Policies Due to Lapse 2020-21

Table of Contents

What is lapsing policy? .......................................................................................................................... 2
Our Ability but not our Money – Financial Assistances to International Students in Need... 2
Making Universities More Inclusive of People of Colour ................................................................. 3
Reaffirming our commitment to a Conflict-Free Campus ................................................................. 4
Fund Feminist Street Art on Campus (Expenditure Request) ......................................................... 6
Elected positions for Postgraduate Research and Postgraduate Taught University Representatives (Extraordinary Motion) .............................................................. 7
In memory of Gordon Aikman ........................................................................................................... 9
Give Edinburgh students a voice: integrate voter registration and enrolment ......................... 10
Students must oppose the UK Government’s immigration clampdown ........................................ 11
NUS and UCU National Demonstration .......................................................................................... 12
Representing Student Voices in the Council Elections (expenditure request) .......................... 13
Representing Student Voices in the Council Elections .................................................................. 15
Special Circumstances Review ....................................................................................................... 17
Allocate £1500 to Sexcetra (Expenditure Request) ...................................................................... 19
World Autism Awareness Day ........................................................................................................ 20
Supporting the Right to Choose ..................................................................................................... 21
Brexit - A Way Forward .................................................................................................................... 22
Edinburgh University Students’ Association Supports Gaelic ..................................................... 24
Edinburgh University Students’ Association Commemorates Holocaust Memorial Day.... 27
Defend EU and International students! (Expenditure request) .................................................... 27
Edinburgh University Students’ Association condemns anti-Semitism ....................................... 28
Nap pods and rest facilities ............................................................................................................. 29
Make Special Circumstances More Accessible ............................................................................ 30
An End to Period Poverty on Campus ........................................................................................... 31
Call for increased Edinburgh University Students’ Association and university support of the International Student Centre......................................................................................... 32
What is lapsing policy?

This document lists the policies which are due to lapse in the 2020-2021 academic year. The Students’ Association’s Democracy Regulations state that policies shall be deemed to have lapsed after 4 years unless they are readopted by Student Council, or they are subsequently replaced, overturned or amended. If any student wants to uphold any of these policies, they must be submitted as a new motion the usual way by using the online form, where they will be debated in Student Council. If any motion is not resubmitted, it will automatically lapse.

Our Ability but not our Money – Financial Assurances to International Students in Need

What will we do?

1. To submit a motion to the NUS including the followings:
   a. Conference Resolves:
      i. To reaffirm that education to all students, regardless of where they are come, should not be treated as a business.
      ii. To lobby universities and colleges to provide more accesses to scholarships and bursaries to international students.
      iii. To urge the Scottish Government to provide tuition fee and living expense assistances to international students with financial difficulties.
      iv. To set out a target of which 3% of international students should have accesses to Government’s, universities’ or colleges’ assistances to address their financial difficulties by the time this motion lapses.
      v. To facilitate, in a long term, an accessible ability-based education to international students.

What is the background to this?

1. That International students are paying a substantially higher tuition fee when compared to local or EU students.
2. That the average tuition fee for international student in Scotland’s further and higher education institutions is seven times higher than that of home or EU students (before Student Awards Agency Scotland Funding).
3. That, however, international students’ accesses to financial supports (both in terms of scholarship and bursary) are strictly limited.
4. That, when compared to the average household incomes of popular origins of international students, university’s tuition fee alone equals 32% (USA), 225% (China), 52% (Hong Kong) and 1130% (India) of the respective annual household incomes.
5. That the high tuition fee rate places huge financial burden on the families of international students.
6. That the high tuition fee rate blocks overseas elites from pursuing quality education in Scotland.
7. That the rate of offer made to international students is significantly higher than that made to local or EU students
8. That the high tuition fee rate and the lack of financial support change the admission basis of international students from academic ability to financial ability.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. That education is a public good.
2. That it is inappropriate to treat the provision of education as a business.
3. That international student enjoys equality in opportunities in receiving education.
4. That allowing talented students from around the world to study in Scotland would benefit the local community and the sustainable development of Scotland as a centre of education.
5. That the education of global elites allows Scotland to pioneer world-changing ideas.
6. That the motive of generating profit from the provision of international education would undermine the quality of international students admitted.

This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.

Making Universities More Inclusive of People of Colour

What will we do?

1. Lobby universities to be more inclusive of people of colour in two areas:
   a. In curriculums
      i. Making curriculums more diverse -specifically inclusive of people of colour.
      ii. Lobby universities to create an interdisciplinary course about race relations in humanities departments.
      iii. State the importance of all university departments and colleges to provide courses based on race, ethnicity, non-white scholars, and/or non-English speaking countries.
      iv. Lobby universities to increase representation of people of colour in reading lists in humanities subjects.
      v. Lobby universities to make it a requirement to include people of colour scholars when designing new courses in humanities.
   b. In the teaching body
      i. Lobby universities to make the teaching body and student services more inclusive of people of colour.
      ii. Lobby universities to increase the number of non-white tutors, lecturers, professors and senior officials.
      iii. Lobby universities to include a quota for the number of academics that are people of colour teaching courses. This should be directly related
to the course being taught, i.e. Black Studies should be organised and taught mostly by people of colour.

iv. Lobby universities to make it a requirement for academic staffs to undergo ‘Implicit Bias’ training, as well as further training to combat racism and microaggressions with the classroom environment.

What is the background to this?

1. The literary canon at universities is traditionally white, reflecting an ongoing history of colonialism, white-washing and institutionalised racism. University reading lists ought to reflect an ethnic diversity of scholars in humanities.

2. According to figures published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency, there have been no black academics in the elite staff category of “managers, directors and senior officials” for three years. The figures also show that universities employ more black staff as cleaners, receptions or porters than as lecturers or professors.

3. It is problematic that the professor of Black Studies at the University of Edinburgh is white. This is just one example of the lack of inclusiveness of people of colour within teaching staff.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. It is necessary to combat institutionalised racism in order to see a society that is inclusive of all minorities.

2. Curriculums in humanities subjects are not racially diverse. Many BME students report none or close to no people of colour in their reading lists.

3. It is currently very difficult for people of colour to enter academia in an already very white environment.

4. There are concerns from BME students that academic staff at universities are not diverse in terms of race.

5. There are concerns from students that academic staff are not equipped to deal with racism in the classroom and have experienced racism that has not been confronted.

6. Inclusivity of people of colour is vital in encouraging more people of colour to apply to Scottish universities.

This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.

Reaffirming our commitment to a Conflict-Free Campus

What will we do?

1. To affiliate and publicise affiliation to the Conflict-Free Campus Initiative, a project of the Enough Project’s raise Hope for Congo campaign.

2. To support and facilitate the organisation of awareness events on the issue where possible or relevant.
3. To educate students on the issue of Conflict Minerals, on University and Students’ Association policy of procurement on this issue.
4. To encourage students at the University of Edinburgh to get involved the Conflict-free Campus Initiative and promote ethical consumerism amongst the student body.
5. To continue to uphold the Students’ Association Conflict Minerals policy (passed at student council 3/12/15) and lobby to ensure the University to does the same.

What is the background to this?

