That USSA has many means available to it for informing students of these things, i.e.: website, notice boards.
4. That the University Chaplaincy work alongside fair-trade on a regular basis promoting their products and helping those who are affected by unfair trade.

COUNCIL BELIEVES

1. Student unions should be at the forefront of campaigning on health issues.
2. That there has been no attempt from the Association to sell fair-trade products in USSA outlets.
3. That selling fair-trade and other non- Nestlé products in our outlets gives our students a viable alternative.

COUNCIL INSTRUCTS

1. The VPFCs to stop ordering any Nestlé products for any USSA premises.
2. The VPFCs to write a letter on behalf of the association stating our displeasure at such practices.
3. To state to Nestlé that the boycott will continue until Nestlé complies fully with the letter and the spirit of the WHO/UNICEF International Code of Marketing of Breast milk Substitutes.
4. The Deputy President, at the earliest possible opportunity, to make information on the workings of Nestlé available on Association premises, by leaflet and poster campaign as well as on the website.
5. The VPFCs to begin stocking fair-trade products in USSA premises, with implementation before the final meeting of SRC this year.
6. The VPAS to keep SRC up to date on changes to do with Nestlé products.

2009/10

The Customer Is Always Right...

Policy maintained at Student Parliament, 28th of March 2017

AGM Notes

1. That the attached document represents comments consistently made by students in their responses to the National Student Survey and first year surveys.
2. The University of Strathclyde's vision and mission, which states: *"Providing a high-quality education and experience to all our students, regardless of background, inspiring them to develop to the full their abilities"*.
3. The University of Strathclyde's Academic Strategy (06-09) which states: *"innovative teaching which impacts on curriculum design, teaching methodology and the learning environment and which enables the students to develop as reflective learners capable of regulating their own learning experience"*

AGM Believes

1. That in recent years there has been increasing moves within the higher education sector to view students as consumers.
2. That this view of students is wrong and counterproductive; students should be co producers in their educational experience – as partners with the university.
3. At any rate, if students really are to be considered as consumers then there are always obligations posed on the service provider, and rights on the part of the consumer.
4. That today's students deserve an education which is equipped for the demands of the 21st century, allows for academic freedom and ownership, provides them with the means for self development and flexible to needs.
5. That the attached document represents a minimum level of standards and services students should expect from their Strathclyde experience.
6. That these standards should be achieved through partnership and collaboration between the university, students and USSA.
7. That with great rights come great responsibilities; in order to be afforded these rights, students should recognise and adhere to the regulations imposed on them by membership of the university.

AGM Resolves

1. To adopt the attached document as policy, and for it to form the basis of USSA's Education Policy Committee's priority campaign.
2. For the President to circulate the policy to relevant university staff and officers, and submit it through the formal committee process.
3. For the President to seek university buy-in and adoption of the document, and adhere to it's obligations.

Proposer: Philip Whyte, President

Second: Amy Davies, Deputy President

Education Funding Policy - Free For All

Policy maintained at Student Parliament, 28th of March 2017

SRC Notes

1. The abolition of the Graduate Endowment in 2008, which saw the introduction of a truly free education for Scottish domiciled students.
2. A amendment to this bill, tabled by Jeremy Purvis MSP, called for the introduction of a minimum income of £7,000.
3. The introduction of top-up fees in England and Wales in 2004, which then Education Secretary Charles Clarke admitted would lead to an increase in student debt, with average debt rising to £21,000.
4. That the Westminster government is currently undertaking a review of student funding, led by Lord Browne.
5. A report by Universities UK into demographic changes in the size and shape of UK HE noted a fall in the numbers of 18 – 20 year olds in HE between now and 2019.
6. That this fall equates to 70,000 full-time undergraduate places over 10 years.
7. Separate research by HEPI which suggested that a downturn in the student population would be disproportionate in working class families.
8. That there will be a General Election this year, and a Scottish Parliament Election in 2011.

SRC Believes

1. That the introduction of top-up fees brings elitism into the applications process, creating a situation where applicants would have to choose their university depending on their ability to pay, not their academic ability.
2. Allowing university's to charge top-up fees leads to a market-based system of education funding and student support.
3. That this is fundamentally wrong and against all principles of equal access to higher education.
4. That the Government should be responsible for finding adequate funding for the expansion of higher education; this responsibility should not be delegated to universities themselves or onto individual students.
5. That the abolition of the Graduate Endowment was a massive success but only goes so far in alleviating financial pressure on students.
6. The downturn in student numbers mentioned above, especially from working class families, is in no small way due to the increased cost of being a modern student.
7. Prospective students should choose their course on the basis of their academic ability, preferred career path or favoured institution – not on their ability to pay.
8. Traditional students are still in the majority and differing demographics still face barriers to entry. In a city like Glasgow, widening access is of the utmost importance, with educational attainment opportunities based on ability not ability to pay, a must.
9. The University of Strathclyde has a civic responsibility to ensure all those who wish to study are able to study free from the threat of top up fees.
10. That, especially among the "ancient" universities, there have been musings of the introduction of fees in order to remain what they deem to be "competitive."

11. That, no matter what your political beliefs, minority governments such as the SNP in Holyrood are by their very nature unstable and rely on pacts formed as and when required to ensure certain pieces of legislation.
12. Whilst support existed at the time for an end to the graduate endowment, this support is not set in stone and guaranteed forever, especially in a difficult economic climate and with the outcome of the 2009 review still to be decided.
13. That south of the border many institutions are calling for the cap to be lifted; something which is more than likely to happen.
14. That should the cap be lifted it places an even greater funding gap between Scotland and the rest of the UK.

SRC Resolves

1. To maintain a strong and unwavering commitment to the principle of free education.
2. To actively campaign against any proposals, north or south of the border, which deviate from this commitment.
3. Specifically campaign for a government commitment to:
 - i. An increase in minimum income to £7,000, with additional support for those from vulnerable or less well off backgrounds.
 - ii. Abolish for good student fees, both at the point of entry and the point of exit.
 - iii. Ensure a 0% real interest rate on loans.
4. To actively lobby the university's Senior Officers to take a stand against student fees, for a free education; against the marketisation of HE, for a fairer system of student support.

Proposed: *Philip Whyte, President*

Seconded: *Amy Davies, Deputy President*

Association Ethical Clothing

Policy maintained at Student Parliament, 28th of March 2017

Council Notes:

1. USSA source t-shirts and hoodies from several different companies
2. Currently, there is no requirement that the clothing is produced ethically

Council Believes:

1. USSA should source clothing from a fair-trade, ethically sound company
2. Threadme.co.uk is an example of a company which fits the ethical requirements as it is a UK-based workers' co-operative, which produces organic, Fairtrade clothing, in a factory powered by renewable energy
3. Any company must cater for the needs of the Association members – Including a wide range of sizes
4. If USSA opt for ethical clothing, this will increase the chance of the University being certified as a Fairtrade University and the Union achieving a higher award in the Sound Environmental Impact Awards

Council Instructs:

1. Ensure all USSA (either wholly or partially) funded and branded clothing is sourced from Fairtrade ethical and local suppliers

Proposed: *Lorna Murchison, Environmental and Ethical Convenor* **Seconded:**
Charandeep Singh, Deputy Environmental and Ethical Convenor

2010/11

Flexible Learning

Policy Council, 24th of February 2011

Policy maintained at Student Parliament, 28th of March 2017

Forum Notes:

1. That many students drop out of university due to personal circumstances, which are unrelated to do with their degree.
2. That due to the significant financial pressures on various students, many have part-time jobs to cover the short fall between bursaries and living costs. This shortfall can be particularly acute for single parents, students with caring responsibilities and those from disadvantage backgrounds.
3. They are many students who do not have the family support or credit to fall back on.
4. That for certain students it is more financially viable to work full-time and study part-time.
5. That the University of Strathclyde was established as a liberal organisation that accepted students from non-traditional backgrounds as well as being a place of useful learning.

Forum Believes:

1. That many students leave higher education not because they do not have the academic ability but due to personal circumstances
2. That the University should support all students and be flexible enough in its curriculum to adapt to the changing situation of its students.

Forum Instructs:

1. The executive to lobby the university to make teaching and degree structures flexible enough to allow students to switch if they feel that they are unable to continue with full-time study.
2. To work with all national bodies as appropriate to ensure that students receive enough adequate support during their studies.

Proposed by: *Graeme Allan, Vice President Education & Representation*

Seconded by: *The Education & Representation Forum*

Challenging Racism On Our Campus And In Our Communities

Policy Council, 24th of February 2011

Policy maintained at Student Parliament, 28th of March 2017

Forum Believes:

1. Racism continues to rise across society, endangering the welfare of all Black students.
2. Last year, racist attacks increased by 7%. Police figures have shown Arabs are 13 times, African Caribbean's ten times and Jewish people three times more likely to suffer racist attacks than white Europeans. Every such attack must be condemned and students' unions should take steps to prevent them.
3. Politicians and some media have recently attacked multiculturalism, revealing a growing climate of intolerance. The freedom to dress as you choose including for religious reasons is a basic civil right. Students of all faiths - and none - also have the right to organise through student societies.
4. Educational institutions are required by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act to promote racial equality including by enforcing an up to date race equality policy.

Forum Resolves:

1. USSA should actively encourage the reporting of hate crimes.
2. Work with NUS Black Students' Campaign to ensure colleges/universities implement the Race Relations Amendment Act and anonymous marking.
3. Execute campaigns which raise awareness of the diversity of the student population, for example, One Strathclyde Many Cultures.
4. Work with the University and the Halls Committee to increase awareness of personal safety on and around campus.

Proposed by: *Charandeep Singh, Vice President Equality & Diversity* **Seconded**

by: *The Equality & Diversity Forum*

2012/13

External Sponsorship Policy

Policy Statement

This policy is to support student groups in seeking External Sponsorship. USSA believes that the seeking of the external sponsorship should be student-led and that the communications department should support this, rather than doing it for the students and therefore denying them further transferable skills which would be useful for future employment. The policy also states what kind of organisations are not acceptable to approach for external funding.

Policy Aims

This Policy Aims to support student groups in receiving more funding from external organisations, in order to allow them to do more to improve the student experience of their members.

Policy Objectives

We expect that:

1. All student groups will be adequately supported in seeking external sponsorship
2. All student groups will receive some level of external sponsorship during the academic year in which they are active.

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be effective the following expectations will be placed on student groups and the communications department.

Expectations for Student Groups

1. Student groups should actively seek external funding/sponsorship from appropriate sources.
2. Student groups should keep records of who they have contacted for funding and compile this information into a database.
3. External funding applications and their effectiveness should be included in any of the student group handovers.
4. Student groups are actively encouraged to collaborate when applying for external funding.

Expectations for the Communications Department

1. Communications will give training to all student groups on the best methods of seeking external funding.
2. Communications will support student groups to get external funding, with the recognition that some groups may require more support than others.
3. Extra support will be given by the communications department on a case by case basis.

Rules on External Funding

The Students' Association exists for the benefit of all students at Strathclyde University. As such there are boundaries on the organisations that student groups can apply to, and what external funding can be used for, both for commercial and ethical reasons.

Student groups cannot receive external funding from:

1. Any organisation which is excluded by USSA's standing policies for being unethical.

Student groups cannot receive external funding for:

1. Advertisement of a service or business which would be in direct competition to the Student Association's commercial activities.
2. Advertisement of any organisation which is excluded from USSA's standing policies for being unethical.

If a student group is in any doubt over whether or not they can receive funding from an external organisation, they should seek the advice of the communications department in the first instance.

Policy submitted by: Activities & Development Forum
Approved by Policy Council 26/11/2012

The Glasgow Cup

Policy Statement

The Glasgow Cup is a intervarsity sports tournament that various sports teams are encouraged to take part in. This Policy is to state USSA's commitment to providing the Sports Union support in delivering (in partnership with other Glasgow Universities) a successful intervarsity sports event.

Policy Aims

This Policy aims to achieve:

1. High participation in the Glasgow cup from Sports teams and spectators from the University of Strathclyde and the local community.

Policy Objectives

We expect that the following will take place:

1. Sports Teams will field the best possible teams for each of the events in the Glasgow Cup.
2. USSA will advertise the event extensively to improve the numbers of spectators at the derby.

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be effective, we have a number of expectations of the Sports Union, Sports Teams and the Students' Association.

Expectations for the Sports Union:

1. The Sports Union will ensure that each Sports Club is aware of the importance of fielding good teams at the intervarsity sports event.
2. The Sports Union will support clubs to participate at the discretion of the inter-university organising committee.

Expectations for Sports Clubs:

1. Sports Clubs will field the best possible team that they can when they compete in each event.
2. They will advertise the events to all their members and encourage them to come along, even if they are unable to take part.
3. Sports Clubs will let the Sports Union know in advance if they intend to take part in the intervarsity sports event, and what support they will need to do so.

Expectations for USSA:

1. USSA will advertise the event to the best of its ability to all students at Strathclyde, and actively encourage spectators to attend the derby.
2. USSA will assist the Sports Union in any other reasonable way to ensure that the event is a success for the University of Strathclyde.
3. The Student President and Managers within the Students' Association should encourage the Executive and staff respectively to attend the Glasgow Cup where appropriate.

Policy Submitted by: Sports & Wellbeing Forum
Approved by Policy Council: 26/11/2012

Wednesday Afternoons Free

Policy Statement

This policy is to outline USSA's position on Wednesday afternoons for Sports.

We recognise that since 2002 the University has made some improvements in ensuring Wednesday afternoons are free. However, there are still a large number of classes which are continuing to be scheduled on a Wednesday afternoon.

Clubs, Sports and other Student Development activities provide an excellent opportunity for students to gain transferable skills. A large proportion of SSS fixtures in Scotland and even more so with BUCS fixtures throughout Britain are consistently planned for Wednesday afternoons. Without them being totally free at the University, some students will be forced to choose between their classes and their Sport.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to re-affirm USSA's commitment to ensuring that Wednesday Afternoons are free for Sports and Student Activities.

Policy Objectives

We expect that the following will take place:

1. The University will schedule no compulsory classes on a Wednesday afternoon after 1pm and should endeavour to give students free timetables from as early on a Wednesday as possible.

