

# Student Council

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, 6-8pm, [Collaborate, MyEd](#)

## AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Sabbatical Officer Accountability  
[Paper A](#)
3. Accessibility Break
4. Motions:  
[Paper B](#): Create a Section Representative post for Students who commute to University, submitted by Jeremy Pestle  
[Paper C](#): Mitigating financial barriers that prevent Section Reps from fulfilling their role, submitted by Vivek Santayana  
[Paper D](#): We are European, submitted by Association Executive  
[Paper E](#): Fighting the Structural Racism of the Prevent Strategy and the Hostile Environment, submitted by Vivek Santayana
5. Affiliations  
[Paper F](#)
6. Any Other Business (AOB)  
Shout outs

## Paper A: Accountability Reports

### Report from Andrew Wilson, President

As your Students' Association President, I represent the interests of students to the University and beyond, as well as leading your Students' Association to be a relevant and representative union for its members. Here's what I've been up to recently:

#### Getting In and Getting On

Throughout my year in office, I have been championing the idea that each and every student, regardless of background, should be able to access the University of Edinburgh and get in to education, but also get on whilst they're here, making the most of their University experience with the best support available to them.

- Along with Sabbatical Officers from across the country, I spoke at the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Students meeting on 'Perspectives of Student Finance' in the House of Parliament to raise issues that students in Edinburgh face with student finance systems. I will be attending the President's Roundtable in the Scottish Parliament at the end of April.
- It is inevitable that Widening Participation students will be hit hardest due the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Many students will also be losing out on wages that they depended on to pay rent, bills and buy food. I have been working with the University and the Students' Association's Advice Place to ensure we advertise the funds available to students during this difficult and uncertain period.

#### A Relevant Students' Association

Our Students' Association must be relevant to student life and representative of all our members which is why I have:

- I presented at the Students' Association's Planning Round meeting with the University to discuss development opportunities for the Students' Association for the year ahead
- Working on developing a Local Business Directory so students can support local businesses in Edinburgh and find where to get the best student discounts
- I have attended the Students' Association's Governance Working Group to push for work to be done to ensure that our policy making structures and processes are as representative as possible, and that all students are fully aware of how to hold all their representatives to account

#### Students as Changemakers

As students, we have the power to shape local and national decisions and the future of our University, here's what I've been doing to facilitate that:

- I have been working on the Students' Association's response to the City of Edinburgh Council's City Plan 2030. We have been supporting options that will directly benefit students at the University of Edinburgh and suggesting where the proposals could go further – it would be great to hear any suggestions from our members!
- I have been continuing to work closely with UNA Europa in their efforts to create a truly European university. I have convened meetings of the Student Board to highlight key priorities for students in the 1EUROPE project.
- I have been working with NUS (National Union of Students) on their #SaveEramus and #FreezeTheFee campaigns following the recently announced Budget by the Westminster government

## Report from Beth Fellows, VP Activities and Services

As a result of the current situation this month has been very different. My work load has been completely reprioritized to dealing with Coronavirus Covid-19. Therefore my usual report is somewhat shorter than usual.

For the last few weeks I have been working very closely with the other Sabbatical Officers, with members of staff in the Student Association and those at the University to try support students as best we can through the pandemic. This has also included trying to work very closely with the Activities office to support societies and student groups in particular.

However, as this is my last Student Council, I would like to take a bit of time to reflect on the year. Firstly thank you to all the students who have helped with projects, given feedback and made this year such a huge learning curve for me. From my manifesto I am pleased to say I have achieved many of the projects on there. This could only be done by the fantastic support given by the Student Association staff and the University. This job really is one of a kind and this year in particular has been quite something. The thing I will take away most from this year is the unique and wonderful people I have met and the relationships I have built up. It has been a privilege to be your VP Activities and Services this year. I hope you all stay safe and well. Thank you finally to my Sabbatical Officers for always being there as well

### Increase Participation and Communication

- It was great to see the success of my outlook calendar of events in students' office 365 during Elections to encourage people to vote. Given the incredible turnout and voting numbers I was really pleased I achieved this manifesto point with regard to increasing participation amongst the student body in our activities.
- I spend a lot of Election Week out and about and it was wonderful to meet many of the candidates and talk to so many students about elections.

### Improving Services

- I have been supporting the University throughout their pilot scheme of the occupancy levels in the Main library and Murray library.
- I have been working with the Careers Service on a Teaching Matters podcast blog on the Future of Work. It was really interesting to hear about student opinion on who they think is responsible for equipping them for the wider working world.