1. The Students’ Association policy passed on the 3rd December 2015 mandated the Association to “raise awareness” and “encourage engagement” on the issue as well as alter its procurement policy to avoid Conflict Minerals.
2. The University of Edinburgh’s Central Management passed a policy on 1st March 2016 which “seeks to help to protect vulnerable communities by avoiding the use of minerals that fund conflict.” This made our University the first to implement a policy of this type, in the UK.
3. That the mining of tin, tantalum, gold, and tungsten is financing conflict in certain areas, particularly the Democratic Republic of the Congo, due to local military groups controlling mining operations.
4. These minerals are collectively termed ‘Conflict Minerals’ by organisations working to end the human rights abuses and violence encouraged through the supply chain of minerals mined in these areas.
5. In March of 2017 the EU voted to adopt the final draft of regulations pertaining to the sourcing of Conflict Minerals. The rules are scheduled to take effect in January of 2021 and will affect UK industries regardless of Brexit due to the large amount of trading the UK does with the EU.
6. The International Peace Information Service found that in 2014 nearly 70% of mines extracting Conflict Minerals in the Congo were not controlled by armed groups. This is in comparison to 2010, when an estimated nearly 90% of the mines were under the direct influence of armed groups.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The International Peace Information Service, UN, and the Enough Project have noted the positive impact Universities such as ours, amongst other big buyers of electronics, have made.
2. The support for transparent supply chains from tech giants Apple and Intel, after much campaigning, shows progress is being made through policies such as this.
3. The testimony of Annie Callaway, Advocacy Manager of Enough Project, for this affiliation shows the organisation (Conflict-Free Campus Initiative) wants to be affiliated with us and for us to continue to implement our policy.
4. The knowledge that the Students’ Association and the University have already made a lasting impact, but that this affiliation must be cemented in policy to ensure students remain aware and educated on the issue, and that our Students’ Association may set a positive global example.

This policy was passed by Student Council in March 2017.
Fund Feminist Street Art on Campus (Expenditure Request)

What will we do?

1. Give £700 to the Edinburgh University Students’ Association’s Women’s Liberation Group to help fund the flight costs for members of the Feminist Street Art Collective: Vienna to come to Edinburgh and hold street art workshops with women students and students of marginalised genders.

What is the background to this?

1. Feminist Street Art Collective: Vienna is an Austria-based feminist group with a focus on graffiti and other forms of creative activism. As well as running general events and workshops on a variety of themes, from street harassment to anti-fascism, they also offer bespoke workshops to groups looking to explore feminist and political themes through street art. The Collective has a special focus on reclaiming space in areas that are traditionally dominated by cis men (men whose gender is aligned with what was assigned at birth), such as the street art scene.

2. One of the Women’s Liberation Group’s major focuses this year is to (re)claim space and raise awareness of women’s issues, issues facing marginalised genders and feminist issues through art, for instance, by inviting the Collective to run workshops open to all women students and students of marginalised genders. Another focus has also been to diversify our methods of activism to be more creative, as has been raised in discussions with past convenors and students who have asked for more diverse forms of activism and ways of exploring feminist issues.

3. The workshops will involve learning about street art, developing a feminist street art concept, and finally creating a semi-permanent street art mural for display on campus -for the community and by the community. We aim for these workshops to be intersectional and to ensure that the experiences of women with disabilities, women of colour, trans women and women from other marginalised groups on campus are also reflected in our work.

4. The Women’s Liberation Group has already run events and campaigns this year focusing on taking up space for marginalised genders, which is in line with the Feminist Street Art Collective’s aims, such as the photography project #UnapologeticallyMe and Fight For The Night. Edinburgh University Students’ Association has supported multiple women-led and feminist projects and motions at Council, for example End Rape Culture and Lad Banter on Campus and Support Feminist Society Campaign. The Students’ Association has also supported campaigns such as No One Asks For It and Sexpression’s consent campaign, both of which have had a focus on improving the experiences of women students and students of marginalised genders by tackling issues like harassment and rape culture. As such, this would only be an extension of the work Student Council and the Students’ Association already do to support women students and students of marginalised genders.
5. In order for the project to take place, the Women’s Liberation Group needs funding for the flights of the people coming to Edinburgh to do these workshops. The Group will be funding other resources (e.g. advertising, art materials, and refreshments during the workshops) from our own budget, but requires some extra financial aid for travel expenses from Student Council. With Student Council funding, we can also ensure that workshops are free for participants, which would mean they are accessible to all students regardless of income.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The Women’s Liberation Group believes this is a project that will benefit all women students and students of marginalised genders as a form of work to take up space at the university and make our voices heard through an intersectional approach.
2. The Women’s Liberation Group believes that creative activism (in particular street art and wall murals) is often an overlooked form of activism, but one which can be more accessible and useful to many students than more “traditional” activism such as protests or petitions.
3. The Women’s Liberation Group believes that working with the Feminist Street Art Collective: Vienna is a great opportunity to create and foster feminist networks, communities and friendships internationally as well as within Edinburgh. We also believe this is a way of sharing knowledge and learning from people we might otherwise not get the chance to interact with.
4. The Women’s Liberation Group believes that the fight for women’s rights and the rights of people of marginalised genders is an international fight, and that by connecting with people across borders we are stronger and more successful for it.
5. With this money, we can ensure that the workshops are financially accessible and that members of the Collective, a group that also does not have much of its own funding, are able to come here and run their workshops without financial barriers.

This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.

Elected positions for Postgraduate Research and Postgraduate Taught University Representatives (Extraordinary Motion)

What will we do?

1. Amend Edinburgh University Students’ Association ‘Student Democracy Regulations’ as follows:

Part 1, Section C: ii) c), delete the word “five” and insert in its place the word “seven”;
Part 1, Section C: ii) c), insert “6) Postgraduate Taught Representative” and “7) Postgraduate Research Representative”;
Part 2, Section A: i) a) 3), delete the word “Five” and insert “Six”;
Part 2, Section A: i) a) 3), insert “6) Postgraduate Research Representative”; Part 2,
Section A: ii) a), insert “2) Postgraduate Taught Representative”.

What is the background to this?

1. Our Students’ Association includes over 13,000 postgraduate taught (e.g., Taught Masters) and postgraduate research (e.g. Masters by Research and PhD) students, who we currently fail to adequately represent in the same way we represent undergraduates since the vast majority of representative roles are filled by undergraduates.

2. Postgraduate students feel that their student experience is extremely different from the experience of undergraduate students, so they need to be represented on different issues.

3. The Students’ Association has consulted both postgraduate-taught and postgraduate-research students widely about ways in which postgraduate representation can be enhanced. Whilst there is postgraduate representation at School-level, they need university-level representation to address many additional issues affecting postgraduate students.
   a. Postgraduate taught students feel that they need to be represented on issues including (but not limited to): the lack of postgraduate taught community across the University, study space, social space, extremely high tuition fees, integration of both on campus and online distance learning students into the wider university, inconsistency of academic support including dissertation support, and issues arising from the short duration of their degree.
   b. Postgraduate research students feel that they need to be represented on issues including (but not limited to): inconsistency of academic support including research support, the lack of formal support for personal and welfare-related issues, the lack of postgraduate research community across the University, the allocation of desk space, social space, integration into the wider university, the provision of tutor and demonstrator roles, training and support for tutors and demonstrators, and issues arising from interrupted study in Edinburgh during field research.

4. The Students’ Association Sabbatical Officers have worked closely with postgraduate tutors over the past twelve months over a host of issues, including fair-pay, subject-specific training, and access to facilities. It is clear that having an elected representative for postgraduate research students would help the Students’ Association advocate for and represent this cohort in the future.

5. The best persons suited for representing these groups are postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students themselves.

6. Whilst University and College Union Edinburgh (UCUE) represent postgraduate students in terms of their working conditions, the Students’ Association has a responsibility to support their needs and welfare as students, and to ensure they are listened to by members of academic staff.

7. The Students’ Association has been establishing specific committees for postgraduate-research students within Schools, but there needs to be wider representation for postgraduates across University committees and across the Students’ Association.
8. The Students’ Association has been establishing more representative spaces within the University for postgraduate students, and has been developing strategies for increasing postgraduate engagement in the future.

