

CD1

Notice of National Conference 2012

Circulate to officers, student council chairs
and staff with responsibility for democratic
processes

If you need this document in another format
contact NUS on 0845 521 0262 or email
events@nus.org.uk



national union of students

Key information

Purpose of this document

This is Conference Document (CD) 1 which gives Notice of National Conference 2012. Within it you'll find the key dates for the policy and accountability process for the year ahead and a brief summary of how the processes work. Each further conference document will go into more details on that specific area.

What you need to do

You should read this document and all further Conference Documents published when they are sent to you. You should aim to circulate them around your union and send them to your delegations when selected and used within their delegate training.

Checklist

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| The key dates on page four have been added to my calendar | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student council will be debating zone recommendations in January | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delegates for National Conference will be elected before 5 th March | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| We will be training delegates on their role at National Conference | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Read through the document and need more help?

If you require additional information please contact one of the following people:

- For issues relating to the administration of conference, including registration, access needs, room bookings and stalls contact the Events Team events@nus.org.uk
- For issues about delegate entitlement, zone committees, reports and policy, amendments to zone policy proposals & Cross Campus Ballots contact democracy@nus.org.uk

All the above can be contacted at:

- NUS, 4th Floor, 184-192 Drummond Street, London, NW1 3HP
Telephone: 0845 521 0262

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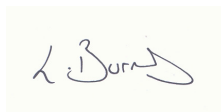
Welcome to the first stages of your involvement in NUS Democracy.

If this is your first year of being involved then I am incredibly excited on your behalf for the opportunities that you will have in shaping student's lives. If you are a returning delegate then I am glad that you are building on your experiences and coming to Sheffield for the first time.

NUS National Conference is an event unlike any other. There are not enough places in society where people come together to debate major issues, hear from speakers and experts in fringe meetings and are able to elect leaders. You'll meet students and activists who are both like minded and different in their opinions, but with a common belief that they want to do the best for students across the UK.

It's my pleasure to lead this National Union, but also my pleasure for the leadership to rest with National Conference delegates each year. Prepare well, get involved and use that power wisely.

See you in Sheffield,



Liam Burns

NUS National President

The National Union of Students of the United Kingdom welcomes your participation at our National Conference 2012 to be held in the City Hall, Sheffield.

All of our members are invited to take part in National Conference, which for registered delegates is free to attend. Please do not throw this document away and try to keep it safe - inside you will see it contains instructions on how to take part in NUS National Conference and what you need to do in the run up to the event in coming months.

You can find this document and all the other information and papers for Conference on our website at www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference

The Democratic Procedures Committee will be outlining your role in relation to each document throughout the year as well as extra guidance on what you can do in your union. Feel free to contact us via democracy@nus.org.uk with any questions.

Best wishes - I look forward to seeing you there

Steven Findlay

Chair, Democratic Procedures Committee.

National Conference Deadlines

**Contest of delegate entitlement or
Cross Campus ballot requirement Deadline**
5.00pm Thursday 1 December 2011

Zone Committee Report Deadline
5.00pm Friday 9 December 2011

Close of Nominations for full time positions
5.00pm Friday 24 February 2012

Close of Ordinary Motions
5.00pm Friday 2 March 2012

Close of Amendments to Zone Committee Reports
5.00pm Friday 2 March 2012

Deadline for Applicants to Membership
5.00pm Friday 2 March 2012

Close of Registration for Access Needs and Subsidised Accommodation
5.00 pm Monday 5 March 2012

Trustee Report, Accounts and Estimates
5.00pm Monday 5 March 2012

Nominations Committee Report and Nominations
5.00pm Monday 5 March 2012

National Executive Council Report
5.00pm Monday 5 March 2012

Close of Nominations for NEC positions (Block of 15)
5.00pm Friday 16 March 2012

Report of the Chief Returning Officer
5.00pm Monday 19 March 2012

Drafting Commissions
Sunday 25 March 2012

Final Close of Registration
5.00pm Thursday 5 April 2012

Close of Emergency Motions
5.00pm Thursday 5 April 2012

Democratic Procedures Committee Report Deadline
5.00pm Tuesday 9 April 2012

Deadline for Motions for Adoption
5.00pm Thursday 5 April 2012

National Conference
24 – 26 April 2012

Deadline for opposing Policy Lapse and submitting Report Motions
12 Noon 25 April 2012

Election Counts not conducted at Conference
Wednesday 2 May 2012

Participating in the Policy Process

This section outlines how members can get involved in shaping the priorities and activities of NUS each year. As we go through the year, each member union will receive information and reminders about how and when to add their voice to NUS' democracy. Unions are encouraged to regularly check our website for up to date event information, all of which will appear on www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference

Policy Routes

There are three main routes to passing policy at NUS:

1. Zone Policy Recommendations
2. Ordinary Motions to National Conference
3. Liberation, Student Sections & Nations Policy

1. Zone Policy Recommendations

Inside NUS, there are five policy zones covering five main broad areas of issues affecting students: Welfare; Further Education (FE); Higher Education (HE); Union Development; and Society and Citizenship.