### Celebrating Students

- #WeAreEdinburgh profiles are now being pulled together to make a video of all the profiles this year which I hope will be finished very soon.

## Report from Rosheen Wallace, VP Community

Where has this year gone!! Last student council of the year, probably not happening in the way any of us expected, but here we are. Other than dealing with and adjusting to the evolving situation in relation to Covid-19, here is an update from me since the last student council.

### Facilitating Flatmate Finding

- Two updates in this area. Firstly, I hosted a flatmate-finding event early this month, which included a 'know your rights' session delivered by Living Rent. The event was well attended and I plan to ensure these events continue in future as these are a great way for any student to come along and meet potential flatmates.
- Secondly, an exciting update is that the 'Flatshare' website is currently being built and going through testing as we speak! I hope that following this student council meeting the site will be up and running for students and prospective students, as it is a much needed forum for students to connect online in their search for accommodation.

### Sustainability Committee

- The first meeting was held last month and it was clear that there is loads of enthusiasm for taking on some of the bigger issues such as making club nights and events more sustainable. The group will be drawing up a sustainability plan as well as using the Green Impact criteria to make sure that action is being taken in all areas of the Students' Association. Some outcomes so far are:
- Green hub. Details are still being finalised but it looks like there will be a space that can be used as a Green Hub at least on a dedicated day a week to begin with. Watch this space!
- The green guide is continuing to be updated, for example with content on locally sourcing meat following the recent motion debating the sale of beef.
- Working on a solution to single use plastics. This issue is quite complicated, and hard to summarise in this report. However, there are plans for a pilot of reusables, and future planning of Teviot is incorporating facilities for reusable cups as well.

### Carbon Emissions from air travel

- I have been supporting University plans for a carbon tax and for restrictions on UK flights in order to reduce emissions from business travel. There is currently a University wide survey being circulated on this topic, so if you would like to show your support for this initiative, please consider filling it in! Visit [edin.ac/aviation](http://edin.ac/aviation) for more information.

### Guarantor Scheme

- This has been a difficult project to make progress on, and understandably this will be on the backburner for a while now for staff due to the current Covid-19 pandemic. On a positive note, I do think that a start has been made and hopefully the University are in a good place to work on this in the coming year and improve the guarantor scheme for future students.

### Other updates

- I am continuing to support the development of more University-run halls for students on two sites in Edinburgh.
- I am organising a tenancy rights event to take place in September for Welcome Week.
- In other news, congratulations to next year's sabbatical team, and especially to my successor Amanda!!! I'm so excited for her and can't wait to see what she will get up to
- Finally, it's a difficult and uncertain time for everyone, but if you're well and able to, consider supporting the people around you; your neighbours, housemates, families and friends <3



## Report from Stephanie Vallancey, VP Education

A small disclaimer: as I am sure everyone is aware there has been an emerging situation due to COVID-19 and as a result many of my priorities have shifted. I am still continuing my work on my manifesto; however, a large portion of my time is currently being spent working to support students and mitigate impact through this time.

### Hidden Course Costs

- After many discussions with Heads of School, Staff and students I have been able to make really positive progress. I have decided to hold off sending in my paper to Education committee to the March meeting with my recommendations, I will review this at a later date.
- I have also joined up working with a department in the Universities Communication and Marketing department who are looking at 'Total Costs' of University. This aligns strongly with all of our officers work this year around Cost of Living which is incredibly exciting, and they will be taking on some of my work around communicating the exact costs of studying. I am really confident that this will help ensure the longevity of my work in this area.
- Next steps I will be hopefully closing the loop for all the work that has happened in ECA with working with staff and students to guide better communication and mitigation around the costs that exist. I am in the process of creating resources for students and staff to use in their own schools to look independently at the Hidden Costs which can be used in the future years.

### School Reps/Representation

- We successfully ran and completed the pilot of the College of Science and Engineering Student Staff Liaison Committee (CSE SSLC)!!
- Continuing discussions with looking at Course Enhancement Questionnaires and if they are fit for purpose, alongside wider discussions on the use of all student feedback
- The School Rep Handbook is still in development this over the next month or so, and we will be ensuring it is fit for use for the next wave of elected reps!
- We had our elections, (with the highest voter turnout since 2016) and elected next years reps as well as your next year's Sabbatical Officers!

