

minutes

NEC/15A/11

meeting of: National Executive Council (fourteenth meeting)

place: UCL Roberts Building

date and time: 22nd September 2011 11am

Present:

Members:

President & Chair

Zones

Liberation

Sections

Nations

Block

In attendance:

Staff

Observers:

Apologies:

Zones

Liberation

Nations

Sections

Block

Staff

Name

Liam Burns

Toni Pearce & Shane Mann (Further Education)

Usman Ali (Higher Education);

Danielle Grufferty (Society & Citizenship);

Ed Marsh & Paddy Stearn (Union Development);

Pete Mercer (Welfare)

Kanja Sesay and Anil Sachdeo (Black Students);

Rupy Kaur and Matthew Bond (Disabled Students);

Vicki Baars & Alan Bailey (LGBT);

Estelle Hart & Kelley Temple (Womens);

Christina Yan Zhang & Mateus Wysocki (International Students)

Fee Wood (Mature & Part Time Students);

George Charonis & Dante Micheaux (Postgraduate Students)

Luke Young & Raechel Matthey (NUS Wales)

Robin Parker & Graeme Kirkpatrick (NUS Scotland);

Adrienne Peltz (NUS-USI)

Mark Bergfeld, Nes Cazimoglu, Michael Chessum, Lauren Crowley, Matt

East, Ruby Hirsch, Taylor Kane, Aaron Kiely, Joe Oliver, Rowlands, Daniel

Stevens, Rachel Wenstone.

Jim Dickinson (Director Policy and Delivery); Vic Langer (Assistant Director

Policy and Delivery); Dave Farbrother (NUS Group Finance Director);

Graeme Wise (Assistant Director Policy and Delivery); Gemma Painter

(Head of FE); Hannah Charnock (Campaigns Manager); Nick Smith

(Democratic Services Co-ordinator); Dan Francis (Democratic Services

Advisor)

Aakash Naik, Pete Woodward, Sophie Richardson, Usman Ali (to attend
NEC late)

Stuart Cannell

Dante Micheaux

Surya Prakash-Bhatta, Mary Prescott, Stevie Wise

minutes

1. Introductory & Administration

- 1.1 Liam Burns (LB) opened the meeting and encouraged NEC members to follow and retweet the new @NUSNEC twitter account.
- 1.2 Apologies were noted.
- 1.3 Declaration of Interests

Name	Declaration
George Charonis	UJS Israel Trip
George Charonis	UJS Israel Trip
Joe Oliver	UJS Israel Trip, Peace One Day concert
Racheal Matthey	UJS Israel Trip, Peace One Day concert
Luke Yong	Peace One Day concert
Adrienne Peltz	Peace One Day concert
Pete Mercer	Peace One Day concert
Liam Burns	Peace One Day concert, THE Breakfast
Usman Ali	Peace One Day concert
Dannie Grufferty	Peace One Day concert
Kanja Sesay	ACTSA Swaziland, ACTSA South Africa, South Africa, Open Society New York

1.4 Ed Marsh (EM) issued a point of clarity that in his report to the last NEC he had meant that there was no contractual relationship between NUSSL and News international. Otherwise the minutes were approved for accuracy.

1.5 There were no matters arising.

2. Reports and accountability

2.1 LB: presented his report and added that the 'One Member One Vote group' had now met for the first time. LB invited questions and called for responses to his report.

The NEC discussed NUS response to the government white paper in relation to press activity and public affairs. Mark Bergfeld (MB) asked if LB agreed there was a general lack of understanding about the white paper and whether NUS could do to change that? Michael Chessum (MC) suggested that this was NUS's opportunity to develop public support for alternatives. LB said that at this stage it was important to focus on areas when NUS can have the most impact such as student number control and financial support.

Vicki Baars (VB) suggested that NUS joining an ESU faction maybe unwise and that this could tie NUS into an agreement. LB clarified that ESU do not represent FE because the majority of their affiliated European national unions in turn only represent HE.

Estelle Hart (EH) Ed Marsh (EM) and VB appointed to NUS charitable services board. Joshua McKenzie (JM) had been removed from the NEC following a Code of Conduct enquiry into fraudulent behaviour during election.