9. The addition of these two elected positions would ensure that the Students’ Association provides more representative structures, which will mean that postgraduates are less likely to be forced to rely on undergraduates to present their concerns to University staff members.

10. Role descriptions for these new positions are currently being formed, based on the previous Postgraduate Convenor role and tailored to Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research student needs based on consultations. The role descriptions do not need to be ready until September 2017, ahead of the by-elections.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. That postgraduates need more representative spaces across University-level decision making boards.
2. That postgraduates should not have to rely on undergraduates to address concerns across the University.
3. That student representatives must support those students who teach, particularly when many of these tutors and demonstrators are on precarious contracts, are provided with little training, and who currently have little representative input.
4. That the experiences of postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students are fundamentally different from each other and from the undergraduate experience, and therefore two separate roles are required to capture the vastly different set of needs and demands of these two groups.

This policy was passed by Student Council in March 2017.

In memory of Gordon Aikman

What will we do?

1. Edinburgh University Students’ Association will lobby the University of Edinburgh to rename a lecture theatre after Gordon Aikman

What is the background to this?

1. Motor neurone disease is a rare condition that progressively damages parts of the nervous system. It occurs when specialist nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord, called motor neurones, stop working properly. This is known as neurodegeneration.
2. After graduating from the University of Edinburgh and working as the VPSA in EUSA (2007-2008) Gordon Aikman was diagnosed with Motor Neuron Disease (MND) in 2014.
3. Following this, Gordon Aikman set up the charity ‘Gordon’s Fightback’ and raised over £500,000 for MND research.
4. His lobbying led to the Scottish Government doubling the number of MND specialist nurses across Scotland and was instrumental in changing the law so that people at risk of losing their voice as a result of a medical condition could access voice equipment on the NHS.
5. For his tireless campaigning, Gordon received the British Empire Medal and was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Edinburgh in July 2015.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. In recognition of Gordon Aikman’s contribution to public life, the University of Edinburgh should name a lecture theatre after him, as a testament to his charity work, his connection with the University of Edinburgh and the Edinburgh University Students’ Association.

This policy was passed by Student Council in March 2017.

Give Edinburgh students a voice: integrate voter registration and enrolment

What will we do?

1. Lobby the university to integrate voter registration and enrolment, so that students can choose to submit information via an online form for both matriculation and voter registration
2. Follow the ‘Sheffield Model’ implemented at other institutions and outlined in this document, where the university has an agreement with the council that allows it to collect data for voter registration via its existing online system for matriculation

What is the background?

1. Students register to vote in chronically low numbers; when students do register, they often do not do so at their term-time address
2. The move to individual voter registration in 2014 meant that many students who were previously registered dropped off the electoral register; an estimated 800,000 people in total were lost from the electoral register following the change
3. Chronically low turnout among young people has meant that governments have often failed to act in students’ interests, for example by raising tuition fees
4. Recent elections and referendums have shown a disconnect between the views of students and those of the majority of voters. While students and young people...
voted overwhelmingly to remain in the EU referendum, the national result did not reflect this
5. Voter registration has been integrated with enrolment at other comparable institutions across the country, including the University of Sheffield and University of Birmingham
6. At Birmingham, where this policy has been introduced, 2040 students had registered to vote during enrolment as of 1 September 2016

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Students' voices matter in deciding our future and should be heard. When students vote in lower numbers, it diminishes our influence and our say over how our country is governed
2. The low turnout of young voters in the EU referendum is not a reflection of students and young people caring less, but of a systematic failure to involve young people in the political process
3. Student participation in democracy and the electoral process is a good thing and should be encouraged
4. Integrating voter registration with enrolment will lead to greater numbers of students at the university registering to vote

This policy was passed by Student Council in October 2016.

Students must oppose the UK Government’s immigration clampdown

What will we do?

1. Give People & Planet up to £200 for campaign materials including banner making, leaflets, posters and other related expenses to help run the Migrants' Rights campaign on campus.

What is the background?

1. The asylum process in the UK is complex, bureaucratic and inaccessible. Most applicants are refused when they first attempt to apply for asylum -some 59% refused in 2015. The decision-making process is poor as demonstrated by the courts having overturned Home Office decisions in 38% of asylum appeals in 2015.
2. In 2015, 14,832 asylum seekers were incarcerated in detention centres. Shamefully, around half of all asylum seekers are detained while they are in the process of applying for asylum. Despite the Government’s 2010 pledge to end child detention for immigration purposes, 154 children were imprisoned during this time.
3. The Yarl's Wood detention centre is one particularly notorious example which detains women and children. Many detainees have commented on the sexual and physical abuse that happens within Yarl's Wood.
4. Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre in Lanarkshire is set to close towards the end of 2017, however, it will be replaced by a new short-term holding facility near Glasgow Airport in order to facilitate the faster removal of asylum seekers.

5. The Students’ Association has a history of supporting campaigns and projects to advance the rights of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants; for example, Amnesty’s Equal Access campaign that achieved scholarships and bursaries for asylum seeker students (see ‘Support the Equal Access Campaign’). It has also recently delivered four van loads of student donations to the refugee camps in Calais.

6. People & Planet, Amnesty and Students for Justice in Palestine are running a joint campaign on migrants’ rights.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. That all asylum seekers, refugees and migrants deserve to be treated in a just and humane manner and, accordingly, to have their human rights fully respected.

2. That asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are amongst the most vulnerable groups in UK society and are routinely demonised and dehumanised by the UK government and media.

3. That western and UK colonialism as well as more recent military interventions have had a profound and negative impact on many of the countries from which many asylum seekers, refugees and migrants originate.

4. That the UK Home Office’s border regime is cruel and repressive and that we must stand in solidarity with those asylum seekers, refugees and migrants affected by it.

This policy was passed by Student Council in October 2016.

NUS and UCU National Demonstration

What will we do?

1. To request, dependent upon travel arrangements with other students’ associations, a maximum of £1,650 from the Students’ Association’s campaigns budget to subsidise the cost of coach travel to the NUS and UCU National Demonstration on 19 November.

What is the background?

1. In July 2016 NUS UK announced that it would be mobilising students for a National Demonstration to march for a fairly funded, liberated education. Students’ associations and unions across the UK are mobilising their campuses for students for the largest student and staff demonstration since 2012.

2. Academic and Support staff who are members University and Colleges Union (UCU) are assisting in co-ordinating the demonstration, and will be marching alongside students.
3. The UK Government is imposing some of the most fundamentally damaging reforms to the Higher Education sector in over two decades, attempting to link tuition fees to the quality of teaching, based more on employability than on teaching, thus changing how both staff and students value their learning.

4. Maintenance grants for students from low-income households, and for nurses who are undertaking degrees to work in the NHS, have been cut completely by the Conservative Government.

5. Further Education has faced consistently significant funding cuts, which is reducing the social mobility of young people.

6. Staff in the Higher Education sector are being forced to rely on temporary contracts, casualised work, and have seen a real terms fall in their incomes.

7. The contribution that overseas students make to our universities and wider civic society is being aggressively undermined, amidst rising xenophobic tendencies since the referendum to leave the European Union.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. That education is a public good, and that individual students should not face significant financial burdens by studying at university.

2. That we should be supporting students who obtain places at universities through access courses at Further Education institutions.

3. That the interests and rights of staff and students are mutually reinforcing.

4. That students should visibly and collectively reject hostile attitudes towards overseas students.

5. That the Students’ Association should proudly celebrate its international diverse membership, and affirm its embrace of internationalism.

This policy was passed by Student Council in October 2016.

Representing Student Voices in the Council Elections (expenditure request)

What will we do?

