



Preventing the power of private student halls (NUS Scotland)

NUS Scotland Conference resolves:

1. NUS to lobby the Scottish Government and universities to introduce regulation of purpose built student accommodation (PBSA is Private halls, e.g. unite):

- To require new developments of PBSA to include provision for affordable student housing amounting to 25% of the total.
- To ensure PBSA providers reinvest a proportion of profit into student wellbeing and mental health
- Ensure PBSA prioritises student and community needs over greater profits

NUS Scotland Conference notes:

PBSA has rapidly grown in recent years, taking over the market. They have private investors, so their greater capital means that can afford to buy property more than universities. They can also challenge planning permission more easily

1. Current costs in Edinburgh for PBSA range from £105 p/w for a bunk bed room to £245 p/w for a studio with bathroom and kitchen (including bills).² This is £5,355 to £12,495 per year based on a 51 week contract. PBSA offerings are heavily skewed to the expensive end. The maximum student support in Scotland this year is £7625. PBSA is very unaffordable for students, particularly those from a disadvantaged background.
2. PBSA is exempt from the new Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016
3. In some local authorities, e.g. Edinburgh, new housing developments must include 25% affordable beds, but PBSA is exempt from this legislation.

NUS Scotland Conference believes:

1. It is a right, not a luxury, for students to have access to affordable housing.
2. As Universities start relying more on PBSA, private developers will be able to increase their price.
3. En-suite and studio rooms, heavily favoured by PBSA, aren't good for affordability or shared communal space. As PBSA is privately owned by investors, their only goal is to make money, and not to think about student wellbeing
4. With long contracts, PBSA will dominate further in future. We must act now.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures.