



Student Council Policies

Below is a list of policies that have been passed by Ulster University Students' Union Student Council and that are currently in effect. Each policy has their respective lapse date to indicate when that policy shall expire. Unless the Student Council deems it appropriate to update and pass a lapsed policy, the Student Executive are not required to carry out the requirements of the respective lapse policy.

To Note: As of November 2016 the policy template sheet has been altered and now contains slightly different wording.

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REFUGEE SUPPORT POLICY

This Council believes:

The student executive should be given the students' mandate to campaign and advocate for those who are displaced by conflict and natural disaster worldwide.

This Council further believes:

As a campaigning organisation, it is UUSU's duty to call for an end to conflict worldwide and to advocate for fair and compassionate treatment of refugees.

Within the current context, conflict in Syria has claimed the lives of between 47,000 and 89,000 civilians. It has also caused a further 4 million people to leave their homes. UUSU must do everything in its power to aid those displaced by the fighting and to call for an end to this, and all future conflicts.

Students' Unions have a history of campaigning for Fairness and Equality. By passing policy which enables Officers to advocate for those in need Council is making major strides towards easing the suffering of those who have been forced to leave their homes worldwide.

This Council resolves that:

The Executive should be given the Student Body's Mandate to campaign and advocate for refugees fleeing conflict or natural disaster and to campaign for an end to all armed conflicts both presently and in the future.

Name of Proposer: Elliot Lyness, Vice-President Campaigns and Communications

Name of Seconder: Daniel Reynolds, B00656177

Date presented to Student Council: 27/10/15

Lapse Date: 27/10/17

FREE EDUCATION POLICY

This Council believes:

The higher education sector in Northern Ireland is unsustainably underfunded in comparison to the rest of the UK. We are currently experiencing cuts at Ulster University and these are unlikely to be reversed in the near future.

This Council further believes:

Education serves a public good and should be free at the point of access to all, regardless of their background, with the ability and willingness to learn. To solve the current crisis which the University is facing a sustainable funding model must be found.

This Council resolves that:

To mandate Student Executive to lobby the Stormont Executive and to lobby the university, to adopt a stance advocating, for free higher education.

Name of Proposer: Colum Mackey, President

Name of Seconder: Kellie Murnion, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Date presented to Student Council: 27/10/15

Lapse Date: 27/10/17

STUDENT MANIFESTO POLICY

This Council believes:

That in tandem with NUS-USI's voter registration campaign "Owning our Future", UUSU Student Executive should be given a mandate to produce a Student Manifesto.

This Council further believes:

Early next year there will be a Stormont Assembly Election, and NUS-USI has already done much to campaign to get Students' opinions heard and to register as many students to vote as possible. The power of Students as a voting block was made evident earlier this year when USI's "Make Grá the Law" Campaign had a significant impact on the Marriage Equality Referendum in the Republic of Ireland.

There needs to be more information available to Students about their options in advance of the Assembly Elections, and while Officers will be doing what they can to get Student Issues onto party Manifestos there will be parties who will be unwilling to negotiate on key areas of concern. By supporting this motion, Council will be giving UUSU Student Executive their mandate to create a student manifesto which will detail the positions of key Stormont parties on the following issues: raising tuition fees; free education; equal marriage; the MSM blood ban; legalisation of abortion in Northern Ireland and divestment from fossil fuels.

This Council resolves that:

The Executive should be given the Student Body's Mandate to produce a Student manifesto.

Name of Proposer: Elliot Lyness, Vice-President Campaigns and Communications

Name of Seconder: Daniel Reynolds, B00656177

Date presented to Student Council: 27/10/15

Lapse Date: 27/10/17

LIBRARY OPENING POLICY

This Council believes:

That the library should be opened until midnight during peak exam time. This is because there are not enough rooms available for study during exam time, as well as this, the rooms which are reserved 24 hours are computer suites, thus do not facilitate for those who wish to study without using the computer.

This Council further believes:

Many students who live on-campus work part time jobs, and therefore may need to study late at night, as well as those who cannot concentrate in their flats due to noise etc.

This Council resolves that:

The library should open until midnight to facilitate those who require a quiet study room to better their study. Alternatively, if the extension of the library hours is unachievable, then I propose that we open more 24hour study rooms with no computers.

**Name of Proposer: Kellie Murnion, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs
(Jordanstown)**

Name of Seconder: Colum, President

Date presented to Student Council: 27/10/15

Lapse Date: 27/10/17

GENDER RECOGNITION, RESPECT AND ACCESS POLICY

This Council believes:

That transgender and gender non-conforming/non-binary students should be respected and allowed access to basic facilities and be treated with the same respect as their cis- gender peers.

This Council further believes:

That the student's union can be at the forefront of respecting gender in all of its infinite forms and that access to facilities, such as gender neutral toilets and being able to self- determine on all documents will mean a better world for all our students, regardless of gender or expression.

This Council resolves that:

Some toilets on campus should be converted to gender neutral toilets, which can be as simple as changing signage. The Students Union should do this for all their campus facilities and lobby the University for Gender Neutral Facilities to be provided on each campus.

That, with the support from the Students' Union, the University should allow students to self-determine their gender.

Name of Proposer: Gillian Bell, B00582065

Name of Seconder: Ellen McGuinness, B00618880

Date presented to Student Council: 27/10/15

Lapse Date: 27/10/17

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POLICY

This Council believes:

That we should hold a Women In Leadership (WIL) programme to encourage more women to participate in influential roles for example sabbatical officer positions within our UUSU.

This Council further believes:

It is important that women understand that they are more than capable of fulfilling an influential role in leadership and feel confident in doing so.

This Council resolves that:

We should run a WIL programme in December Week 11 on the Belfast Campus for Belfast and Jordanstown students, and one in Magee for Magee and Coleraine students.

**Name of Proposer: Kellie Murnion, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs
(Jordanstown)**

Name of Seconder: Colum Mackey, President

Date presented to Student Council: 27/10/15

Lapse Date: 27/10/17

HIDDEN COURSE COSTS

This Council believes:

Tuition fees for domiciled students in Northern Ireland are currently advertised at £3,805 per year however; additional costs necessary for academic success are omitted and not made explicit within university prospectuses.

This Council further believes:

Ulster University should be transparent when advertising the full costs involved in studying on its courses.

This Council resolves that:

To mandate Student Executive in lobbying the university to specify and make transparent any additional costs that may be incurred within a mode of study (mandatory, necessarily incurred and optional), to be detailed within all university course promotional material and documentation, including the university course prospectus.

**Name of Proposer: Conan Meehan, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs
(Belfast)**

Name of Seconder: Colum Mackey, President

Date presented to Student Council: 27/10/15

Lapse Date: 27/10/17

CAMPUS CAR PARKING POLICY

This Council believes:

That there should be more parking spaces for students on the four campuses which would then solve issues in regards to on campus clamping.

This Council further believes:

The university should prioritise students' needs before dignitaries. Students pay a summation of £3805 a year in tuition fees with hidden course fees and student loans on top of that, then a further charge of a £50 fine when clamped by Noonan for not parking in a designated space.

This Council resolves that:

The Executive of UUSU will ask the university at the next UUSU/UU forum to remove reserved parking for dignitaries and prioritise students paying to attend the university and not those being paid!

Name of Proposer: Emma Boner, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Name of Seconder: Ellen McGuinness, B00618880

Date presented to Student Council: 27/10/15

Lapse Date: 27/10/17

#mybodymyrights POLICY

This forum believes:

The abortion law in Northern Ireland is not compliant with Human Rights. The Amnesty International '#mybodymyrights' campaign seeks to change this, calling for abortion to be permitted in Northern Ireland in cases of fatal foetal abnormality, rape and incest in line with international human rights standards.

This forum further believes:

At least 1000 women a year have been forced to travel from Northern Ireland to Great Britain to access reproductive healthcare and abortions since 1970, including women who have suffered a sexual crime or have received the devastating news that their foetus has fatal foetal abnormalities. Countless others have taken safe but illegal pills to self-abort, risking up to life imprisonment, while others have done desperate or dangerous things.

Recently the Department of Justice carried out a consultation on the possibility of reforming abortion law in the cases of fatal foetal abnormality, and invited comments on reform in the cases of rape and incest; however no changes have been forthcoming. Research commissioned by Amnesty International in 2014, carried out by market research company Millward Brown Ulster, shows that 7 in 10 people in Northern Ireland support a reform of such restrictive laws. The outcome of a judicial review on the matter is expected in the near future. This is very much a live issue.

NUS-USI have ratified a motion calling for support for the #mybodymyrights campaign at their 2014-15 conference and it is included in the programme of work for 2015-16.

This forum resolves that:

UUSU should explicitly support the Amnesty International NI #mybodymyrights campaign and ask that the Executive Committee join with NUS-USI and other groups to campaign for change in abortion legislation.

Name of Proposer: Danielle Roberts, B00601771

Name of Seconder: Vikki Lutton, B00610467

Date presented to Student Council: 24/11/15

Lapse Date: 24/11/17

CAMPUS NURSE POLICY

This forum believes:

There should be a nurse on campus for all Ulster University students.

This forum further believes:

Physical health should be taken into as much consideration by the University as mental health and financial help for students while at Ulster. Our counterparts in Queens University Belfast and Letterkenny IT have not only a nurse but a doctor on site as well. Students should not have to wait at the A&E department for hours or till they are home at the weekend to see their local GP.

This forum resolves that:

The Executive of UUSU should liaise/ lobby with the appropriate University channels to ensure the campus nurse is restored, or at least provision to have a nurse on site a few days a week.

Name of Proposer: Micky Quigg, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Magee)

Name of Seconder: Arthur Caulfield, B00670442

Date presented to Student Council: 24/11/15

Lapse Date: 24/11/17

PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLICY

This forum believes:

That the UUSU Student Council should lobby for fairer and cheaper public transport for students.

This forum further believes:

The government has a responsibility to provide fairly priced public transport and by imposing similar pricing for both students and people working full time, it places a financial burden on youth furthering their education.

This forum resolves that:

The UUSU Student Executive should contact the other university's Student Councils and join with them to bring this matter to the attention of the government. UUSU shall also campaign on the following three issues: campaign for travel bursaries or free travel for students; campaign for the Y-Link card to be extended to students over 24 and campaign for subsidized cross-border travel for commuting students.

