



Student Council

Thursday 25th January 2018, 6-8 pm, Pleasance Theatre

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Summary of Outcomes

Below is a summary of motions discussed at Student Council.

Note on NUS motions: Some motions for this meeting were for submission to the National Union of Students (NUS) Conferences. Each year the Students' Association can submit motions to the NUS Conferences to be debated and if passed set the work of the NUS for the coming year. These motions must first be passed at Student Council. As we can only submit 3 motions to NUS Scotland and 6 were submitted to this meeting, there was also a priority ballot to determine which three would be submitted. Three of the NUS Scotland motions passed with over 67% in favour and these same three motions also ranked top three in the priority ballot (as indicated in the table below). Therefore, Papers C, D and L will be submitted to NUS Scotland Conference. The other NUS Scotland motions will not be taken forward to online ballot or to Conference.

Paper	Outcome
Accountability Reports (Paper A)	Passed.
Funding a ticket to "Improving BAME Outcomes in Further and Higher Education" Conference (expenditure request) (Paper B)	Passed.
Improved Financial Support for Student Nurses (NUS Scotland) (Paper C)	Passed (Ranked #2 in NUS Scotland priority ballot). This motion will be discussed at the NUS Scotland Conference.
Preventing the power of private student halls (NUS Scotland) (Paper D)	Passed (Ranked #1 in NUS Scotland priority ballot). This motion will be discussed at the NUS Scotland Conference.
Fight for Affordable Rent (NUS UK) (Paper E)	Online Ballot.
Fight for Affordable Rent (NUS Scotland) (Paper F)	This motion did not receive 67% of votes in favour but since it was not ranked top three in the NUS Scotland priority ballot it will not be discussed at the NUS Scotland Conference and will not go to Online Ballot.



McDonalds Strikes (NUS UK) (Paper G)	Online Ballot.
Supporting Picturehouse and McDonalds Strikes (NUS Scotland) (Paper H)	This motion did not receive 67% of votes in favour but since it was not ranked top three in the NUS Scotland priority ballot it will not be discussed at the NUS Scotland Conference and will not go to Online Ballot
Solidarity with Iranian students and workers (NUS UK) (Paper I)	Passed.
Solidarity with Iranian students and workers (NUS Scotland) (Paper J)	This motion did receive 67% of votes in favour but since it was not ranked top three in the NUS Scotland priority ballot it will not be discussed at the NUS Scotland Conference and will not go to Online Ballot
Keep fighting climate change! (NUS UK) (Paper K)	Passed.
Keep fighting climate change! (NUS Scotland) (Paper L)	Passed (Ranked #3 in the NUS Scotland priority ballot). This motion will be discussed at the NUS Scotland Conference.
Sustainable Growth in Student Numbers (Paper M)	Passed.
Build more affordable student housing! (Paper N)	Passed.
Mandates for NUS Delegates (Paper O)	Failed.

2. Welcome and overview

Welcome and overview of the agenda by Emma van Rooijen, Student Council Facilitator at Edinburgh University Students' Association.

3. Accountability

Reports from the Sabbatical Officers were given and questioned from the floor.

a) Report from Patrick Kilduff, Students' Association President

- **Question (from Conrad James Puchowski):** there's a lot of controversy about the incoming principal. Will the Gordan Aikman lecture theatre also be named this during the fringe?
- **Answer:** Yes, these are great concerns to bring up and ask. Yes, it will be permanently named for the next 25 years.

Report passes 94.8% in favour.

For: 46 votes, Against: 2.5 votes, Abstain: 4 votes.



b) Report from Esther Dominy, Students' Association Vice President Welfare

- **No questions.**

Report passes 79.4% in favour.

For: 40.5 votes, Against: 10.5 vote, Abstain: 1.5 votes.

c) Report from Oliver Glick, Students' Association Vice President Community

- **Question:** how are the organisations at the housing fair chosen?
- **Answer:** there were existing contracts but these are continuously being revised.

Report passes 98% in favour.

For: 48.5 votes, Against: 1 vote, Abstain: 3 votes.

d) Report from Bobi Archer, Students' Association Vice President Education

- **Question (Tom Wrench):** one the biggest challenges for joint honours students is not knowing who else studies their course – is there any way you can consider that?
- **Answer:** we are working on the 'learner' platform to help create more of an online community, with consultations with the University to understand the issues faced by these students.

Report passes 100% in favour.