LB highlighted that the NUS no platform policy had been implemented for two sabbaticals at Westminster SU following an investigation and ruling by the Democratic Procedures Committee. NEC should contact LB before contacting the union.

minutes

The appointments and the report as a whole were *approved*.

2.2 The Zone Convenors presented their reports there were the following questions and issues arising.

Further Education – Toni Pearce (TP) introduced her report and added that 160 delegates were registered for Festival. NEC discussed plans to review the Institute for learning (IFL) TP outlined how NUS are working with UCU on the issue.

Higher Education – Usman Ali (UA) - to attend NEC late, submitted written report.

Union Development – Ed Marsh (EM) discussed the work on how NUS can better support RAG. EM also outlined how the Student Skills accreditation scheme provides the central plank for the NUS employability agenda.

Welfare – Pete Mercer (PM) presented his report. Aaron Kiely (AK) thanked PM for attending the Unite Against Fascism (UAF) demonstration.

Society and Citizenship – NEC were given the opportunity to ask Danielle Grufferty (DG) questions.

All Zone reports were *approved*.

2.3 The Liberation Officers presented their reports to note.

2.4 The Sections presented their reports to note.

2.5 The Nations presented their reports to note.

2.6 There were no reports or notices from Scrutiny or Special Groups

2.7 There was no update from the Block members at this stage.

NEC broke for lunch

LB notified NEC that a VP Birmingham Guild was currently in custody for his involvement with a protest. NUS is currently liaising with the Birmingham Guild on the matter. DG is also working with Liberty and Right To Protest on these types of issue.

LB amended the agenda to take items in a different order.

3. Motions and Proposals

3.10 Motions and Amendments

Motions 1: Supporting peace one day

Speech for: DG

Speech against: none

Vote: Motion Passes

Motions 2: Stop NCH, Keep HE public!

Speech for: MC

Speech against: None

Vote: Motion Passes

minutes

Motions 3: A strategy for the autumn

Speech for: MB

Delete and replace amendment A:

Speech for: LB
Speech against: MB

Speech for: LB
Speech against: MB

Vote: Amendment Passes

Speech against motion: None
Vote: Motion passes with no amendment

Motion 4: Swaziland

LB ruled NEC Resolves one out of order as it is ultra vires Kanja Sesay (KS) agreed to meet with LB to discuss an alternative

Speech for: KS
Speech against: None
Vote: Passes

Motion 4: Dialogue on Israel-Palestine

Speech for: DG

Add amendment A:

Speech for: AK
Speech against: Rachael

Speech for: KS
Speech against: Robin P

Speech for: MB
Speech against: EM

For	AG Kelley Temple, Usman Ali, Graeme Kirkpatrick, Michael Chessum, Mark Bergfeld, Ruby Hirsch, Kanja Sesay , Anil Sachdeo, Matthew Bond, Aaron kiely, Alan Baily, Vicki Baars, Mateus Wysocki
Against	Jo Oliver, Toni Pearce , Robin Parker, Matt East, Josh Rowlands, Paddy Stearn George Charonis, Pete Mercer, Taylor Kane, Nes Cazimoglu, Lauren Crowley, Raechel Matthey, Ed Marsh, Estelle Hartm Rachel Wenstone, Luke Young, Danielle

minutes

	Grufferty, Fee Wood
AB	Christina Yan Zhang Daniel Stevens

Recorded vote: 13 for, 18 against, 2 abstentions

Add amendment A falls

Add amendment B:

Speech for: RP

Speech against: EM

Vote: Amendment B falls

Speech against motion: MB

MC Parts, to remove Further Believes 1 and Resolves 1

Speech for: MC

Speech against: Rachael Wenstone (RW)

Speech for: VB

Speech against: EH

Recorded vote: 20 keep, 9 remove, 3 abstentions

Keep	Jo Oliver, Toni Pearce, Kelley Temple, Robin Parker, Matt East, Josh Rowlands, Paddy Stearn, George Charonis, Pete Mercer, Taylor Kane, Nes Cazimoglu, Lauren Crowley, Raechel Matthey, Ed Marsh, Estelle Hart, Rachel Wenstone, Luke Young, Danielle Grufferty, Fee Wood, Mateus Wysocki
Remove	Michael Chessum, Mark Bergfeld, Ruby Hirsch, Kanja Sesay, Anil Sachdeo, Matthew Bond, Aaron Kiely, Alan Baily, Vicki Baars
Abstain	Usman Ali, Graeme Kirkpatrick, Daniel Stevens