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be successful, the following needs to take place:

1. The entire USSA executive to campaign to ensure that Wednesday afternoons are kept free.
2. Ensure that the University's current Timetabling Policy is upheld and if reviewed, maintained to at least the same standard.
3. The Executive member who sits of the Timetabling Steering Group and the Executive member who sits on Estates should continue to re-iterate USSA's stance on Wednesday afternoon classes.
4. VPSW and VPE will monitor and report to the Executive on departments which are guilty of non-compliance with University Timetabling Policy.
5. The President must lobby the Principal on this matter, highlighting courses which are not complying with existing policy.

Policy Submitted by: Sports & Wellbeing Forum

Approved by Policy Council: 26/11/2012

Charging for Course Materials

Policy Statement

This policy aims to outline USSA's position on charging for necessary course materials in Strathclyde degrees. The cost for those studying in education – particularly international students and RUK students has increased dramatically over the last few years. In addition, many students struggle to find part time work and to cover their own living expenses.

USSA believes that the University should not allow mandatory course materials to be charged for. Mandatory course materials are defined by us to be an entitlement of students. Without such materials a student would experience detriment to their grades. This includes books which would be critical (critical meaning that without, the student would be unable to complete the course or progress) to students studying a course. The University should purchase necessary licences to share these materials appropriately.

Policy Aims

This policy is to clarify the position of USSA on charging for mandatory course materials and the action that USSA should take if the University does not comply.

Policy Objectives

We expect the following should take place:

1. No charges will ever be applied for mandatory course materials by the University

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be successful, the following need to take place:

1. The USSA to lobby the University on this issue.
2. The USSA to organise a campaign around this issue if required.

Policy Submitted by: Diversity & Advocacy Forum
Approved by Policy Council 26/11/2012

Tuition fees for students adversely affected by World events

Policy Statement

This policy is to outline the position which USSA should take when a situation arises in which a student may become liable to self-fund due to world events. This may include students who are Asylum Seekers, or those who have come from countries which have fallen into civil war since their arrival. At the time of writing, this policy would have been deemed to affect Syrian students who would now be forced to self-fund their education due to the sanctions being placed on the Syrian government.

In situations where this occurs, the University may charge the full amount of fees which can be tens of thousands of pounds. We believe that in the above situations the University should charge domestic EU rates for students seeking Asylum and in the case of students affected by civil war, it would be preferable if the University waived all tuition fee costs. The University should also support the students with their living costs, if appropriate. The

USSA recognises that the University has previously taking positive action to mitigate the impact of world events on its students, with the assistance given to Libyan students during the Arab Spring. USSA would like the University to offer similar dispensation in the future, should the need arise.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to ensure that USSA campaigns actively for the University to be more ethical with its tuition fees in the outlined situations.

Policy Objectives

We would expect that the following would happen:

1. The University will charge EU rates for Asylum Seekers
2. The University will waive fees for students who are affected adversely through actions which happen whilst they are not in the country.

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be successful, the following needs to take place:

1. USSA to meeting with appropriate University Staff and discuss the above proposal
2. To lobby and campaign as necessary until the objectives have been reached.

Policy Submitted by: Diversity & Advocacy Forum

Approved by Policy Council: 26/11/2012

Women's rights in the world.

Policy Statement

This policy seeks to ensure USSA's position when dealing with the rights of women, both inside USSA, the wider community and internationally. USSA is a safe space and all students are entitled to feel safe within the union building. USSA will never tolerate any breach of this safe space for any student.

USSA recognises that the rights of women are often secondary to males in the wider world and finds this situation unacceptable. USSA has had many policies in the past on the rights of women and this policy is in support of them. We believe that women should be treated equally, with the same dignity and respect often given to men.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to ensure USSA's continued work to assist women to achieve liberation.

Policy Objectives

We expect that the following will be achieved:

1. USSA will actively maintain its safe space policy and a zero tolerance policy towards any breaches.
2. USSA will actively speak out and campaign for the rights of women.
3. USSA will encourage students to have positive behaviours towards women.

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be successful, the following must take place.

1. USSA has regular campaigns celebrating the rights on women and raising awareness of women's rights across the world.
2. USSA will encourage as many self-defined female students as possible to take part in USSA's activities and elections..
3. USSA will speak out against any form of gender discrimination.

Policy Submitted by: Diversity & Advocacy Policy

Approved by Policy Council: 26/11/2012

Removal of Exam Bunching

Policy Statement

This policy is to ensure that USSA is active in preventing the University from continuing to bunch-up exams. This is defined as a student being forced to take part in more than one exam within a 36 hour period by the 2012 Student Rep Congress. It should also be noted, that although USSA students are against exam bunching, they are equally against having examinations on a Saturday.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to ensure that USSA actively opposes exam bunching and lobbies the University to stop this practice.

Policy Objectives

We will expect that the following will take place:

1. Students will no longer be subjected to exam bunching.
2. No exams will be scheduled on a Saturday as a result.

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be successful, the following must take place.

1. USSA to lobby appropriate Faculty and University staff on this issue. o Within this, Academic staff should be approached and asked
 - i. for their input into the discussions.
2. USSA to fully research the problem, and encourage student participation by raising awareness of the issue through a campaign.
3. USSA to use the research to further justify the removal of exam bunching.

Policy Submitted by: Education Forum
Approved by Policy Council: 26/11/2012

HEAR Policy

Policy Statement

This policy is to ensure that the University of Strathclyde Students' Association (USSA) is active in encouraging the University to implement the Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR) by the 2013-14 academic year. The HEAR report will mean that students will be able to have some extra-curricular activities recorded, on what will become their transcripts. It is hoped that the inclusion of these activities help increase graduate employability³.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to ensure that all members of USSA will be able to benefit from the HEAR and that USSA lobbies the University for its implementation as soon as possible.

Policy Objectives

We would expect that the following will take place:

1. The University should implement a student led HEAR system, which supplies evidence to support students employability.
2. The University to have an opt out pilot scheme for HEAR in academic year 2013-14 including at least one department or school.
3. The University should have all students enrolled in HEAR for academic year 2014-15.
4. The scheme will include an opt-out to allow students not to record certain activities if they so wish.

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be successful, the following will need to take place.

1. The VPE to ensure that the University sticks to a pre-approved, planned project timescale on the introduction of HEAR.
2. The VPE remains the chair of the HEAR working group until successful implementation of the HEAR scheme has been achieved.
3. The VPE to continue work with the University in a cycle of quality assurance and enhancement of the HEAR project for the future.
4. USSA to assist where necessary in the publication of the HEAR, including such activities as offering workshops and training to class reps on the HEAR, so they can cascade this information to students.

Policy Submitted by: Education Forum
Approved by Policy Council: 26/11/2012

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/enh/highereducationachievementreport/>³
<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/lt/enh/highereducationachievementreport/>

Continuing to increase Postgraduate Representation

Policy Statement

This policy is to ensure that the University of Strathclyde Students' Association (USSA) continues to develop and increase postgraduate representation within USSA's and the University's structures. For the purpose of this policy, postgraduate is defined as a PGT or PGR student. Whilst both groups of students are postgraduate, they both have very separate issues and needs. USSA should be mindful of this when interacting with the different groups.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to ensure that USSA continues to increase postgraduate representation by developing appropriate means to engage with Postgraduate students, and encouraging them to take part in the various representational opportunities that are offered by the University and USSA.

Policy Objectives

We expect that the following will be achieved:

1. All postgraduate positions for Faculty reps will be filled, with one position held for PGT and one for PGR students.
2. More postgraduate students will take part in representational activities by becoming Student Reps.
3. USSA will see an increase in the number of postgraduate students engaging with all activities.

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be successful, the following must take place:

1. The VPE will continue to take the lead on developing the Postgraduate representation.
2. The VPE will work with the University to develop a Postgraduate Research representation system that reflects the different needs of PGR students, with the input of the Postgraduate Research Society.
3. The VPE will be supported by the Executive in this were required.
4. The Executive will ensure that they engage with postgraduate students wherever possible. Each of the student Trustees (including the Executive) should be targeted to GOAT 12 postgraduate students each year. This should include both PGR and PGTs.
5. USSA will do its best to make sure that its activities are inclusive to Postgraduate students.
6. That USSA will host a welcome event in October in conjunction with the University's events which will introduce the Postgraduate students to the Union.
7. That USSA will support any postgraduate societies to the best of its ability to host events of interest to postgraduate students.

8. USSA will also host an annual postgraduate festival, which is organised by the PGR Society with support from the VPE.

Policy Submitted by: Education Forum

Approved by Policy Council: 26/11/2012

Widening Access at Strathclyde

Policy Statement

This Policy is to ensure that the University of Strathclyde Students'

Association (USSA) supports the University of Strathclyde in improving its Widening Access record. USSA should be the critical friend of the University on this issue, being both critical and supportive when required. In addition, USSA should also be encouraging the University to further expand their policy on Widening participation in the Context of Admissions⁵

USSA should also lobby external agencies, such as but not limited to the Scottish Government, the Scottish Funding Council and NUS Scotland in order to improve the widening access statistic of Strathclyde and other Education Institutions in Scotland.

In addition, USSA should be developing its own mechanisms to assist the recruitment of students from poorer backgrounds. In particular, students from the SIMD 20⁶ group on the social deprivation index.

In current context, "Strathguides" is an example of the Union assisting with Strathclyde's widening access agenda. The project aims to help local School children in area's of multiple deprivation to progress to Further or Higher Education should be supported, developed and encouraged by USSA.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to ensure that USSA does everything within its power to encourage the University to widen its participation to be reflective of the social make up of Scotland.

Policy Objectives

We expect that the following will be achieved:

1. Strathclyde will increase the number of students coming from area's of multiple deprivation from 13% to be more reflective of the 49% of Glasgow's population that live in Glasgow's deprived areas⁷.
2. Strathclyde will introduce a system of Universal contextual admissions so that students from area's of multiple deprivation get a better chance to progress to higher education with Strathclyde.
3. USSA's own mechanisms to support widening access show results in encouraging students to go to further or higher education, not just to Strathclyde but other education institutes in Glasgow.
4. To work alongside external organisations which aim to widen access to education, including, but not limited to TOP UP, FOCUS west, The Scottish Government, UCAS and the University of Strathclyde.

⁵ University Policy and Procedures on the Widening Participation Policy in the Context of Admissions – University of Strathclyde – Approved by Senate September 2009.

⁶ Information found at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>
<http://www.understandingglasgow.com/indicators/poverty/deprivation>

Policy Implementation

In order for this policy to be successful, the following must take place:

1. The Executive to lobby appropriate Faculty staff in order to encourage Universal contextual

admissions. Such admissions should take advantage of as much information about prospective students as is possible to attain.

2. The Executive to gain support from University Senior Management for Universal Contextual Admissions.
3. The Students' Association continues to support the Strathguides initiative, in terms of administration, training, recruitment and logistics. The Association should also support any future schemes built around supporting widening access, were such schemes do not duplicate any existing work.
4. To lobby appropriate external organisations to continue to pressure Education Institutions to widen their access.

Policy submitted by: External Engagement Forum

Approved by Policy Council: 26/11/2012

2013/14

Timetabling at Strathclyde

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

This policy is to ensure that the Union continues to pressure the University of Strathclyde to implement a University-wide central timetabling system. A system which should remove class clashes, and double-bookings. The policy also seeks an end to the practice of different courses on joint degrees scheduling classes at the same time and therefore forcing students to decide which class they want to attend.

Policy Council Notes:

1. That the University of Strathclyde was named Times Higher Education (THE) Institute of the Year 2013.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That the THE Institute of the year should be able to have an organised timetabling system which prevents clashes and last minute room changes.
2. That last minute changes to timetabling causes disruption our members.
3. That some classes on joint degrees which are run by different courses are scheduled at the same time, forcing students to choose between them.
4. That lack of centralised timetabling is impacting the learning experience of students at this University.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To campaign for a centralised timetabling system, which meets the following criteria:
 - a. Removes inter-degree class clash
 - b. Ensuring that the rooms allocated are appropriate for a class.
 - c. Prevents last minute timetabling changes (except in emergencies)

Passed to policy council 2/12/2013

Increase the number of Beds at Strathclyde

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

At this time, the current number of bed spaces in our halls, and the external halls supplied by various companies around Strathclyde are full. There is no more space and students are increasing struggling to find a place to stay while studying here. The University needs more student halls available in order to meet demand. This policy is to lobby for their creation.

Policy Council Notes:

1. Hall space is now full at Strathclyde and it is increasingly more difficult for students to find a place to stay.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That coming to University is stressful enough without having the added threat of potential homelessness hanging over your head
2. That the University has a responsible to ensure a smooth transition from home life to University life

Policy Council Resolves:

1. That USSA shall campaign for Strathclyde University to either acquire or build a sufficient number of halls to meet the new demand from students.
2. That USSA should also ensure that rents offered to students are proportional and fair and not further exploiting students dwindling finances.

Passed to policy council 2/12/2013

Getting back to bursaries

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

This policy is in relation to the recent “win” that NUS Scotland has declared with regards to student support – with the poorest students now receiving an additional £250.00 in additional loans to bring the minimum income to £7250 per annum. However, the cost of this £250.00 is great, as it is given through loans and not through bursaries – therefore costing students more money in interest. Also because of the bursary assessment process, the additional £250.00 removes £250.00 from the bursaries given forcing interest payments to be made. The £250.00 additional funding should be given through bursaries, rather than through loans.

Policy Council Notes:

1. NUS Scotland has had a commitment to achieve a minimum income for students of £7500 since its 2010 conference.
2. NUS Scotland has now achieved 96.6% of this target.
3. That NUS Scotland, like USSA believes that access to education should be on ability to learn, rather than ability to pay.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That the recent NUS Scotland campaign has concluded with an increase in student support overall, however has resulted in a decrease in bursaries.
2. That USSA would prefer a system with more bursaries given than loans.
3. That if the additional £250.00 costs more in the long run, it is an expensive win.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. For USSA to submit policy to NUS Scotland conference to request the Scottish Government gives the additional funding through Bursaries, rather than loans and to also have the following aims:
 - a. That NUS Scotland commissions research to look at the breakdown of the percentages that loans and bursaries have made of Scottish student’s income.
 - b. That NUS Scotland changes its position to move for more bursaries for the poorest students, rather than loans.
 - c. For bursaries to make up the vast majority of our poorest students incomes by 2020

Passed to policy council 2/12/2013

Creating a Letting Agency

Submitting Forum: **Education Forum**

Policy Statement

USSA believes that a number of its students are being financially exploited in the rental market in Glasgow. This policy is to allow the Trustee Board of USSA to explore the possibility of creating a letting agency to put an end to this exploitation.