Zone Conferences are held in late October and feature a mixture of educational sessions, panel debates and workshops. The informal outcomes of Zone Conferences are compiled into policy recommendations to be presented to National Conference for approval. These recommendations are put together by the Vice Presidents and committee in each Zone.

The policy recommendations will be circulated to each union in December 2011 in good time before National Conference.

At that stage Unions may suggest amendments to the Policy Recommendations presented in each Zone Report by sending them into NUS by 2 March 2012. These will be compiled by the DPC and debated at the National Conference. If unions want to submit text that is not an amendment or addition to a Zone recommendation this is an ordinary motion.

2. Ordinary Motions to National Conference

Unions are able to propose ordinary motions on issues that are not covered in the Zone Report Policy Recommendations. The deadline for submitting these motions is 2 March 2012.

Unions will have a word limit they can use on submitting amendments under section 1, and motions under section 2. Once the submission deadline has passed the Democratic Procedures Committee will take each submission of text and first determine if the text or sections of it represent an amendment to the Policy Recommendations of any of the Zone reports. In this event it will bring them together or "composite" them where appropriate and list these as proposed amendments to the Policy Recommendations to be debated separately. All other text will become composite motions under the appropriate Zone.

Once composited, Democratic Procedures Committee will circulate the Zone Policy Recommendation Reports and motions documents to all unions in good time before National Conference.

For example: Your Union wants some text on the Education Maintenance Allowance and provision of IT for postgraduates. The FE zone committee has recommended policy on EMA, but there are no submissions from zones on IT. Your EMA text becomes an amendment and the IT text is an ordinary motion.

Each zone will have a set amount of time to debate the policy recommendations, amendments and ordinary motions submitted within it. Times can be extended for a specific area, but this will cut time to debate other zones.

The order that both zones and the order in which ordinary motions are discussed within that zone is decided by a ballot of registered delegates before conference. Note that it is usual for more policy to be submitted than conference has time to discuss, so the priority ballot is an important process to be part of.

3. Liberation, Student Sections and Nations Policy

Each Liberation Campaign, Student Section Campaign and Nation has its own conference, where policy relating to the students in those campaigns is debated and agreed. The process of passing policy at each conference differs between campaigns. Member unions should refer to the relevant standing orders available on www.nusconnect.org.uk for further details.

Every year the policy of each liberation, student section and nation is presented to National Conference for adoption. Delegates to National Conference are not permitted to propose amendments. Once adopted, the policy of each of these campaigns becomes the policy of National Union of Students.

4. Lapsed policies

All the policies of NUS, which are three years old, (i.e. passed or ratified by Conference 2009) will be presented to Conference for either lapse or retention. The procedure is that the policies will automatically lapse at the end of the Conference unless a union objects to the lapse. You must notify the Democratic Procedures Committee, in writing before 12 Noon on the second day of Conference. Conference will decide on all objections during the final session.

Should you have any queries about the policy process and how to get involved, please contact Nick Smith, our Democratic Service Coordinator, on nick.smith@nus.org.uk

Accountability

NUS National Conference holds the Zones accountable for the work they have undertaken since the last Conference. It also can hold accountable all members of the NEC for their conduct as members of the Council and representatives of the organisation.

Report Section

Before each Zone Motion debate, there will be a report section chaired by a member of DPC. Each Zone is required to submit a written report on their work for the year and give a five minute presentation on it at National Conference. After the presentation there will be a period for questions. Questions must be submitted in writing to DPC.

Report Motions

If a union is unhappy with the work of a zone as reported to National Conference it can propose a report motion. This can be done before the end of the Zone report in writing to DPC. The Report Motions can do two things;

- 1) Refer back a section of the report – when the Constituent Member is unhappy with the work done a specific area
- 2) Refer back the whole report- when the Constituent Member is unhappy with the work done as a whole

After any report motions the Conference will be asked to accept the report from the Zone.

Motions of censure or no confidence

The NEC is accountable to the National Conference on its conduct as individuals and as a whole in relation to how it goes about representing and campaigning for students.