Name of Proposer: Ashley Donnan, B00701080

Name of Seconder: Conan Meehan, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Belfast)

Date presented to Student Council: 24/11/15

Lapse Date: 24/11/17

CCTV POLICY

This forum believes:

Various robberies of students happen in Boyes Park beside the Ulster University Belfast's campus. UUB security also claims a lot of assaults have happened there. They mainly happen around winter time when 'money is tight'.

This forum further believes:

There are no CCTV cameras in Boyes park to aid the police in their investigations and stop serial criminals and bring justice, and perhaps prevent some criminals from targeting this park.

This forum resolves that:

To lobby the University for increased CCTV on all University campuses and in particular outside of UUSU Storage rooms.

Name of Proposer: Vikki Lutton, B00610467

Name of Seconder: Esther Twieg, B00537117

Date presented to Student Council: 24/11/15

Lapse Date: 24/11/17

FIRST AIDER POLICY

This forum believes:

That all Student Executive officers and council members should have first aid training.

This forum further believes:

The student union has a responsibility to look after the health and safety of every student on each campus. Each campus should be equipped with proper first aid boxes. We should all have this knowledge and training. In the Belfast campus some of the art department work with dangerous tools and machines. It would be beneficial to everyone if we had first aid training.

This forum resolves that:

Ulster University should provide first aid training for the Student Council and other students who wish to benefit from the training. A register of already accredited (with at least BTEC level) First Aiders, both staff and students, is compiled and publicly displayed in prominent areas. All Sports Clubs and Societies should be reminded that St John's ambulance is available to be availed of for their events.

Name of Proposer: Esther Twieg, B00537117

Name of Seconder: Vikki Lutton, B00610467

Date presented to Student Council: 24/11/15

Lapse Date: 24/11/17

DRUG AWARENESS POLICY

Student Council notes:

After having conversations with both Drugs.IE and Addiction NI it is clear that 'Just say no' campaigns ran in the past are not effective and that as a Students' Union we should be informing students rather than telling them 'not to do something'. We should be informing students of the dangers of different drugs out there right now and if they or a friend have taken drugs what could the effects could be. This information will be given out through 'what's in the pill, what's in the powder' campaign during the year.

Student Council believes:

Some people are more drawn to risk taking than others. They may use drugs to fit in with their social group or to help them cope, for a sense of release or individual transformation or for the thrill and young people (ages 18 to 24) are already at a heightened risk of addiction. As students at least half of us probably know of, or have seen someone take drugs since starting university and this will continue. One way we can tackle this is informing and offering support and guidance for those students.

That as Students' Union we have the responsibility to run this drugs awareness campaign to assist in fighting and improving the reduction of students who are being affected or harmed by drugs at Ulster University every year.

In Universities all over the world there are going to be a number of the student population that will partake in the consumption of illegal drugs. The aim of the drug awareness campaign is not to try to stop students from experimenting with drugs, but acknowledging that they do and the serious risks that come with drug consumption.

The campaign will focus on harm reduction rather than complete drug prevention, giving students the information they should know if they are going to take drugs.

Ulster University Students' Union do not condone the consumption of illegal drugs and would advise all of our students not to take part in the consumption of illegal drugs, or any illegal act. But we will be there for those students who do consume these drugs and offer advice and support for them.

Student Council resolves:

Ulster University Students' Union should launch a campaign based on the harm reduction aspect, giving students the advice and knowledge they need when it comes illegal drugs. We will do this by:

- Throughout the campaign the Students' Union will also focus on the non-harm element of drug-taking;
- Having visible posters/factsheets around each of our campuses on 'what's in the pill' and 'what's in the powder', as well as uploading these factsheets on all our social media accounts to keep students informed;
- Work with Student Support on each campus and continue to build on the better awareness for students and work with health professionals, such as NHS;

- To continue to work on campaigns with Drugs.ie to make sure students know guidance is always available;
- Having outside bodies such as Addiction NI come onto each campus and give out further information for students;
- Having drug testing kits supplied by E-Z testing, available on campus at each of the Student Union offices for students to come and confidentially take one. The drug testing kits will also have a number for both Callcare and Addiction NI attached in them for students to call regarding drug abuse and addiction problems;
- Direct students to Drugs.ie website to complete an online drug test to see how the drugs they are potentially taking impact their health.

Name of Proposer: Hannah Rooney, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Name of Seconder: Ben Johnson, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Magee)

Date presented to Student Council: 02/11/16

Lapse Date: 02/11/18

HOMESLESS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN POLICY

Student Council notes:

The Students' Union is organising a Solidarity Sit Out as part of its' Homelessness Awareness campaign on Thursday 17th November in Belfast (exact venue tbc). This sit out will be a charity fundraiser for a Homeless charity. A number of NI charities were approached – two replied to us with advice on organizing one such charity event and information on what assistance they could offer us:

De Paul is a cross-border charity who exists to serve homeless individuals and their families, supporting them to rebuild their lives. If selected, they could provide us with informational leaflets on homelessness in Northern Ireland and donation buckets to promote and fundraise for the event on all four campuses during the campaign week.

Shelter NI work to promote and facilitate the provision of sufficient, decent and affordable homes to end long term homelessness. If selected, they could provide us with leaflets on their work, merchandise such as rubbers, pens, tote bags and keyrings to help with promotion and could also provide us with collection buckets, volunteer t-shirts and potentially arrange for some members of staff to join those taking part on the night.

Student Council believes:

The decision on which charity to support should be made by Student Council to give the elected student body the opportunity to decide where the money from this charity venture goes.

Student Council resolves that:

The elected student body should decide, by majority vote, how the money from this charitable venture is donated – whether that be to one specific charity or split between the two.

Name of Proposer: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic & Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Name of Seconder: Colum Mackey, President

Date presented to Student Council: 02/11/16

Lapse Date: 02/11/18

UNI-LINK EXTENSION POLICY

Student Council notes:

The Uni-Link bus which brings students from the Belfast city centre to the Jordanstown campus between Monday and Friday is one of the most useful ways for students to get to and from the Jordanstown campus. The last bus which leaves from Belfast to Jordanstown is 5:30pm and the last bus to leave the Jordanstown campus is 18:15. There are currently over 30 classes still ongoing after 18:15 between Monday and Friday. This means a large portion of students are unable to take the bus home if their class is after 18:15.

Student Council believes:

Although there is a train station 10 minutes walk from the Jordanstown campus, it is felt that students would feel more comfortable and safer getting the bus at later times when it is darker.

For students to continue to safely get to and from the Jordanstown campus there must be additional times added to the Uni-Link timetable and that talks with Translink must happen to ensure this.

It is unfair that the large majority of those students who are in past 18:15 do not get the option to use the Uni-Link service. This is vital for students getting to and from the campus and additional times and should be added to ensure that all students get to use the service and feel safe on their journey to and from the Jordanstown campus.

This also affects students who want to go to the library after class, stay to go to the gym and attend society events.

Student Council resolves that:

Ulster University Students' Union would like there to be two additional times added to the Uni-Link timetable, 19:15 and 21:15.

To try and ensure that this happens the Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown) will take a number of steps:

- Create a survey and send it to those students who have classes after 18:15 and then post the survey on the Students' Union Facebook and Twitter page to encourage students answer appropriately. This will ensure we fully understand how many students would want these extra times;
- Contact Translink and set up a meeting for the team to discuss the matter further so that the issue with the times can be dealt with correctly.

Name of Proposer: Hannah Rooney, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Name of Seconder: Conan Meehan, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Belfast)

Date presented to Student Council: 02/11/16

Lapse Date: 02/11/18

PHD EXTENSION FEES POLICY

Student Council notes:

The Department of the Economy offers 3 year studentships to PhD Students including a stipend and the payment of fees.

If a PhD student does not submit within 3 years they may take an extension. The average time to complete a PhD is 3.5 years.

Students at Ulster University get a free extension for 4 months, and then pay £595 for each additional period of 3 months. The total for a year and 1 month is £1785. Queens University students pay £290 for an extension of a year

Student Council believes:

A PhD is the equivalent of a full time job and students in receipt of a studentship are expected to spend 35 hours a week working on their research. PhD students may teach for up to 6 hours a week (paid) and must receive approval for any other work outside of the university.

When a student goes into an extension period they are no longer in receipt of a stipend. Therefore the payment of £595 every 3 months is very difficult.

Queens University and Ulster University PhD students in receipt of a studentship receive the same stipend, but are faced with very different fees for the extension period.

Student Council resolves that:

The Student Executive will investigate why Ulster University PhD students pay a higher level of extension fees than Queens University PhD students who are in receipt of the same studentship.

Name of Proposer: Danielle Roberts, B00601771

Name of Seconder: Vikki Lutton, B00610467

Date presented to Student Council: 02/11/16

Lapse Date: 02/11/18

GRADUATION POLICY

Student Council notes:

The cost of an average of an Undergraduate Degree for a Northern Irish student is currently over £12,000 and the cost of graduation is £75, with an additional £15 extra tickets.

The average price for a Masters Degree at Ulster University is £5,150.

If a student were to study at Ulster University for three years at undergraduate level and undertake a master qualification, they would have spent around £17,150.

This is an astonishing amount to pay for education, and then at the end of it all, students are asked to pay more to go through the amazing experience of graduating.

Student Council believes:

Students spend a number of years attending and representing Ulster University, and the current cost of graduation acts as a barrier for some students to be able to attend.

Graduation should be a positive experience for everyone involved and should be a celebration of a student's time whilst at University.

As students have paid a large amount of money to attend university, Ulster University should subsidise the cost of graduation as a congratulation.

Student Council resolves that:

Ulster University Students' Union will meet with the Vice-Chancellor of Ulster University, Professor Patrick Nixon, to discuss the possibility of abolishing or lowering the fees incurred by students in relation to graduation and also the availability of tickets.

Name of Proposer: Ben Johnson, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Magee)

Name of Seconder: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Date presented to Student Council: 02/11/16

Lapse Date: 02/11/18

ERASMUS FUNDING POLICY

Student Council notes:

The UK director for Erasmus has said that she cannot guarantee its' continuation for UK students beyond 2017 as a result of Brexit. This comes despite UK outward mobility as a result of the programme doubling from 2007 (7,500) to 2013 (15,000).