### COVID-19

- We have been in consistent communication with the University over the response to the virus. We also have representation at various groups where these matters are being discussed and are passing on all concerns brought to us by students.
- We are also pooling together resources for students to support in any way we are able to.

## Report from Oona Miller, VP Welfare

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, our priorities as a Sabbatical team and Students' Association have shifted significantly, as is the case with the University itself. In the last month, I have contributed to University and Association contingency planning and continued with my own projects wherever possible and appropriate. The following update reflects this; my own projects may, as such, be subject to further risk.

### COVID-19

- Attended University and Students' Association meetings discussing contingency planning, with particular attention from me to preparedness for a rise in special circumstances applications, service capacity in Residence Life, and access to the Advice Place.
- Responded to and escalated concerns from students as appropriate, alongside the rest of the Sabbatical team.
- Compiled support resources on mental and physical wellbeing for students (and staff!) to access during the pandemic. Our mental health is likely to suffer in the coming months, but it will do so collectively; it is important to be kind, compassionate and, wherever possible, generous to others and ourselves.

### Committing to Campus Accessibility

- Daniel Johnson MSP has agreed to support our work to ensure access to the Transport Scotland National Entitlement Card for disabled students
- I expect to have a final draft of a Disabled Students Framework by the end of my term, which can then be taken forward by University colleagues and my successor
- Received assurances from University and Association Estates teams that key 'problem areas' for accessibility to Students' Association venues would be addressed in the next few months. This includes replacement of Pleasance lifts, contracting an acoustician regarding ambient noise in our rooms, and beginning to address the Pleasance cobbles issue.

### Fostering a Compassionate University Community

- #NoExcuse Consent Training pilot is on hold due to COVID-19. Nonetheless, I am happy to report that the first stage of the pilot has received positive feedback! I expect the current context will provide an impetus for expanding online training for students, and there are already discussions about integrating training on consent, equality and diversity, and mental health into matriculation. A planned review of University induction journey may cover this.
- Attended Rep Lunch to collect ideas for the development of #NoExcuse
- Toured the new Bristo Square Health and Wellbeing Centre It will bring a 40% overall increase in Counselling and Disability Services capacities, purpose-designed space for taking time out, and the first ever Changing Places toilet at the University! Unfortunately, COVID-19 means the opening is delayed until the end of April.
- Worked with the Advice Place, Edinburgh Global and Student Administration on reforming emergency funding pathways for students, with particular focus on communication of the 'Exceptional Fund', re-evaluation of Hardship and Discretionary Funds provision, and a streamlining of processes to ensure students struggling are not chased for money (e.g. by Accommodation, the Fees and Funding team, etc.)

### Tackling Elitism and Building Inclusivity

- Tackling Elitism group are consolidating their structure and beginning to link with other student groups and projects where relevant; University's Widening Participation team have agreed to support them in whatever way possible.

### Finally...

- In amongst the mania, your 2020/21 representatives have been elected! Big shout-out to everybody who ran and made it such a vibrant campaign, and especially to your new VP Welfare, Niamh. She will enter the post in June.

## Paper B: Create a Section Representative post for Students who commute to University

### What we will do:

1. Create a new student section representative post that represents students who travel to the University of Edinburgh from home
2. The post should be filled during the Postgraduate Election cycle in October 2020 and subsequently in every Spring cycle, as per other representative positions.
3. The post should be filled and elected by those who live at home and outside Edinburgh; determined whichever way the Students' Association sees fit.
4. The Sabbatical Officers shall, in association with the University, additionally conduct a study to understand why some students choose to commute to University from home and how the Students' Association can best support these students