Parts remain

Kelly Temple (KT) Parts, remove Further Believes 4

Speech for: KT

Speech against: RW

Speech for: RP

Speech against: EM

Vote: Parts remain

minutes

MC Parts, remove Believes 3

Speech for: MC

Speech keeping: RP

Vote: Parts remain

Recorded vote on the motion: 19 for, 5 against, 9 abstentions

For	Jo Oliver, Toni Pearce, Robin Parker, Matt East, Paddy Stearn, Usman Ali, George Charonis, Pete Mercer, Taylor Kane, Nes Cazimoglu, Lauren Crowley, Raechel Mattey, Ed Marsh, Estelle Hart, Rachel Wenstone, Luke Young, Danielle Grufferty, Fee Wood, Adrienne Peltz
Against	Kelley Temple, Michael Chessum, Mark Bergfeld, Ruby Hirsch, Matthew Bond
Abstain	Josh Rowlands, Graeme Kirkpatrick, Kanja Sesay, Anil Sachdeo, Aaron Kiely, Alan Baily, Vicki Baars, Daniel Stevens, Mateus Wysocki

Motion passes, with no amendments added and no parts removed.

LB adjourned NEC for a five-minute access break

3.1 A presentation given by TP, Jim Dickinson (JD) and Gemma Painter (GP) on the context of FE in NUS and current priorities. The NEC had the opportunity to ask questions.

3.6 LB introduced the note on NUS support for the NCAFC demonstration on November 9th.

MC outlined the NCAFC program for the autumn and call on NEC members to help mobilise students and engage students' unions with the national demonstration. In response to a question by Lauren Crowley (LC) MC clarified that NEC should encourage students' unions to mobilise for the London demonstration on November 9th in preference to running local action on the day.

Nes Cazimoglu (NC) suggested that students' unions broadly agreed with NUS supporting the NCAFC demonstration but didn't want NUS to put the same level of resource in as last year.

LB emphasised the importance of the note to NEC and highlighted that NUS should not take responsibility for the demonstration but that there ways in which NUS could support and advise the NCAFC in running the event. The NEC made it clear that NUS support would only be given to non-violent action.

NEC *approved* the paper

3.2 Dave Farbrother (DF) delivered a presentation explaining the budgets and their objectives. DF highlighted that NUS has 5.8 million of fixed overheads allowing a discretionary spend of £605,000.

minutes

LB introduced the Detailed Internal budgets (DIBs) adding that National Demo appears on the budgets but was allocated as "National Demo or Local Campaigning Capacity" in the estimates to national Conference. It is correctly described in the detail of the paper as supporting the local activism and campaigning effectiveness priority projects.

Daniel Stevens (DS) argued that the amount NUS spends on travel and accommodation was high. NEC agreed LB should be strict with travel rules. NEC discussed the budgeting process and their need for a better understanding of group finances as a whole.

LB noted that the Democracy budget should read £67,000 and that the Access budget of £45,000 had been incorrectly rolled into Disabled Students budget.

NEC *approved* the DIB's.

3.4 LB introduced the Zone, Liberation and Sections budgets noting the following corrections under Sections; International 12,000, Postgraduate 6,000, Mature and Part-time 4,000, total 22,000.

NEC approved the Zone, Liberation and Sections budgets

3.3 NEC agreed to devolve bylaws and performance indicators to LB

3.5 NEC agreed to devolve role of non NEC Full Time Officers to LB. LB agreed to bring this paper back to NEC if it was contentious.

2.7: LB asked the block to feed back any important information from CMs

RW noted the Sheffield Hallam had very positive feedback for the HE charters and would like UA to contact them with more information.

LC highlighted that De Montfort are experiencing a period of change and NUS support would be valued. De Montfort are also discussing no platform policy issues and looking for information from NUS DG or KS to get in touch.

SOAS critical of NUS action around the White Paper. Liam to get in touch.