1. The Students’ Association will launch a campaign around the forthcoming Edinburgh City Council elections in May 2017, with the aim lobbying current and prospective councillors and political party representatives to commit to supporting certain student Asks (outlined below) should they be elected.

2. We will mandate the Students’ Association to include the following in its list of Asks:
   a. That councillors impose rent pressure zones in areas of central Edinburgh with a high number of student inhabitants, in order to make rents more affordable.
b. That councillors assist in ensuring that organisations which provide support for survivors of sexual abuse and violence, such as the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre, are better funded.

c. That councillors work with the police department and local pubs, clubs and bars to encourage all staff to receive training on how to combat sexual harassment, and to allocate the necessary financial and human resources to make this happen.

3. Sabbatical Officers and the External Campaigns Committee will take a lead on advancing this campaign.

4. The External Campaigns Committee will produce a survey asking students what other issues they would like the Students’ Association to campaign on during the council elections. Issues arising from this survey could be raised at a future Student Council, in order to be included within the Students’ Association’s list of Asks.

5. We will work with Class Reps and Schools Reps to disseminate this survey and information about the council elections to their students.

6. The Students’ Association will use its online platforms, including its website and social media platforms, to promote the council elections to students and encourage students to register to vote.

7. We will work with the Students’ Association to collaborate with the student associations and student unions of other universities and colleges within Edinburgh in order to collectively advance the goals of this campaign.

8. Student Council will allocate £400 to promoting student Asks within the council elections and encouraging students to register to vote. The breakdown of how this money will be spent is as follows:

   a. 1 Railings Banner (if displaying a banner is approved by the University) -£100
   b. 3 Kappas (or ‘pledge signs’) -£25
   c. 100 A3 Posters -£25
   d. 1000 A6 Flyers -£50
   e. 1 Pop Up Banner -£60
   f. Online Promotion -£50
   g. Contingency -£90

What is the background to this?

1. The Students’ Association has campaigned on this matter during previous council elections and so should continue to promote student engagement with local government.

2. Levels of student engagement in elections, and particularly local council elections, is very low, which contributes to student interests being consistently overlooked within local government.

3. Organisations, like the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre, provide vital support to people who have experienced rape, sexual assault or domestic violence, however, many such organisations face continual funding shortages and are heavily reliant on volunteer fundraising.

4. Sexual harassment both on campus and within clubs and bars around the city is still far too high. A Students’ Association survey conducted 2011 concluded that “nearly 1-in-3 survey respondents reported experiencing sexual harassment”. 36.3% of these
incidents took place in bars and clubs around Edinburgh. Such statistics are unacceptable and the council prioritise initiatives aimed at eliminating sexual harassment.

5. Housing prices in Edinburgh are on the continuous rise, now at twice the national average. The Students’ Association has taken on initiatives in the past aimed at reducing the price of university accommodation, however, this does not address the cost of accommodation within the private rental sector.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The Students’ Association has a responsibility to advocate for the interests of students within local government, and to encourage students to engage with local governance.

2. Having affordable housing is crucial to enabling students to adequately undertake their studies, and to improving the accessibility of higher education to poorer students.

3. As Edinburgh is a city with many students living within it, sexual harassment around the city affects a high proportion of students. Having adequate and well-resourced services locally available to support survivors of rape and sexual assault is crucial in enabling survivors to study at the University of Edinburgh.

4. Sexual harassment within pubs, clubs and bars is severely detrimental to the lives of students both on and off campus. It promotes an environment where it is deemed acceptable for this behaviour to happen which both demeans students and contributes to creating an unsafe environment. Having staff trained in how to tackle sexual harassment will help to reduce the amount that takes place and allow students to feel more comfortable within these places.

This policy was passed by Student Council in November 2016.

Representing Student Voices in the Council Elections

What will we do?

1. The Students’ Association will launch a campaign around the forthcoming Edinburgh City Council elections in May 2017, with the aim lobbying current and prospective councillors and political party representatives to commit to supporting certain student Asks (outlined below) should they be elected.

2. We will mandate the Students’ Association to include the following in its list of Asks:
   a. That councillors impose rent pressure zones in areas of central Edinburgh with a high number of student inhabitants, in order to make rents more affordable.
b. That councillors assist in ensuring that organisations which provide support for survivors of sexual abuse and violence, such as the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre, are better funded.

c. That councillors work with the police department and local pubs, clubs and bars to encourage all staff to receive training on how to combat sexual harassment, and to allocate the necessary financial and human resources to make this happen.

3. Sabbatical Officers and the External Campaigns Committee will take a lead on advancing this campaign.

4. The External Campaigns Committee will produce a survey asking students what other issues they would like the Students’ Association to campaign on during the council elections. Issues arising from this survey could be raised at a future Student Council, in order to be included within the Students’ Association’s list of Asks.

5. We will work with Class Reps and Schools Reps to disseminate this survey and information about the council elections to their students.

6. The Students’ Association will use its online platforms, including its website and social media platforms, to promote the council elections to students and encourage students to register to vote.

7. We will work with the Students’ Association to collaborate with the student associations and student unions of other universities and colleges within Edinburgh in order to collectively advance the goals of this campaign.

What is the background to this?

1. The Students’ Association has campaigned on this matter during previous council elections and so should continue to promote student engagement with local government.

2. Levels of student engagement in elections, and particularly local council elections, is very low, which contributes to student interests being consistently overlooked within local government.

3. Organisations, like the Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre, provide vital support to people who have experienced rape, sexual assault or domestic violence, however, many such organisations face continual funding shortages and are heavily reliant on volunteer fundraising.

4. Sexual harassment both on campus and within clubs and bars around the city is still far too high. A Students’ Association survey conducted 2011 concluded that “nearly 1-in-3 survey respondents reported experiencing sexual harassment”. 36.3% of these incidents took place in bars and clubs around Edinburgh. Such statistics are unacceptable and the council prioritise initiatives aimed at eliminating sexual harassment.

5. Housing prices in Edinburgh are on the continuous rise, now at twice the national average. The Students’ Association has taken on initiatives in the past aimed at reducing the price of university accommodation, however, this does not address the cost of accommodation within the private rental sector.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?
1. The Students’ Association has a responsibility to advocate for the interests of students within local government, and to encourage students to engage with local governance.
2. Having affordable housing is crucial to enabling students to adequately undertake their studies, and to improving the accessibility of higher education to poorer students.
3. As Edinburgh is a city with many students living within it, sexual harassment around the city affects a high proportion of students. Having adequate and well-resourced services locally available to support survivors of rape and sexual assault is crucial in enabling survivors to study at the University of Edinburgh.
4. Sexual harassment within pubs, clubs and bars is severely detrimental to the lives of students both on and off campus. It promotes an environment where it is deemed acceptable for this behaviour to happen which both demeans students and contributes to creating an unsafe environment. Having staff trained in how to tackle sexual harassment will help to reduce the amount that takes place and allow students to feel more comfortable within these places.

This policy was passed by Student Council in November 2016.

Special Circumstances Review

What will we do?

1. Have the University review Special Circumstances policy to:
   a. Take into account unique circumstances which impact upon student carers which adversely affects their performance in an assessment, or resulted in non-attendance or a non-submission for a scheduled assessment.
   b. Take into account unique circumstances which impact upon student parents which adversely affects their performance in an assessment, or resulted in non-attendance or a non-submission for a scheduled assessment.
   c. Reflect changes in Extension forms so as not to focus on the individual, making it clear that familial and caring responsibilities can impact upon academic performance.
   d. Reflect changes in Late Penalty Waiver forms so as not to focus on the individual, making it clear that familial and caring responsibilities can impact upon academic performance.
   e. Reflect changes in Special Circumstances so as not to focus on the individual, making it clear that familial and caring responsibilities can impact upon academic performance.