### Background to this:

1. Some students, particularly those from Fife and the Lothians, decide to commute to University from home instead of moving to Edinburgh for a variety of reasons, including the cost of living in Edinburgh and a preference to continue living with their parents.
2. Because of the longer journey times to and from university, these students often have fewer opportunities to engage and interact with the Students' Association and Student Societies, as well as making new friends there.
3. Many bus and rail services out of Edinburgh don't operate after around 11:00pm on most nights, meanwhile Lothian Buses operates a comprehensive NightBus network.
4. Campaigns that are run by the Students' Association, particularly those relating to cost of living, appear not to focus at all on students who live outside the city and are often excluded from debates and representation that is relevant to them.
5. Students from Fife particularly sometimes struggle to reach university as a result of poorer public transport links and severe weather than those from Edinburgh benefit from.
6. In February 2020, the Queensferry Crossing was closed in both directions as a result of ice and snow forming and falling from the cables, damaging vehicles.
7. Both the road and public transport networks struggled to cope with the increased demand and some students will have been unable to attend classes as a result of this disruption.
8. The Students' Association and the University did not publicly acknowledge these issues as they were happening.
9. In December 2015, the Forth Road Bridge was closed for several weeks after a major defect was found on the bridge.
10. This closure happened during that semester's exam season and commuting students were affected.
11. At the time, the University acknowledged the seriousness of the issue and offered students discounted accommodation if they were unable or unwilling to travel to/from Fife.
12. Local media in Fife frequently report frustrations with the rail service provided to Fifers, with trains often running late, have fewer carriages than there should be, or simply don't run at all and often at short notice.

13. The time spent commuting often makes students more tired and gives them less time to complete their studies during the week than those who live nearer to campus and have closer access to study facilities.

#### Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. The issues that affect students who commute from home haven't been voiced because there is nobody currently to represent them.
2. This group of students need and deserve a voice within the Students' Association.
3. The University should be doing more to support students who commute to Edinburgh and its
4. campuses from a transportation, academic and social viewpoint.
5. Commuting students' access to services and activities provided by the Students' Association
6. and the University are in need of improvement.

**Submitted with 40 student signatures by Jeremy Pestle.**

## Paper C: Mitigating financial barriers that prevent Section Reps from fulfilling their role

### What we will do:

1. To take under advisement financial barriers that may prevent elected Section Reps from fulfilling their role, such as travel, childcare, accessibility aids, et cetera
2. To provide expenses to mitigate these barriers
3. To provide information and guidance to elected reps on how to avail of the resources and support available to enable them to be effective in their role despite and mitigate these barriers

### Background to this:

1. The proposed Extraordinary Motion to create a Commuters' Student section rep
2. The difficulties faced by the University's Student Support Thematic Review 2017-8 in convening a focus group for commuter students because of a lack of provision of expenses
3. The expenses or funding available to make Student Council accessible.

### Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. Section Representatives represent constituencies that face financial barriers to their participation in the University.
2. These barriers would further interfere with the respective Rep's ability to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of their role
3. The proposed Commuter Students' Rep would need to commute into university to undertake activities relating to their work as a Rep
4. The expenses currently available cover Reps' ability to access Student Council meetings but not the daily activities involved in their role
5. Section Reps need support in carrying out these daily activities in order to be effective in their role.

**Submitted with 20 student signatures by Vivek Santayana.**

## Paper D: We Are European

### What will we do:

1. The Students' Association will commit to preserving a strong European identity for the benefit of the students it represents
2. The Students' Association will campaign for a workable continuation of the Erasmus+ scheme for students
3. The Students' Association will campaign to protect research funding and opportunities such as the Horizon Europe research and innovation programme.
4. The Students' Association should lobby the UK Government to ensure we have an immigration system that works to allow for European staff and students to contribute to our University community
5. The Students' Association will support the University's efforts and initiatives to remain a close relationship with Europe, including supporting the UNA Europa Alliance and Students' Association President 19/20 as the Edinburgh representative on the Student Board for the 1EUROPE project
6. As part of the Students' Association's annual Europe Week at the end of March, the Students' Association will proudly fly and display the European Flag across its venues, as well as at other appropriate times throughout the year

### Background to this:

1. On 31st January 2020, the United Kingdom left the European Union
2. Edinburgh University Students' Association endorsed a Remain vote in the EU Referendum at a Student Council meeting in March 2016
3. Students and young people overwhelmingly voted Remain in the 2016 EU Referendum and have consistently voted for pro-EU and pro-second referendum parties in the two successive elections following the referendum
4. The University of Edinburgh currently participates in European research programmes that enable access to a pooled financial resource that are essential to collaboration, whilst also incentivising it. We will lose access to these resources and our exposure to networks and contacts across Europe, eroding collaboration opportunities in a post-Brexit environment
5. Universities are key to ensuring we have a successful post-Brexit UK economy and diverse, multicultural and international society. Universities may not be able to depend on the support from the government to ensure that they can thrive.

### Beliefs and Motivating Actions:

1. Remaining in the European Union would have been the option for the future of the United Kingdom and for the interests of students and young people
2. The events of recent years have represented a profound detachment from what we collectively regard as the United Kingdom's righteous future within a free and prosperous European Union.
3. Whilst it is extremely regrettable that we have now left the European Union, the Students' Association should now be focusing on ensuring we preserve as many student-facing rights and benefits as possible.