More than 14,000 people in the UK have already signed a 'Save Erasmus' petition which was started by a British Student.

Student Council believes:

That the UK government should ensure that the UK remains a part of the Erasmus Scheme to enable students from here to benefit from the numerous opportunities that this programme presents.

The rise in outward mobility as a result of Erasmus demonstrates that the interest in international study is still very much there.

It is the responsibility of both the University and our elected representatives to ensure continuation of this programme, or, failing that, to ensure that this funding is replaced by the UK government.

Student Council resolves that:

The Student Executive should work alongside the Global Engagement department within the University to stress the importance of the continuation of Erasmus funding. This would be particularly relevant as part of the 'We Are International' campaign planned for November.

The Student Executive should meet with elected representatives; particularly MP's and ask for their assistance in lobbying the UK government to request the continuation of Erasmus funding when negotiating Brexit.

Name of Proposer: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic & Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Name of Seconder: Micky Quigg, Vice-President Campaigns & Communication

Date presented to Student Council: 02/11/16

Lapse Date: 02/11/18

DECRIMINALISATION OF ABORTION POLICY

Student Council notes:

Abortion is available in Northern Ireland in only very limited circumstances, where there is a risk to the life or long term mental or physical health of the pregnant person. In 2015 16 NHS abortions were carried out in Northern Ireland and at least 833 women travelled to Great Britain for private abortion healthcare, costing up to £2000 per person. Limited reform of abortion law is being discussed in Stormont, limited to pregnancy resulting from a sex crime or where there is a fatal foetal abnormality. A Judicial Review in 2015 found that Northern Irish law was not compliant with minimum international human right standards.

In April 2016 a woman was given a criminal condition for taking safe but illegal abortion pills.

Student Council believes:

Abortion currently falls under criminal justice rather than healthcare policy. Organisations such as British Pregnancy Advisory Services (BPAS) and Alliance for Choice have shifted their focus to decriminalisation of abortion rather than the extension of the 1967 Abortion Act, which still criminalises women. While Ulster University Students' Union has policy supporting limited reform of abortion legislation, NUS-USI has broader policy campaigning for the decriminalisation of abortion.

Limited reform will not meet the needs of the majority of people who need an abortion. Ulster University Students' Union should add their voice to the campaign for the decriminalisation of abortion.

Council understands that abortion is a contentious issue. We respect people's rights to hold different opinions.

Campaigning for decriminalisation of abortion does not restrict the expression of different view points.

Student Council resolves that:

Ulster University Students' Union will support campaigns for the decriminalisation of abortion in Northern Ireland, through the Student Executive and Vice-President Campaigns and Communications as appropriate.

Name of Proposer: Danielle Roberts, B00601771

Name of Seconder: Vikki Lutton, B00610467

Date presented to Student Council: 02/11/16

Lapse Date: 02/11/18

GOOD RELATIONS POLICY

This Council believes:

That the Good Relations policy developed in partnership between UUSU and the University should be approved by Council and made policy for the Union and all its members.

This Council further believes:

This policy lays the foundation for Good Relations and shall govern all events and processes that UUSU shall run.

This Council resolves that:

That the Good Relations policy will be adopted in UUSU policy and practice and shall apply to all UUSU events, Sports and Societies

Name of Original Proposer: Mark Bell, President

Name of Original Seconder: Colum Mackey, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Name of most recent proposer: Hannah Rooney, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Original date presented to Student Council: 25/11/14

Date reaffirmed: 29/11/16

Lapse Date: 29/11/18

To view the full policy created please see the Student Union website for further information.

POLITICAL EXPRESSION AND FRAMEWORK POLICY

This Council believes:

That the Political Expression and Framework policy be developed in partnership between UUSU and the University be adopted into practice.

This Council further believes:

This policy lays the foundation for Political Expression and shall govern all events and processes that UUSU shall run.

This Council resolves that:

That the Political Expression and Framework policy will be adopted in UUSU policy and practice and shall apply to all UUSU events, Sports and Societies.

Name of Original Proposer: Mark Bell, President

Name of Original Seconder: Colum Mackey, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Name of most recent proposer: Hannah Rooney, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Original date presented to Student Council: 25/11/14

Date reaffirmed: 29/11/16

Lapse Date: 29/11/18

To view the full policy created please see the Student Union website for further information.

BREXIT POLICY

Student Council notes:

On the 23rd June 2016 the UK voted to leave the European Union with a 51.9% majority.

Student Council believes:

Ulster University has inextricable links with the EU and there is no doubt that students and staff benefit from EU funds and projects.

The potential impact of Brexit on higher education and young people is far reaching.

As negotiation plans are being drawn up it's imperative that MLAs, MP's and MEP's are representing their constituents. It's imperative they are repeating the 26,000 students at Ulster University and securing the best deal for students as the UK withdraws from the EU.

Voters in Northern Ireland opted overwhelmingly to maintain our constitutional position within the EU. It is imperative that public representatives reflect this view and argue accordingly for a special position within the EU for Northern Ireland.

Student Council resolves:

The views of those in higher education and young people must be sought and considered, especially over the next two years.

UUSU should lobby decision makers to deliver a deal with the EU which:

- ensures the continuation of funding previously provided by the EU to higher education;
- allows for easy collaboration with universities in the EU for study and research;
- allows the continuation of student mobility both into and out of the UK.

Name of Proposer: Colum Mackey, President

Name of Seconder: Conan Meehan, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Belfast)

Date presented to Student Council: 29/11/16

Lapse Date: 29/11/18

SOCIETY FUNDING POLICY

Student Council notes:

Clubs and societies are a vital part of what students' unions do. Not only do they aid retention and progression, but they give students a space in which to make friends and develop important skills such as time management, leadership and teamwork.

A large portion of the Students' Union budget is ring-fenced for sports clubs. Around £112,000 is spent annually on this important service. Comparatively, the annual societies budget is £8,000 with an average around £5,200 of that being claimed each year.

Affiliated societies can receive up to £150 each semester to fund some aspects of their activity, and are expected to fundraise any extra that they require throughout the year for their other activities. In exceptional circumstances they can receive more money with the approval from Student Council in the interest of transparency.

Student Council believes:

Some societies are better at fundraising than others, with a distinct advantage going to larger more established societies or those which are affiliated to outside commercial bodies.

The two Student Activities Coordinators employed by the Students' Union put in all reasonable effort to ensure that societies spend all of their allocated funding, but in many cases the funds available simply are not enough.

An increase in available funding for societies would encourage all of the budgeted amount to be spent. By allocating a more meaningful amount, committees will be more likely to claim for spending on good quality events, equipment and other items.

Student Council resolves:

The budget that societies receive should be doubled to £16,000 over the next two years, with incremental increases in spending being introduced with each budget.

The Student Activities Coordinators should be given a mandate to ensure that 100% of the budgeted amount is spent this year, and hereafter each year, either by reallocating funding to societies who require additional funds at the year's end or by spending the money on services or material to benefit all societies.

Name of Proposer: Elliot Lyness, B00579196

Name of Seconder: Lisa McKenna, B00656927

Date presented to Student Council: 29/11/16

Lapse Date: 29/11/18

DIVESTMENT POLICY

Student Council notes:

The Students' Union recently received a response to their freedom of information request Ulster University on their investment portfolio. We had inquired as to Ulster University's direct investments through Innovation Ulster and those made indirectly through it's Endowment Fund.

It was found that the University invests its Endowment Fund through the Rathbones Active Income and Growth Fund.

Without taking into consideration the fund's direct investments, and bearing in mind that the total amount of money Rathbones are managing for the University is over £7 million, it has invested approximately £80,000 in fossil fuel companies such as Dutch Shell and BP.

Furthermore, the University also have significant investments in the tobacco industry (Over £26,000) and most worryingly in the arms industry (£13,000).

Included in the University's arms investments are companies such as BAE and Lockheed Martin, whose munitions are currently being dropped by coalition forces in Syria.

Furthermore, investments are also made in Honeywell, who manufacture the non-nuclear components of nuclear weapons.

Student Council believes:

In the current climate of divestment campaigning by Students' Unions in the UK and Ireland it is only right and proper for UUSU to challenge this behaviour, and call for the University to review its investment portfolio.

The Students' Union should secure a commitment that the University will invest their Endowment Fund directly into student facilities or through a legitimately ethical product (such as Rathbones Greenbank).

Student Council resolves:

To mandate the Student Executive, with the direction of the recently approved UUSU Green Impact Sub-Committee, to mount a campaign to lobby the University to withdraw any investment in the arms trade and fossil fuels companies, and to use this investment in greener, more sustainable alternatives, if not student facilities.

Name of Proposer: Elliot Lyness, B00579196

Name of Seconder: Conan Meehan, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Belfast)

Date presented to Student Council: 29/11/16

Lapse Date: 29/11/18

UNIVERSITY MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY POLICY

Student Council notes:

1 in 6 people in Northern Ireland have a mental health need at any one time. More than 20% of young people are suffering from significant mental health problems by their 18th birthday.

Aside from optional lunch and learn training sessions delivered to course teams by Student Support and some mental health elements of the PG CHEP (Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Practice), there is no sufficient guidance or training provided to staff to enable them to deal with mental health issues amongst students.

The University has recently set up a Mental Health Strategy Working Group through Student Support which is tasked with developing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy based around institutional responsibility with regards to students' mental health.

Student Council believes:

Ensuring that adequate training and guidance is provided to staff on dealing with students with mental health issues is essential and this new Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy is the perfect opportunity to ensure that the university is aware of its' institutional responsibility for the mental health needs of its' students by putting in place measures to educate and inform staff on how they can help students with mental health issues.

It is important that staff who work closely with students are given adequate training to enable them to spot signs of mental illness amongst their students and signpost them to relevant support services e.g. Student Support, Carecall.

Student Council resolves:

The Student Executive team will liaise with Student Support and ask for student representation on the working group to ensure that Mental Health Strategy is sufficient to allow staff to ably and confidently assist and signpost students with mental health needs as and when required. Also to ensure that the Mental Health Strategy adequately reflects the vast and complex breadth of issues that students might encounter during their time at university.