For: 51 votes, Against: 0 votes, Abstain: 1.5 votes.

e) Report from Kai O'Doherty, Students' Association Vice President Activities & Services

- **Question (Paul Sinclair):** what is involved in improving Teviot?
- **Answer:** there is a certain budget for improving our bars, and there will be several updates to the Library Bar and Sports Bar.

Report passes 94.8% in favour.

For: 46 votes, Against: 2.5 votes, Abstain: 4 votes.

4. Motions – [see here.](#)

i. Funding a ticket to "Improving BAME Outcomes in Further and Higher Education" Conference (expenditure request)

- **Question:** who is organising the conference?
- **Answer:** it is organised by Holyrood.



- **Statement for (Bobi Archer):** the University senate is also in support of this as well.

Expenditure request passes 96.8% in favour.

For: 45 votes, Against: 1.5 votes, Abstain: 0 votes.

ii. Improved Financial Support for Student Nurses (NUS Scotland)

- **No questions or statements.**

NUS Scotland Motion passes 97.9% in favour.

For: 46 votes, Against: 1 vote, Abstain: 4.5 votes.

NUS Scotland priority ballot: ranked #2

*this motion will be put forward to be debated at the NUS Scotland Conference.

iii. Preventing the power of private student halls (NUS Scotland)

- **Question 1 (Alan Luke):** could you define affordable student accommodation for me?
- **Answer 1:** the most should be expected to pay is a maximum of £105 per week.
- **Question 2 (Connor Bok):** the question we need to ask is why students must take these options – is there any plan to increase the University's student accommodation?
- **Answer 2:** the University would like to build more housing, and we are working with the Estates department to develop a strategy to match the expansion of private halls.
- **Question 3:** who determines who gets the rooms that are cheaper in purpose-built student accommodation?
- **Answer 3:** if possible, model it the same way that the University does.
- **Statement for:** students in England only get £6000 a year for rent, and so it is not possible to afford £1000 a month.

NUS Scotland Motion passes 93.2% in favour.

For: 48 votes, Against: 3.5 votes, Abstain: 0 votes.

NUS Scotland priority ballot: ranked #1

*this motion will be put forward to be debated at the NUS Scotland Conference.

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iv. Fight for Affordable Rent (NUS UK & Scotland)

- **Question 1:** is this cap just for student rents – wouldn't this discourage renting out to students?
- **Answer 1:** it is to make it more affordable for students to rent from the University so that they can focus on their studies without taking on part-time work.
- **Question 2:** what's the next step after voting for this?
- **Answer 2:** it is for NUS to have support for this to give it authority, and then up to all of us to organise.



- **Question 3:** if you make a cap, it might not allow student accommodation to be in the market?
- **Answer 3:** yes but this will stop organisations from lining their own pockets.
- **Question 4:** how realistic is this – as far as I'm aware the rent is still rising at UCL?
- **Answer 4:** there is a rent cap, a lot is possible from conducting student action.
- **Question 5:** what is your plan for student action?
- **Answer 5:** I'm hoping that we can get campaigns running here as the first step.
- **Question 6:** would the cap include electricity and heating?
- **Answer 6:** no.
- **Statements against:** having affordable rent is important, but I'm not sure that having a cap is the best way to achieve this; the issue is about the University not being able to provide enough accommodation.
- **Statement for:** tenants are still being exploited and this is the priority, so I urge you to vote for this to be taken to NUS.

NUS UK Motion goes to Online Ballot with 54.8% in favour.

For: 25.5 votes, Against: 21 votes, Abstain: 6 votes.

NUS Scotland Motion receives 58% in favour.

For: 25.5 votes, Against: 18.5 votes, Abstain: 6 votes.

*this motion will not go to NUS Scotland as only 3 can be put forward and 6 were received. This was decided using a priority ballot. Therefore this motion does not need to go to online ballot.

v. Supporting Picturehouse and McDonalds Strikes (NUS UK & Scotland)

- **Question:** it says £10 per hour minimum wage for students – can you elaborate on this? Will this stop them from hiring students?
- **Answer:** other campaigns have been for £10 but there is evidence that this can be achieved, so we should aim for this.
- **Statement against:** it is important in principle but zero-hour contracts are sometimes what students need and would like, so I would like to challenge the phrasing; the issue is trying at having better zero-hour contracts than just banning them.
- **Statements for:** they are flexible but there is a guaranteed hours contract which would be better and is used in other areas across the University; getting rid of zero-hour contracts would help students that don't work in organisations like student unions – we should push for flexible contracts.

NUS UK Motion goes to Online Ballot with 57.8% in favour.

For: 29.5 votes, Against: 21.5 votes, Abstain: 1.5 votes.