**Submitted by Association Executive.**

# Paper E: Fighting the Structural Racism of the Prevent Strategy and the Hostile Environment

## What we will do:

1. For the sabbatical officers to issue a statement condemning the structural racism faced by Muslim and BAME students under the Prevent strategy and international students faced under the Hostile Environment policy.
2. Mandate EUSA to do everything legally possible to minimise the impact of the Prevent strategy and the Hostile Environment policy upon students and to register students' objections to these policies in the strongest possible terms.
3. Educate students on the dangers of the Counter Terrorism Security Act and the Prevent Strategy as well as their legal rights in relation to them.
4. Educate international students on the nature of the Hostile Environment, their rights, and organisations that can support international students experiencing hardships.
5. Provide assistance to students who undergo Prevent-related procedures because of their research.
6. Work with the university in developing the Prevent training that gets shared with staff, and using the expertise of BAME staff and students to ensure that this practice is non-discriminatory
7. Lobby the University to be open and transparent about how they are engaging with Prevent and other similar initiatives, including: publishing how the policy is operating in the University, how they are updating their materials to reflect the changes in the Prevent duty as notified by the Supreme Court at the end of 2019, and holding consultations with the student body about how it affects students.
8. Work jointly with campus trade unions and other relevant student groups or networks to seek legal advice from the University's immigration solicitor and develop a framework for minimal compliance with the official requirements of visa sponsorship
9. Lobby the University, jointly with campus trade unions and other relevant student groups or networks, to follow this framework of minimal compliance that will satisfy the University's duties as a visa sponsor without excessive and/or intrusive surveillance of students and staff
10. Lobby the University, jointly with campus trade unions, BAME liberation groups, and other relevant student groups or networks to publicly oppose the Prevent duty and the Hostile Environment Policy.

## Background to this:

1. The statutory requirements of the Prevent agenda, as part of the Government's 'anti-extremism' work, have been used to create an expansive surveillance architecture to spy on the public and to police dissent.
2. Under Prevent, lecturers have been known to report students as being 'at risk of radicalisation' for merely taking an interest in political affairs in class, or for observing their religion more closely, whilst politically active students have found themselves visited by counter-terrorism officers.
3. The Government's counter-terrorism policy systematically targets people of Protected Characteristics, especially Muslims and ethnic minorities, by placing specific emphasis on

- “threats ... from terrorist organisations in Syria and Iraq and Al Qa’ida associated groups” and “Islamic extremists” as “the most significant” terrorist threat.
4. The Tell Mama project (Measuring anti-Muslim attacks) has reported a 692% spike in anti-Muslim hate crimes in the week following the Christchurch mosque attack last year, and a total of 1,213 anti-Muslim hate crimes reported recorded by 20 police forces across the UK from January to June 2019.
  5. Universities are also required by the terms of their license to sponsor student visas to monitor the attendance of international students.
  6. The Hostile Environment policy and the visa sponsorship requirements give broad guidelines to universities, leaving it at their discretion to interpret and implement the policies as they see fit.
  7. This attendance monitoring implemented at Edinburgh University requires a similarly expansive surveillance architecture used to monitor every single contact point.
  8. The Staff Student Solidarity Network has published samples of emails sent to UK students and international students for missing contact points that demonstrate discriminatory treatment
  9. Upon missing classes, UK students are advised to seek support whereas international students are threatened with escalation procedures of being reported to the Home Office
  10. International students have also faced pressures to cross picket lines during industrial action or risk their immigration status because the University did not have a consistent policy to accept industrial action as legitimate exemption from attendance
  11. International students also face other, dispersed forms of discrimination because of the Hostile Environment in workplaces or housing.
  12. The Students' Association has previously passed the ['End the Hostile Environment! Defend Migrant Rights'](#) that sets objectives to defend the rights of students affected by the Hostile Environment