Policy Council Notes:

1. That the University of Sheffield Student Union has set up a letting agency for its students to use

Policy Council Believes

1. That any letting agency that is set up should have the welfare of students at its priority

Policy Council Resolves

1. To mandate the Trustee Board to investigate the possibility of setting up a letting agency and publish its findings for further consideration of the student body.

Passed to policy council 2/12/2013

Jobs for Students studying at Strathclyde

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

This policy is to outline USSA's position on maintenance jobs within and around the university campus for students. We recognise that little has been lead in terms of this type of opportunity occurring in Strathclyde or other universities and is a new field open for development and broadening. Maintenance of the university is major role within the campus and would provide a wide variety of jobs within the university, from cleaning to basic admin. This will help students gain confidence and experience in a working environment for the future. Full-time/ part-time jobs through the summer months could help with student poverty, for example, students without

SAAS funding unable to pay rent and basic needs.

This will help the university become more self-sustainable. It will also continue the knowledge that Strathclyde is a pioneering university and always guiding student opportunities. Additionally, the university will gain more respect among students as they will feel more involved within their university and that the establishment are implementing focus in their wellbeing.

Policy Council Notes:

1. Lack of employment often leads to students from more deprived backgrounds dropping out of University for financial reasons.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That the University should employ students throughout campus part-time during their academic careers.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To mandate the executive to campaign and lobby so that students are offered jobs on campus.
2. For USSA to campaign on this issue.
3. For relevant staff in the University to be made aware of this policy

Passed to policy council 2/12/2013

End the blood donation Ban

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy Forum

Policy Statement

In recent years, the blood ban on Gay, Bisexual and Men who sleep with men has been relaxed to allow them to give blood if they abstain from sex for 12 months. We feel that this is still unfair

Policy Council Notes:

1. Gay and Bisexual Men and men who have had sex with men where completely been banned (banned for life) from giving blood since 1983.
2. In 2011 this restriction was relaxed to prevent blood donations for 1 year after sex.
3. The regulations do not prevent promiscuous heterosexuals from donating blood. In fact the only restriction is that they have no had sex with a sex worker.

Policy Council Believes

1. This restriction is discrimination
2. That bans should be behaviour based and not sexual orientation based.
3. That the UK imports blood from countries that allow gay, bisexual and men who sleep with men to donate blood.

Policy Council Resolves

1. To continue to oppose this discriminatory policy
2. To campaign for the blood donation service to introduce behaviour based blood donation regulations

Passed to Policy Council 5/12/2013

Let them... wear capes.

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy Forum

Policy Statement

In recent years, more and more steps have been taken to prevent women from choosing what they wish to wear, be it short-shorts or burka's or niqabs. We believe that as long as someone wears clothing, then there should be no restrictions on what a person can wear.

Policy Council Notes:

1. France, one of the major powers in the European Union has banned Burka"s and niqabs from being worn in public.

Policy Council Believes

1. Regardless of what faith you follow, or if you follow no faith humans have the ability to make decisions
2. That decisions on clothing rarely result in life or death situations (unless you are any of the characters in a generic teen film)
3. That as long as public decency is maintained (i.e no full frontal nudity) people should be able to wear what they wish, when they wish, for whatever reason they wish.
4. That this contravenes the European Convention on Human Rights.

Policy Council Resolves

1. For USSA to highlight the ridiculousness of Government legislating on what people can and cannot wear
2. For USSA to campaign for the rights of the individual to dress how they wish.

Passed to Policy Council 4/12/2013

Protect our Human Rights

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy Forum

Policy Statement

This policy was created as a result of the Westminster Government of the United Kingdom stating that they wish to opt-out of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Policy Council Notes:

1. At the Conservative Party Conference in 2013, The Prime Minister David Cameron stated that the UK may need to withdraw from the ECHR and replace it with a British Bill of rights, one which will be similar to the ECHR but be applied more flexibly.
2. The Home Secretary, Theresa May and the Justice Secretary, Christopher Grayling have suggested that we leave the ECHR altogether and replace it with nothing.

Policy Council Believes

1. We have the contention on human rights for a reason
2. That the bill protects far more people, than those that potentially abuse it.
3. Getting rid of the ECHR to allow easier deportation of alleged terrorist suspects is the equivalent of throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

Policy Council Resolves

1. For USSA to be able to actively campaign against the removal of the UK from the ECHR

Passed to Policy Council 4/12/2013

Ensuring a legacy for the commonwealth games

Submitting Forum: Sports and Wellbeing Forum

Policy Statement

Since September of this year, the Sports Union has noticed that the University of Strathclyde's apparent interest in the Commonwealth games has wavered slightly and the only department that is actively promoting the games is the CSR. This policy is to encourage that the University continues to help promote the event, and help the Student Union ensure a legacy for the games.

Policy Council Notes:

1. That almost all public bodies are currently promoting Glasgow and the Commonwealth games in Scotland.
2. That although the University is not a public body, it is partially public funded.
3. That there are ample opportunities which the University could use to promote the sporting event.
4. The Union and the University should work with Glasgow Life to help ensure a sporting legacy from the games.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That the legacy of the commonwealth games will help Glasgow both physically, and mentally as we saw with London 2012.
2. That in order for this legacy to continue agencies will have to work together.
3. That the Union, the University and other relevant agencies to continue to ensure a legacy.
4. That the union already has a number of initiatives to ensure a legacy.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. That the Sports Union should continue its Lead 2014 programme beyond the commonwealth games.
2. That the Sports Union president raises the issue with University management and gets a firm commitment from the University to ensure a legacy of the games.
3. That both the Union and the University should work together with other agencies to ensure a legacy.

Passed to Policy Council 5/12/2013

Impact of Independence on Student Sport

Submitting Forum: Sports and Wellbeing Forum

Policy Statement

This policy is to ensure that students are made aware of any potential impacts on University Sport – negative and positive – regarding the Scottish Independence referendum in 2014

Policy Council Notes:

1. There are a lot of unanswered questions regarding funding of Universities, and Student Unions post-independence.
2. That there are inter-UK bodies which govern sport (BUCS + other sport governing bodies)
3. That the student association has a policy to stay neutral in the debate, so long as there are no negative/positives discovered from the independence debate.

Policy Council Believes:

1. There are a number of problems currently with the Team GB set up, and Scotland is still in the UK.
2. However, Scottish athletes do receive benefits from being part of Team GB, but they must meet very London centric conditions
3. That we need more clarity generally in order to make an informed decision.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. For the Sports Union to request to BUCS and SSS clarification on what will happen in the event of Scottish Independence in order to inform our members.
2. That the same request should be submitted to national governing bodies to find out what will happen to governing bodies in the event of independence

Passed to Policy Council 5/12/2013

Timetabling at Strathclyde

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

This policy is to ensure that the Union continues to pressure the University of Strathclyde to implement a University-wide central timetabling system. A system which should remove class clashes, and double-bookings. The policy also seeks an end to the practice of different courses on joint degrees scheduling classes at the same time and therefore forcing students to decide which class they want to attend.

Policy Council Notes:

1. That the University of Strathclyde was named Times Higher Education (THE) Institute of the Year 2013.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That the THE Institute of the year should be able to have an organised timetabling system which prevents clashes and last minute room changes.
2. That last minute changes to timetabling causes disruption our members.
3. That some classes on joint degrees which are run by different courses are scheduled at the same time, forcing students to choose between them.
4. That lack of centralised timetabling is impacting the learning experience of students at this University.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To campaign for a centralised timetabling system, which meets the following criteria:
 - a. Removes inter-degree class clashes
 - b. Prevents last minute timetabling changes (except in emergencies)

Student Support over the summer

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

The Students' Association recognises that during this time of austerity, the poorest in our society are often hit the worst. Generally students are amongst the poorest in society and we should be doing everything we can to help them. Currently students who are continuing their studies are not entitled to benefits during the summer months (which are outside of SAAS loans and support). Therefore if they cannot get a job, then they will have limited access to assistance. Some Universities offer emergency hardship loans, but these are on a discretionary basis. This policy is attempting to ensure USSA campaigns for adequate student support during the summer months.

Policy Council Notes:

1. We have no current data on the exact number of students that are in need of student support, or have been made homeless over the summer
2. That USSA is committed to access to education on the ability to learn, rather than ability to pay.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That lack of student support may cause an unacceptable number of students to drop out, due to financial stress and other matters.
2. That there should be adequate support made available for students during the summer months.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. That USSA fully investigates and monitors the number of students in Strathclyde who are in need of summer support.
2. That USSA presents solutions to develop student support to the University and lobbies for their implementation
3. That USSA submits policy on summer student support to NUS Scotland Conference in order to mandate them to lobby on this issue nationally.
4. That any NUS delegations are mandated to vote for the policy and any other policies which improve student support during the summer.

Increase the number of Beds at Strathclyde

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

At this time, the current number of bed spaces in our halls, and the external halls supplied by various companies around Strathclyde are full. There is no more space and students are increasingly struggling to find a place to stay while studying here. The University needs more student halls available in order to meet demand. This policy is to lobby for their creation.

Policy Council Notes:

1. Hall space is now full at Strathclyde and it is increasingly more difficult for students to find a place to stay.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That coming to University is stressful enough without having the added threat of potential homelessness hanging over your head
2. That the University has a responsible to ensure a smooth transition from home life to University life

Policy Council Resolves:

1. That USSA shall campaign for Strathclyde University to either acquire or build a sufficient number of halls to meet the new demand from students.
2. That USSA should also ensure that rents offered to students are proportional and fair and not further exploiting students dwindling finances.

A Win that's not a Win

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

This policy is in relation to the recent "win" that NUS Scotland has declared with regards to student support – with the poorest students now receiving an additional £250.00 in additional loans to bring the minimum income to £7250 per annum. However, the cost of this £250.00 is great, as it is given through loans and not through bursaries – therefore costing students more money in interest. Also because of the bursary assessment process, the additional £250.00 removes £250.00 from the bursaries given forcing interest payments to be made. The £250.00 additional funding should be given through bursaries, rather than through loans.

Policy Council Notes:

1. NUS Scotland has had a commitment to achieve a minimum income for students of £7500 since its 2010 conference.
2. NUS Scotland has now achieved 96.6% of this target.
3. That NUS Scotland, like USSA believes that access to education should be on ability to learn, rather than ability to pay.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That the current win for NUS Scotland is not really a win, as it will cost students interest and remove £250.00 from bursaries.
2. That USSA would prefer a system with more bursaries given than loans.
3. That if the additional £250.00 costs more in the long run, it is an expensive win, if it is a win at all.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. For USSA to submit policy to NUS Scotland conference to request the Scottish Government gives the additional funding through Bursaries, rather than loans and to also have the following aims:
 - a. That NUS Scotland commissions research to look at the breakdown of the percentages that loans and bursaries have made of Scottish student's income.
 - b. That NUS Scotland changes its position to move for more bursaries for the poorest students, rather than loans.
 - c. For bursaries to make up the vast majority of our poorest students incomes by 2020

Supporting Industrial Action

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

From time to time, Lecturers and staff at the University of Strathclyde have no choice but to take industrial action in an attempt to resolve their disputes over pay and conditions. This policy is to outline what conditions are required in order that USSA supports the industrial action.

Policy Council Notes:

1. That USSA exists to improve the student experience of students studying at Strathclyde and the welfare of students shall forever be our priority in these situations.

Policy Council Believes:

1. This policy will strengthen the relationship that USSA has with the University staff's trade unions.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. USSA may support industrial action if the following conditions are met:
 - a. The Union(s) going on strike notify USSA with a minimum of 72 hours before the action
 - b. That the Industrial action is called as a result to changes in pay, contracts, pensions or any further conditions.
 - c. The Union building is not a direct target of picketing.
2. If the conditions are met, USSA should support the action to the best of its ability within the law.

Creating a Letting Agency

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Policy Statement

USSA believes that a number of its students are being financially exploited in the rental market in Glasgow. This policy is to allow the Trustee Board of USSA to explore the possibility of creating an letting agency to put an end to this exploitation.

Policy Council Notes:

1. That the University of Sheffield Student Union has set up a letting agency for its students to use

Policy Council Believes

1. That any letting agency that is set up should have the welfare of students at its priority

Policy Council Resolves

1. To mandate the Trustee Board to investigate the possibility of setting up a letting agency and publish its findings for further consideration of the student body.

End the blood donation Ban

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy Forum

Policy Statement

In recent years, the blood ban on Gay, Bisexual and Men who sleep with men has been relaxed to allow them to give blood if they abstain from sex for 12 months. We feel that this is still unfair

Policy Council Notes:

1. Gay and Bisexual Men and men who have had sex with men where completely been banned (banned for life) from giving blood since 1983.
2. In 2011 this restriction was relaxed to prevent blood donations for 1 year after sex.
3. The regulations do not prevent promiscuous heterosexuals from donating blood. In fact the only restriction is that they have no had sex with a sex worker.

Policy Council Believes

1. This restriction is discrimination
2. That bans should be behaviour based and not sexual orientation based.

Policy Council Resolves

1. To continue to oppose this discriminatory policy
2. To campaign for the blood donation service to introduce behaviour based blood donation regulations

Protect our Human Rights

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy Forum

Policy Statement

This policy was created as a result of the Westminster Government of the United Kingdom stating that they wish to opt-out of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Policy Council Notes:

1. At the Conservative Party Conference in 2013, The Prime Minister David Cameron stated that the UK may need to withdraw from the ECHR and replace it with a British Bill of rights, one which will be similar to the ECHR but be applied more flexibly.
2. The Home Secretary, Theresa May and the Justice Secretary, Christopher Grayling have suggested that we leave the ECHR altogether and replace it with nothing.

Policy Council Believes

1. We have the contention on human rights for a reason
2. That the bill protects far more people, than those that potentially abuse it.
3. Getting rid of the ECHR to allow easier deportation of alleged terrorist suspects is the equivalent of throwing the baby out with the bathwater.