What is the background to this?

1. The University reviewed its Special Circumstances policy in 2016 without consulting students, and has thus not taken into account the diverse range of students which attend the University of Edinburgh. In the document, the University commits to supporting its students by taking into account illness, accident or other circumstances beyond a students’ control that have adversely affected their performance in
assessment. Examples given which are likely to be accepted are (and these are specifically stated in the forms):

a. significant short-term physical illness or injury;
b. significant short-term mental ill-health
c. A long-term or chronic physical health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently
d. A long-term or chronic mental health condition, which has recently worsened temporarily or permanently
e. Bereavement or serious illness of a person with whom the student has a close relationship
f. A long-term relationship breakdown, such as a marriage-Victim of a crime which is likely to have significant emotional impact
g. Military conflict, natural disaster or extreme weather conditions.

2. These exclude circumstances which affect student parents and carers, such as:

a. Providing care during short or long-term illness when no other party can do so.
b. As an example for a parent, if a child has an illness, such as (but not limited to) a sickness bug they are unable to attend school and/or childcare. This could result in the student parent’s non-attendance, leaving mid-assessment or non-submission for a scheduled assessment due to additional caring responsibilities.
c. If a child or person for whom the student is responsible for care suffers from a mental health condition or requires additional support for personal, medical, physical reasons, and the responsibility is on the student to provide this, then this may impact upon the student’s academic performance.
d. A child or person for whom the student is responsible for caring sustaining injury. This could result in the student’s non-attendance, leaving mid-assessment or non-submission for a scheduled assessment.

3. These are only some examples of unique scenarios which are not reflected in the Special Circumstances policy and which can severely impact upon academic performance.

4. As well as the additional stress and time commitment, students have reported that they often have to stay awake 24/7 in order to prepare for/submit an assessment as they cannot neglect their caring responsibilities or their academic responsibilities, resulting in lack of sleep which again affects performance. These are circumstances which are outwith the students control and are not usual circumstances. There does not, however, appear to be a standardised response throughout Schools within the University. Some students have reported that they have been encouraged to submit special circumstances/extensions, while others have been told that these (or similar) circumstances will not be considered. This, therefore, needs to be laid out and made clear in the policy document to ensure uniformity throughout the University and to ensure that no student is left disadvantaged.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The student population at the University of Edinburgh are diverse and there is a renewed interest in Widening Participation to include more mature students (which
will undoubtedly include parents) and young carers. Research has shown that these students can perform well academically, however their personal situations can impact upon their performance resulting in them dropping-out of University all together or not obtaining the classification of degree which they are capable. These proposals will not be putting this cohort of students at an advantage, but making the playing field more level.

2. I believe that the support given by some Schools should be uniform across all Schools at the University. The only way which this is possible is making it clear through policy and reflecting this on the relevant forms.

This policy was passed by Student Council in November 2016.

Allocate £1500 to Sexcetra (Expenditure Request)

What will we do?

1. Student Council will allocate £1500 to supporting Sexcetra (Title subject to change!)
2. These funds will go towards marketing of the week’s events and payment for speakers. Any unspent funds will be reimbursed

What is the background to this?

1. Sexcetra will be a week of events in late march focused on sexual health and general sexual wellbeing.
2. Sexcetra will be run by Sexpression, the Equal Opportunities Convenor, and The Advice Place, with input from VPSA, Women’s Liberation convenor and LGBT+ Convenor, and with involvement of a range of other societies and groups.
3. Sexcetra will aim to educate students on issues around sexual health and healthy relationships
4. Sexcetra will aim to promote an open environment in which all topics around sex and relationships can be openly discussed

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Sexpression receive overwhelmingly positive interactions at their Big Cheese stall, as well as high attendance at their events: there is clearly an appetite for events on this topic.
2. There is a lack of consistent Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) in the UK and further afield: there is a need for events on this topic.
3. Rapidly changing dating culture and rates of HIV and STI transmission among young people also show need for further education in this area.
4. That everyone has a right to inclusive and extensive SRE
5. Many other university unions hold some form of sexual health week, which generally receive high engagement
This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.

World Autism Awareness Day

What will we do?

1. Light Teviot – and any other Students’ Association building possible – up blue every 2nd April to raise awareness for World Autism Awareness Day
2. Turn off the music in all Students’ Association buildings every 2nd April to raise awareness of accessibility issues faced by hypersensitive autistic students
3. Release a statement outlining why we are taking these actions and encouraging the university and other buildings in Edinburgh to do the same
4. Put up posters in Students’ Association buildings on the 2nd April explaining why the actions have been taken, to raise awareness and provoke discussion

What is the background to this?

1. Approximately 1 in 100 people suffer from autism or an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and the number of diagnoses – particularly among young people – is on the rise. The National Autistic Society estimates then when the families of autistic people are included, around 2,000,000 people are affected by autism every day in the UK. World Autism Awareness Day is held every year on the 2nd April under a UN decree, and for the past 10 years the Light It Up Blue campaign has encouraged buildings to be lit up blue for the day

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Autism has a profound impact on young people attending university. It is a processing disorder, which means that their ability to learn is different to their neurotypical course mates and adjustments have to be made. The difficulties autistic people have in communication and social interaction can make integrating into university life, forming relationships and living independently a real challenge. Research has found that autistic students often avoid their students' unions, partially due to the hypersensitivity many of them suffer in busy, noisy environments. Many can also find large communal spaces such as libraries inaccessible. As an "invisible disability," autistic people are often misunderstood and appropriate adjustments are not made by their peers or academic staff. One in five autistic children has also been excluded from a school and over 50% are in school considered inappropriate by their parents, making them less likely to make it into higher education.

2. Addressing these issues cannot be limited to one day, but a bold action can make a difference. Lighting our buildings up blue will send a message of solidarity with students on the ASD, and can be used to encourage discussion on the issue, which may help students and staff address their own stigmas towards ASDs. Turning off the music in our union buildings may also make it that little bit easier for autistic students to come in and experience the environment they have a right to access. The Students’
Association can take the lead on improving accessibility for autistic people in Edinburgh, and hopefully our university and other institutions will follow our lead.

This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.

Supporting the Right to Choose

What will we do?

1. Affirm Edinburgh University Students' Association's pro-choice position, supporting the right of those seeking an abortion to make decisions about their own bodies
2. Support the belief that all those seeking an abortion in the UK are entitled to free, safe and legal abortion, regardless of geographical location or ability to pay
3. Support campaigns to oppose any restrictions to current rights and access to abortion
4. Support campaigns to make access to, and experience of, abortion fairer for those who decide not to continue a pregnancy
5. Ensure that independently of the Students' Association's stance on this or any issue, all students who are pregnant and wish to access free, impartial and non-directional advice are able to do so through the Advice Place

What is the background to this?

1. Under UK law, abortion can be carried out up to 24 weeks in England, Scotland and Wales subject to legal requirements; abortion is permitted after 24 weeks if the pregnancy poses a risk to life
2. There is currently no legally protected right to abortion on request; two doctors must confirm that continuing a pregnancy involves a greater risk to physical or mental health than having a termination
3. Abortion is tightly restricted in Northern Ireland and can only be obtained if the pregnancy poses a risk to life and in some cases of foetal abnormality
4. Under the Scotland Act 2016, responsibility for abortion law was devolved to the Scottish Parliament
5. At present, those in Scotland seeking abortions after 18 weeks are required to travel to England to have this procedure
6. One in three women in the UK have an abortion in their lifetime (Abortion Rights)
7. Restrictive laws do not stop people from having abortions, they mainly make the procedure clandestine and often unsafe (Guttmacher Institute)
8. The Students' Association previously held policy stating its pro-choice stance, and this motion largely restates the content of that policy

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The Students' Association is an organisation dedicated to representing the interests of University of Edinburgh students
2. As such, it should support the right of all students to choose what happens in their lives and what happens to their bodies, including the choice of whether or not to continue with a pregnancy.