A censure is a criticism of the individual or group and stern indication that National Conference is unhappy with their work or behaviour. A no confidence is much more serious and says that the Conference believes that they are unable to perform their role and should be removed.

A motion of censure or no confidence or must be presented in writing to DPC by 12 Noon on the second day of Conference ready for the NEC report session on the last day. A motion of censure or no confidence may be made against an individual NEC member, a group of members or the NEC as a whole. This decision rests with the proposer of the motion of censure or no confidence.

A Union submitting a motion of censure or no confidence will be asked to give a speech on why they feel the officer should be censured or no confidence. There will be a speech against the censure or no confidence made by either the individual, one member of the group being censure or no confidence or the National President if the censure or no confidence is made against the whole NEC. National Conference will then be asked to vote on the censure or no confidence.

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Your Delegation

This section outlines your delegation to National Conference, how to bring Observers and what their rights are.

1. Delegate Entitlements

CD2- Delegate Entitlement document details the number of **free** Delegates each union is permitted to send to conference. Free covers the cost of attending the conference and bed and breakfast accommodation, but not travel or other meals which should be covered by the union. Note that many fringes are catered however.

2. Delegate elections

All universities and public sector higher education colleges must elect their delegates by cross campus ballot (one office bearer may be an ex-officio delegate). If you feel you feel unfairly penalised by such an arrangement you should contact the Democratic Procedures Committee via email, democracy@nus.org.uk. Further Education colleges are exempt from the requirement to hold a cross campus ballot, though this is encouraged where possible.

We encourage all unions to have held their cross campus ballots prior to 5pm, 5 March 2012, (registration deadline), otherwise we cannot guarantee you free places at conference. Delegates registered after 5pm, 5 March 2012 will be charged for the cost of their accommodation. A declaration that the cross campus ballot has taken place is included on the registration form for Conference.

Each Union is entitled to send up to three observers. Each observer may be sent at a cost of £300 plus VAT.

3. Rights

All delegates have full speaking and voting rights. Observers have full speaking rights but do not have voting rights. Press representatives do not have speaking or voting rights.

4. Registration

Your delegation must be registered for Conference on www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference . The Events Office cannot fill in the form for you. Please ensure all names are spelt correctly.

Online registration (www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference) will be available from 5 February 2012.

Each individual union president or SSLO will be posted their own security code in October 2011. You will need this in order to register your delegation, submit motions and amendments.

5. Parental Consent

If you are between the ages of 16-18 years old and booking onto this event you should ensure you follow the procedures your union/college have in place for parental consent. If you are required to bring a guardian with you then please make this known, giving full details of name and relationship. Your college/union will be responsible for the cost of your guardian. You will also be required to complete a consent form when registering for the event and ensure it is returned to the Events Team by 5.00pm Thursday 5 April 2012.

6. Late Registrations

Late registration causes administrative difficulties both for arrangements at the Conference venue and provision of hotel accommodation for your stay at Conference.

The date given under registration procedures is the absolute deadline for receiving registration documentation duly completed giving us the necessary information to proceed. Any monies payable in respect of observers, student press etc attending conference must be included with your papers to allow the Events Office to validate the registration.

It is felt you are being given fair warning in relation to lateness and **if your registration is received after the deadline you will forfeit your right to the 100% subsidy** per delegate at conference. This means that you will have to pay for the cost of your own accommodation and meals.

7. Access Requirements

Please ensure that you include details of any access needs required by your delegate to enable that person to fully participate in the event. Advance notice of access requirements allows the necessary arrangements to be made in good time.

Please state all such requirements when registering by 5pm, Monday 5 March 2012. Full details are necessary. Please phone or email the events@nus.org.uk if you wish to discuss your access needs further.

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We cannot guarantee access requirements will be met if not received by this time. You should send your access needs even if you have previously attended NUS events.

8. Cancellation

In the event of your having to cancel your delegate place, you must contact NUS events in writing, via phone or email prior to the event. All contact details can be found on your booking confirmation and www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference.

Except in exceptional circumstances, and at the sole discretion of NUS, refunds can only be made for cancellations received prior to the close of registration.

In situations where a observer decides to cancel their booking, the following refund policy applies. Refunds reflect the costs incurred by NUS in booking accommodation, catering and venues.

Cancellation charges will be deducted from the registration fee as follows:

- Up to 28 working days in advance of an event = full refund
- Up to 15 working days in advance of an event = 60% refund
- Less than 14 days before an event = 0% refund

A working day is a Monday through to Friday up to 5pm not including any public holidays.