Name of Proposer: Kevin McStravock, VP Academic and Student Affairs, Coleraine

Name of Seconder: Colum Mackey, President

Date presented to Student Council: 29/11/16

Lapse Date: 29/11/18

LIVING WAGE AT EMPLOYMENT FAIRS POLICY

Student Council notes:

Since the introduction of the National Living Wage in April 2016 and amended under the National Minimum Wage Act (1998), young people are being discriminated against on the basis of their age as the amendment only covers those that are over the age of 25.

Employers have the advantage of:

- being invited into the University;
- marketing their company as an employer of placement year students;
- legally employers can pay placement and graduate students up to £1.65 less an hour than a person over the age of 25 for a proportion, a majority or in some cases, all of their placement year.

Student Council believes:

The said discrimination and wage gap will result in some young people completing their work placement year being denied the best start in life in their career path by being overworked and underpaid.

Some students after completing placement are being further invited to continue their training on a part-time basis during their final year before being subsequently employed as a graduate who creates a further loss.

The wage gap creates a loss to the student between £1,000 and £4,000 per annum followed by a further £1,000 loss for every year the student partakes in a graduate position meaning that before they see a penny of the National Living Wage, they could have lost up to £3,000. This is based on one student graduating at the age of 22 prior to which they completed a three year course with a placement year.

Those that graduate at the age of 21 who did not take a work placement year as it was not compulsory face even further exploitation as they are faced with an additional £1,000 loss compared to those that graduate at the age of 22 due to taking a work placement year.

All employers abroad and locally should show they are paying all employees and placement students the same wage as advertised.

Within employment fairs, an unbiased view of the company should be given, not just focusing on the pay.

Student Council resolves:

The Student Executive suggests to the University an accreditation badge to those employers who pay the National Living Wage of £7.50. This can be used for promotional purposes and can be attached to the employer's stall at Placement and Graduate Fairs.

The Student Executive suggests to the University that those who go the extra mile and pay the Voluntary Living Wage of £8.45 an hour or more will receive an upgraded accreditation badge. This can be used for promotional purposes and can be attached to the employer's stall at Placement and Graduate Fairs.

Name of Proposer: Matthew Bell, B00694529

Name of Seconder: Micky Quigg, Vice-President Campaigns and Communications

Date presented to Student Council: 29/11/16
Lapse Date: 29/11/18

NAME BADGE POLICY

Student Council notes:

Non-academic University staff currently do not wear a name badge that displays their first name only.

Student Council believes:

Students will have an overall better experience within Ulster University if the barrier of formality is taken down slightly by ensuring that all non-academic University staff wear a badge displaying their first name only.

Staff members that this should affect include, but are not limited to, library, reception, as well as student support and student services.

The current staff ID cards are not sufficient in identifying the names and are only used as access cards and a security measure.

The observance that library staff on the Coleraine campus are wearing name tags attached to a lanyard but that isn't always most efficient particularly if they are sitting behind a desk.

This motion is similar to the #hellomynameis campaign which campaigned for NHS staff to introduce themselves when delivering care as a form of common courtesy. It broke the barrier in providing a therapeutic relationship and build trust in difficult circumstances.

Student Council resolves:

The Student Executive suggest to University about the possibility of providing name badges and asking those members of staff who are ear-marked to wear them in student facing roles and environments.

Name of Proposer: Matthew Bell, B00694529

Name of Seconder: Deborah Ferry, B00610433

Date presented to Student Council: 29/11/16

Lapse Date: 29/11/18

CUPS IN THE STUDENTS' UNION CATERING POLICY

Student Council notes:

It is estimated 2.5 billion 'paper' disposable cups are thrown out every year in the UK. Less than 1/4 of a percent of these cups are recycled.

Student Council believes:

The environmental impact of sending waste to landfill or for incineration is unsustainable. We should be doing all we can at a local level to reduce the amount of rubbish we produce and promote the use of environmentally friendly solutions.

Student Council resolves:

That the Students' Union will:

- sell reusable cups at UUSU catering outlets;
- investigate the sustainability of offering a discount to customers who use a reusable cup when purchasing drinks traditionally sold in a disposable cup;
- encourage the use of reusable cups in our outlets.

Name of Proposer: Colum Mackey, President

Name of Seconder: Conan Meehan, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Belfast)

Date presented to Student Council: 29/11/16

Lapse Date: 29/11/18

DEGREE CLASSIFICATION POLICY

Student Council notes:

Currently at Ulster University, the final degree classification is based solely on the marks of final year modules.

Student Council believes:

That a student's degree classification should be calculated in a way which best reflects their effort and maximises their degree classification.

Having the final degree classification is based solely on the marks of final year modules puts an increased amount of pressure on the final year student due to the knowledge that every mark counts.

The problems associated with this are the fact that if a student doesn't do well in an examination or a piece of coursework, in their final year, then this one slip up can lead to them not coming out with the degree classification that they need, want or deserve, thus potentially adversely affecting their chances of getting onto the course they want to, if they want to go on and further study, as well as potentially affecting their chances of getting the job that they want.

Furthermore, due to the added stress of final year and having only it count towards the final degree classification, there is increased risk of students developing mental health problems as a result of them not being able to handle the pressure of knowing that everything that they do counts towards their final degree classification.

Student Council resolves:

That the Student Executive shall lobby the relevant university management to highlight this issue and to lobby for a change of the way degree classifications are formulated.

Name of Original Proposer: Darren Crooks, B00606477

Name of Original Seconder: Colum Mackey, (then) Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Name of most recent proposer: Colum Mackey, President

Original date presented to Student Council: 25/11/14

Date reaffirmed: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLICY

Student Council notes:

Translink do not provide an option for a return ticket within Northern Ireland to depart the Coleraine Campus on a specific day and return on another and neither do they offer an open return. The cost of a yLink day return ticket is capped at the cost of £12.30.

The cost of a yLink single ticket is capped at the cost of £8.

This costs students up to £16 a trip, provided that they have a student yLink card, which continues to add up should there be a demand for them to be home often at times at the weekend.

There is an expected rise of 1.6% in March this year to the cost of public transport. ¹

Student Council believes:

The cost of public transport could be made a lot cheaper for students if they could purchase a different day return ticket.

Translink do not make a loss in terms of providing the service if they allowed passengers to purchase open return or different day return ticket.

An open return and different day return tickets are available in mainland Britain counterparts.

The yLink card is predominantly used by students but is not available to any student who is older than 23. This means that many students have to avail of the 24+ card, giving them 33% off train travel and 50% off Enterprise fares. This costs the user £8 per year and does not include any discount on bus travel, which is provided by the yLink card.

Student Council resolves:

For UUSU, with potential consultation with NUS-USI where and when appropriate, to lobby Translink to develop a ticketing option for passengers, that include students, allowing them to purchase either an open return ticket or a ticket that is valid for return on a different day other than the day that it was first used for travel.

For UUSU, with potential consultation with NUS-USI, where and when appropriate, to lobby Translink to include discount on bus travel within the 24+ card.

Name of Proposer: Matthew Bell, B00694529

Name of Seconder: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Date presented to Student Council: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

RE-ENROLLMENT FEES POLICY

Student Council notes:

Students who have to submit coursework/sit an exam in the next academic year are required to pay a £155 registration/re-enrolment fee. This fee also applies to those who have been granted first sits as a result of extenuating circumstances e.g. illness.

Student Council believes:

Students should not be expected to pay this significant sum of money given that the university has acknowledged that their inability to submit work/sit the exam in the previous academic year was due to circumstances out of their control.

Student Council resolves:

The Student Executive will lobby the university to waiver this fee in the case of extenuating circumstances which have been acknowledged as such by the examination board, or, at the very least to reduce this cost to a more affordable rate e.g. £50

Name of Proposer: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Name of Seconder: Colum Mackey, President

Date presented to Student Council: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

PART-TIME LIBERATION OFFICERS POLICY

Student Council notes:

There is currently no representation within UUSU for liberation groups (women/international and BAEM (Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority) students /LGBT+/disabled students etc.). This is in stark contrast to most Students' Union who have liberation officers. Queens' Students' Union, for example have 16 part-time Student Officers including representation for all of the aforementioned. These officers work with the full-time team to highlight issues experienced by individuals within their group as well as to help plan and deliver campaigns.

Student Council believes:

The establishment of representation for liberation groups would enable UUSU to develop a greater understanding of the issues affecting these groups within the university and wider society. Furthermore, these groups could feed into campaigns being delivered by UUSU and help to organise and deliver awareness campaigns relevant to their group.

Within the context of UUSU, it makes more sense to create a part-time officer role for each group per campus who could work alongside their campus Vice-President to represent the students within their campus and their counterparts on other campuses. The Vice-President Campaigns and Communications could also plan and deliver relevant campaigns with the relevant part-time and full-time Student Officers.

Student Council resolves:

UUSU should explore the creation of part-time liberation officers for the following groups: LGBT+, international and BAEM students, disabled students and women.

The positions would be voluntary and the elected part-time liberation officers would automatically sit on Student Council to ensure accountability and transparency. This would be subject to a change in the schedule which would need to be ratified by Student Council.

Name of Proposer: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Name of Seconder: Colum Mackey, President

Date presented to Student Council: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

STUDENT SUPPORT FUND POLICY

Student Council notes:

That a number of students who have applied for the student support fund at Ulster University have been made to wait for months on end as their applications process.

Student Council believes:

That students who apply for financial assistance through the student support fund do so because they are in financial difficulty and deserve to have their applications responded to within a one-month period.

Student Council resolves:

That Student Executive be mandated to lobby Ulster University to make much needed changes to the student support fund application and approvals system in order to alleviate the stress, anxiety and suffering caused to students as a result of totally inadequate waiting times.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Stephanie Bruce, B00639300

Date presented to Student Council: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

PAYMENT OF POST-GRADUATE TUITION FEES POLICY

Student Council notes:

That the current options provided by Ulster University's fee office for payment of the full-time postgraduate fees of £5,290 (1 year) and the full-time postgraduate diploma fees of £3,530 (1 year) include: entire fees up-front in one lump sum or in either five or ten equal monthly payments.