AK discussed how Plymouths issue with a sports calendar, adding that it may be worth EH getting in contact.

MC suggested it should be easier for students to email members of the NEC.

MC also noted that that cuts were impacting on student transport and housing and that it may be worth highlighting how constituent members can best lobby on these issues.

LB thanked Aakash Naik (AN), Paddy Stern (PS), Shane Mann (SM), Sophie Richardson (SR) and Pete Woodward for serving on the NEC, as this would be their last meeting.

Meeting closed 5.20pm

resolutions

Supporting Peace One Day

NEC Believes:

1. In 2001 a United Nations General Assembly resolution was unanimously adopted by UN
2. member states, formally establishing an annual day of global ceasefire and non-violence on the UN International Day of Peace, fixed in the global calendar on 21st September Peace One Day is calling for and working towards a day of ceasefire and non-violence on the 21st September 2012; a Global Truce which could be the largest reduction in global violence in recorded history, both domestically and internationally
3. On Peace Day 21st September 2010, in all 192 UN member states, and 28 organisations carried out 88 humanitarian activities across 31 countries
4. Since 2007, 4.5 million children have been vaccinated in Afghanistan against polio as a result of Peace Day agreements by all parties in the region. On Peace Day 2008 the United Nations Department for Safety and Security, which monitors security related incidents, recorded a 70 per cent reduction in violent incidents in Afghanistan on the day itself.
5. POD Education aims to advance learning in areas of conflict resolution, global citizenship and human rights, and NUS can play a key role in this
6. While we aim for a Global Truce for 365 days in the year instead of one, this is a positive step that NUS can partake to spread a message of peace.
7. Students Unions have already got involved in the campaign, such as Bournemouth, Plymouth, Dudley College and

NEC Resolves:

1. To join the call for a Global Truce on Peace Day 2012
2. To support students' unions in action to build up to September 2012, such as screening the POD video, sports and arts in the community, workshops etc, which can get wide influence through student activities
3. To work with POD to provide training to students to educate others on issues of global citizenship and promote messages of peace, both at a local and international level.

Stop NCH, keep HE public!

NEC believes:

1. That humanities subjects in higher education are facing devastating funding cuts, with the removal of entire teaching budgets from departments.
2. That numerous academics and business leaders have announced plans for a privately owned 'rival to Oxbridge' to be established in Bloomsbury, called the 'New College for the Humanities'(NCH).
3. That NCH will charge £18,000 per year for tuition in a number of humanities subjects, plus law and economics, leading to a University of London international programme degree.
4. That the operation is headed up by a number of well-known academics, but that actual teaching from them will be limited.

resolutions

5. That the college is a private company limited by shares - not a charity. It will therefore be expected to deliver a profit to its shareholders, including private backers who are supporting the project with £10m of funding.
6. That a number of courses, advertised on the NCH website, have been pirated from existing University of London courses – including those facing serious funding cuts, such as Royal Holloway. At no point were course material copyright holders approached.
7. That NCH claims it will offer access to facilities across Bloomsbury, including University of London libraries and existing students' union facilities; but that no agreement has been reached with the University of London, its constituent colleges, or its students' unions.
8. That the HE White Paper is a (chaotic) attempt to introduce a market in HE – with institutional failures, privatisation and consumer-driven learning.

NEC further believes:

1. That NCH represents a serious attack on the principle of universities as public institutions for scholarship, research and the dissemination of knowledge. If it is allowed to succeed it will undermine the character and ethos of university education.
2. That £18,000 a year fees place this college beyond the reach of all but the very richest. NCH claims it will offer scholarship funding, but this will not cover full fees and will be of limited availability. NCH is therefore also an attack on the principle of access to education by the ability to learn, not the ability to pay.
3. That the NCH business model depends critically on access to world-class facilities, built up at substantial public expense, located around Bloomsbury - most notably the university libraries, but also including welfare and students union services. It is therefore seeking to enjoy a handsome public subsidy, while turning a private profit
4. That many of the claims made by NCH – both in terms of its academic experience and its ability to award degrees – border on mis-selling, and mask what will amount to a precarious and questionable learning experience for its prospective students.
5. That the welfare and support services to be offered by NCH appear wholly inadequate to the needs of its potential students and that this is plainly irresponsible on the part of its founders.
6. That if NCH is allowed to become a reality, it will become a rallying point for privatisation and marketisation in the HE sector, especially in the minds of Vice Chancellors who view public regulation as restrictive.
7. That under the HE White Paper there is a serious possibility of some HEIs leaving the public sector altogether. Students and NUS must play a strong role in vigorously opposing such moves from the outset.
8. That it is still possible to prevent NCH from becoming a reality, both in terms of public furore and in terms of the technical business of awarding degrees.