Policy Council Resolves

1. For USSA to be able to actively campaign against the removal of the UK from the ECHR

Increasing our Volunteer Skills

Submitting Forum: Activities Forum

Policy Statement

Year on year, USSA increases its numbers of volunteers and the number of hours that those Volunteers give back to the greater Glasgow community. We believe that these volunteers should be able to develop skills whilst volunteering. We believe that USSA should provide training and other opportunities for volunteers to further develop their skills.

Policy Council Notes:

1. That USSA has currently launched skills workshops for volunteers, which allow volunteers to develop further skills

Policy Council Believes

1. That these workshops are well attended and that this shows that students are interested in expanding their skills base
2. That USSA should continue to offer volunteer opportunities which allow students to further develop their skills.

Policy Council Resolves

1. That USSA should continue to run skills workshops to help volunteers develop.
2. That USSA should continue to offer volunteer opportunities that will allow volunteers to develop extra skills to better prepare them for employment.

Referendum 2014

Submitting Forum: External Engagement Forum

Policy Statement

On the 18th September 2014 the people of Scotland will be asked the following question in a referendum "Should Scotland be an independent country?" The answer to this question will have a profound effect on the people of Scotland. For the first time, young people who are aged 16 and over will be allowed to vote in this referendum. USSA has an obligation to ensure that its members are fully aware of the debate and get as much information as possible in order to inform their choice.

Policy Council Notes:

1. USSA is continuing to hold debates on the theme of Independence

Policy Council Believes

1. That these debates allow students to ask questions in order to better inform their decisions.

Policy Council Resolves

1. For USSA to continue to hold independence debates throughout academic year 2013-14
2. For USSA to encourage as many students as possible to register to vote
3. For USSA to hold a non-binding referendum on the question, in as similar style to the actual referendum as possible before the end of this academic year.

2014/15

Supporting Kurdish people in Northern Iraq

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy Forum

Policy Statement

This policy is to show solidarity to the Kurdish people who for many centuries have been repeatedly tortured, gassed, and brutally repressed in every country they live in. Denied an independent state of their own, the Kurds have suffered innumerable injustices at the hands of the people ruling them, including ethnic cleansing and horrific genocide at the hands of Saddam Hussein in the late 80s (Halabja). Recently, the President of Iraqi Kurdistan, Masoud Barzani, announced his support for an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq. The Kurds, already given self-autonomy in part of Iraq, have proven themselves more than able to run a country and are currently fighting against the malicious terrorist group, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)

Policy Council Notes:

1. More than two thousands members of the Kurdish people have been killed and injured during just a week from the hands of ISIS, most of the members who have been slaughtered are from minority Yazidi sects. There have been Humanitarian actions from United Nations but when will the killing of the Kurds end.
2. Up to 20,000 people may still be trapped on Mount Sinjar
3. Women and girls have been sold as Sex slavesii (look at the link for further detail)
4. There are thousand displaced Kurdish people in this area with no water or food iii.
5. Most of the Yazidi's are forced to be converted to Islam.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To support local Kurdish support groups, and groups affiliated to USSA, in organising a demonstration to support the Kurdish people, and actively campaigning against ISIS killing innocent people in this area.
2. To work with Clubs & Societies and the student body to help organise fundraising for aid and relief for the people affected in Northern Iraq

Education Provision in Public Hands, for Public Good Opposing Privatisation and Supporting our Lecturers

Submitting Forum: Education

Policy Council Notes:

1. Current USSA Standing Policy “Education Funding Policy – Free For All”ⁱ.
2. The existence of private education companies operating in the Higher Education sector in the United Kingdom including KAPLAN, Navitas, INTO and Study Group International.
3. The current partnerships with the company INTO, operating at Glasgow Caledonian University and the University of Stirlingⁱⁱ.
4. The current partnership with Study Group International, operating on our own campus at the University of Strathclydeⁱⁱⁱ.
5. The long-standing opposition to these private companies displayed through policy and briefing documents from the largest Lecturer Trade Union, UCU (Universities & Colleges Union) and successful campaigns opposing such companies at Universities such as Goldsmith’s, Essex, York, UCLan & Gloucestershire^{iv}.
6. The long-standing opposition to these private companies displayed through policy and briefing documents from the National Union of Students Education Zone Policy^v.

Policy Council Believes:

1. The privatisation of Education should be opposed.
2. Private companies are driven by profit, to the detriment of educational standards.
3. Public ownership of Education is the only way to ensure standards of education, student support and staff terms & conditions are met.
4. The University has a duty of care to all students on their campus (whether matriculated as full students or not) to ensure they receive the same standards of education, support and guidance across the board.
5. A partnership with a private educational pathway provider, such as Study Group International, undermines the academic quality and employment standards that students’ associations and trades unions have fought hard for over many years and puts the future of academia and academic career paths in jeopardy

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To reaffirm USSA's stance against any form of privatisation to our Education provision, at our own University and in the Scottish and UK Higher Education Sector as a whole.
2. To mobilise students to campaign to raise awareness of and to fervently oppose any further privatisation of Education at the University of Strathclyde.
3. To work with the University to establish and implement full representation structures and processes for students participating in courses run by Study Group International's Study Centre at the University of Strathclyde.
4. To work with the University to ensure that all students studying courses run by Study Group International's Study Centre at the University of Strathclyde are covered by the same standards of policies, procedures and support afforded to all other students at the University.

† USSA's Standing Policy Document

<http://www.strathstudents.com/sites/default/files/Standing%20Policy%20-%20Updated%20February%202014.pdf>

ii INTO Partnership Institutions in the UK

<http://www.into-corporate.com/higher-education/united-kingdom.aspx>

iii Strathclyde's Partnership with Study Group International's Study Centre

<http://isc.strath.ac.uk/>

iv UCU's Campaign Against Privatisation in HE

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/stopprivatisation>

v NUS' Education Zone Policy Document

http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/nusdigital/document/documents/10561/6e4a1e1cf7b79335d7eb85d705b_0001d/HE%20Zone%20live%20policy%20-%20201215.pdf?AWSAccessKeyId=AKIAJKEA56ZWKFU6MHNQ&Expires=1415102964&Signature=2QtE1jIkrGuJruuZ%2F4IHttla%2Bdo%3D

This is Fracking Outrageous

Submitting Forum: External Engagement Forum

Policy Council Notes:

1. That hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”) is a method of drilling for shale gas. It involves breaking down shale rock through blasting it at a high pressure with a mixture of sand and chemically treated water, so that the underlying natural gas deposits can be tapped and exploited.
2. That to maximise production the fracking process is repeated many times over on the same deposit, despite each drilling operation bringing with it an exponential increase in the risk of widespread pollution, thus putting the surrounding areas at great risk from earthquakes and the pollution of local aquifers [1].
3. That recently, the new development of horizontal drilling has allowed companies to attempt to exploit deposits that lie under populated areas, leading to a so called “shale rush”.
4. That the process of fracking is known to release large amounts of methane, frequently leading to the contamination of the local water supply, already a critical problem in some areas of the USA that have previously undergone drilling operations[2].
5. That nation states like Germany are currently debating about banning fracking altogether[3]
6. That the UK government is in the planning process for large areas of Scottish soil to be made available for fracking exploration [4], with the majority of these overlapping densely populated areas.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That Fracking is a method of drilling for shale gas that is deeply destructive to both the local and the global environment.
2. That the University of Strathclyde, as a leading scientific institute, has a duty to lead the way in responsible research, long term decision making, and environmental sustainability.
3. That the University of Strathclyde’s founder, John Anderson, believed that education should be for ‘the benefit of humanity’. In this spirit Strathclyde should take a stance against fracking.
4. That Strathclyde students are socially, globally, and environmentally aware, and therefore demand that Strathclyde University builds upon these principles in its investments.

5. That courses related to the environment, regardless of faculty, are extremely popular among students, therefore the University should continue to, and develop, its work in making the curriculum reflect sustainability.
6. Fracking is a short term solution.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To mobilise students to campaign for the University of Strathclyde to disinvest from any research and development operations that support companies involved in fracking.
2. To lobby the University to continue to, and extend, its ties with sustainable energy and increase its great work of investing into renewable energy.
3. To Lobby the University to better integrate environmentalism into both the undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum.

References:

1. *The Truth about Fracking* By: Mooney, Chris, Scientific American, 00368733, Nov. 2011, Vol. 305, Issue 5
2. *Fracking and Tainted Drinking Water* By: Fischetti, Mark, Scientific American. Sep. 2013, Vol. 309, Issue 3, p21-21.
<http://www.dw.de/germany-debates-proposed-ban-on-fracking/a-17762068>
3. *Fracking UK Shale: Planning Permission and Communities* UK Department of Energy & Climate Change, Feb. 2014.
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283832/Planning_v3.pdf

Bringing attention to detention centres

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy

Policy Council notes:

1. The repeated sexual abuse and objectification of women by predominantly male guards at Yarl's Wood detention centre in England that was recently exposed in the mainstream media.
2. Serco, the company responsible for Yarl's Wood, has commissioned an independent review of its staff and culture.
3. Shadow Home Secretary has called for an independent inquiry into the conditions at Yarl's Wood.
4. There is one detention facility in Scotland, Dungavel, located in South Lanarkshire. This facility can detain up to 249 people with space for only 14 women. Sometimes only one or two women are detained alongside over 200 men.
5. Around 60 people have been on hunger Strike since Monday in Dungavel. They are refusing food in protest of their substandard conditions.

Policy Council Believes:

1. The experience of detention is incredibly difficult and these situations are exacerbated by experiences of violence and abuse including sexual abuse.
2. Little to no help is offered to survivors of this abuse.
3. Few provisions are made for pregnant women in detention facilities.
4. There is no reason for pregnant women to be detained in these facilities.
5. These facilities are detrimental to women and can cause harm.
6. Women for Refugee Women's report 'Detained: Women Asylum Seekers Locked up in the UK' researched the lives of 46 women most of whom were detained at Yarl's Wood. This report found high levels of persecution, despair and abuse from staff. This report recommends that women remain in communities while cases are considered.
7. The accommodation at Dungavel is in dormitory form, an unsettling situation for women when they first arrive often in the early hours of the morning or late at night.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To condemn the inaction of the UK government in tackling the treatment of women at Yarl's Wood and Dungaval detention centres.
2. To call for an independent inquiry into treatment of women at Yarl's Wood and Dungavel detention centres.
3. To call for more female guards and better living conditions for women at detention centres.
4. To call for pregnant women to be held in detainment facilities only when strictly necessary and to call for adequate prenatal care to be provided.
5. To campaign against the unnecessary detention of people who could remain in the community.
6. To lobby the Scottish and Westminster government to change the inhumanity of the current system. Especially the conditions the detainees are living in – E.g. 8 people in one room. We believe that is too many people in one room and is not humanitarian.
7. To publicly support detainees protesting using hunger strike as tool for change and to advocate for their rights.

Free Periods

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy Forum

Policy Council notes:

1. Some Student Unions (including UEA, Cambridge, Imperial, Brighton, Leeds, Leicester, Sussex and Goldsmiths) sell sanitary products at cost price in their SU shops.
2. Some Student Unions give out free sanitary products to students – including KCLSU, SUARTS and EUSA.
3. That tampons and sanitary towels are currently taxed by the Government at a rate of 5% as a 'luxury, non-essential item', and hence subject to Value Added Tax (VAT).
4. That many products are free from VAT as they are viewed as fundamental: food, prescriptions and children's clothes; but not sanitary products.

Policy Council believes:

That the cost of sanitary products is an unfair burden that negatively impacts anyone that has periods.

1. That sanitary items are also crucial to health and hygiene – using homemade alternatives can put you at risk of infection.
2. That some students opt to take the contraceptive pill continuously to avoid a monthly cycle and the costs that come with it, despite the warnings of health risks.
3. Taxing sanitary products implies they are not fundamental which they are to everyone that has periods.
4. These issues should be taken into serious consideration in the light of NUS Scotland's campaign to end student poverty.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To support the campaign for #FreePeriods: calling on the Government to eradicate the cost of sanitary products, let alone the VAT.
2. USSA should look into the feasibility of providing sanitary products for free to students.
3. To provide free sanitary products to students for one semester to assess the costs and sustainability of this long-term. Moreover, we can also look for alternative organizations that can provide us with free or reduced priced products.
4. To seek funding for these products for the benefit of students.

Post-Study Work Visa and Employment for International Students

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy

Proposer: Roza Salih Vice President Diversity and Advocacy

Policy Council Notes:

1. Removal of the Post Study Work Visa (PSW) in 2012 had negative impact on International students' work opportunities
2. The current employment system is confusing for students and employers; it needs to be reformed.
3. There is not enough guidance for international students on employment opportunities in the UK
4. Unrealistic salaries, and not enough Tier 2 sponsors in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and outside of London stop international students from getting PSW.
5. Creative Arts students are restricted by Tier 2; their work is often freelance, part-time, and based on portfolios, meaning they may never meet Tier 2 requirements.
6. Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visas need to be reformed and should serve as a potential route for permanent residence.

Policy Council Believes:

1. "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment".¹
2. International students should have the right to work during study, which should be more flexible, and include self-employment.
3. Tier 5 is underused and can be more useful for international students seeking work experience in the UK as it doesn't have the restrictions of Tier 2, and reflects the needs of international students in post-graduation work.
4. Tier 5 practices should be applied more consistently.
5. The principle that some Tier 5 sponsors use that the employer pays for the visa and not the student should be promoted.

Policy Council Resolves:

¹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

1. To campaign for restoration of the PSW Visa.
2. To campaign for better guidance for international students on employment and inform international students of their employment rights.
3. Work with NUS UK International Students campaign to lobby the Home Office to provide better information for employers on hiring international students.
4. To lobby the Scottish and Westminster Government to reform existing work routes to ensure International students have equal access to work including extending the Tier 4 period after completing their course, lowering salary requirements and accounting for regional salaries, changing the policy on job titles and extending Tier 4 part-time working rules for more flexible hours and to include freelance work.
5. To lobby the Department of Business, Innovation & Skills and work with partner international groups to develop and promote Tier 5 as an alternative to Tier 2.
6. To work with the UK Council for International Student Affairs, the National Association of Student Employment Services, and the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services to develop positive relationships with employers.
7. To work with partner international groups or organisations groups such as AIESEC (www.aiesec.co.uk) to promote the "Access Tier 5" programme, which allows UK-based employers to offer work experience to highly skilled non-EEA nationals by providing them with Certificates of Sponsorship.

