



Student Senate

Members of Student Senate are notified that the next meeting will be held as shown below:

Monday 29 January 2018

Room 4J, 4th Floor Students' Union 5pm

Agenda

Please contact the Student Voice Team on 02920 781435 or email democracy@cardiff.ac.uk to discuss any additions or amendments you may have or to request further information on any of the below agenda items.

I Standard Items:

- A. Apologies
- B. Welcome from the Chair
- C. Minutes from previous meeting

II Students' Union Items:

- A. Student Senate Amendments

III Submitted Items:

- A. Making the union Plastic Straw Free.....8
- B. For the Students' Union to ensure the protection of students involved in sex work.....9
- C. Securing bursaries and grants for postgraduates in need..... 10
- D. Better hand dryers in the ASSL..... 12

IV Any Other Business:

- 1. Lapsed motions

SECTION I

Student Senate.Tuesday 5th December 2017.Room 4J, 4th Floor Students' Union, 5pm**Senators in Attendance:**

Amr Alwishah	George Baldwin	Joshua Lewis
Adarsh Bansal	George Watkins	Joshua Prior
Aditi Gupta (<i>Chair</i>)	Hanin Abou Salem	Julia Rooke
Alani Padzil	Henrietta Page	Kabira Suleman
Cameron Rose	Jac Brown	Lewis Rigley
Catherine Chamberlain	Jane Hobbs	Matt Medveczki
Catherine Iannucci	Janet Williams	Niall Yasseen
Charles Knights	Jessica Warren	Tomos Llewelyn
Connor Radcliffe	Jesslyn Priscilla	Ye Yang

Sabbatical Officers in Attendance:

Fadhila Al Dhahouri (VP Education)

Jake Smith (VP Postgraduate Students)

Students' Union Staff in Attendance:

Steve Wilford (Director of Engagement & Participation)

Steve Ralph (Head of Student Voice)

Holly Thomas (Student Voice Co-ordinator)

Vicki Groves (Student Voice Assistant) (*Minutes*)

I. Standard Items

A. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jacob Morris, Mathilde Fouani and Taz Jones.

B. Welcome from the Chair

AG welcomed attendees to the meeting.

C. Minutes from previous meeting

There were no amendments to the minutes and they were confirmed as a true record.

II. Students' Union Items

A. Bye Laws Amendments

Steve Wilford presented the Bye Laws Amendments and explained that the changes are only name changes for Sabbatical Officer positions which were passed at AGM.

Bye Laws Amendments were approved.

III. Submitted Items

A. Boycott and divest from propagators of illegal Israeli settlements

Proposed by: Cameron Rose

Seconded by: Amr Alwishah

CR spoke for the motion and explained that it refers specifically to illegal settlements by Israeli nationals in the West Bank and where settlers have attacked Palestinians and illegally detained them. Explained the motion is not about taking a side in the conflict, it is about boycotting goods from illegal Israeli settlements to show solidarity with Palestinians who are affected.

MM spoke against the motion and explained that many comments are unsubstantiated and there is no evidence to support them. There is a need for condemning action but it cannot be called an 'apartheid'. Voting for this motion will vote these words into law and they could be deemed offensive. Boycotts do not hurt the

government, they hurt the people and could decrease their living standards further.

AA spoke for the motion and explained that it is a personal issue. This motion is not to boycott Israel, it is just to boycott their illegal settlements in the West Bank, which is land that belongs to Palestine and to prevent them from making more profit. There are human rights issues that Senate should stand against.

GB spoke against the motion and explained that Senate should create policies that help students at Cardiff University and commented that the motion is not clear enough.

General discussion.

CR commented that it is a controversial and passionate subject and requires courage to speak about and explained the list in the motion was from the BDS website, which talks about how Universities can get involved. Gave an example of Stephen Hawking pulling out of an event due to pressure from a University and explained that this motion is practical support, rather than a statement, and is a non-violent solution.

MM commented that the language used in the motion is wrong and asked if this motion is the best way of going about it. By boycotting these settlements, you are damaging the people who live there.

TL commented that boycotting large companies can cause other problems, such as large factories being moved and this could cause Palestinians to lose their jobs. Some of the companies are not supported by Cardiff University.

JPrior commented that there is no evidence that BDS works and boycotts do not change policy in the Israeli Government.

JH asked how this boycott would work logistically.

CR replied that the SU could lobby corporations and the University for an Academic Boycott.

MM commented that the SU boycotting settlements will not help to achieve a peaceful solution, all this motion would do is to hurt people that live there.