Finances

1. Subscriptions

Your annual subscription to the National Union are due before the end of October 2011.

Important: Please note, if your subscriptions were not paid by the due date and no arrangements for method of payment made, it will affect your registration for Conference.

This can only be varied if your union has approached the NUS Finance Office which is responsible for fees, and agreed payment arrangements effective from the month of October 2011. To avoid any problems arising concerning registration, we would suggest that you contact Brenda Scott at (Brenda.scott@nus.org.uk) who deals at first hand with subscriptions and special arrangements.

2. Fees

All delegates to Conference go free of charge providing they register online by the registration deadline. There is a registration fee payable for all observers and press representatives at a rate to be announced by the end of January 2012. You will be invoiced for these places shortly after National Conference.

Documents

Documents will be made available on www.nusconnect.org.uk/conference as they are released and emails about them will be sent out via the Democracy Mailing list which you can sign up for on the website. Officers are encouraged to send these documents out to their delegates and student councillors.

Each document will include a section outlining its purpose and also the actions required by you within it.

Printed documents

NUS will print 1 copy per delegate of

- The Conference Order Paper (Agenda)
- The reports submitted to Conference
- The motions submitted to Conference
- The manifestos of Candidates standing for election

Copies of other documents will be made available but not printed one per delegate in line with the NUS green policies.

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Elections

The elections, which will be held at National Conference 2012, are listed below.

1. Full time positions

Elections will be held at National Conference 2012 for the offices of President, Vice President (Further Education), Vice President (Higher Education), Vice President (Society and Citizenship), Vice President (Union Development) and Vice President (Welfare).

2. National Executive Council Positions

The full time officer positions are all ex-officio members of the National Executive Council, with the President as chair. In addition National Conference also elects 15 other National Councillors – known as the ‘Block of 15’.

3. Student Trustees

The National Conference elects student trustees to sit on the National Union’s Trustee Board. The conference will elect three trustees for a tenure of two years. The National President will also be elected to chair of the Trustee Board ex-officio.

4. Lay Trustees

National Conference will appoint two lay trustees as proposed by the nominations committee to serve as trustees for a tenure of two years. Although not an election as such, details are included here for information.

5. Democratic Procedures Committee

The National Conference elects members to the Democratic Procedures Committee, which ensures the smooth running of Conference and the policy process. National Conference will elect four members this year.

6. Election Procedures

Election Procedures will be made available by the Chief Returning Officer in CD11.

7. Election counts

The elections for the President and Vice Presidents will be counted and announced at National Conference. Other positions will be counted and announced a week later.

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Further Documents

The following documents will be made available throughout the year. They will not necessarily appear in this order. The core Conference Documents (CD) are as follows.

CD1 – Notice of Conference: This document introducing the key dates and processes.

CD2 – Delegate Entitlement: This outlines how many delegates each union in membership can send and outlines the formula used within the calculation.

CD3 – Minutes of the last Conference: The record of National Conference 2011, the policy passed and the election results.

CD 4 – Order Paper (Agenda): The outline of timings for the Conference. Note that this is subject to change by the will of delegates, and often does get altered dramatically over the course of the event.

CD 5- Zone Reports and Initial Policy recommendations: Due in December this is the first report of the zones and their initial policy recommendations based on discussions at Zone Conferences.

CD 6 – Accounts and Estimates: The accounts of the past year and also the financial estimates jointly proposed by the Trustee Board and National Executive Council.

CD 7 – Reports of the Trustee Board, National Executive Council, Democratic Procedures Committee & Chief Returning Officer: Reports of various committees and individuals to conference. Note these are released in several sections.

CD 8 – Adoptions of Nations, Liberation Campaigns & Student Sections: Policy passed at autonomous conferences is sent to National Conference to be adopted by the organisation as a whole.

CD 9 – Policy due to Lapse: Policy is valid for 3 years unless conference challenges it lapsing. Policy from 2009 will lapse at this conference.

CD 10 – Final Proposals, Amendments and Ordinary Motions: The final document of the policy recommendations, any amendments to these and the ordinary motions supplied by unions.

CD 11 – Election Schedules and Regulations: Rules on how to run for elected positions at National Conference.

CD 12 – Manifestos: The Manifestos of full time officers and block of 15 National Executive Council members.

CD 13 – Minutes and Resolutions of National Conference 2012: The official report of the Conference.

Other support documents are also available

Introduction to Zones

Introduction to Zone Committees

Accountability Guide