Campus Wide Nestlé Ban

Submitting Forum: Diversity & Advocacy

Proposer: James Ferns, Vice President Education

Policy Council Notes:

1. That there is a long-standing boycott of Nestlé products based upon their policies regarding the promotion of baby formula in the third world.
2. That Nestlé in 1984 agreed to end such activities and the boycott ended but was found in 1988 to be continuing such products leading to a renewal of the boycott
3. That Nestlé continues to deny that they engage in any activity meriting this boycott.
4. That USSA has a policy of boycotting Nestle product but the University does not.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That engagement in the boycott is correct, and that the University should be engaged in this boycott with the Union.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. That USSA shall lobby the University and associated bodies to engage in the boycott and end sales of Nestlé products on campus.

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions

Submitting Forum: Education Forum

Proposer: James Ferns, Vice President Education

Policy Council Notes:

1. That the State of Israel continues an illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories – the West Bank and Gaza Strip – an illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip, and enacts a system of Apartheid that has been described as "far worse than Apartheid South Africa" by the chair of the African National Congress (ANC), the ruling party in South Africa.
2. That the aforementioned state is responsible for widespread and on-going human rights abuses against the indigenous Palestinian population; including the destruction of homes, theft of land and water resources, arbitrary imprisonment without trial, torture of prisoners, systematic segregation, and the construction of Jewish-Only settlements on occupied Palestinian land.
3. That the actions of this state are in violation of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights & the Charter of the United Nations. The construction of Israeli settlements and Apartheid Segregation Wall has been deemed illegal by the International Court of Justice, the UN Security Council res 242, and the UK government.
4. That, as noted by Nelson Mandela, the Israeli occupation reflects the former apartheid government of South Africa through the daily breach of Palestinian human rights. The South African Apartheid System was itself brought to an end in part due to an effective and global boycott campaign.
5. That, the human rights group Amnesty International published a report on the 27th of February 2014 accusing the Israeli army of using excessive force in the West Bank, killing dozens in the past three years in what might constitute a war crime.
6. That, in 2005, Palestinian civil society called for a campaign of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel until it complies with international law, allowing the realization of Palestinian rights. A truly global movement against Israeli Apartheid is rapidly emerging in response to this call.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That fundamental human rights and international law should be acknowledged and adhered to by states and businesses. Just as individual sanctions against apartheid in South Africa led ultimately to its demise there, so individual and collective sanctions against the state of Israel will end apartheid and suffering in Palestine.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To ensure that products sold by this union are neither grown nor produced within occupied Palestinian territories, nor by companies which are complicit in the occupation of Palestinian territories.
2. To resist, insofar as legislative considerations permit, any action or commercial transaction that gives political or economic support to the State of Israel and corporation's directly complicit in its violations of international law
3. To Mandate that the executive of the Students association campaign for the University of Strathclyde to also implement the above two principles.
4. To condemn the practice of some UK sabbatical officers of receiving funding for visits to Israel from civil or political organisations, and to ban USSA sabbatical officers from participating in official or funded trips to Israel in their capacity as elected officers.
5. To endorse the global BDS movement against the state of Israel until it ends the occupation, complies with international law, recognizes the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality, and respects the Palestinian Right of Return as stipulated in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution #194 [<http://www.bdsmovement.net/call>].
6. Furthermore, USSA shall henceforth follow the precedent already set by other Scottish Students' Associations such as Edinburgh and Glasgow Caledonian and formally endorse the Palestinian Right to Education Campaign [<http://www.right2edu.org>].
7. This resolution and information within shall be permanently displayed on USSAs website in an area accessible to students and public.

Fairtrade Future

Submitting Forum: External Engagement Forum

Proposer: Gary Paterson, President

Policy Council Notes:

1. The current policy 'Nestle Products in the USSA' calls for the stocking of fairtrade products in the association.
2. USSA currently sells fairtrade coffee in all bars and catering facilities.
3. USSA meetings also provide fairtrade coffee in meetings.
4. The current policy 'Association Ethical Clothing' calls for 'USSA clothing to be sourced from fairtrade ethical and local suppliers'.
5. USSA previously had a fairtrade policy, Fair Trade, which has since lapsed.
6. USSA has current policy, 'Environmental Policy' that calls for fairtrade tea and coffee, an increase in fairtrade products and to lobby the university on the issue.
7. USSA currently source fairtrade clothing for campaigns.
8. Glasgow has been a Fairtrade City since 2006.
9. The local universities Glasgow Caledonian University and the University of Glasgow have fairtrade status.
10. USSA's Strategic Plan aims to get Fairtrade Status for USSA by 2019.
11. USSA is working towards NUS's Green Impact Awards which involves meeting sustainable procurement criteria including fairtrade standards.

Policy Council Believes:

1. Fairtrade is a growing, international movement which ensures that producers in poor countries receive a fair price for their goods (one that covers the cost of their produce and guarantees sustainable living).
2. Fairtrade empowers communities and producers to help them sustain their livelihoods and communities.
3. Strathclyde students can help this movement by increasing fairtrade activities and purchasing in USSA and the University.
4. Fairtrade produce should be for sale wherever possible in the Association
5. Fairtrade produce should be for sale wherever possible in the University
6. Fairtrade produce should be used in all meetings at USSA.

7. The use of fairtrade clothing for the association should be increased.
8. Fairtrade is important issue for students that USSA should continue to campaign on.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To promote fairtrade products within the Union and increase the fairtrade produce available.
2. To ensure fairtrade options are available in all cafes and bars.
3. To ensure fairtrade clothing is available for campaigns and USSA activities.
4. To support clubs, societies and sports clubs that wish to use fairtrade clothing and encourage this where possible.
5. At meetings of USSA where tea and coffee are provided, it should be fairtrade.
6. To work towards Fairtrade Status for the Association.
7. To lobby the University to increase fairtrade product availability and ethical procurement.
8. To lobby the University to achieve Fairtrade status and support them in this work with any relevant working relationships.
9. To run at least one campaign each year to increase awareness, understanding and usage of fairtrade products.

Solidarity with Clyde College

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Gary Paterson, President

Policy statement:

The University of Strathclyde Students' Association stands in solidarity with Glasgow Clyde College Students' Association (GCCSA) in their fight against student representatives being removed from the Board of Management.

Policy Council Notes:

1. The two elected student officers of Glasgow Clyde College Students' Association have been asked to leave the Board during discussions about the future of the college Principal.
2. Student officers are full members of the Board of Glasgow Clyde College.

Policy Council Believes:

1. These actions by the College Board Chair fundamentally attack the role of student representation on governing bodies, and sets a dangerous precedent that must be opposed.
2. That legislation is clear about the full legally required role of student officers on governing bodies.
3. That University Officers would never be asked to leave their governing bodies during important decisions, and that we cannot allow this to happen in any sector within our movement.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To fully support the GCCSA campaign, asking for the removal of the Chair of the Board.
2. To write to the Glasgow Clyde College Board of Management, Colleges Scotland, and the Cabinet Secretary for Education raising our concerns, and to seek concrete guarantees and securities for the role of student representation on governing bodies.

USSA supporting Who Cares? Scotland

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Gary Paterson, President

Policy statement:

The University of Strathclyde Students' Association will support the charity for young people in care and do all it can to promote the issue of care leavers in education.

Policy Council Notes:

1. Only 4% of young people in care will go from school to Higher Education.
2. Young people in care are most likely to be excluded in society as well as education.

Policy Council Believes:

1. USSA has a role to play in supporting organisations in our community which is working to support young people in care, and working to improve the prospects of care leavers.
2. Strives have been made by the Student Movement to support this issue, however we need to do more, and USSA can do more.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. The President will work with the University to establish a joint signing between it and the Students' Association of the Who Cares? Scotland 'Pledge to LISTEN' to children in care.
2. The Association will host a screening of the 'Care: My Story' documentary for students to raise awareness of the issue of young people in care and care leavers in education.
3. The Association will work to provide space for young people in care for a Christmas Day party in conjunction with Who Cares? Scotland.

Living Rent Campaign

Submitting Forum: Education

Policy Council Notes:

1. That rents in Scotland are becoming more and more unaffordable for tenants.
2. That most other countries in Northern and Western Europe have rent controls, but the UK does not.
3. That the Scottish Government is drafting a new bill to reform private rented housing, and the Living Rent Campaign is calling for the introduction of rent controls as part of this process.
4. That affiliates to the Living Rent Campaign include NUS Scotland, UCU Scotland, Unite Scotland, the STUC Youth Committee, as well as several other students' associations.
5. That the Scottish Association of Landlords are proposing specific clauses to strip students of protections from eviction.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That housing is a human right.
2. That the free market has failed to ensure people have somewhere secure and affordable to live.
3. That the Government must step in and regulate rents.
4. That, ultimately, the best solution would be building more social housing, but that there are things we can do right now to make private renting more tolerable.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To affiliate to the Living Rent Campaign and to join their call for rent controls, protection from eviction, and flexibility for tenants.
2. To promote the campaign to students, and to encourage students to sign the campaign's response to the Scottish Government's consultation: <http://www.livingrent.org/support-the-campaign/>
3. To lobby the University to limit rent in halls to affordable levels.

Opening the Borders of Education

Submitting Forum: Joint Education, External Engagement and Diversity Forum

Policy Council Believes:

1. That access to higher education should be based on academic ability; rather than nationality, citizenship, or independent financial means.
2. That this principle should extend across all backgrounds, regardless of ethnicity or immigration status.
3. That we should welcome the contribution of asylum seekers to our education system by ensuring they enjoy fair access and necessary support; which will in turn improve their life chances and the success of our wider society as a whole.
4. In the profound and wide-ranging benefits of welcoming and supporting those from other countries who want to make a contribution to our society through education.
5. That education can liberate and empower those fleeing persecution from a lifetime of trauma, persecution and fear.

Policy Resolves:

1. To lobby our governments for the long-term provision of living allowances that would enable asylum seekers to access higher education on a basis equal to that of domestic students.
2. To campaign in the short-term at an institutional level for funding to provide asylum seekers with the financial support to live and access to safe, affordable accommodation where necessary.
3. To raise awareness of the barriers to education and improved life-chances for those who have already battled significant persecution and disadvantage.

Summertime Blues: Student Counselling Provision

Submitting Forum: Sports Union General Meeting

Proposer: Mairi MacVicar, Vice-President Sport & Wellbeing

Policy Council Notes:

1. The University's Student Counselling service no longer has any provision to provide counselling over the summer months (June-September inclusive).
2. Student Counselling only had one member of part-time staff working over the summer, with their recent retirement the university has indicated that their role will not be replaced.
3. Student counselling currently have a three week waiting list for a first appointment.
4. Student Counselling is an important service for all students especially those with mental health conditions.
5. Postgraduate courses continue to run during the summer.
6. Student counselling is the only University support service to only have staff on term time only contracts.

Policy Council Believes:

1. Postgraduate students do not have a summer immunity to mental health conditions, low mood, life events or any other reason a student might want to speak to a counsellor.
2. Cutting counselling provision during the summer is damaging to students who need to speak to someone in need of support for their mental or emotional health.
3. Student receiving exam or degree outcome or going through resits may also need counselling support.
4. Students' mental and emotional health should be a priority within the University.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To lobby the University to ensure that Student Counselling is accessible to students all year round.

15th April 2015

Smoke Free Events

Submitting Forum: Sports and Wellbeing Forum

Proposer: Mairi MacVicar, Vice President Sports & Wellbeing

Policy Council Notes:

1. Tobacco use cannot be reconciled with good health and no level of exposure to second-hand smoke is safe.
2. The Smoking, Health and Social Care S. Act 2005 prohibits smoking in public places in Scotland.

Policy Council Believes:

1. Smoke-free environments are vital in protecting the health and wellbeing of all event participants, visitors, employees and volunteers.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. There will be no smoking policy at all USSU events.
2. Smoking will be prohibited in any indoor or outdoor areas of the venue.
3. There will be clear signage at all entrances and exits and all visible smoking cues will be removed e.g ashtrays, smoking area(s) and signs
4. This policy will be clearly displayed at the venues of all USSU events.

Smoke Free Outdoor Space on Campus

Proposer: Mairi MacVicar, Vice President Sports & Wellbeing

Policy Council Notes:

1. Tobacco use cannot be reconciled with good health and no level of exposure to second-hand smoke is safe.
2. The Smoking, Health and Social Care S. Act 2005 prohibits smoking in public places in Scotland.

Policy Council Believes:

1. Smoke-free environments are vital in protecting the health and wellbeing of all event participants, visitors, employees and volunteers.
2. Everyone should be able to enjoy being outdoors without having to breathe second hand smoke.
3. Creating a smoke free campus at Strathclyde is difficult due to the public roads and footpaths that run through it however there are spaces which could logically be sectioned off and clearly sign posted as outdoor smoke free spaces.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. That the 2015-16 USSA Executive and USSU Executive lobby the university to make Rottenrow Gardens a Smoke Free outdoor space.

Real Ale in USSA

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Gary Paterson, President

Policy Council Notes:

1. The Union bars currently provide no real beer alternative to lager.
2. Nearby bars popular with students such as JD Wetherspoons, Scream PubCo. ARK and Strathclyde University Todd's Bar sell affordable cask ale that is popular with customers.
3. The Union is working to widen our offering to students and will ensure our commercial services are student led.

Policy Council Believes:

1. That we should support a wide range of good quality food and drink for students at an affordable price.
2. That the Students' Union is well placed to support the take-up of good quality beer within the student population, and support the local economy by providing local cask ales in our venue.

Policy Council Resolves:

1. To add cask beer taps to The Yard and ensure rotating guests throughout the year, with prices in the range of local bars.
2. To ensure bottle craft/ale beers are available across the Union's bars and events when open.
3. To gain Cask Marque accreditation and Cask Marque training for staff!
4. To have brewery to make a regular Strathclyde-branded IPA for launch at Freshers week 2015.

2015/16

Keep Privatisation Out of Our Classroom

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Mikey O'Donnell, Vice President Education

Policy statement

USSA opposes any moves to invite private companies into the teaching environment as this sort of move will undermine the quality of teaching.