NEC resolves:

1. To issue a statement condemning the NCH project for the reasons as given above, and to disseminate this as widely as possible.
2. To call on university managements (particularly those in London) to issue a similar statement, distancing themselves from the project.
3. To call on the University of London to refuse to collaborate with NCH, and issue a statement to this effect.

resolutions

4. To support calls for a "greylist" of NCH, including boycotts of, and protests at, public engagements of its professoriat and financial backers.
5. To support action taken by staff unions against NCH.
6. To support ongoing campaigns against NCH.
7. To support similar campaigns and direct action against similar projects, and against any university management which tries to go private.

A strategy for the autumn

NEC Believes:

1. Throughout history forms of non-violent protest have been used to symbolise the strength of feeling about issues.
2. NUS is proud of the role it has played in both organising demonstrations and supporting student led demonstrations & non-violent protests
3. As a tactic non-violent protest can be effective of raising awareness about issues and NUS recognises and supports its role in building activism and campaigning- it provides the opportunity for ordinary people to come together to demonstrate their views and opinions.
4. National Conference did not vote for a Demonstration but we should support student led activity of this sort where it is safe and non violent.
5. That the only way to reverse the Government's outrageous cuts to public education, trebling of tuition fees and cutting of EMA is to have a long-term strategy that will win over the hearts and minds of the public, change the policies of political parties and end in a General Election at which educational opportunity is major issues
6. In the interim NUS must continue to win for its members, and NUS has the opportunity to put significant amounts of money back into students pockets through winning changes to the student support system.

NEC Resolves:

1. In the short term NUS should inspire of a whole new generation of student activists, ready to campaign on a diverse range of issues. These students will return empowered to their campuses ready to win change locally as well as to keep up momentum nationally.
2. We will support NCAFC's 9th of November demonstration, the National Lobby of Parliament by education trade unions and public sector strike action called for November 30th.
3. To support student unions in winning fairer access through Access Agreements for potential students to their institution
4. To put more money in students pockets by winning improved student financial support, reducing hidden course costs and the cost of accessing student travel.
5. We will influence the pending HE Bill so that students gain more power as full partners in shaping their educational experience.

Swaziland

NEC believes:

resolutions

1. That a vibrant and vocal student movement plays a pivotal role in ensuring the existence of a representative dialogue, which is a prerequisite to a well functioning society.
2. That people who are exposed to education become independent thinkers and are more likely to become politically active.
3. That the campaigns of Swaziland NUS, which call for democracy and rights in the country, embody these principles.
4. That participation in student union activities should not result in a student being denied access to education, or to their rights to liberty and physical integrity.
5. That the freedoms of association, expression and assembly are fundamental human rights.

NEC further believes:

1. That the Swaziland NUS executives are volunteers who place themselves at immense risk for the promotion of democracy and rights.
2. That peaceful student protests in Swaziland are often violently disrupted by the security services, and that students are arbitrarily detained and physically mistreated.
3. That the Swaziland NUS President, Maxwell Dlamini, along with Musa Ngebuni, of the political youth group SWAYOCO are currently in detention, under politically motivated charge, after they were arrested ahead of protests on 12-14 April.
4. That students should not be denied access to funding (scholarships) based on their political affiliation, students are being granted scholarship if they support the Monarchy
5. That students in Swaziland who participate in student union activities risk being subjected to disruptions in, or the complete withdrawal of, their access to tertiary education, either as a deterrent or as a punishment.
6. That international solidarity with Swaziland NUS will contribute to creating an environment in which Swazi students can conduct their activities without fear of harassment.