That a postgraduate loan, of up to £10,000, was rolled out for students from England and Wales who were starting their courses on or after the 1st August 2016 and that a similar postgraduate tuition fee loan will become available to Northern Irish students at the beginning of the academic year 2017/18.

That postgraduate loans provided by the government are done so in three instalments during the academic year.

That a number of postgraduate students from England and Wales have already raised serious concerns and issues with Ulster University's payment options which, as they stand at present, have already resulted in some students struggling financially and even having had their access to university facilities suspended due to an inability to pay the high rate of fees demanded on the prescribed cyclically basis.

Student Council believes:

That the options currently provided by Ulster University for students to pay their postgraduate tuition fees is extremely restrictive, discriminates against students of low income backgrounds, and doesn't account for or fall in line with the way Student Finance England and Student Finance Northern Ireland pay postgraduate loans during the course of an academic year (usually September, January and April).

That the options for tuition fee payments presently pose a serious risk and danger to students who might have to be forced to choose between payment of tuition fees and money for basic essentials, such as food and rent.

That financial difficulties caused by the current system and options available could have, and is already having, a severe impact on students' physical and mental health with signs of anxiety, depression and other problems surfacing among a number of postgraduate students.

That suspension from the university for non-payment of fees and the restriction of access to university facilities, including blackboard, results in students being unable to produce work to the same quality and standard they would otherwise be able to and that it creates a huge amount of unnecessary stress for the students who are victims of this problem.

That Ulster University has the ability to be a great deal more flexible with tuition fee payments for students from low income backgrounds and who rely on these postgraduate loans provided for by the government.

Student Council resolves:

That the Student Officers lobby the University to create an additional method of payment for postgraduate tuition fees that is aligned with the payment of loans from the Student Loans Company.

That the Student Officers lobby the University to not restrict access on facilities to students who have not pay tuition fees, were there is be a legitimate reason for a late payment.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Stephanie Bruce, B00639300

Date presented to Student Council: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

COMMEMORATING THE VICTIMS AND SURVIORS POLICY

Student Council notes:

This Council recognises the unspeakable horrors of the Holocaust, subsequent genocides and the serious consequences of totalitarianism, xenophobia, racial hatred and dehumanisation.

This Council further recognises that, throughout the course of the year there are days and dates of importance to a diverse array of students from many backgrounds, including but not limited to the annual Holocaust Memorial Day, which falls on the 27th January.

Student Council believes:

This Council believes that commemorating the victims of the Holocaust, subsequent genocides, racial hatred and totalitarianism, and working to promote education and public awareness of these crimes against humanity, is building a more accepting, diverse and sustainable future inclusive of people from all backgrounds, faiths, colours and creeds.

Student Council resolves:

This Council resolves that Student Officers within UUSU should work with the University, students and external organisations, such as the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, Ann Frank Trust and Holocaust Educational Trust, to organise commemorative events. These events would be for students, members of the public and all interested attendees to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day (27th of January annually) and Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day (24th April annually).

This Council further resolves that international Holocaust Memorial Day (27th January annually) and Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day (24th April annually) be added to the official calendar of the Students' Union and that for occasions such as centenaries is marked appropriately to emphasise the date's importance.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Stephanie Bruce, B00639300

Date presented to Student Council: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES POLICY

Student Council notes:

That according to Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights “everyone has the right to education... and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit”.

That the term refugee applies to any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

That an asylum seeker is someone who has lodged an application for protection on the basis of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention.

That in the United Kingdom, Discretionary Leave to Remain (DLR) is a 3-year renewable status that may be granted to individuals on the basis of an asylum claim, including many separated children from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, Yemen and Iraq.

That the ongoing refugee crisis has displaced many thousands of students worldwide and these same students have been deprived of the chance to pursue higher education courses in their native countries.

That Ulster University have yet to provide funded scholarships and financial support to refugee students.

That several other UK universities, including our closest neighbouring university, Queen’s University Belfast, have committed to funding scholarship places for refugees.

That asylum seeker students and students with DLR are routinely charged overseas fees, yet their situation and needs are different to those of international students.

That there is no consensus policy from UK universities on access to education for refugee and asylum seekers.

That a number of UK universities have amended their admissions policies to allow asylum seekers and/or students granted DLR as the result of an asylum application to pay ‘home’ tuition fees, or have waived fees entirely. These include, but are not limited to: Manchester University; Leeds University; Royal Holloway University of London and Salford University.

That the Equal Access campaign is being led by the National Union of Students (NUS) and Student Action for Refugees (STAR) and is supported by a range of other organisations.

Student Council believes:

Ulster University has a moral duty and also the necessary resources to support a reasonable number of refugee students each year.

Ulster University should provide access to higher education based on merit, not nationality, immigration status or race.

Ulster University should adopt a fair and equitable approach in providing access to higher education on the basis of merit for all, including asylum seekers or individuals granted DLR on the basis of an asylum claim.

Given Ulster University is recognised as a leading university within the world, by supporting this cause, it has the potential to influence policy pertaining to student refugees at a local, national and international level.

Student Council resolves:

To mandate UUSU to support the Equal Access campaign and work closely with NUS and STAR to create a campaign specific to our institutions unique circumstances and situation.

To mandate Student Officers, within UUSU, to call on Ulster University to provide a proportionate, clear and comprehensive institutional response to welcome students who are fleeing persecution by classifying them as home students and creating studentships or bursaries.

To mandate Student Officers, within UUSU, to call on each of the Ulster University accommodation services to financially support the expected living costs incurred by a refugee student studying at the university.

To mandate the Student Officers, within UUSU, to lobby Ulster University to sign the Equal Access pledge and remove financial barriers preventing students seeking refugee protection from studying here. Specifically, to:

- (i) Enable all those seeking refugee protection to be able to study as home students;
- (ii) Recognise that, like other vulnerable groups, students seeking refugee protection have additional needs and give them access to additional support, such as fee waivers, bursaries, scholarships and grants.

That the President and other Student Officers, within UUSU, request a meeting between the Vice Chancellor, representatives from STAR and any other relevant stakeholders in Northern Ireland to discuss how this policy can be achieved.

That the Student Executive write and sign a letter to the Vice Chancellor outlining the benefits of providing equal access to higher education within this university, and to liaise with STAR to create this letter.

That UUSU support campaigns on the national level for equal access to higher education for students seeking refugee protection and the right to work for asylum seekers.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Matthew Bell, B00694529

Date presented to Student Council: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

ANTI-SEMITISM POLICY

Student Council notes:

That 'anti-Semitic attacks are on the rise in Britain', with incidents such as brick attacks on synagogues, anti-Jewish graffiti and even bomb threats occurring in recent years.¹

That the Community Security Trust (CST) recorded 924 anti-Semitic incidents across the United Kingdom during 2015.²

That Northern Ireland's only Rabbi, David Singer, told BBC Radio Ulster's Sunday Sequence on Sunday 2nd October 2016 that he has received suspicious e-mails and came across anti-Jewish graffiti in the centre of Belfast.³

That the national student movement has been rocked by allegations of anti-Semitism and the concerns of Jewish students have been repeatedly downplayed by some of those in leadership positions.⁴

That NUS motion 404 'Anti-Semitism on campus' resolved to lobby Students' Unions in order to encourage them to have clearer policies on responding to anti-Semitic incidents and situations in which Jewish students feel threatened.⁵

That UUSU has, to the current date, not had any known issues with regards to anti-Jewish oppression, prejudice and hatred.

That April Rosenblum, in her 2007 pamphlet 'the past didn't go anywhere: making resistance to anti-Semitism part of all our movements', expands in great detail on the nuances surrounding modern day anti-Jewish oppression and why it is absolutely vital to integrate a radical analysis of, and opposition to, all manifestations of anti-Jewish hatred and oppression into the work we already carry forward.⁶

Student Council believes:

That regardless of whether an anti-Semitism problem exists or not on our own campuses it would still be advisable to hold a policy that addresses anti-Semitism on campus, provides a workable definition of anti-Semitism and gives guidance on what steps can be taken to combat this particularly odious form of hatred.

That all forms of racism and oppression are abhorrent and should be uncompromisingly opposed with as much effort and energy as can be mustered.

That anti-Semitism is a specific form of racism, relating to Jews and Judaism.

That anti-Jewish oppression is the system of ideas passed down through a society's institutions to enable scapegoating of Jews, and the ideological or physical targeting of Jews that results from that.

That the definition of anti-Semitism has been debated and disputed as a result of political influences relating to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

That a workable definition of anti-Semitism can be found provided by noted scholar Brian Klug who has defined anti-Semitism as a '*form of hostility towards Jews as Jews, in which a Jew is perceived as something other than what they are*'.⁷

That anti-oppression ethics, coupled with a thorough understanding that multiple oppressions can manifest at one time and are often complex and multi-layered, is crucially important in our efforts to acknowledge anti-Semitism as still being a major problem in society today.

That anti-Semitism includes, but is not limited to:

- (i) Questioning the loyalty of Jews to their state of citizenship simply on the basis of their Jewish identity, which includes claims that Jews as a collective or a community engage in efforts to subvert or mislead the general population, as well as the claim that Jews are more loyal to the state of Israel than their country of citizenship, is an anti-Semitic position to hold;
- (ii) Claiming or making any effort to create a reality in which Jews do not have the same rights as any other religious, cultural or ethnic group, including the right to free speech, free practice of religion, free use of native languages (i.e. Hebrew, Yiddish, Ladino, etc.) and self-determination;
- (iii) Denying, trivializing and misconstruing the Nazi Holocaust. This includes denying the fact, scope, method, or motivation for the genocide of six million Jews at the hands of the National Socialist regime. It also includes the accusation that Jews or the state of Israel have fabricated, cause or over-exaggerated the Holocaust;
- (iv) Calling for, aiding or justifying the killing or harming of Jews for the sake of their Jewish religion, ethnicity or identity;
- (v) Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as Jews or for being Jewish. This includes accusations of Jewish control of the world, of our political structures and government, the media, as well as blaming Jews collectively for imagined and real atrocities;
- (vi) 'Equating Jews or maliciously equating Jewish organisations and the polity of the state of Israel with the Nazi Regime. This includes, but is not limited to equating Zionism with Nazism and claiming that 'History is repeating itself' with regards to the Nazi Holocaust and the state of Israel. This also includes using Jewish symbols and religious imagery alongside Nazi symbols and imagery. However, this does NOT necessarily include reasonable analogies between historical events';
- (vii) Using Jewish symbols to antagonize, harass, and intimidate Jewish students.
- (viii) Assuming that because a person is Jewish that they will automatically hold particular political views and positions regarding Zionism and Israel;
- (ix) Demanding a Jewish person or group of Jews collectively to present an opinion or position on the Israel-Palestine conflict and where those demands are often aggressive, intimidating and harassing;
- (x) Labelling Jews that hold differing political positions on Zionism and Israel as 'kapos', 'self-hating Jews' or 'traitors';
- (xi) Deliberately using terms 'Zio' and 'Zionist' as pejorative terms of abuse in order to isolate and attack Jewish students and members of Jewish communities.