3. Abortion is a student issue because pregnancy is something that happens to students, and because the decision about whether or not to continue a pregnancy can influence how and whether students are able to access education.

4. Threats to the right to choose are not uncommon; tactics against abortion, including street protests outside abortion clinics, are occurring in Edinburgh and throughout the UK.

This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.

Brexit - A Way Forward

What will we do?

1. Edinburgh University Students’ Association and its representatives should work to lobby the Scottish and UK governments in whatever way possible to accomplish the following:
   a. Fee and funding status - The Scottish Government should provide a guarantee that it will fund EU-domiciled entrants who start studying in Scotland between 2018-19 and for the duration of their course.
      i. We welcome the Scottish Government’s guarantee to continue to fund EU-domiciled entrants for the 2017-18 academic year, and call for a decision on the funding status of entrants for 2018-19 to be made by spring 2017 to enable universities to provide accurate advice and guidance to potential students.
      ii. We strongly urge the Scottish Government to provide certainty that EU students starting their course at any point prior to the UK leaving the EU will continue to be funded under current arrangements for the duration of their course, even where this continues beyond the UK’s potential exit from the EU.
      iii. Without this certainty in the short term then there is a great risk that the number of EU students choosing to study in Scotland will decrease and this would have consequences for local economies and jobs, and be detrimental to society and education. EU students generated £414.1m for the economy and 3743 jobs in Scotland.
   b. Immigration Status - The UK Government should make an urgent decision on the post-Brexit immigration status of EU students who want to start studying at Scottish universities after the time that the UK officially leaves the EU.
      i. It is crucial that the UK Government makes a decision as soon as possible on the immigration status of students from the EU who wish to start courses in Scotland after the UK has left the EU. Only then can institutions and students start planning appropriately for any effects of the UK’s withdrawal from the EU.
ii. EU students make up 9.3% of the undergraduate and postgraduate population in Scotland’s universities, and they makeup a higher proportion of postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students in Scotland than they do at undergraduate level. As such, a decrease in their numbers due to changes in immigration status potentially poses a challenge to the viability of certain courses.

iii. Changes in immigration status would also have a detrimental effect on Scotland’s economy, which could lose out on highly skilled EU graduates who currently are able to remain in Scotland and work after their studies.

c. Exchange and Mobility - The UK Government should seek continued access to Erasmus funding or establish an alternative scheme.
   i. Around 1,600 Scottish students used ERASMUS in 2014-15 to study abroad, and the number of students from Scottish institutions taking part in Erasmus increased by 50% between 2007-08 to 2014-15.
   ii. Student mobility provides a range of benefits to individual students and institutions. Living and studying in another country broadens students’ outlook and provides them with valuable cultural and social experiences, which make them more employable. Graduates with global outlooks are beneficial to society and to employers.
   iii. The Erasmus scheme is open to non-EU members but it is linked to freedom of movement and as such, this must form part of the Brexit settlement. Without funding for study exchanges this experience will become unaffordable to most students and this will be a loss to education, society and the economy.

d. Post Study Work Visa - The UK Government should introduce a scheme, which provides international students with the opportunity to remain in the UK and work after completing their studies.
   i. There is a concern that the number of students from the EU coming to study in Scotland will decline significantly after Brexit if they face international student fees, no loan facility to pay these and tougher visa restrictions.
   ii. Under current arrangements, EU graduates can stay and work in Scotland and help meet demand for high skills and contribute to the economy. Stricter visa rules introduced over the last few years have already made the UK less appealing to talented international students.
   iii. There is a consensus in Scottish education and politics that a post-study work visa should be reintroduced in Scotland. If there is any restriction on the mobility of EU students post-Brexit then the need for Scotland to have a visa scheme that makes it an attractive destination for talented students will be even more important.
   iv. As well as being of benefit to education, it would also help to address Scotland’s aging population, help to meet demand for high skills and contribute to the economy.

What is the background to this?
1. Edinburgh University Students’ Association campaigned to remain within the European Union.
2. Given the recent rhetoric surrounding Brexit and the uncertainty regarding the situation that we face as a University and student body, it is necessary to establish our aims and outlook on the situation. These aims will provide the organisation with a core set of goals that it can focus on and work to achieve.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. We believe that students should feel welcome and be empowered to study and grow on this international campus.
2. We believe that students studying at the University of Edinburgh should be able study at partner institutions through the ERASMUS exchange programme.
3. We believe that EU students should not face political barriers to participating in the educational environment offered here.
4. We believe that freedom of movement should be defended.
5. We believe that upon leaving university, students should be allowed to remain and work in Scotland without facing significant legal or financial barriers.

This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.

Edinburgh University Students’ Association Supports Gaelic

What will we do?

1. Develop a bilingual English/Gaelic Edinburgh University Students’ Association logo (giving equal prominence to both languages) to replace at the nearest opportunity the current monolingual logo in key positions (principal signage, website header, printed matter cover pages, screens, headed paper, merchandise etc.), and optionally wherever else space allows. If feasible, also develop a monolingual Gaelic logo for use in potential future Gaelic-only communication.
2. Develop and make publicly available a plan and timescale for the replacement of key signage in Students’ Association venues with bilingual signage in consultation with the University’s Gaelic Officer.
3. During the annual week-long Edinburgh Gaelic Festival (which is led and developed by the University), include Gaelic-language music on the playlist for Students’ Association venues.
4. Identify specific contexts that can be used as vehicles to use, promote, celebrate and normalise Gaelic (e.g. printed matter and events relating to the Highlands, whisky, Highland/cèilidh dancing etc.) and take appropriate action to ensure these are being exploited to this end.
5. Continually work on identifying opportunities for incorporating Gaelic into general communication.
6. Continue to offer opportunities for use and acquisition of Gaelic.
7. Declare and acknowledge in appropriate channels that Edinburgh University Students’ Association supports the aim of securing Gaelic as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect with English, as per the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

What is the background to this?

1. The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 established Bòrd na Gàidhlig, a body responsible for developing strategy for the development and promotion of Gaelic language and culture. The Bòrd prepares a National Gaelic Language Plan, and also has the power to ask public bodies to prepare Gaelic Language Plans outlining the actions they will take to work towards the aims of the Act. The University of Edinburgh has published and is following such a Plan, which includes commitments to create and develop opportunities for use and acquisition of Gaelic, as well to incorporate Gaelic into corporate identity and communication. We have already seen some of these put into practice, for example:
   a. the University flying bilingual Welcome/Fàilte banners;
   b. bilingual principal signage in the new School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures building;
   c. the issuing of bilingual tote bags to LLC freshers;
   d. a photography competition run by the International Office in which both the theme (“Faodail | Dùn Èideann: A lucky find | Edinburgh”) and category titles were formulated primarily in Gaelic;
   e. development of a Gaelic University logo for use in Gaelic-related contexts and a commitment to explore incorporating Gaelic into the main logo at the next opportunity;
   f. publishing of a Bilingual Signage Policy stating that principal signage in Pollock Halls and the Main Library, as well as signage designating the names of buildings throughout the University will be replaced with bilingual versions as needed.

2. Edinburgh University Students’ Association offers opportunities for use and acquisition of Gaelic, but is currently lagging behind the University in terms of incorporating Gaelic into its identity and communication.

3. In a 2012 survey run by the University and answered by 1,853 individuals representing all schools and staff groups, 67.4% in total, or 70.2% of student respondents, rated supporting and promoting Gaelic as ‘very important’ or ‘quite important’.