JW commented that Senate does not know if the businesses in this area employ Palestinians, Israelis or both. History says that boycotting strong governments is not always possible and campaigning is a better way to achieve peace. Asked if boycotting a University could affect the students.

CR retracted the motion.

B. NUS Referendum

Proposed by: Tomos Llewelyn

Seconded by: Prashant Garg

TL proposed an amendment to senate resolves 1 to change to “Should Cardiff University Students’ Union disaffiliate...” From “Should Cardiff University disaffiliate...”

TL spoke for the motion and explained that a referendum should take place and would decrease student apathy with elections. Other Universities have already had similar votes and at least 5 voted to disaffiliate. It is not an issue of whether we should disaffiliate or not, it is about giving Cardiff University students the choice.

GB spoke against the motion and explained that it does not explain why there should be a referendum and does not say any arguments for or against the NUS. At a recent AGM, there was an overwhelming vote for re-affiliating with the NUS. The motion also does not take into account the cost of a referendum.

CK spoke for the motion and explained that many students with disabilities feel that they are not well represented at these conferences and that at AGM the re-affiliation gets mixed together with other votes and so they can’t have their say. Explained that more conversation on this topic would benefit students.

JH spoke against the motion and explained that there are engaged students who use SU services and they don’t know enough about the topic and do not want a referendum. If they don’t understand then other students may not either.

General discussion.

AA asked why this referendum should be held so soon after the AGM.

TL replied that the AGM was a smaller electorate than the referendum would be and some people at AGM abstained. People will get more informed and a better understanding with a referendum.

CR commented that Exeter had 2 referenda in 2 years and although they did increase engagement, there were still lots of students who did not take part. Suggested that it could be a ‘non-binding referendum’.

TL replied that it is important to give students a say and binding is the best way forward.

HP agreed that there is student apathy with elections and other decisions, but students voted to keep the NUS at AGM and people at AGM are the most engaged. The NUS is not perfect but issues should be tackled from the inside to still reap the benefits.

JL commented that a referendum to increase engagement will not have a continuing effect with other Students’ Union elections. The money that this would cost the SU is high and there is not enough evidence to support and justify it. Student senate notes 2 uses ‘trusted’ and this suggests that the SU does not trust their students.

HAS explained that the NUS has 7 million students affiliated and there are arguments for and against the NUS. The NUS student cards brings in £33,000 and this gives the SU profit. NUS delegates need to go to NUS conferences to put students’ interests forward. Suggested it would be better to have a campaign before holding a referendum, so students are better informed.

JS outlined some benefits for the SU from the NUS, including its campaigns for students, its courses and conferences for Sabbatical Officers and staff and the NUS Extra card.

TL commented that a referendum is the best way to raise awareness of the NUS and there are other costs associated with NUS other than the affiliations, for example transport to conferences.

MM commented that Senate are representatives for students elected to make these decisions, rather than holding referenda for every decision. Minority students that need more representation, would have their voices lost in a referendum.

JW commented that students could be made more engaged by campaigns and more information.

TL summated for the motion.

Motion fell.

IV. Any Other Business

A. Lapsed motions

Motions passed 02/12/14

- External Bookings
- Student Growing Space

B. Senate focus groups

SR explained that on Friday, Student Voice will be holding 4 focus groups on changing the structure of Senate and how it goes forward. Information on focus groups will be sent tomorrow.

C. Trustees ratification

SW explained that Trustees are legally responsible for the organisation and the Bye Laws give the opportunity for a student trustee to have 2 terms in the role. Alex Williams and Lily Ryan Harper are halfway through and would like to continue for next term.

Alex Williams and Lily Ryan Harper were approved as Student Trustees.

SECTION II

Proposals for changing Student Senate – as per the working group that was created by Student Senate 2016/2017. Senators are asked to provide feedback on the three proposals at this time so that further work can be undertaken to refine the proposals ahead of the February Senate. There will not be a vote on these proposals, merely the opportunity to feedback via post-it notes.