USSA Notes:

1. There has recently been a proposal to consider inviting in private companies to deliver courses where a possible development has been identified but cannot be done by the current in-house staff.
2. The marketization of education“ is becoming a problem across the UK and numerous literatures have been written about the subject highlighting this problem.
3. The University main opposition to the HE governance bill has been the issue of autonomy, letting private companies take control over courses will undermine the University“s autonomy a lot more than this bill will.
4. That 'marketisation of education' is on the agenda at NUS Zones Conference 2015 which highlights the student movement as a whole recognises this as an issue.

USSA Believes:

1. Allowing private companies into education will undermine the teaching quality available to students as those brought in will not be up to the same standard as fully trained staff.
2. The University will have no autonomy over these private „contractors“ who would have a foothold in the education system if these proposals go ahead.
3. Proposals such as these undermine the University“s ability to improve as an institution as they cannot hold these private companies to account if the student experience is affected in a negative way from these changes.
4. By allowing this proposal to go forward, this will cause a culture of fear among teaching staff who will think if they speak out they will simply be replaced.
5. That these proposals could lead to a two tier system in the University where those on teaching contracts are replaced by less qualified “learning providers” with fewer employment rights.

USSA Resolves:

1. To oppose any moves by the University to implement these proposals whether at Faculty Level or on a wider basis.
2. To work with campus trade unions such as UCU on combating any moves to open the way for private companies into the classrooms.
3. To work with NUS on how to construct a wider response to this issue and involve more Universities to join the opposition and show support.
4. To educate students on the growing issue of 'marketization of education' and highlight the dangers of such proposals to their student experience of University life.

22nd October 2015

National day of walk-out

Submitting Forum: Executive Proposer: Raj Jeyaraj,

VP Diversity

Policy statement

Strathclyde University students will join Students across the country are taking part in a national walk-out day on November 17 to highlight their dissatisfaction with government immigration policies.

USSA Notes:

1. International students have been under constant attack by the Home Office for a number of years, including;
 - a. Post-Study Work (PSW) scheme which allowed any Tier 4 student to stay on and work (at anything) for 2 years after their studies has been abolished in 2012.
 - b. International students currently need to show they have enough money for course fees and living costs for either two months – if they have an “established presence” – or nine months. But the established presence provision is being removed, so all students will need to show they can support themselves for up to nine months or the full length of their course, whichever is shorter.
 - c. All Tier 4 students must now show when applying to extend their visas for a new course that the course represents „academic progression“ from one level to a higher one
 - d. Since this November All Tier 4 students must now pay an Immigration Health Charge of £150 for each year of study.
 - e. Landlords must now check the immigration status of tenants
 - f. Prevent Duty guidance
2. These attacks have intensified since 2012 with the revocation of the 'Highly Trusted Sponsorship' of London Metropolitan University.
3. Other universities and colleges have also lost their sponsorship status since.

USSA Believes:

1. The onslaught on international students' rights in the UK is not an isolated matter and is part of a bigger picture of the anti-migrant sentiment which is growing in the UK.
2. International students are an integral part of Strathclyde's student community.
3. As a progressive movement, it is our responsibility to stand in solidarity with all migrants and condemn how they are treated in this country.

USSA Resolves:

1. USSA should prioritise the plight of migrants in general and that of international students in particular in its campaigning activities.
2. USSA to fully support, endorse and encourage a national day of walk out on 'International Students' Day', November 17th. This would be to raise awareness regarding the treatment of international students and the wider migrant communities in the UK. This would be a one-day walkout.
3. USSA to utilise every possible tool to get as many students as possible on-board and informed with the national day of action.
4. USSA to particularly magnify, advertise, and promote this day of action through its press, and media channels.
5. USSA to highlight this position to the university, local and national government, and relevant decision makers.

22nd October 2015

Our Uni, Our Academic Year!

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Mikey O'Donnell, Vice President Education

Policy statement

USSA believe exams should be moved before Christmas and the academic year kept in line with other Glasgow Universities from the next Academic Year onwards.

USSA Notes:

1. In a meeting with SEES, an option has been presented to USSA that shows there is scope to move exams before Christmas and keep the Academic year at the same start point as this year.
2. This has been on the agenda for many years and is finally a serious discussion which we welcome.
3. Engineering is piloting having some exams before Christmas so it is clear there is a desire to do this in the University.
4. The start date of the academic year this year was in line with Glasgow, Edinburgh, Glasgow Caledonian and Dundee and a week later than Heriot-Watt, St Andrews, Aberdeen and Stirling all of these Universities have exams before Christmas and so we appear to be lagging behind our colleagues.

USSA Believes:

1. Bringing exams before Christmas will reduce the level of stress felt by students over the Christmas period and so will improve overall Student Experience.
2. This will help to improve student satisfaction in areas of assessment and feedback as students will now be receiving the timing of assessment that they want.
3. If we do not take this opportunity we will appear to be behind the curve of many other universities.
4. Keeping the academic year in line with other universities in Glasgow is not just about the academic side of things we allow our students an equal opportunity at gaining access to private accommodation should they require it in the city instead of being left with the expensive and the unwanted.

5. That this would benefit students who do not spend the Christmas holidays within access of the University as they currently do not have access to physical learning resources while studying for semester 1 exams.

USSA Resolves:

1. To continue to lobby the University to accept that exams need to be brought before Christmas and the Academic year should remain the same as it was this year.
2. To educate students on what these changes will mean for them in terms of academic study and assessment.
3. To keep students informed during discussions and to make sure the student voice is heard throughout these discussions.
4. To monitor the effects of these changes through student surveys and continually assess the impact of the changes to ensure student satisfaction.

22nd October 2015

Prevent Prevent

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Raj Jeyaraj, VP Diversity

Policy statement

USSA will boycott and oppose the government guidance for specified Scottish authorities on the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

USSA Notes:

1. The government's Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory requirement on public bodies – including universities – to “prevent people being drawn into terrorism” and to implement the „Prevent“ agenda.
2. The Prevent agenda, as part of the Government's anti-extremism“ work has been used to create an expansive surveillance architecture to spy on the public and to police dissent, systematically targeting Black people and Muslims.
3. Under Prevent, lecturers have been known to report students as being at risk of radicalisation“ for merely taking an interest in political affairs in class, or for observing their religion more closely, whilst politically active students have found themselves visited by counter-terrorism officers.
4. The Government's counter-terrorism/security policy is fundamentally flawed in its approach; its operant concepts of „extremism“ and „radicalism“ are ill-defined and open to abuse for political ends.
5. The Act further criminalises Muslims and Black people, and comes amidst a campaign of fear and demonization from the government.

USSA Believes:

1. Islamophobia is massively on the rise across Europe, is state-sponsored and legitimised by the mainstream media.
2. The government's identified „warning signs“ of “radicalisation” problematize and renders suspect those with mental health difficulties.
3. That the Act could serve to isolate many students who already feel that the only avenue through which the Government will engage them is „anti-radicalisation“ initiatives, resulting in further alienation and disaffection.

4. The Act discourages free expression and analysis of ideas. Academics, as well as anyone in a public sector job, should not have to be part of this surveillance.
5. We fundamentally believe that universities and colleges are places for education, not surveillance
6. The implementation of the Prevent Strategy on campus will not only isolate Muslim students but undermine the civil liberties of other groups such as environmental, political and humanitarian activists.
7. That the National Union of Students (NUS) and University and Colleges Union (UCU) have both passed motions at their conferences opposing the Act and Prevent.
8. As a separate legal entity from the university, USSA is not legally bound to engage with Prevent and will seek to boycott it
9. The Prevent Duty Guidance is an attack on our students civil liberty
10. Our students should have an environment that promotes learning, safe from constants surveillance, free from discrimination.

USSA Resolves:

1. To mandate the Officers of this Union to not engage with the Prevent strategy or implement the proposals of the Act, and to boycott it as far as legally possible.
2. To work with campus trade unions including UCU on combating the Prevent strategy and its implementation on campus.
3. To educate students on the dangers of the CTSA and the Prevent Strategy.
4. To lobby the university to be more open and transparent about how they are engaging with Prevent and other similar initiatives. This includes:
 - a. Demanding publications of how the policy is operating within the university.
 - b. This includes access to materials used to train staff and students.
 - c. Holding consultations with the student body regarding how this affects students.

22nd October 2015

LGBT + Counselling

Submitting Forum: Equality and Diversity Committee

Proposer: Leo Siebert

Student Parliament Notes:

1. There is a considerable number of students at Strathclyde University who identify themselves to be somewhere on the LGBT+ spectrum.
2. Currently, the University counsellors are not trained to deal with issues relating to gender or sexual identity.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. The University counsellors should receive LGBT+ specific training as soon as possible as the University should provide support for all students.
2. LGBT+ students should have the ability to seek out counselling on LGBT+ issues from the University.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. The Student Union and the VP Diversity should lobby the University for suitable LGBT+ specific training for their counsellors and the Advice Hub before the end of the semester.

1st March 2016

Tick Tick

Submitting Forum: Executive Proposer: Raj Jeyaraj,

VP Diversity

Student Parliament Notes:

1. The Two Tick symbol, is awarded by Jobcentre Plus
2. In order for an employer to be awarded the Two Tick symbol, five commitments have to be made. These are:
 - a. To interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and to consider them on their abilities.
 - b. To discuss with disabled employees, at any time but at least once a year, what you can both do to make sure they can develop and use their abilities.
 - c. To make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment.
 - d. To take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work.
 - e. To review these commitments every year and assess what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans.
3. Strathclyde University Students' Association does not currently use the Two Tick Scheme.
4. Disabled people often face barriers to gaining employment that are not faced by non-disabled people.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That the Two Tick scheme does not amount to positive discrimination because there are no guaranteed jobs and any candidate considered under the scheme is assessed on the merits of their application.

2. That the Two Tick Scheme is a good step for employers to take in order to reduce the disadvantages faced by disabled people because it shows a proactive approach to employing disabled people and developing their abilities.
3. Employers should be encouraged to apply for the Two Tick Scheme.
4. That Strathclyde University Students' Association should use the Two Tick Scheme.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. To mandate the President, and VP Diversity to work towards University of Strathclyde Students' Association being awarded the Two Tick Scheme.

Useful Links:

<https://www.gov.uk/recruitment-disabled-people/encouraging-applicationspage.html>

1st March 2016

Counselling Cuts

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: Lord Mensah Apesti

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Strathclyde university student counselling provision has gone down to approximately 1.7 staff members.
2. The current waiting time for an appointment is 4 weeks.
3. The same number of students has been served this academic year (just 1st Semi) same as the whole of last academic year despite a decrease in staff from 2.2 to 1.7.
4. There were 45 students on the waiting list for counselling before Christmas.
5. NHS has seen a 25% increase in the use of their Mental Health services. (2)
6. There has been a 35% increase in the use of CAMHS (Children and Adolescent mental health service) in Scotland between 2013 and 2015. (5)
7. The NHS target waiting time is 18 weeks.
8. The recommended ratio by the Association of University and College Counsellors recommend a counsellor to student ratio of 1:3,000. (3) 20% of (1336) students consider themselves to have a mental health problem.
9. 13% of (1336) students have had suicidal thoughts at some point during their course.
10. More than 25% (.4) of students will not tell anyone.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Mental health is an essential part of a positive student experience.
2. The correct amount of resources should go into counselling provisions.
3. The current student counselling provision is not sufficient to cope with demands.
4. The current provision is dangerous for students welling.

5. The long waiting times is putting students at risk.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. Mandate the Union Exec to lobby the university to increase the counselling provision.
2. Campaign for the university to increase its commitment toward student counselling services.

Useful Links:

Association for University and College Counsellors Good Practice Guidelines

<http://www.nus.org.uk/Global/Campaigns/20130517%20Mental%20Distress%20Surey%20%20Overview.pdf>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-32861745#>

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Child-and-Adolescent-Mental-Health/>

1st March 2016

Access to exam transcripts and average marks

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: Tariq Mir

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Students at Strathclyde do not currently receive information on how their marks from assessments compare to the class average.
2. The data showing the spread of marks for assessments should be easily available.
3. There is no system in place for all students to see their transcript after an exam. Giving students access to exam transcripts following a request, is currently at the discretion of each department.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Giving students access to the spread of marks for assessments that contribute to the final mark for the course, would encourage those who need support to seek it, give students doing well a confidence boost and
2. Providing this information could also be used to highlight problems in course delivery if the average mark was very low.
3. Any information provided to students should be anonymous.
4. Having access to exam transcripts will allow students to reflect and plan their studying, enhancing their ability to progress through their course.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. The Executive to lobby the University to implement a system that shows students the spread of marks and average mark, for every assessment that contributes to the final grade for a course.
2. The Executive to lobby the University to make individual exam transcripts available to all students, on request.

Useful Links: <http://www.strath.ac.uk/dataprotection/dataprotectionfaq/>

Let's get debating

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: John Martin Lyon

Student Parliament Notes:

1. There presently seems to be very little that the university or Union is doing surrounding educating students on the upcoming Scottish Parliamentary elections and "Brexit" referendum. The union's standing policy allowed for there to be and actively encouraged participation in debate around the Scottish Independence referendum but has failed to do so for these two upcoming votes.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That USSA and other University bodies need to do more to encourage participation in and debate surrounding
 - a. The upcoming Scottish elections
 - b. The "Brexit" referendum

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. The union executive should , along with other bodies in the university, be actively organising the following events for both votes:
 - a. Hustings
 - b. Meet the candidates sessions (for parliamentary elections)
 - c. Debates

30th March 2016

Bring Water to the Desert – “Water Water Everywhere!”

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: Tariq Mir

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Access to safe drinking water is important.
2. Water fountains have been piloted in the library and have been a resounding success.
3. Water in cafes is expensive.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Free fresh drinking water should be available to students and staff throughout campus.
2. Disposable paper cups would be preferable.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. The student union should resolve to firstly make fresh purified drinking water available on every level of the student union.
2. The Exec should complete an audit of the availability of free water on campus, identifying particular areas of need and campaigning for the University to provide drinking fountains in these areas.
3. USSA should run a campaign encouraging students to rehydrate with water while they are at student bars.
4. The Union should contact every faculty and describe exactly the importance for safe potable drinking water, along with necessary disposable cups.