### Beliefs and motivating actions:

1. Both the Hostile Environment and Prevent strategy are structurally racist policies that systemically target vulnerable and marginalised groups
2. These policies adversely affect both students and staff, and thus students and staff must work together in solidarity to oppose such an intrusion of the surveillance state into university campuses
3. The rise in anti-Muslim attacks points to a rise in Islamophobia which is state-sponsored and legitimised by the mainstream media and the government’s counter-terrorism legislation which has been warned to risk alienating British Muslims.
4. The implementation of the Prevent Strategy on campus will not only isolate Muslim students but undermine the civil liberties of other groups such as environmental, political and humanitarian activists
5. The Hostile Environment policy further alienates international students and adversely affect their wellbeing when they are already facing significant financial barriers and discrimination in society
6. Both the Hostile Environment policies and the Prevent strategy require lecturers and admin and professional services staff to monitor students’ work and engagement in a drastic intrusion of a surveillance state into higher education
7. Edinburgh University’s implementation of attendance monitoring to satisfy its sponsorship duties are a maximalist interpretation of the Home Office guidelines and are excessive and intimidatory towards international students.

8. This motion will provide further clarity on actions the Students' Association can take to oppose the hostile environment.

**Submitted with 20 student signatures by Vivek Santayana.**

## Paper F: Edinburgh University Students' Association Affiliations, March 2020

### Why are we reviewing our affiliations?

Under the Education Act (1994), each year the Students' Association is required to give all our members the opportunity to review the organisation's on-going affiliations.

### What is the process for reviewing our affiliations?

In-line with this, Association Executive (which is made up of the five Sabbatical Officers) has prepared a paper detailing the Students' Association's current affiliations, and their recommendations on each affiliation.

These recommendations will either be to continue to the affiliation or discontinue the affiliation. Where the Officers are recommending an affiliation is discontinued, their reasoning will be outlined below.

At the March meeting of Student Council, members will be asked to vote for or against those recommendations.

These affiliations will also be considered by the Students' Association's Trustee Board. Under charities law, the Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring that the Students' Association has a clear purpose, is operating legally, and is financially viable.

### What happens following the review?

If both Student Council and the Trustee Board accept the recommendations of Association Executive then they will be implemented.

If Student Council and the Trustee Board cannot reach a consensus on the recommendations of Association Executive, then the status quo will remain and the Students' Association will retain all our existing affiliations.

### What if a student wanted to challenge an affiliation?

Affiliations can only be overturned by a referendum. A referendum proposal can be submitted in any of the following ways:

1. **Directly to Association Executive:** Any member can present a referendum proposal to Association Executive, provided they have the signatures of 500 members
2. **Through Student Council:** Any member can submit a referendum proposal by bring an extraordinary motion to Student Council
3. **Through Association Executive:** Association Executive can submit a referendum proposal by a two-third majority vote

**Students' Association Affiliations, as of March 26<sup>th</sup> 2020**

Organisation	Affiliation Fee	Recommendation
National Union of Students (NUS)	£57,700 for 2020/21	Continue affiliation
Conflict-Free Campus Initiative	None	Discontinue affiliation, due to campaign no longer being active
National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC)	Unclear	Discontinue affiliation, due to organisation no longer existing
Stop Climate Chaos	None	Continue affiliation
Votes at 16 Coalition	None	Discontinue affiliation, due to campaign no longer being active
Right to Education Campaign	None	Continue affiliation
Friends of Birzeit University (FOBZU)	Unclear	Continue affiliation

**1. National Union of Students (NUS)**

Affiliation agreed via referendum in 2004

**Affiliation fee:** £57,700 for 2020/21

**Organisation website:** [www.nus.org.uk](http://www.nus.org.uk)

**What is the National Union of Students?**

The National Union of Students (NUS) exists to represent Students' Unions and their members across the UK. They work at the national level to campaign on issues affecting students and support individual Students' Unions in their work. They also negotiate purchasing deals on behalf of their members, giving Students' Unions access to commercial goods and services at a reduced rate.

**Why is Association Executive recommending we continue our affiliation?**

While NUS affiliation costs the Students' Association over £50,000 each year, there are a range of benefits, most notably a saving of over £100,000 through purchasing deals negotiated by NUS. We also benefit from training, resources, and support throughout the year, and we have the opportunity to shape NUS' work by sending delegates to national conferences.

**2. Conflict-Free Campus Initiative**

Affiliation agreed by Student Council in 2016

**Affiliation fee:** none

**Organisation website:** [www.enoughproject.org/get-involved/cfci](http://www.enoughproject.org/get-involved/cfci)

### **What is the Conflict-free Campus Initiative?**

The Conflict-Free Campus Initiative, led by the Enough Project, aims to achieve peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) by lobbying Higher Education institutions to ensure that the electronics companies they have a relationship with – either through investment or procurement – are sourcing minerals from the DRC in a sustainable and socially responsible way.