That criticism of the Israeli government, its policies and actions are not inherently anti-Semitic and neither is reasoned criticism of Zionism and its impact in Palestine and upon the Palestinian people.

Student Council resolves:

The UUSU, including the entire Student Executive, is mandated to publicly oppose actions on campus that are anti-Semitic based on the aforementioned definitions.

The Student Executive will ensure all anti-Semitic incidents aimed at or perpetrated by Ulster University students either verbal, physical or online are dealt with swiftly and effectively in conjunction with the university and, if appropriate or requested by the victim, the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

That Student Executive be mandated to publish a bi-annual report detailing all incidents of racism, including anti-Semitic incidents and instances of anti-Jewish oppression that have occurred on campus during the previous six months and the actions taken by UUSU and the university.

The Students Executive is mandated to work with relevant university staff in order to address racism and anti-Semitism on campus and methods to alleviate it.

The work of organisations such as Jewdas⁸, the NUS and Union of Jewish Students is consulted when developing work against anti-Semitism so as to ensure resources are provided to help Students to understand the nuances and fully comprehend these policies.

The pamphlet of April Rosenblum⁹ is viewed as a key resource and made available (once permissions have been sought and granted) for students to access on the UUSU Website under a section specifically designed to tackle all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism, in order that the Union might better promote and enhance legitimate debate regarding the morality, problems and human rights issues surrounding international conflicts whilst also remaining resolutely committed to opposing the manifestation of illegitimate and illegal acts of anti-Jewish oppression on campus.

That this motion be brought forward by UUSU to both the NUS National Conference 2017 and the NUS-USI National Conference 2017 in a format that is appropriate for the national conferences.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Matthew Bell, B00694529

Date presented to Student Council: 09/02/17

Lapse Date: 09/02/19

¹ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/israelgaza-conflict-rise-of-antisemitic-attacks-in-uk-as-crisis-rages-in-the-middle-east-9631174.html>

² <https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2016/02/04/cst-antisemitic-incidents-report-2015-published-today>

³ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-37533746>

⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-37489745>

⁵ https://nusdigital.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/document/documents/24818/Welfare_Live_Policy_201417.pdf

⁶ <http://www.buildingequality.us/prejudice/antisemitism/rosenblum/the-past.pdf>

⁷ See Brian Klug, 'The collective Jew: Israel and the new Anti-Semitism', *Patterns of Prejudice*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2003, 117-138.

⁸ <http://jewdas.org/how-to-criticise-israel-without-being-anti-semitic/>

⁹ <http://www.buildingequality.us/prejudice/antisemitism/rosenblum/the-past.pdf>

LGBT+ LOBBYING

Student Council notes:

That UUSU should lobby the Stormont government on behalf of the LGBT+ community to promote their rights, in particular, with regards to equal marriage.

Student Council believes:

Ulster University student body includes members of the LGBT+ community. That repeatedly Stormont government has failed to protect and promote the rights of the LGBT+ community. That USI, NUS and NUS-USI have policies in regards to LGBTQ rights, and that this will bring us further in line with these policies. That everyone in Northern Ireland deserves equal rights, and that the UUSU officer team must fight for the rights of their students in government.

Student Council resolves:

That the UUSU will collaborate with NUS-USI and civic society to lobby Stormont on behalf of the LGBT+ student community to promote equal rights.

Name of Proposer: Colum Mackey, President

Name of Seconder: Ben Johnston, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Magee)

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

SUPPORT FOR BREASTFEEDING STUDENTS

Student Council notes:

Many students begin or return to their studies after giving birth, a number of them will be breastfeeding.

Currently there are inadequate facilities for breastfeeding students on at least Jordanstown and Magee campuses.

Breastfeeding students need access to a suitable room to express to avoid the risk of infection, as well as maintain their milk supply.

Breastfeeding students need a room with a comfortable chair, a plug, and privacy. Best practice would include access to a fridge to store expressed milk.

Student Council believes:

We should support students who are beginning or returning to study after having a baby, including breastfeeding students.

Many staff will also be impacted by the lack of adequate breast feeding facilities.

Currently breastfeeding students are relying on the good will of university staff for access to a private room, or expressing in unsuitable rooms.

The lack of suitable facilities may contribute to students dropping out of university, or ceasing breastfeeding earlier than they would otherwise choose to.

The current situation may breach equality legislation and health and safety regulations.

Student Council resolves:

The Student Executive will write to the university to highlight this issue and raise the lack of adequate breastfeeding facilities on campus.

The Student Executive will explore if there is a student union space that could be used by breast feeding students as a temporary solution.

That Student Executive lobby the University to become an institution friendly for breastfeeding mothers with 'Breastfeeding Welcome here' scheme membership or similar.

That UUSU bar and café facilities become accredited to this scheme and to display the relevant stickers.

Name of Proposer: Danielle Roberts, B00601771

Name of Seconder: Claire McHugh, B00690945

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

CONDOLENCES UPON THE PASSING OF MARTIN MCGUINNESS

Student Council notes:

It is with deep regret and sadness, that on this day, 21st March 2017, former Deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness has passed away after battling a rare genetic illness.

Student Council believes:

Throughout the past two decades, Martin McGuinness has demonstrated an exceptional level of determination, dignity and humility as he took the tremendous steps required to secure peace, share power and build a better future for the peoples of Ireland, Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Martin McGuinness was a passionate republican, who worked tirelessly for peace, reconciliation, parity of esteem and equality, without erasing his contentious past as a member of the IRA, and his involvement in various acts of violence, and recognizing the great deal of pain caused to families and victims.

There have been incredible steps and compromises undertaken by Martin McGuinness and Sinn Fein in order to share power with those diametrically opposed to the principles and values of Irish republicanism.

Student Council resolves:

UUSU should pay tribute to Martin McGuinness for his enormous, extraordinary and rather unique contributions to politics and peace building which has shaped Northern Ireland and defined much of his own public life.

UUSU should to extend our heartfelt condolences, both on behalf of ourselves as councillors and the entire student executive at Ulster University Students union, in particular we extend our condolences to Bernie, Fiachra, Emmet, Fionnuala and Grainne, his grandchildren and all of the extended McGuinness family.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Hannah Rooney, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Jordanstown)

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

JANUARY EXAM PERIOD

Student Council notes:

That on the first Monday of January exams commence not necessarily in line with schools and nurseries and that Queen's University have scrapped their January exam period in favour of December exams.

Student Council believes:

Having exams so early in January puts significant stress and strain on all students especially student parents who have to make alternative childcare arrangements prior to the reopening of schools. Additionally, Christmas is a very busy time for people with children which makes it hard to prepare for exams.

Student Council resolves:

The Student Officer team should work with the university to change the date of January exams – ensuring that this decision is taken in close partnership with the student body: options should include December exams or later in January.

Name of Proposer: Shannen Maher, B00692005

Name of Seconder: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH BILL

Student Council notes:

That the House of Lords is reaching the final stages of amending and approving the Higher Education and Research Bill with some massive changes being pushed through that will have a severely detrimental impact to higher education in all constituent nations of the United Kingdom.

Acknowledges that these changes will manifest themselves in particular through the revised Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF Year 2 and beyond).

That the main driver behind these changes is underpinned by an agenda of rapidly increasing competition in the HE sector with the ultimate goal of opening up the sector to private investors and influence that will lead to a private ownership and commoditisation of our education system.

Student Council believes:

That the new TEF rating system, based on Olympic medal style ratings, will not improve teaching, but will instead damage the very fabric of academic freedom and innovation in pedagogy.

That UUSU should express concern that, despite such huge changes, the Stormont Executive appears frustratingly indifferent and nonchalant about the current Conservative Government's overarching agenda of monetising and marketization of our universities.

That such change will greatly damage not only Ulster University, but also the third-level sector as a whole in this region.

That education is a right, not a privilege; our students are not cash cows for private companies and the rich to get even wealthier from as we struggle to endeavour to grow, gain knowledge through learning and hone our academic acumen.

Ulster University should make strong representations to the Department of the Economy, or any future Northern Ireland Assembly Executive department that deals with FE and HE, advocating against the inclusion of local universities and colleges in the new TEF regime.

Student Council resolves:

The President and Vice-President Campaigns and Communications to lobby both the Northern Ireland Assembly and the University in order to demand that all parties act and implement changes only when they are in the best interests of higher education which can only be achieved by steering a new path for our universities, rather than fall into the privatisation and marketization pathway currently pursued and laid out by the UK Government agenda.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Elliot Lyness, B00579196

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

STUDENT OFFICER ROLE DESCRIPTION

Student Council notes:

There is a need for UUSU to change the current Student Officer positions and remit to fit with the change of Ulster University. This relates to the Greater Belfast Development, the University's new strategic plan and the changing culture of our student body.

Student Council believes:

UUSU should follow the format of some other Student Union's across the island. Some positions that should be taken into consideration include Vice-President Education and Vice-President Clubs and Societies.

With the growing number of societies UUSU has every year, now is a key time to consider how a dedicated Student Officer might be able to represent them better, along with Sport Clubs.

With the growth of UUSU's Senior Representatives' and Student Experience Forum's there is a need for an officer to represent the academic side of the student body that cuts across the entire University and each faculty. This position could coordinate with the newly appointed Pro-Vice Chancellor of Education and be a key contact for all Executive Deans.