30th March 2016

Greening the Campus

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: Tariq Mir

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Strathclyde University is investing hundreds of millions of pounds on serious infrastructure in the coming years.
2. The University spends a great deal of money on heating and lighting.
3. Other universities such as Edinburgh and Caledonian have invested in Combined Heat and Power Systems (CHP). Caledonian University is the most recent addition to the list of CHP university facilities in the UK.
4. Edinburgh University has reported: "Since 2002 the University has invested more than £20 million in an efficient network of low carbon and renewable power generation that now provides the majority of its energy needs".
5. These use natural gas to produce electricity directly on campus and waste heat is recycled throughout the energy system. In the winter waste heat is used to warm buildings.
6. Co-generation is a thermodynamically efficient use of fuel.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. The Union should remind the University it has a duty to provide the most fuel efficient methods on campus.
2. The University spends a lot of money on research on renewables but itself is not very Green on its power sourcing methods.
3. We need to keep our own house in order before we can guide companies and organisations to do the same.
4. Strathclyde has until now avoided this obvious opportunity to develop its campus, especially since it is undergoing major restructuring.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. The Union should lobby the University at all levels for investment in a CHP energy system, clearly describing the benefits and using the examples of other Universities who are using CHP.

Useful Links:

<https://www.clarke-energy.com/2013/glasgow-caledonian-university-chp-district-heating-scheme/>

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/about/sustainability/themes/low-carbon-renewable>

Removal of “Fundraising for the Philippines”

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Kyle Henry

Student Parliament Notes:

1. The policy relates to the destruction that Typhoon Haiyan brought to the Philippines in late 2013.
2. The policy resolves : to work with clubs & societies and the student body to help organise fundraising for aid and relief for the people affected in the Philippines. (Passed to policy Council 4/12/2013)

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Putting in place policy to undertake fundraising for any one particular cause can overlook the other causes we raise for.
2. RAG decide on an annual basis which charities / causes to fund raise for.
3. The Union should support all fundraising and support campaigns.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. To remove this policy as standing.

30th March 2016

Preserve our Green Spaces

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: Tariq Mir

Student Parliament Notes:

1. We are seeing a major programme of restructuring, new builds and transformation of the university estate.
2. This means there is less green space for students on campus.
3. Rottenrow Gardens, the space with the big nappy pin is a student friendly space in the heart of campus.
4. The brownfield site adjacent to the Andersonian library has recently been leveled, its trees cut down and chipped.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. The probability that Rottenrow Gardens be used for some future build project seems to be high.
2. Rottenrow gardens is an important space for green space development.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. The union should use its power to bring the necessary departments together within the university to preserve this space for future generations of students and staff.
2. Students should be involved in the planning of campus.

30th March 2016

Grading for students studying part of their degree abroad

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: Lennart Fahnenmüller

Student Parliament Notes:

1. As globalisation progresses, so does the number of (1) international students at the University of Strathclyde (2) UoS students spending part of their studies at another university (3) students from other universities spending part of their time at the UoS (4) Joint Degrees offered by the UoS and other institutions.
2. Scottish percentage averages for a comparable performance are generally lower than those according to other countries' grading system. On the other hand, a lower overall average leads to a "merit" or "distinction" degree in Scotland.
3. It is university policy to not integrate grades from courses delivered at a partner university into UoS students' average. It is also university policy to not issue a "merit" or "distinction" degree to students studying a joint degree where the other universities do not recognise this classification.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. The trend towards an internationalisation of student life is worth supporting.
2. In order to support and motivate students studying at more than one university it is fundamentally important that performances delivered at other universities are fully recognised by the UoS, including the grades delivered at a partner university.
3. The current UoS policy regarding grades delivered at other universities does not live up to expectations of students in a globalised world.
4. It is important that degrees awarded by the UoS and a partner university include Scottish degree awards, i.e. "merit" or "distinction", where applicable, in order to treat Joint Degree students' achievements in the same way as UoS-only students.
5. The Scottish grading system as such and its application by the UoS is coherent and both are not in the scope of this particular motion.
6. It is important to find a balance in recognising grades delivered at partner universities without over- or underrating these performances and thereby undermining the Scottish grading system.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That the UoS should be asked to include all grades delivered at partner universities into UoS degrees.
2. USSA should request that the UoS should negotiate with their partner universities in order to award "merit" and "distinction" degrees on Joint Degrees, where applicable according to UoS standards.
3. That the UoS should be asked to perform a benchmark on how other UK and EU universities, considering e.g. the "Bayerische Formel"(Bavarian formula) used in Germany, treat this issue and report back to the Student Parliament on the outcomes.
4. That a suitable translation scale should be introduced by the UoS, which does not only consider percentages (as the effort necessary to deliver these varies between different countries), but also the relevant amount of students in each country attaining this mark.
5. That the Vice President Education addresses this topic in a suitable way, engages the university on this issue, oversees the progression of this project and reports back to Student Parliament.

Useful Links:

<http://globalinnovationmanagement.org/img/GIM14-15HANDBOOK.pdf> (page 19)

[https://www.zv.uni-](https://www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Studium/studentensekretariat/pdf/Umrechnung_auslaendischer_Studienleistungen.pdf)

[leipzig.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Studium/studentensekretariat/pdf/Umrechnung_auslaendischer_Studienleistungen.pdf](https://www.zv.uni-leipzig.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Studium/studentensekretariat/pdf/Umrechnung_auslaendischer_Studienleistungen.pdf) (page 5, NB differences to Strathclyde scale)

30th March 2016

2016/17

More Ethical and Environmental Provision of Water in The Union and Across Campus

Submitting Forum: Clubs & Societies General Meeting

Proposer: Liam McCabe, VPVD

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That a majority of plastic bottles end up never being recycled, and when incinerated produce toxic fumes.
2. That it takes a huge amount of fossil fuel powered energy to create plastic bottles in the first place, and produces over a million tons of waste a year and several million tons of carbon dioxide².
3. That there is a huge impact upon wildlife, particularly marine³, with birds and sea life in particular often consuming lethal volumes of plastic waste or an item which they cannot process, leading to death.
4. That according to the UN Human Rights Council (Resolution A/HRC/RES/15/9), access to clean drinking water is a human right⁴.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. It is incumbent upon us to reduce our impact on the environment, as part of our guiding principle of environmentalism and in line with our Environmental Policy.
2. That it is necessary for us to provide clean, safe drinking water to our students and this should be as accessible as possible, with cost and location in mind.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. To prohibit the sale of bottled water in The Union, and campaign for a similar ban across outlets on campus.
2. To replace bottled water with a combination of water fountains in The Union (with free, recyclable cups provided) and access to low cost water bottles for long-term use.
3. To continue to advocate for the proliferation of water fountains across campus, in line with legislation on workers' rights, and the provision of cups that said legislation entails for the use of students and staff alike.

² <http://www.hydratelife.org/?p=767>

³ <http://www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/whats-the-problem-with-plastic-bottles/>

⁴ http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/15/9

2017/18

Living Rent Union

Proposed by: Matthew Crilly; Seconded by: Alessio Gentile

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That rents in Glasgow have increased by 7% in the past year.
2. That there is existing policy supporting the Living Rent campaign. Since the policy was passed, the Living Rent campaign developed into Scotland's tenants' union.
3. That the Living Rent has been involved in campaigning for its members- including students- against substandard housing conditions in Glasgow.
4. That Glasgow City Council have passed a motion to investigate the viability of introducing rent pressure zones in Glasgow.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That rents in Scotland are becoming more and more unaffordable for tenants and students.
2. That students are disproportionately vulnerable to exploitative landlords and letting agencies in then private rented sector.
3. That decent, affordable housing is a priority for students.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That USSA should encourage its members to join the Living Rent Union through its communication channels.
2. That USSA should make an annual donation of £100 to the Living Rent and meet with them to discuss partnership projects.
3. That USSA should pressure Glasgow City Council to introduce rent pressure zones in Glasgow.

Solidarity with the Rohingya

Proposed by: Matthew Crilly; Seconded by: Simran Kaur

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That the Rohingya Muslim population in the Rakhine state of Myanmar/Burma are being persecuted by Burmese security forces.
2. That more than 480,000 Rohingya have been forced to leave their homes.
3. That a top United Nations Human Rights official has said the persecution of the Rohingya in Myanmar is a "textbook" example of ethnic cleansing.
4. That Human Rights Watch have condemned the Burmese security forces for committing 'crimes against humanity'.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That all states should respect and adhere to international humanitarian law.
2. That international pressure should be applied to the Burmese state, to stop the violence and expulsion of the Rohingya.
3. That those responsible should be held accountable for the suffering they have caused.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That elected student officers should support international campaigns which apply pressure on Burmese representatives and the Burmese state.
2. That USSA should resist, insofar as legislative conditions permit, any action or commercial transaction that gives political or economic support to the State of Myanmar, whilst it engages in breaches of international humanitarian law.
3. That USSA should donate £100, from its campaigns budget, to Oxfam's emergency appeal supporting Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh.

Useful Links:

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/actions/stop-violence-against-rohingya-myanmar>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/09/25/burma-military-commits-crimes-against-humanity>

https://donate.oxfam.org.uk/emergency/rohingya?pscid=ps_ggl_emergencies_rohingya_generic&clid=EAlaIQobChMIIna_z9p3F1gIVjrDtCh1ppQTCEAMYASAAEgKd9_D_BwE&gclid=CJjG1f6dxdYCFTA0wodxh8LiA

Military Recruitment

Proposed by: Matthew Crilly; Seconded by: Liam McCabe

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That this policy was passed by the Clubs and Societies General Meeting on 02/10/2017
2. That existing policy from 2009/10 banning military recruiters from the Student Union premises is unclear as it bans military recruiters from the Student Union but makes exceptions for UOTC, UAS and UNRU on the basis that they are not military recruiters.
3. That, despite what the previous policy states, these organisations are attached to the Volunteer Reserves, and thus are part of the British Armed Services.
4. That these organisations place conditions upon access to their opportunities.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That students should not feel pressured to join the Volunteer Reserves or any branch of the Armed Forces.
2. That conditions placed upon membership of the university branches of the Volunteer Reserves sees the exclusion of international students and students with certain medical conditions and disabilities from taking part, which is in contravention of USSA's Equal Opportunities policy.
3. That in offering financial benefits and exclusive opportunities to students, university military units are participating in a form of military recruitment.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That any part of the Armed Forces, including the Volunteer Reserve Units, will not be allowed to affiliate to USSA and are prohibited from undertaking any official activities in the Student Union or at attending Union events, including the Freshers' Fair. This includes any branch of the University Officers' Training Corps, the University Air Squadrons and the University Royal Naval Unit.
2. That this policy will replace wholesale the previous "Military Recruitment" policy.

Referendum on Moving USSA to a New Building

Proposed by: Iain Paterson; Seconded by: James Ferns

Student Parliament Notes:

1. The Union plays a vital role in the student experience. One recognised by the University and external bodies such as the NUS.
2. The Union currently has a ten floor building (one of the tallest buildings of its kind in Europe).
3. Services include bar facilities, a cafe, study space, an advice hub, support for 170 student societies, 53 sport teams (223 student groups total), and the infrastructure to support this.
4. These Services and Student Groups rely on there being space made available to them, which is already in high demand in the current building.
5. Under plans for the new Learning and Teaching Building the Union will be allocated part of two floors, sharing space with the University.
6. No decision has as of yet been made to the future of the current Union Building.
7. There are also a number of concerns from disabled students regarding the proposed building.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Students have not been properly consulted on the Union being moved.
2. The new Space is not adequate for student needs.
3. There is still time to demand better accommodation from the University.
4. A referendum is necessary to gauge the will of the students.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That a referendum should be held at the next convenient opportunity as to whether the Union should consent to being moved.
2. We should continue to have dialogue with the University, to ensure the building doesn't continue to be built without our interests in mind.

3. That should the membership of USSA reject the move, the Executive and Management of USSA shall not consent to any move from the current building to another premise, until a better offer is made and consented to by the membership of USSA in a referendum.

4. That the question shall be: "Currently USSA provides bar facilities, a cafe, study space, an advice hub, 170 Clubs & Societies and the infrastructure to support this. The University proposes to move the Student Union from its current ten floor premises to a much smaller section of the new Learning and Teaching Building. This will occupy two stories in part of what is currently the Colville Building. Do you agree that The Union should move?"

Terminating the Mark of Zero Policy

Proposed by: James Ferns; Seconded by: Iain Paterson

Student Parliament Notes:

1. In 2015 the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (HaSS) rolled out a new faculty wide policy on the submission of late assignments.
2. This policy dictates that students who submit an assignment passed its deadline, even by a few minutes, will automatically receive a mark of zero.
3. Before this policy was introduced departments within HaSS had their own policies for the submission of late assignments. These policies generally dealt with late submission of assignments in less draconian terms – for instance, rather than an instant mark of zero some departments enforced a 5 per cent reduction in marks for every day beyond the assessment deadline.
4. USSA vocally opposed the mark of zero policy when it was initially conceptualised. This opposition has remained constant since the policy was passed, yet HaSS continues to ignore its students.
5. There has been discussion of standardising late submission policy across the University and this carries the potential for the zero-mark policy to be extended to other faculties.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. USSA acknowledges that there must be a punitive consequence for the late submission of an assignment. However, USSA believes that awarding a mark of zero is unreasonably harsh and should be replaced with a fairer policy.
2. There should be no extension of the zero-mark policy to other faculties.
3. One of the universities strategic aims is improving student retention, particularly among the ever increasing widening access population. USSA believes that the mark of zero compromises student retention rates; receiving a zero-mark on an assignment as a first year student could seriously lower academic confidence.
4. The National Union of Students and other bodies have highlighted the current inflation of mental illness, depression, and anxiety among the student population. USSA believes that awarding a mark of zero for the late submission of assignments does nothing to rectify this situation, instead, it worsens it.
5. USSA challenges the notion that the mark of zero in some way prepares students for the 'real world'. Students are no longer supported by generous governmental grants, many are

compelled to take part-time and full-time jobs to support their studies. It is a patronising position which assumes that students do not understand the world of work.