In March 2016, Student Council passed policy [“Reaffirming our commitment to a Conflict-Free Campus”](#). This policy asked the Students’ Association to affiliate to the Conflict-Free Campus Initiative, and promote that affiliation. As this policy has not been resubmitted, it will lapse at the end of this academic year.

### **Why is Association Executive recommending we discontinue our affiliation?**

While the Enough Project is still active as an organisation, the Conflict-Free Campus Initiative is no longer live, and in light of this it no longer makes sense for the Students’ Association to maintain our affiliation.

However, the Students’ Association will continue to engage with and support [the University’s work to eliminate conflict minerals from their supply chain](#).

## **3. National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC)**

Affiliation agreed by Student Council in 2013

**Affiliation fee:** none

**Organisation website:** [www.anticuts.com/](http://www.anticuts.com/)

### **What is the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts?**

The National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts was a national network of student activists who campaigned in the early 2010s against tuition fees and cuts to the education sector. They regularly engaged in direct action, including demonstrations and occupations, some of which were attended by our members.

### **Why is Association Executive recommending we discontinue our affiliation?**

The National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts no longer exists. Their website is no longer live, and while there have been occasional posts on their social media channels these do not appear to be related to activity organised by NCAFC.

In light of this, it does not make sense for the Students’ Association to maintain our affiliation.

## **4. Stop Climate Chaos**

Affiliation agreed by Student Council in 2011

**Affiliation fee:** none

**Organisation website:** [www.stopclimatechaos.scot/](http://www.stopclimatechaos.scot/)

### **What is Stop Climate Chaos?**

Stop Climate Chaos is a coalition of over 50 organisations in Scotland campaign collectively on climate change. Their key focus is on lobbying the Scottish Government to take “bold action to tackle climate change, with Scotland delivering our fair share of action in response to the Paris Agreement and supporting climate justice around the world.”

### **Why is Association Executive recommending we continue our affiliation?**

Stop Climate Chaos are a registered charity and continue to be active in campaigning on climate change, an issue which we know many of our students are passionate about. The Students' Association is listed on [their members' page](#), and as members we are entitled to get involved in any of the working groups which shape their campaign activities.

## **5. Votes at 16 Coalition**

Affiliation agreed by Student Council in 2012

**Affiliation fee:** none

**Organisation website:** [www.votesat16.org/](http://www.votesat16.org/)

### **What is the Votes at 16 Coalition?**

The Votes at 16 Coalition is a collection of young people, organisations, and politicians across the UK lobbying for 16 and 17 year olds to be given the right to vote in all UK elections.

### **Why is Association Executive recommending we discontinue our affiliation?**

Since this affiliation was passed by Student Council, the Scottish Parliament has passed the Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Bill which gave 16 and 17 year olds the right to vote in Scottish local and parliamentary elections.

It is also questionable whether the Votes at 16 Coalition is still active, with their website having not been updated since 2013, and only occasional updates on their social media channels.

In light of this, it does not make sense for the Students' Association to maintain our affiliation.

## **6. Right to Education Campaign**

Affiliation agreed by General Meeting in 2005

**Affiliation fee:** none

**Organisation website:** <http://right2edu.birzeit.edu>

### **What is the Right to Education Campaign?**

The Right to Education Campaign is a grassroots movement based at Birzeit University in the West Bank which aims to raise awareness of the issues facing Palestinian students,

academics, and institutions, while also lobbying for all Palestinians to have access to education. Historically, the student-led society Students for Justice in Palestine have organised a number of events during Right to Education Week in November to raise awareness of the Right to Education campaign on campus, including in some years hosting students and academics from Birzeit University.

**Why is Association Executive recommending we continue our affiliation?**

The Right to Education Campaign is still active.

**7. Friends of Birzeit University (FOBZU)**

Affiliation agreed by General Meeting in 2005

**Affiliation fee:** none

**Organisation website:** <https://fobzu.org>

**What is the Friends of Birzeit?**

Friends of Birzeit University (FOBZU) is a grassroots campaign in support of the right to education and its role in the wider development of Palestinian society. They work with partners in Palestine and globally to deliver events, scholarships, and writing residencies.

**Why is Association Executive recommending we continue our affiliation?**

Friends of Birzeit University is still active and continues to run a number of on-going projects and campaigns.