4. In the same survey, 60.2% of respondents (1,116) were either taking a Gaelic course (2.3%) or indicated they are/might be interested in learning Gaelic (57.9%). Of this group of 1,116 respondents, 323 (28.9%) had a national identity from outside the UK or its constituent nations. Interest in learning Gaelic was strongest among those from Poland (83.3%), Greece (80.0%), the USA (79.5%) and China (76.9%) (all groups had at least 10 respondents). This corroborates the experience of An Comann Ceilteach/The Highland Society, which is often approached at activity fairs by international students wishing to learn more about Gaelic language and culture –they are assets that the Students’ Association should exploit.
5. 933 respondents (50.4%) favoured ‘increased visibility of Gaelic in public spaces (e.g. corporate/visual identity, signs, stationery)’ as an additional initiative for increasing the status of Gaelic.

6. The websites and logotypes of Aberystwyth University Students’ Union (www.abersu.co.uk) and the UCD Students’ Union (www.ucdsu.ie) may serve as examples of successful integration of a second language into contemporary and attractive branding.

7. The decline of Gaelic in Scotland is largely due to active persecution of Gaelic speakers by governing powers, be it in form of punishing and eradicating the use of the language in schools or the forced displacement of whole communities during the Highland Clearances. Edinburgh University Students’ Association has done great work in fighting the cultural oppression of women and BME and LGBT+ people, and we believe the cause of revitalising Gaelic fits well into this general policy. Declarations of support by influential institutions are especially important now that economic hardship threatens a rise in anti-Gaelic sentiment.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The plan of action is designed to increase the visibility of Gaelic language and culture on campus and within the student community at little cost to Edinburgh University Students’ Association. It is also designed to normalise the use of Gaelic, presenting it not as a relic from the ancient past but as a living language relevant to today’s multicultural Scotland, and the world.

2. International students often express great interest in Scottish culture, including the Gaelic language, and the Students’ Association would benefit from marketing itself as a place where they can learn a bit about this, and where they can come into contact with real Gaelic as opposed to the likes of ‘slangevar’ and ‘usquabae’.

3. Explicitly stating that Edinburgh University Students’ Association considers Gaelic a part of its identity will send a powerful message of support to Gaelic speakers, learners and communities, affirming that the Students’ Association believes in a Scotland that cherishes both its Lowland and Highland culture and heritage equally, and that it will work to make sure Gaelic is welcome in the student community. This will become increasingly important as people going through Gaelic medium education reach university age.

4. It should be stressed that none of these actions are meant to diminish the importance of other languages and cultures in contemporary Scotland: however, Gaelic is the oldest continually spoken language in Scotland that finds itself endangered after centuries of oppression. Polish may be spoken by more people in Edinburgh than Gaelic, but independently on that, Polish is also an official EU language with roughly 40 million speakers and full institutional support. Neither do we propose to promote Gaelic at the exclusion of Scots—in fact, we hope that the development of Gaelic sets the precedent for Scots to finally gain the legislative footing it deserves.

This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.
Edinburgh University Students' Association Commemorates Holocaust Memorial Day

What will we do?

1. Edinburgh University Students’ Associations (EUSA) will recognise Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) on its official calendar.
2. EUSA will support the activities that take place on Holocaust Memorial Day, by coordinating with the Jewish Society and other relevant societies in terms of speakers, stalls and other activities.
3. EUSA will publicise the events surrounding Holocaust Memorial Day.
4. EUSA will light Teviot – and any other Students’ Association building possible – up purple every 27th January to raise awareness for Holocaust Memorial Day

What is the background to this?

1. The Holocaust, the genocide perpetrated by Nazi Germany, killed 6 million Jews and 5 million other people including disabled and LGBTQ individuals, people of Roma descent and political opponents.
2. 27 January marks the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp.
3. Holocaust Memorial Day was created on 27 January 2000, when representatives from 46 governments around the world met in Stockholm to discuss Holocaust education, remembrance and research. At the end of this meeting, all attendees signed a declaration committing to preserving the memory of those who have been murdered in the Holocaust.
4. Holocaust Memorial Day has taken place in the UK since 2001, with a UK event and over 7,700 local activities taking place on or around 27 January each year.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Holocaust Memorial Day is an international day of commemoration of those who perished in the Holocaust.
2. With only a few years left when survivors will be able to tell their experiences first-hand, it is vital that as many students as possible are able to hear their testimonies.

This policy was passed by Student Council in March 2017.

Defend EU and International students! (Expenditure request)

What will we do?

1. Allocate £500 in funding for the 'Another Europe is Possible -Edinburgh' group of students to run a campaign around students' rights

What is the background to this?
1. Theresa May has claimed she will trigger Article 50 as soon as the 29th March.
2. EUSA supported a 'Remain' vote in the EU referendum.
3. Brexit threatens students, both from the EU and further afield, who are unsure if their current status will be maintained in the medium-to-long-term.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. EUSA should support efforts to stand up for the rights of all students and fight to give them guarantees in a time of great uncertainty.

This policy was passed by Student Council in March 2017.

Edinburgh University Students’ Association condemns anti-Semitism

What will we do?

1. Edinburgh University Students’ Association will reaffirm its commitment to fighting antisemitism and will condemn it in all its forms.
2. The Students’ Association will adopt the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) Working Definition on antisemitism (see below) as a document integral to identifying and fighting antisemitism.

What is the background to this?

1. 2016 has seen a rise in antisemitic incidents throughout the United Kingdom with CST noting a 11% rise in antisemitic attacks between January-June 2016.
2. In March 2016, antisemitic flyers were posted throughout the university, most notably in Kings Buildings, denying the Holocaust and calling it “The Greatest Swindle of All Time”.
3. In September 2016, more flyers were found in Edinburgh which incited antisemitic stereotypes and hatred.
4. In the past year, students, including elected Students’ Association representatives and NUS Delegates, have taken part in antisemitic behaviour.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. At a time of rising antisemitism, Jewish students need the support and backing of their Student Association.
2. Jewish students have the right to define their own oppression.
3. Jewish students do not currently feel that the University of Edinburgh or the Student Association provides a safe space for them.
4. Several Jewish students have terminated their studies at the University of Edinburgh due to an unwelcoming environment.
5. The EUMC working definition of antisemitism is universally accepted as a guideline on what antisemitism is by the Jewish community and the international political community

This policy was passed by Student Council in October 2016.

Nap pods and rest facilities

What will we do?

1. We are looking for endorsement from the Students Association, then to take the proposal forward to a round table discussion with the university's Commercial Services Department.

What is the background?

[Please see our 30 page Buchanan Institute proposal for detailed information: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dzKmdu_4fJa8L4a7ErrJcpFMmEoYawwV93mRroaMf tQ/edit]

1. Low Student Satisfaction - Student satisfaction for the university is low (120th in the UK according to the 2017 Complete University Guide) and one major factor contributing to this can be student welfare and comfort. In order to improve the same, we wanted to explore how our institution could focus on improving wellbeing on campuses. In order to achieve this goal, we decided to investigate factors affecting well being, with a focus on tiredness and sleep deprivation among our students and the availability of rest spaces on our campuses.

2. Result of survey of 1,500 students - Around 93% of the students who responded to the survey have felt the need to nap on campus and support nap spaces. Due to lack of proper facilities, around 76% students have left campus to go home for a nap. Feedback from the survey has been overwhelmingly supportive of nap pods and rest facilities.