Proposal 1 – Online Vote, followed by Student Senate Vote

Proposal 2 – Online Vote becomes the Policy-making body

Proposal 3 – Online vote, followed by Student Senate votes – with increased in randomly selected students

Proposal 1 – Online Vote, followed by Student Senate Vote

1. Student submits an idea for a policy / campaign / activity by the students' union
2. Students are given the opportunity to 'up vote' or 'down vote' the idea for two weeks
3. If the idea reaches 500 'up votes' within those two weeks it will then be taken to the appropriate decision-maker i.e. Student Senate
4. Student Senate debate and vote upon the idea

Notes:

- All policies would have to go through the electronic system first before reaching Senate
- If a policy fails to reach 500 it will not be discussed by the decision maker
- Lapsing policy would also be required to be re-submitted via this process
- There would be 6 Student Senates per annum
- Ratification of Trustees or Bye Laws would go through an online vote that will not have a quorum, instead simply time limit with the 75% majority being in place
- If the idea relates directly to something that would require the approval of the trustees, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will engage directly with the person who has submitted the idea
- Any decisions that require a referenda as per the governing documents would still require referenda (i.e. Removal of officers or affiliations)

Proposal 2 – Online Vote becomes the Policy-making body

1. Student submits an idea for a policy / campaign / activity by the students' union
2. Students are given the opportunity to 'up vote' or 'down vote' the idea for two weeks
3. If the idea reaches 500 'up votes' within those two weeks it will become Union policy

Notes:

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Proposal 3 – Online vote, followed by Student Senate votes – with increased in randomly selected students

1. Student submits an idea for a policy / campaign / activity by the students' union
2. Students are given the opportunity to 'up vote' or 'down vote' the idea for two weeks
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SECTION III

A. Making the union Plastic Straw Free

Student Senate Notes

1. *What is the current situation?
Tell Student Senate and most importantly, those who don't know, what is actually happening.*

Student Senate Believes

1. The environment and sustainability are growing concerns for the general public and Cardiff students. Litter in and around the Union on club nights, especially, is an obvious problem much of which is plastic straws and plastic bottles. A cleaner union would not only improve the environment for Cardiff students during club night, but also would improve the wider community and lessen the Union's burden on the environment

Student Senate Resolves

1. Reduce the amount of plastic straws used by the food and drink outlets in the Union by reducing their use and supporting local environmental movements such as The No Straw Stand. This could be done through deciding to refuse to use plastic straws completely and using biodegradable straws instead or at the very least putting the plastic straws behind the counter and only using upon request.

Proposer: Nia Jones

Seconder: *Jessica Warren*

B. For the Students' Union to ensure the protection of students involved in sex work

The Student Senate Notes

- Over a million students across the country work in the sex industry to help fund their studies.¹
- Sex work includes sexual activities in exchange for payment, erotic dancing and performances or making pornography.

The Student Senate Believes

- The criminalisation of sex work does not prevent students from working within the industry and makes it harder for them to seek legal advice and assistance.
 - In an NUS survey in 2016, almost half of respondents say they would feel “very uncomfortable” going to the police if they had experienced property theft, violence, or sexual violence at the hands of clients or management²
 - 55% of sex workers consider themselves to have some kind of disability.³

¹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/universityeducation/student-life/11390633/The-students-turning-to-sex-work.html>

² <http://www.independent.co.uk/student/news/decriminalisation-of-student-sex-work-prostitution-to-pay-university-tuition-fees-a7111701.html>

³ <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/articles/5-things-we-learned-from-the-student-sex-work-survey-e1d9>

The Student Senate Resolves

- The Students' Union to lobby the university to ensure that no student can be excluded, or otherwise punished under Section 3.1 of the Student Behaviour Policy, for engaging in sex work.
- To ensure that there is a supportive confidential advisor that student sex workers can go to (e.g. in Student Advice, Support and Wellbeing or a tutor).
- To ensure that the use of post-exposure prophylaxis (PeP) is considered for extenuating circumstances due to its side effects.

Proposer: *Cameron Rose*

Seconded: *Henrietta Page*

C. Securing bursaries and grants for postgraduates in need

Senate notes

1. There are 551,595 postgraduate students in the UK⁴.
2. Many universities currently operate bursary schemes for undergraduate students from low income backgrounds. These schemes are usually based on a universities' analysis of family income data provided during the UCAS application process. At Cardiff University for example it is worth up to £1,000 per student. It provides financial support to those from households where the total assessed income is less than £42,000⁵.
4. Some universities provide bursaries and grants for postgraduate students, either in the form of dedicated schemes or by allowing all students to be considered for the university's existing bursary scheme^{6,7,8}. This is often the exception however, with many universities not providing any financial support for postgraduates from low income backgrounds, beyond some emergency hardship funds.
5. This frequently results in the situation whereby an undergraduate from a low income, or otherwise socio-economically disadvantaged background, receives financial support for their university but a postgraduate with the same background does not.
5. The Welsh Government recently announced funding for Welsh universities to provide bursaries

⁴ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students>

⁵ <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/funding/bursaries>

⁶ <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/masters/funding/uk-eu-student-advice/masters-bursary/>

⁷ <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/studentfinance/postgrad/funding.php.en>

⁸ <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/fees-and-financial-support/university-scholarships-and-support/info/postgraduate-bursary-2015-16>

and grants for postgraduates from Wales from low income backgrounds in 2018/19 and 2019/20⁹.