NEC resolves:

1. To call on the Swazi government to allow student unionists in Swaziland to carry out their legal campaigning activities without fear of arrest or harassment.
2. To work with Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) to actively campaign for the release of Maxwell Dlamini and all political prisoners in Swaziland.

Dialogue on Israel- Palestine

NEC believes:

1. Students' unions should remain safe spaces for all students, where different views can be challenged in a open, supportive and constructive environment, without anyone feeling threatened.
2. Believes in democratic, multi-ethnic states which embrace internationalism and respect all people's fundamental human rights.
3. All peoples have the right to self-determination, including Jews, Israelis, Palestinians, Muslims and Arabs.

resolutions

4. There is a significant power imbalance between ordinary Palestinians living in the Occupied Territories and an Israeli State,
5. Since 1967 the Israeli State has encouraged Israeli settlers to build settlements in the Occupied Territories, resulting in the presence of illegal Israeli settlers on occupied land.
6. That Israel's attack on Gaza, launched in December 2008 killed over 1,400 Palestinians – of which more than 300 were children. Gaza's general infrastructure including schools, universities, hospitals and homes suffered enormous damage.
7. Severe human rights violations have been committed by the government of Israel as well as by various Palestinian Authorities.
8. The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office has described the settlements as "not only illegal under international law" but also "a major barrier to our pursuit of a lasting peace agreement in the Middle East".
9. Students should be encouraged to take an active role in the world around us, especially with regard to conflict zones such as Israel-Palestine.
10. Discussions around Israel-Palestine are highly contested and have resulted at times to a deterioration of good campus relations.
11. Dialogue, rather than debate, is the best way to solve conflict on campus and in the wider world. NUS plays a vital role in creating a safe space on campus for dialogue and discussion.

NEC Further Believes:

1. The self-determination of one people cannot be at the expense of another. 'Two viable states, for two peoples negotiated bilaterally is the practical way of expressing both these competing rights, which has the potential to achieve peace in the near future.
2. People in Israel currently enjoy self-determination those in the occupied Palestinian territories do not.
3. Students in the UK, as part of global civil society, should be demanding that all parties involved in Israel and Palestine should urgently call for an end of the Occupation and the achievement of a democratic, just and secure peace between Israelis, Palestinians, and their neighbours.
4. Both the Palestinian and Jewish peoples have the right to self-determination.
5. A peaceful solution will be created through mutual respect and recognition, of what are multiple narratives.
6. On international issues, NUS must be informed by its members' priorities; and focus on campaigns relating to access to education, such as in Palestine; whilst also acknowledging the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

NUS Resolves

1. To support self-determination for the Palestinian and Jewish peoples through two states for two peoples as the possible peaceful solution, recognising that there are multiple narratives of national liberation within the region.
2. Supports the right of Palestinians living in Israel (estimated to be 1.5 million citizens, approximately 20 per cent of the Israeli population) to equality alongside other Israeli citizens.

resolutions

3. To recognise the existence of the many complexities surrounding the conflict and its resolution including the status of: the city of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements, rights to land and Palestinian refugees.
4. To provide education and resources on Israel-Palestine to ensure officers gain an understanding of the complexities of the conflict, and the impact the surrounding debate has on student communities.
5. To show solidarity and build links with those defending the Palestinian right to access education, and humanitarian aid.
6. To recognise that, ultimately, a peaceful solution to the conflict must be a result of dialogue amongst those living in the region and who are directly affected by the conflict.
7. To ask British MPs to help turn the tide on decades of failed peace talks, end the occupation and move towards peace based on two states, through calling for the British Government to support moves from Palestinians to get the United Nations to recognise a Palestinian state.
8. To support the continued building of links and partnerships between students and students' unions in the UK, Palestine and Israel.
9. To condemn all human rights violations, including those committed by the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authorities.
10. Through the Society & Citizenship Zone Committee, encourage unions to host 'roundtable' dialogue events on campuses and learning environments.
11. To strengthen existing interfaith initiatives to promote good relations between religious groups on campus.
12. To ensure the safety of our members as a fundamental priority.
13. To provide training, tools and support to officers on dealing with conflict on campus.
14. To reaffirm NUS's strong opposition to Islamophobia, antisemitism and all forms of racism and discrimination.