6. Local and national student satisfaction surveys highlight students' frustration over the late return of assessment feedback and marks. Yet students generally accept it when lecturers inform them that they will miss deadlines for returning feedback and marks because students understand that lecturers have other pressures acting on their lives. Like lecturers, students also have pressures outside of university demanding their focus: the 1980s student archetype is dead, the modern student can be a part-time or full-time worker, a carer and a parent.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That the Vice President Support and Vice President Education should immediately establish a campaign committee which will coordinate USSA action towards ending the mark of Zero.
2. For USSA to immediately broker two meetings: Firstly, between the campaign committee and the Dean and Vice Dean Academic of HaSS. Secondly, between the campaign committee, Student Experience, and university senior management.
3. In the event that HaSS chooses to ignore USSA, by failing to offer a plan for phasing out the mark of zero, USSA will intensify its campaign by moving beyond the realm of lobbying and will pursue direct action.
4. USSA will extend this campaign to other faculties should any of them adopt the zero-mark policy.
5. If HaSS continues to enforce this overtly draconian policy, USSA will weaponise the National Student Survey. USSA will call on all final year HaSS students to leave a mark of zero in all assessment feedback categories in the National Student Survey: if you give students a mark of zero, students will give you a mark of zero.

2018/19

Strath Union Supports Striking Students

Student Parliament Notes:

1. More and more university students are working precariously while in education, with research conducted by the NUS suggesting 57% of students are participating in part-time work to provide additional income. [1]
2. This is a result of the increased cost of living within the UK, the decreased value of student loans, nurseries, and grants, as well as increasing living expenses of being in full-time education opposed to work. [1]
3. Students now struggle to balance work, educational and their social lives - leading to dire consequences such as rent arrears and evictions - with a 16% rise across the UK in the period 2017-18. [2]
4. These struggles can have a highly detrimental impact on the mental health of students - with the UK and Scotland suffering from a student mental health crisis. [3]
5. The Hospitality, Services, Retail, Care and Teaching industries are all dominated by students and have recently seen strike action in response to their precarious working conditions.
6. While these student workers have support from their respective trade unions - in the past USSA have not always responded, at least in a timely manner, to their collective action.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Scotland is a wealthy country, with plentiful resources, therefore student workers should, at the very least, get a fair share of their produce.
2. This Student Union will always belong to, and be powered by, its members - and that when a student struggles against the ills of poverty pay, casual labour or exploitation we should share in that struggle collectively and support them.
3. With a duty to represent and care for its members, Strath Union also has a duty to show support for students in their struggles at their workplace.
4. As such Strath Union should be far more proactive in supporting striking students in their struggle for better working conditions.

5. Strath Union should show full solidarity with striking students

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. The Strath Union Student Executive will proactively monitor the actions of Trade Unions - covering industries which employ a large number of students - and should a strike be called for; Strath Union will support the strikers.

2. Strath Union will show full solidarity to strikes in which the industry employs a large number of students such as the Hospitality, Services, Retail, Care and Teaching industries.

3. Given that we are in a period of industrial transformation, should new industries emerge not present at the time of this motion, it shall be at the discretion of the ruling Student Executive to extend support to striking students in these industries.

4. Examples of support given to striking students could include, but shall not be limited to, statements of support from Strath Union or members of the Student Executive, raising awareness, and standing in solidarity at picket lines alongside striking student workers.

5. Strath Union will have a statement of support, composed by the Student Executive, prepared for the commencement of strike action - and will continue to show support throughout the dispute, especially in the case of escalation.

6. Strath Union will also host any events, free of charge, that the striking students wish to do, such as educational or campaign workshops.

Additional Resources:

[1] - Leone Richmond - THE - Student part-time work increases
[<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/student-part-time-work-increases/2006956.article>]

[2] - Michael Savage - The Guardian - More than 17,000 UK Students face university rent arrears
[<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/jan/20/17000-uk-students-university-accommodation-rent-arrears-debt>]

[3] - Bridgette Berwick, Helen Stallman - The Independent - How universities can combat the student mental health crisis [<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/university-mental-health-students-depression-anxiety-suicide-alcohol-a8526051.html>]

Vital, Cherished and More Frequent

Proposed by: Ben Taylor Seconded by: Benn Rapson

Parliament Notes:

1. That article "14. a. ii." of the Strath Union Schedules currently states:

"The Parliament shall meet regularly throughout the Academic Year to discuss issues, create Policy, hold the Executive accountable, set referenda, plan, deliver & review campaigns, and coordinate events to encourage greater participation from the membership in shaping the student experience at Strathclyde;" [1]

Parliament Believes:

1. That Student Parliament is an incredibly vital, and cherished, component of the democratic structures we maintain at Strath Union ensuring any student can have their voice heard.

2. That Student Parliament, in the past, has not been meeting regularly enough – with some semesters in previous academic sessions receiving only one or two sittings per semester.

3. That Student Parliament meetings should be more frequent than they have been in recent memory in order to boost awareness of this component of Strath Union life - as well as increase high quality and topical policy output.

4. That the importance of Student Parliament could be better emphasised to Students during their relevant induction periods such as Freshers week, or other times of the academic year.

Parliament Instructs:

1. That article "14. A. ii." of the Strath Union Schedules should be amended to state:

"The Parliament shall meet at least monthly, throughout the Academic Year, with the permitted exception of December, to discuss issues, create Policy, hold the Executive accountable, set referenda, plan, deliver & review campaigns, and coordinate events to encourage greater participation from the membership in shaping the student experience at Strathclyde;

2. That subject to this change the first sitting of Strath Union Student Parliament, in Semester One of the 2019-20 academic session and going forward in subsequent years, shall take place as an event during the 2019 Freshers Season.

3. That subject to this change members of the Strath Union Student Executive shall endorse and promote Student Parliament, when they deem appropriate, at any student inductions in which they speak to students.

Useful links

[1] University of Strathclyde Students Association - StrathUnion - Association-Schedules
[<https://www.strathunion.com/pageassets/voice/unionpolicy/constitution/AssociationSchedules-22.03.17.pdf>]

Strath Union Supports Student Finance Revolution

Proposed by: Benn Rapson Seconded by: Max McKay

Parliament Notes

1. That Scotland, unlike other nations within the United Kingdom, provides free tuition at the undergraduate level, and select postgraduate courses, for Scottish and European nationals and will continue to do so post the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union. [1]

2. That despite free tuition, Scotland continues to operate a system of student loans, alongside selective bursaries, to support living costs for students via the Students Award Agency for Scotland also known as SaaS. [2]

3. That in 2017 the average student loan debt in Scotland rose by 13% year on year to £11,650. [3]

4. That in 2018 the average student loan debt in Scotland has risen once again by 13% to £13,230. [4]

5. That in 2018 university applications nationwide for Scotland from 18 year olds in the poorest areas fell for the first time in decades. [5]

6. That some students leave university with zero student loan debt while others leave with over £25,000 of student loan debt.

7. That there are currently various studies and trials into a so called "Living Income" system as a means to replace the current social security system. [6]

8. That members of our Strath Union Student Executive, such as our Student Union President, have opportunities to engage with members of the Scottish Cabinet such as the Minister for Further and Higher Education. [7]

9. That Strath Union can have further influence on student policy through our delegation to NUS Scotland Conference and NUS UK Conference.

10. That Strath Union can engage and openly campaign on issues affecting students as students.

Parliament Believes

1. That access to, and the opportunities provided by, Further and Higher Education should always be a right - not a privilege - as recognised by the UN Declaration of Human Rights.
2. Despite the many positive implications provided by free tuition in Scotland - which should be protected and maintained - the rise of student loan debt in Scotland is a worrying trend.
3. The fact that some students leave with significantly more debt than others leaving university is an inherent inequality present in our education system that needs addressing.
4. That radical transformation of the funding of Further and Higher Education is required in Scotland - alongside a wider policy programme of reversing privatisation throughout our campuses.
5. That studies by political groupings in the UK such as the SNP, Labour and others - as well as studies internationally in countries like Finland - into a so called "Living Income" look highly promising.
6. That a "Living Income" could be the solution to the student finance problem facing students in Scotland and across the UK.
7. In the absence of a broad-based "Living Income" - both the Scottish and UK Governments should adopt a specialised "Students Living Income" - a universal provision for all students in Further or Higher Education - as a direct replacement for loans.
8. That a "Students Living Income" would ensure a more even playing field on leaving university, create a more equal society, and allow students to focus on their studies opposed to often precarious part-time work.

Parliament Instructs

1. That Strath Union shall adopt a policy advocating a "Students Living Income" - in the absence of a wider "Living Income" programme - as a direct replacement for the current system of student finance.
2. That when engaging in policy discussions with members of either the Scottish or UK governments, or other relevant educational bodies, members of the Strath Union Student Executive will openly advocate for a "Students Living Income" as our policy replacement for student loans.
3. That Strath Union, via its Student Executive, should also make the case to the executive of NUS Scotland and NUS UK - when possible.

4. That Strath Union/Strathclyde delegates to both NUS Scotland and NUS UK Conference should advocate a “Students Living Income” - and if presented with the opportunity submitting a motion on this issue or aim to support suitable motions on the issue.

5. That Strath Union will openly advocate for this policy through all possible, and practical, avenues so that a much needed revolution in student finance comes sooner rather than later.

Useful links

[1] - Katrine Bussey - The Scotsman - Scotland announces free university tuition for EU Students after Brexit Date [<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/scotland-freeuniversity-tuition-brexit-eu-students-shirley-anne-somerville-a8190211.html>]

[2] - Student Awards Agency for Scotland - SaaS Website: About Us [http://www.saas.gov.uk/about_us/index.htm]

[3] - Herald Scotland - Scottish student debt increases 13% to almost £12,000 [<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15350770.scottish-student-debt-increases-13-to-almost12000/>]

[4] - The Student Loans Company - Student Loans for Higher Education in Scotland [<https://www.slc.co.uk/media/10028/slcsp042018.pdf>]

[5] - Jamie McIvor - BBC Scotland- University application rates from 18 year olds in poorest areas falls [<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-42938097>]

[6] - Basic Income UK - Our Mission - [<https://www.basicincome.org.uk/>]

[6] - University of Strathclyde Students Association - StrathUnion - Facebook Post [<https://www.facebook.com/plugins/post.php?href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FStrathclydeUnion%2Fposts%2F3262082750475956>]

Strath Union's Response to the Financial Difficulties of the National Union of Students (NUS)

Proposed by: Daniel Corrigan Seconded by: Nairne Clark

Parliament Notes:

1. That the NUS is experiencing serious financial difficulty [1].
2. That our Union is an affiliated member of the NUS, and has a vested interest in these developments.
3. That the NUS will take measures to address this financial deficit [2].
4. That the NUS has stated that it may consider "turning off some of the activity" that they deliver [2].
5. That the NUS will hold a 'Strategic Conversation' on the 27th of November 2018 to discuss this and other related issues [2].
6. That the outcome of this 'Strategic Conversation' will be put to members to vote upon at the 2019 National Conference [2].
7. That the Union currently purchases many of its goods through the NUS' purchasing consortium.

Parliament Believes

1. That there is a serious chance of the NUS becoming insolvent and having to shut down or seriously scale back its operation.
2. That the NUS should be open and accountable to its members, even in times of difficulty.
3. That our Union and its members should be promptly informed as to how the NUS intends to cut this deficit.
4. That past NUS conferences have failed to ratify effective policies in which to cut the deficit of the organisation.
5. That we could potentially see scaling back of the NUS, price/fee increases on our Union, and cuts to the NUS operation in general.
6. That, if effected, our Union should be prepared, and look towards contingency planning.
7. That, if necessary, the Union should consider the likes of Northern Services [3] as an alternative to the NUS' purchasing consortium - Northern Services being the purchasing consortium used by both Glasgow University Unions, St. Andrews University Union, Dundee University Union and Belfast University Union.

Parliament Instructs

1. The Executive Officers to contact NUS Officers, and request information in regards to the potential avenues available to them in which to cut the deficit.
2. The Executive Officers to contact NUS Officers, and request information in regards to the outcomes of the Strategic Conversation of November 2018.
3. The Executive Officers contacting the NUS Officers to make it clear from the outset that waiting until next year's conference to receive this information is not acceptable.
4. The Union to seek tentative discussions with Northern Services to prepare itself in the possible event that the NUS ceases, or scales back, applicable operations.
5. The Union to prepare itself for this possible event in all other applicable operations, as far as realistically possible.
6. The Union to make updates, in regards to the progression of these instructions, clear and accessible online for members to read.

Useful Links

[1] <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/nov/02/national-union-of-students-faces-bankruptcy>

[2] <https://www.oxfordstudent.com/2018/11/16/controversy-as-the-national-union-of-students-faces-bankruptcy/>

[3] <https://www.northernservices.net/>

Strath Union's Response to the Financial Difficulties of the National Union of Students (NUS)

Proposed by: Daniel Corrigan Seconded by: Nairne Clark

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10. That the NUS will take measures to address this financial deficit [2].
11. That the NUS has stated that it may consider "turning off some of the activity" that they deliver [2].
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[2] <https://www.oxfordstudent.com/2018/11/16/controversy-as-the-national-union-of-students-faces-bankruptcy/>

[3] <https://www.northernservices.net/>

Commitment to Pro-Choice

Proposed by: Julia Swann Seconded by: Bohdan Starosta

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Strath Union's existing policy states that 'women's control over their own bodies and access to safe abortions is fundamental to women's freedom and equality' and 'The union opposes any moves to restrict the current legal situation.'
2. The UN classifies lack of access to abortion as torture.
3. Having access to safe abortion may be a determining factor in whether or not someone is able to continue their studies.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. The safety and wellbeing of students should be protected.
2. Anti-abortion propaganda may be distressing and upsetting to members of Strath Union.
3. Strath Union need not be forced to attach its name to anti-abortion/pro-life propaganda.
4. Strath Union need not be forced to fund or promote anti-abortion/pro-life propaganda if the organisation, through its democratic bodies, chooses not to.

Student Parliament Instructs:

1. Strath Union will not fund, promote or be affiliated to anti-abortion/pro-life propaganda or propagandising activities.
2. Strath Union will not be used as a venue to promote anti-abortion/pro-life propaganda.
3. Strath Union's branding and name will not be used in anti-abortion/pro-life propaganda.
4. Strath Union will continue to support access to safe abortion and support the bodily autonomy of its student members.
5. Strath Union should provide accurate and up to date information relating to abortions should a student seek it.
6. This policy will replace the existing 'No Platform to anti-choice!' policy.

Useful links:

1. http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session22/A.HRC.22.53_English.pdf
2. http://www.lifeandlibertyforwomen.org/truth_about_photos.html
3. <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/keeping-campuses-pro-choice>
4. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/11958784/Anti-abortion-activists-clinicsHarassment-intimidation-and-fear.html>