6. This financial support will not be accessible for any students originally from outside Wales who are studying in Wales.

Senate believes

1. Postgraduate study is a vital development opportunity for many students, whether to retrain in a new area of study or to specialise in their existing field of study. Postgraduate study is therefore a useful tool to aid widening participation and lifelong learning.

2. For too long postgraduate study has been too hard to afford for students across the UK due to a relative lack of financial support, whether from governments or universities.

4. The government postgraduate loans offered to students by the respective governments of the UK don't currently vary depending on family income, meaning a student from a low-income background gets no more support than any other student.

5. The Welsh Governments announcement of bursaries and grants, while welcome, will create the anomaly at Welsh universities whereby students from Wales will have access to bursaries and grants, but students from underprivileged backgrounds from elsewhere won't have access to any financial support.

6. The NUS should proudly stand up for financial support for students who need it most.

7. Postgraduate student numbers are rising, and more jobs require postgraduate qualifications. While the current lack of financial support exists, we risk postgraduate study becoming increasingly slanted towards students from privileged backgrounds with prospective postgraduates from low-income backgrounds priced out.

8. The Office for Fair Access in 2015 noted that students from disadvantaged backgrounds were less likely to go onto study at postgraduate level than their more advantaged peers¹⁰. This echoed 2015 NUS research that found of those not considering postgraduate study, 38.5% were not doing so because of affordability concerns¹¹. 7% more graduates who studied at private schools were found to be considering postgraduate study than graduates from state schools. This, the OFA concluded, was particularly worrying as postgraduate study is "becoming an essential stepping stone into many careers".

⁹ <http://gov.wales/newsroom/educationandskills/2017/maximum-tuition-fee-in-wales-will-remain-9000-kirsty-williams/?lang=en>

¹⁰ <https://www.offa.org.uk/press-releases/students-from-disadvantaged-backgrounds-missing-out-on-postgraduate-study-offa-comment-on-analysis-of-postgraduate-support-scheme/>

¹¹ <https://www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/Debt%20In%20The%20First%20Degree%20-%20Graduates%20Survey%202015%20Report.pdf> P.11

9. Making postgraduate study more affordable for students from low-income backgrounds will enable more students from disadvantaged backgrounds to afford and enter postgraduate study and realise the life changing opportunities that it brings.

9. The NUS should proudly stand up for financial support for postgraduates who need it most.

Senate resolves

1. For the Cardiff University Students' Union to submit this motion for consideration at the 2018 NUS National Conference with the following resolves:
2. For the NUS to lobby the UK Government to provide universities with funding to create substantial schemes of bursaries and grants for postgraduate students from low-income backgrounds.
3. For the NUS to write to each member of the House of Commons Education Select Committee about the importance of financial support for postgraduates from disadvantaged backgrounds.
4. For the NUS to create a toolkit and resources for Students' Unions to support them to make the case to their university for the creation of substantial schemes of bursaries and grants for postgraduates from low-income backgrounds.

Proposer: Jake Smith

Seconder: George Baldwin

D. Better hand dryers in the ASSL

The Student Senate Notes

1. *The Arts and Social Studies Library has toilets on the ground floor, first floor and second floor*
2. *The toilets on the ground floor and second floor possess 2 very low quality hand dryers per set of toilets*
3. *The hand dryers struggle to perform adequate hand drying procedure*
4. *It is noted however that the student's union has no direct control over the ASSL*

The Student Senate Believes

1. *The hand dryers are very weak, they either output very little air or very cold air, neither is suitable*
2. *Many students do not dry their hands with the hand dryers as they view it as a waste of time*
3. *Those who do dry their hands may use both hand dryers at the same time to speed up the process – this is not desirable*

The Student Senate Resolves

1. *That the student's union lobby Cardiff University through the relevant means (VP officers) for better hand dryers in the ASSL toilets*
2. *The passing of this motion will demonstrate the wishes of Student Senate and the wishes of students, which Cardiff University can't ignore as the ASSL is fundamentally run for students*

Proposer: *George Baldwin*

Seconder: *Catherine Iannucci*