Student Council resolves:

UUSU to undergo a review of the UUSU Student Officer roles for the next set of Student Officer elections in 2018. This will include reviewing each position individually and how it works cohesively within the team setting.

The findings of this review should be brought to the first Student Council in the academic year of 2017/18 for approval.

Name of Proposer: Micky Quigg, Vice-President Campaigns and Communications
Name of Seconder: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

ACHT NA GAEILGE

Student Council notes:

The failure of the Northern Ireland Executive to bring forward an Irish Language Act in accordance with its obligations within Annex B of the St. Andrews (2006) amendments to the Good Friday Agreement.

That the Democratic Unionist Party has repeatedly shown utter contempt¹ open hostility and even insulted² the Irish language and those who speak it.

Student Council believes:

The Irish language is a distinguishing cultural characteristic and of great importance to many throughout the island of Ireland.

That the Irish language, as the official language of Ireland, is part of the fabric of society and must be promoted and protected an integral aspect of Irish identity and 'Irishness'.

That those of all identities, cultural and political backgrounds in Northern Ireland have demonstrated they can be united around the Irish language and are calling for an Irish Language Act.

That an Irish Language Act was promised within Annex B of the 2006 St. Andrew's Agreement but that it has still not been passed within the Assembly.

Student Council resolves:

That there is a need for an Irish Language Act and mandates the executive officers to advocate and campaign for the passage of an Irish Language Act in Northern Ireland as soon as possible and to add their voices to lobbying efforts elsewhere within the student movement in order to further this goal.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Eimer Blaney, B00678842

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-38881559>

² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-29895593>

IRISH UNITY REFERENDUM

Student Council notes:

There have been a recent number of political events that directly effect Northern Ireland. This includes the referendum to leave the European Union (Brexit) and the recent Northern Irish snap Assembly election.

There have been several similar referendums in the Republic of Ireland, calling for a United Ireland. As well with many unions in the Republic either undergoing a referendum or planning to have one in the near future.

Student Council believes:

There will be an Irish unity referendum in the near future within Northern Ireland. We believe that it is important that Stormont hears the voice of the 26,000 students at Ulster University before this decision is made.

That as a democratic organisation which cherishes the diversity of beliefs, cultures and opinions of our members. We should allow our students voices to be heard by the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Secretary of State, James Brokenshire.

UUSU will not take a stance on the referendum and will only facilitate. They will make sure students are both aware that the referendum is taking place as well as try and organise debates, discussions and question times before and during the referendum so that students can make an informed decision on the Referendum.

Student Council resolves:

UUSU should hold a referendum on Irish unity so that thee 26,000 student voices of Ulster University are heard and considered in the process of holding a referendum within Northern Ireland, as outlined in the Good Friday Agreement.

The Referendum will be held during semester one of the next academic year.

UUSU will facilitate the Referendum and ensure sure students are aware of it through, social media, campus materials, and engaging with students face-to-face.

UUSU should also seek the support from a number of political parties to engage with and try and facilitate a question time or debate, to provide an insightful commentary on both sides of the argument.

UUSU will respect and uphold the outcome of the referendum, in line with the Constitution, and make sure that Northern Irish elected representatives in Stormont are made aware of UUSU's referendum result.

All Student Officers make students aware of the upcoming Referendum at induction speeches held during the start of the semester and let them know how they can join a campaign team.

The question that shall be posed to students will be: 'Should the people of Northern Ireland be offered to vote for a united Ireland?'

**Name of Proposer: Hannah Rooney, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs
(Jordanstown)**

**Name of Seconder: Conan Meehan, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs
(Belfast)**

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

TRIGGERING OF ARTICLE 50

Student Council notes:

That as of Tuesday 21st March 2017 there is still no agreement to form an executive between the political parties in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

That the Prime Minister, Theresa May, has announced that article 50 will be triggered on Wednesday 29th March 2017¹.

That there is presently no publicly available information on what will happen to Northern Ireland post-Brexit or whether there will be a hard border between Northern Ireland and the Irish republic.

That that withdrawal from the European Union will require some serious revisions to the Belfast Agreement (Good Friday Agreement)² which may prove near impossible to achieve without a re-run of the referendum.

That leaving the European Union means that the foundations of the devolution settlement in Northern Ireland are at stake, because the rights and obligations arising from the United Kingdom's membership from the European Union were influential, if not absolutely integral, to the Good Friday Agreement and the Northern Ireland Act 1998³.

That MPs voted down the Lords amendment to protect EU citizens already in the United Kingdom, generating a great deal of fear, uncertainty and extreme concern⁴.

The passing of the former Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness on 21.03.17

Student Council believes:

That Brexit poses one of the greatest challenges and threats to peace in Northern Ireland and it is essential that we have a functioning, representative and competent Executive in place in order to ensure that we have a leading voice and secure guarantees in negotiations to leave the EU.

That all parties elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly have an obligation to represent the majority decision of the 56% remain vote and should work to the best of their abilities to be a strong voice for the protection of the rights of Irish, European and British citizens here.

That there is a noticeable and clearly detrimental difference between the attitude and approach of political leadership in Northern Ireland in striking comparison to that of Nicola Sturgeon and the Scottish government who have been pushing their hardest for Scotland - the people of Northern Ireland deserve similar from our political leaders.

That priority should be given to investment in third level education and apprenticeships if we are to encourage our students and young people to stay here in a post Brexit world.

That the NI Executive has underperformed in every respect when it comes to investing in and protecting the FE and HE sectors.

That Brexit poses a set of unique and extremely worrying barriers to education for Irish students both in Northern Ireland and the Irish republic.

Student Council resolves:

That the student executive must urgently lobby political leaders and parties in Northern Ireland to ensure that the views of students and this council are heard ahead of the triggering of article 50 and beyond.

That the student executive as a whole call upon parties elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly to reach a agreement for a power-sharing executive and return to devolution in Northern Ireland ahead as swiftly as possible in light of the looming triggering of article 50.

That the student executive give support to any organised demonstrations and protests organised by students or other civil society groups calling for stable government and honest representation in the Brexit negotiations.

That the student executive is mandated to release a press statement, taking guidance from NUS-USI⁵, detailing UUSU's frustration over the current political crisis, our extreme concern on how this will impact on our students, particularly Irish and EU citizens, and that it is incumbent upon politicians to deliver an agreement and stable government that includes guarantees of representing the 56% remain vote in light of Brexit now becoming a reality.

That UUSU encourage James Brokenshire, Secretary of State to Northern Ireland to extend the deadline to form an executive as Parties are struggling to find time to meet due to the passing of Martin McGuinness.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Kelly Thompson, B00685989

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

1 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-39325561>

2 <http://crossborder.ie/site2015/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/EU-Referendum-Briefing-Paper-2.pdf>

3 <https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/ksjpp/2017/03/05/brexit-the-good-friday-agreement-and-the-northern-ireland-act-1998/>

4 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/feb/08/mps-reject-brexit-bill-amendment-to-protect-eu-citizens-in-uk>

5 <http://nus-usi.org/2017/03/07/student-leader-says-stormont-talks-must-deliver-agreement-and-stable-government/>

KEEP WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS FREE

Student Council notes:

There is currently no set time within a student's timetable that they can set aside purely to take part in sporting or social activities. This can include any activity from competitive sports to social programmes that UUSU may run.

UUSU are currently try to find times that suit best to promote social & sports programmes but recently it has become more difficult.

Courses are now scheduling classes for Wednesday afternoons which have historically been set aside for student activities. UUSU can see a decline in numbers attending events due to the scheduling of classes during this time.

Student Council believes:

UUSU should lobby the university in order to keep classes between 9:15am and 1:15pm, on Wednesdays, as it was previously in order for the wider student body to be able to take part in student based activities without the fear of missing classes.

By doing this, students will have the opportunity to enjoy at least one afternoon a week where they are able to partake in activities they may not have done so in the past.

It also gives UUSU the greater chance to promote our social sport programmes alongside our student led societies.

Student Council resolves:

UUSU should work with the university in keeping Wednesday afternoons free for student based activities which in turn will increase the number of students taking part in both sports clubs & societies across all Ulster University campuses.

Name of Proposer: James O'Mullan, Sports President

Name of Seconder: Emma Bonner, B00640205

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

SET LUNCHTIME ON ALL CAMPUSES

Student Council notes:

Currently at Ulster University, there is no set time during the day where students know that they will be free. It may be possible for students to have a break throughout the day but it may not be at a time that suits in order to meet with friends or schedule appointments.

UUSU notices that it can be difficult at times to get a hold of student led committees for clubs and societies.

Student Council believes:

That lunchtimes can be busy times on all campuses where the variety of eateries is limited often to what is usually available on campus.

With the introduction of a set lunch time, scheduling meetings would become much easier and less demanding on student's time. The main reason behind the introduction of a set lunch time would be in order for student societies and clubs to organise themselves in such a way that they know everyone will be free for at least one hour during the day.

UUSU should lobby the university in order to introduce a set lunch time between approximately 12:15pm and 1:15pm (flexible to change). This would give the wider student body to be able to have a break from classes and attend meeting/appointments without the fear of missing lectures and pieces of work.

By doing this, students will have the opportunity to enjoy at least one hour per day where they are able to partake in activities they may not have done so in the past. It also gives UUSU the greater chance to promote our social sport programmes alongside our student led societies. The new gym facilities on campuses can in turn be put to greater use by the students who may be unable to use them as they haven't sufficient breaks during the day.

Student Council resolves:

UUSU Student Executive should investigate what the footfall is between 12:05pm and 1:15pm and 1:05pm and 2:15pm on all campuses, through the Department of Facilities Management in co-operation with outsourced tenants and the Students' Union facilities.

UUSU should work with the university into setting aside a one hour slot each day which will give a greater number of students taking part in both sports clubs & societies across all Ulster University campuses a chance to use this time to complete tasks they may not previously had time for.

It should also increase the number of students actively involved in clubs & societies around campus and help promote UUSU to wider audiences.

That the implementation of this policy should be deferred until after a full analysis has been conducted, as highlighted above.