NUS Scotland Motion receives 58.8% in favour.

For: 28.5 votes, Against: 20 votes, Abstain: 1.5 votes.

*this motion will not go to NUS Scotland as only 3 can be put forward and 6 were received. This was decided using a priority ballot. Therefore this motion does not need to go to online ballot.



vi. Solidarity with Iranian students and workers (NUS UK & Scotland)

- **Question 1:** how will students reach out to Iran if all the major social networks are blocked?
- **Answer 1:** we would be reaching out to existing representatives.
- **Question 2:** one of the points is to not appear on press TV – surely it is more important to present views than self-censor.
- **Answer 2:** we should not encourage anyone to collaborate with people who do not support the protestors.
- **Statement for:** I think it is important that we speak out and express our solidarity.

NUS UK Motion passes 87.8% in favour.

For: 39.5 votes, Against: 5.5 votes, Abstain: 7.5 votes.

NUS Scotland passes 80.7% in favour.

For: 35.5 votes, Against: 8.5 votes, Abstain: 7.5 votes.

*this motion will not go to NUS Scotland as only 3 can be put forward and 6 were received. This was decided using a priority ballot. Therefore this motion does not need to go to online ballot.

vii. Keep fighting climate change! (NUS UK & Scotland)

- **Question 1:** can you explain that nationalising energy companies is better than regulation?
- **Answer:** in France, they were able to create renewable changes and cheaper solar energy.
- **Question 2:** are you just re-affirming this motion?
- **Answer 2:** yes, we do want to re-affirm this commitment and bring it to the forefront.

NUS UK Motion passes 86.7% in favour.

For: 39 votes, Against: 6 votes, Abstain: 7.5 votes.

NUS Scotland passes 85.9% in favour.

For: 36.5 votes, Against: 6 votes, Abstain: 7.5 votes.

NUS Scotland priority ballot: ranked #3

*this motion will be put forward to be debated at the NUS Scotland Conference.

viii. Sustainable growth in student numbers

- **Question 1 (Tomasso Zerbi):** do you know if Brexit is decreasing student numbers?
- **Answer 1:** Brexit is still a minefield so there is no idea about how this will affect student numbers.
- **Question 2:** it says that the international student population has risen from X to X?
- **Answer 2:** we couldn't find an exact number but will try to do so.
- **Question 3:** how much influence does the Students' Association have on this?



- **Answer 3:** We haven't had any meetings with the new principal yet but there will be an opportunity to build a relationship with him and discuss this.
- **Question 4:** Are you suggesting there is a cut on any particular group of students?
- **Answer 4:** No we are trying to keep services proportionate to student intake.
- **Question:** does the policy also include increasing staff numbers?
- **Answer:** staff have been increased in proportion but even if we have staff we don't have estate space.
- **Question:** could issues of quotas in certain schools also be included?
- **Answer:** I'm not aware of the quotas but I will follow this up and consider amending.
- **Question:** does this include 2+2 students who are only here for two years?
- **Answer:** yes this includes all fully matriculated students.
- **Statements for:** I think this is one of the biggest things I've seen while being at University; this also has an impact on the wider community.

Motion passes 100% in favour.

For: 52.5 votes, Against: 0 votes, Abstain: 0 votes.

ix. Build more affordable student housing!

- **Question (Luke):** typically University accommodation is for first year – would this be available to non-first years?
- **Answer:** the focus is on first-year housing.

Motion passes 98% in favour.

For: 50 votes, Against: 1 vote, Abstain: 1.5 votes.

x. Mandates for NUS Delegates

- **Question 1 (Paul Sinclair):** you said this policy has been successful in the past – can you give examples?
- **Answer:** having someone to go to if there is an issue is important.
- **Question 2 (James Conrand Puchowski):** to play devil's advocate – why is it a bad thing if some delegates vote differently? The student body is all different and have different views.
- **Answer 2:** this policy is less restrictive than the previous one.
- **Statements against:** I don't disagree with the role of the delegation leader or mandates, but this is not like the existing policy because it requires submitting a motion of censure to Student Council; the conference has a private ballot and this involves telling the delegation leader that they have voted differently, which goes against democratic process; it is unnecessary.
- **Statements for:** I did copy this verbatim from the website, but removed some clauses that do not currently apply; you are elected to represent students, this is to make it clear how you voted and explain it.

Motion falls 26.2% in favour.

For: 11 votes, Against: 31 votes, Abstain: 9 votes.



Meeting close.

Turnout:

Total number of ballots from students: 6

Total number of ballots from elected representatives: 31

Total number of ballots: 37