3. EUSA policies - To address the increasing problem of wellbeing and mental health, the Students’ Association has come up with some policies. For example, the subsidised eight-week mindfulness course and £140,000 investment in the Student Counselling Service. This solution is a positive extension of the services already offered by the university. We follow the Berkeley model, which this year set up 5 “REST Zones” with nap pods. The Berkeley student council justified the purpose of the nap pods as a means of creating a healthy culture where you have permission to take a break. We believe this is a major scope of the nap pods’ potential at our university. In the long run the implementation of such services will be beneficial to students as well as the university’s standing.

4. Wellbeing facilities provided by different schools do not resonate with the required demand and quality. There is a lack of proper rest facilities and the ones provided are primarily used for social reasons and not for rest.
5. Implementation of Nap Pods and rest facilities by different universities, including the Russell Group, have already recognised the lack of wellbeing facilities and to counter the same, have implemented the idea of Nap Pods and rest facilities on their campuses. Academic Research—There is a wealth of academic research on sleep deprivation and its impact on wellbeing and productivity. Harvard Medical School’s Dr Charles Czeisler has argued that sleep is the “third pillar” of health directly linked with wellbeing and productivity. Dr Czeisler has highlighted the consequences of sleep deprivation on one’s health, productivity, alertness and awareness. While it is a priority to emphasise and encourage healthy sleep patterns, researchers acknowledge that also due to a variety of reasons people may not get a good night’s sleep and suggest forms of recovering during the day to reboost. In 'Sleep Deficit: the Performance Killer', Dr Czeisler argues: ‘Though there is no known substitute for sleep, there are a few strategies you can use to help sustain performance temporarily until you can get a good night’s sleep. ... Naps can be very effective at restoring performance, and if they are brief—less than a half hour—they will induce less grogginess upon awakening.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The nap pods proposal is a solution for tiredness and sleep deprivation on campuses; and in any case it is a positive extension of the services already offered by the university and the students' association.
2. We follow the Berkeley model, which this year set up 5 “REST Zones” with nap pods. The Berkeley student council justified the purpose of the nap pods as a means of creating a healthy culture where you have permission to take a break. We believe this is a major scope of the nap pods’ proposal potential at our university. In the long run the implementation of such services will be beneficial to students as well as the university’s standing.

This policy was passed by Student Council in December 2016.

Make Special Circumstances More Accessible

What will we do?

1. Lobby the university to review their special circumstances processes to be more accessible and less punitive for students that are already struggling.
2. Lobby to adjust the current system so that students with pre-existing conditions known to the University do not have the burden of proving worsening condition.
3. Lobby the university to provide students with the results of their application before deadlines and exams to prevent heightening of any stress and agitation.

What is the background to this?
1. Students applying for special circumstances are already going through extremely difficult times. At present, the university’s policy towards special circumstances appears to be more of an obstacle than an aid to students getting the help and understanding needed.
2. Many students are deterred from asking for the help needed in fear of dealing with the current system.
3. There is a need for the University to take a comprehensive and holistic view on the care of students.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. Special circumstances are an essential part of the infrastructure that exists to support students experiencing exceptional difficulties.
2. The current system places unreasonable demands on students with pre-existing and deteriorating mental and physical health issues.
3. Extended periods of uncertainty regarding special circumstances applications cause unnecessary distress among students applying for it.
4. The university should work to support students to the greatest extent possible.

This policy was passed by Student Council in February 2017.

An End to Period Poverty on Campus

What will we do?

1. To lobby Edinburgh University for:
   a. Free access to menstrual hygiene products.
      i. These products include but are not limited to: tampons, sanitary pads, menstrual cups.
      ii. That these products shall be made available in male, female, and gender neutral bathrooms.

2. To lobby The City of Edinburgh Council for:
   a. A provision requiring public spaces to provide menstrual hygiene products within the same parameters and utilising the same definition as in Paragraph 1. a(i) and a(ii).

What is the background to this?

1. According to the TrussellTrust, approximately 1.2 million people across the UK go without necessary sanitary and toiletry products. Of the 133,000 people who made use of Scotland's food banks in 2015, "thousands" required access to hygiene products.
2. The average menstruating person uses 12,000 sanitary product in their lifetime, amounting to £230, including ONLY tampons, and not other necessary products.
3. Under the United Kingdom Workplace (Health, Safety, and Welfare) Regulations Act of 1992, requirement 21, entitled "Washing Facilities," paragraph 2, sections (D) and (E), workplaces are required to provide "soap and other suitable means of cleaning," and
“towels and other suitable means of drying.” This does not include menstrual hygiene products.

4. Under section 1 of the Public Health (Scotland) Act of 2008, it is mandated that it is the duty of Scottish Ministers to secure provision for protecting public health, which includes "contaminations; or other such hazards" determined to "constitute a danger to human health." However this act makes no provisions, nor any mentions in any way, to the public health problems created by the intersection of poverty and menstruation.

5. Edinburgh University Students’ Association, through The Advice Place, currently provides free sanitary products to those who seek it out.

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The ability of people to live in a healthy and hygienic manner shall not be limited by ability of those people to afford materials conducive to those ends.
2. That while the ability to receive free sanitary products from the Advice Place is and has been very beneficial, by not placing those products in bathrooms, a stigmatising divide is created rather than normalising the necessity of sanitary products for all people.

This policy was passed by Student Council in March 2017.

Call for increased Edinburgh University Students’ Association and university support of the International Student Centre

What will we do?

1. Edinburgh University Students’ Association should ensure that the University of Edinburgh recognizes and supports the International Student Centre (hereafter referred to as the ISC), as one of the few existing spaces most directly serving international students at this university. This involves ensuring university support for the international student community by preserving the services provided by the International Student Centre.

What is the background to this?

1. The ISC has built up a community for international students at this university spanning 20+ years, and continues to support students through the organisation of trips, events, and the facilitation of a community of international students at this University - both past and current.
2. The ISC is been asked to vacate its current location, 22b Buccleuch Place, without being offered a viable alternative space. Effectively, this will result in shutting down most of the services currently provided to support and build the growing international community at the university.
3. The services that the ISC offers to the University have been consistently recognised by students as a key element to make their transition to and their time in Edinburgh better,
as indicated by the consistently high satisfaction rates on the International Student Barometer (96% for the year 2015/16). It is therefore important for the University to recognise the role of the ISC as a major contributant to the university experience of many students.

4. This is particularly relevant in relation to the university's official commitment to increasing the international student numbers (for more details, see the Global Engagement Plan, the University Strategic Planning and Vision 2025). For this to be successful, it needs to be accompanied by the improvement of current services such as the ISC, rather than cuts.

5. The ISC Lounge represents the core of ISC activities and of its community of international students.

6. While other services do exist at the university with the intention of improving the experiences of international students, the goal and subsequent success over the past 20+ years—evidenced by our extensive alumni community—of facilitating a community of international students holds unique to the ISC.

7. For more information on the ISC, please go to https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5VhJUx5DW4gQUxMjMwYmhQcUk/view?usp=sharing

What beliefs motivate the actions you propose?

1. The university claims ‘#weareinternational’ and continues to call on more international students to matriculate while failing to put financial support and recognition towards services by and for them—such as the ISC—and continuing to raise international student fees (from £12,650/£16,650 in 2012/2013 to £17,700/£23,200 in 2017/2018 for new entry overseas students—for more information see http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/fees/undergraduate_2017-2018.cfm?sorter=Programme_Name, http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/fees/undergraduate_2012-2013.cfm and http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-funding/tuition-fees/previous).

2. This is an organization that has proven valuable through its existence as well as through its potential to grow as a space for international students. The loss of the ISC would be a significant loss to the support system provided by the university for students.

3. The significant yearly increase in tuition fees for international students across various degree programs should be represented in an increase in services meant to support students at the University of Edinburgh.

This policy was passed by Student Council in March 2017.