Name of Proposer: James O'Mullan, Sports President

Name of Seconder: Emma Bonner, B00640205

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

STAFF AND STUDENT ALLIANCE

Student Council notes:

That there have been many major campaign victories achieved in recent years whenever both students and staff members within the university campaign together on the issues that matter such as course closures, redundancies, staff cuts and other measures indicative of the creeping privatisation and marketization agenda being rolled out across all UK universities.

A number of cuts to non-academic staff, academic support staff and technical staff which include but is by no means limited to clerical, administrative and cleaning staff, has resulted in a massive burden to both academic staff and students in a number of University schools and departments – with some being left with absolutely zero clerical capacity to even publish lecture power points and papers in blackboard in a timely fashion.

That Queen's University Students' Union recently adopted policy similar to this proposal and has created a staff-student Alliance bringing trade unions, key stakeholders, staff and students together in order to campaign on issues that are threatening them.

Student Council believes:

That Ulster University Students' Union should follow the example of Queen's University Students' Union, which has, under the exceptional leadership of QUBSU President Seán Fearon, created a staff-student Alliance.

That the interests of both students and staff are inextricable from one another and invariably aligned, and that a University workforce which is healthy, respected, afforded academic freedom, is adequately and equitably paid and empowered to have an input in the institutional direction of Ulster University, will provide the highest quality education and student experience to our members.

That the rights of students and the student experience will be best protected and enhanced when Ulster University Students' Union is supported by staff members at Ulster University and their trade union representatives. Many University staff are also either students or former students and we therefore have a duty to campaign in the interests of all of our members as a collective whole.

PhD students due to their particular circumstances, can be members of both the students' union and trade union and would particularly benefit from this alliance.

Student Council resolves:

That Ulster University Students' Union will enter into a campaigning alliance with trade unions representing staff within Ulster University, with the wider trade union movement, and our colleagues at other Higher and Further Education Students' Unions in order to achieve a number of key goals:

- (i) Campaign for a democratic, publicly funded and invested university;
- (ii) Uncompromisingly oppose any increases in tuition fees in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland;
- (iii) Oppose the privatisation and marketisation of the higher education sector;
- (iv) Promote trade union membership among students and staff;
- (v) Build links to ensure greater protections for student workers;
- (vi) Oppose cuts to jobs, courses and departments within Ulster University;

- (vii) Protect the rights of EU students and staff members as the shadow of Brexit looms;
- (viii) Build links with the FE sector in order to ensure an inclusive vision going forward that doesn't forget about or ignore the impact of this conservative government and budget cuts more locally upon our colleges and sixth forms.

Name of Proposer: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Name of Seconder: Elliot Lyness, B00579196

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Student Council notes:

That since societies have in recent years been required to submit a constitution, some of them have been seen to be flawed.

Student Council believes:

Constitutions of societies are necessary.

That societies say they are accountable in their constitution, in some cases, it is easier said than done.

Members of societies often find it difficult to engage sometimes with their committee with ideas not being discussed.

In most society constitutions, an amendment to the constitution can only be discussed at an *annual general meeting* of which there is no accountability that these actually occur in where the members of the society are actually included.

Alternatively, an *extraordinary general meeting* can be convened at the submission of a petition signed by at least 75% of the members of the society or 50% of the members plus the signature of a committee member.

This system is flawed as you need to have more or less a referendum on whether a discussion can take place.

Societies are constitutionally required to hold an AGM annually and an EGM when convened and advertise by public notice within the students' union.

Student Council resolves:

That campus VPs work with societies to develop enhanced constitutions that reflect openness, transparency, and accountability.

That UUSU Student Executive review the backbone of the model constitution to reflect the above resolves and to bring this before council at its first meeting in the next academic year.

Societies reduce the amount of signatures required to convene an EGM from 75% to 25% of them to remain affiliated.

Name of Proposer: Matthew Bell, B00694529

Name of Seconder: Elliot Lyness, B00579196

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FEE DISCOUNT

Student Council notes:

That it is easier to enrol students into societies in bulk at Fresher's and Refreshers and a lot of events are created with the knowledge that a large percentage of members are gathered at these events, such as welcoming events. Students are currently required to pay the full joining fee for the society no matter what time in the year they join and their membership only lasts the length of that academic year, meaning they need to pay the joining fee in full again the next academic year to continue their membership.

Student Council believes:

Students often gather joining forms from societies at Fresher's and Refreshers with the intent of joining later, but an incentive to join on the day, such as a reduced joining fee, would make more students join on the actual day allowing societies to enroll students in their society in bulk creating less stress for the society leaders and a bigger turn out at their events arranged around this period such as welcoming events.

Students joining half way throughout the academic year are generally getting half the amount of events for their money than the students that have joined at the start of the academic year and therefore really should be paying a discounted fee.

Student Council resolves:

UUSU Societies may individually choose to reduce their fees by a percentage they see fit for the day of Fresher's and Refreshers as an incentive for students to join, and at periods throughout the academic year, such as half way throughout the academic year, to allow the student to get value for their money.

This, however will not impose with the minimum UUSU society fee of £1.

Name of Proposer: Vikki Lutton, B00610467

Name of Seconder: Conan Meehan, Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Belfast)

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

SOCIETY TRANSPARENCY

Student Council notes:

That Ulster University Students' Union societies are not required to publish their financial accounts to members of the required society and to the members of the Union.

Student Council believes:

When a student becomes a member of a club or society, they have an opportunity to be a stakeholder. Often there is a lack of clarity among society members on the details of the society finances as committee members are often not held to account by their members at AGMs.

Some members of societies aren't aware of AGMs taking place or AGMs do not always enjoy full membership that would making the committee accountable which can lead to lack of democracy. Societies can lack financial transparency. This is an issue given the level of support (financial and other) awarded to societies by UUSU and their own capacity to fundraise and draw sponsorship. There are varying levels of transparency with membership across societies.

That UUSU already holds records on how each society spends their allocation of funding.

Student Council resolves:

That UUSU should require club and society committees to present their accounts to their members at their annual general meetings, and that these accounts should be held by UUSU and available on request by a nominated date in semester 2 (End of Year Report Pack submission week) so that should such a situation arise where a relevant union official (including student councillors) wish to view them.

Societies should also outline any financial income obtained through the medium of fundraising.

If a club or society receive a donation it must be explicitly outlined in the relevant section of their financial report. If a donation is greater than threshold, as determined by UUSU in consultation with societies, then they must disclose the benefactor. The benefactor should be named as the individual making the donation or the organisation an individual represents as appropriate.

These changes should be made as an amendment to the schedules of the UUSU constitution.

Name of Proposer: Matthew Bell, B00694529

Name of Seconder: Elliot Lyness, B00579196

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

EMERGENCY PHONES

Student Council notes:

When the Belfast campus housed the fine and applied arts in the Orpheus building we had emergency phones located in close proximity to the machinery. These phones would go straight to security when picked up. They were used numerous times to help students and tutors in some cases, not only to call ambulances but to help people who were accidentally locked in parts of the building.

Student Council believes:

Emergency phones are essential and should be near machinery.

Since the move of fine arts and applied arts to the new building in the Belfast campus these phones have not been installed. The university is now advertising an app for mobile phones to have this service that the emergency phones had amongst other things.

The university cannot assume everyone will have a smart phone able to install the app, will have memory on their phone to install the app and will have installed the app or be around their phone when an emergency arises. Many people are not near their phone when using machinery. These phones could help save someone's limbs, or even save a life in extreme cases. They are essential.

Student Council resolves:

The Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs (Belfast) and the President to lobby university to install these emergency phones alongside machinery in the fine arts and applied arts departments as soon as possible with the above argument and knowledge.

Name of Proposer: Vikki Lutton, B00610467

Name of Seconder: Gary Spedding, B00725979

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

SILENT COMPUTER AREAS

Student Council notes:

That on the Coleraine campus, the main computer suite is not a silent study area. The smaller suite is a silent study area but it is frequently used for referencing workshops and classes.

There isn't currently provision for a silent computer area open at all times.

Student Council believes:

Not being able to avail of a silent area affects students' ability to concentrate on the work they are doing. Although there is provision for use of laptops in the silent study areas, not all students have access to a laptop.

That a laptop loan scheme is set to be introduced in the Coleraine campus soon.

Student Council resolves:

UUSU Student Executive should liaise with the university and the library to assess provision for a silent computer room or periods of silent study in the current lab if facilities don't allow for a new area and if there is current provision that students are unaware of that it be better promoted.

UUSU Student Executive clarify with the library as to when the laptop loan service is set to launched and for it to be pushed for reasonably soon.

Name of Proposer: Shannen Maher, B00692005

Name of Seconder: Kevin McStravock, Vice-President Academic & Student Affairs (Coleraine)

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

VEGAN CHEESE ON PIZZAS

Student Council notes:

In the UK there is:

16% of lactose intolerant people (people who have a decreased ability or cannot digest lactose, which is the sugar found in milk and milk products)¹; 7% of people who are allergic to milk and milk products²; and 1% of people are vegans³.

All these people don't eat milk or milk products, such as cheese.

Student Council believes:

Pizza is widely enjoyed by almost every individual and so it should be! Pizzas key ingredients are: a pizza base; sauce; cheese and whatever toppings one may desire. It makes sense for restaurants and takeaways that are primarily selling pizza to cater for 76% of the public that eat cheese created by milk. Vegan cheese is widely available in 2017 and it is generally cheaper than regular cheese and can be eaten by this 24% of people.

Currently, the only alternative the biggest pizza restaurant and take away chains in the UK, Dominos and Pizza Express, offer for these 24% of people is to bring their own cheese or have the pizza without cheese with no discounted price. This is unacceptable.

A large majority of these restaurants customers are students. If it was requested by the students, they may listen and act upon it.

Student Council resolves:

The UUSU president is to ask the UK headquarters of Pizza Express and Dominos pizza on behalf of Ulster Students (and make sure that is known) to start supplying their chains with vegan cheese and allow customers to have this option of vegan cheese on their pizza.

Name of Proposer: Vikki Lutton, B00610467

Name of Seconder: Catriona Doyle, B00529926

Date presented to Student Council: 21/03/17

Lapse Date: 21/03/19

¹ www.moofreechocolates.com

² www.hipp.co.uk

³ www.NHS.uk