



nus
**NATIONAL
CONFERENCE
2014**

8–10 April 2014 | Liverpool

**Democratic Procedures
Committee report
CD7**

If you need this document in another
format contact NUS on 0845 5210 262
or email events@nus.org.uk





Key information

Purpose of this document

This document reports on the activity of the Chief Returning Officer and the Elections committee.

Checklist

- I have noted the process on page three of how to refer back sections of the reports
- I have read the NEC report and am prepared to hold the NEC accountable
- I have read the Trustee Board report including the affiliation fee recommendation
- I have read the Nominations Committee report
- I note the recommendations for lay trustee appointments
- I note that the DPC report will follow

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 executiveoffice@nus.org.uk

Referring back reports

During the “business and work carried out section” of any report constituent members will be empowered to submit the following report motions:

- b. The reference back of a specified part of the report
- c. A motion of censure on a member of the relevant body or body as a whole

If 100 delegates wish to discuss the motion it will be moved. A member of the body will reply and the National Conference will immediately vote on the motion.

Following discussion of all Report motions or at the end of the time allocated for Report motions a member of the relevant body will sum up and the National Conference will vote on the adoption of all sections not referred back.





Introduction from Yemi Gbajobi, Democratic Procedures Committee Chair

Since the first NUS council in 1922, the way that students have interacted with the democratic processes of NUS has changed dramatically. However, this doesn't change some of the simple truths about NUS National Conference.

When NUS council met in 1922 it was to bring together a cohesive student voice from across the education sector. Now we have more members, a thankfully more diverse membership and a larger sovereign body but delegates are still here to build a strong, campaigning national union.

As always, my advice for you is to get involved however you can. Be the delegate who debates their union's policy. Be the one to challenge the elected officers on the work they have done against what they promised conference last year. Be someone who learns from the fringes and speakers, the person who goes back to their students' union excited about the challenges ahead and ready to be the change for their students.

I wish you the very best for the conference ahead and I commend this report to National Conference on behalf of the committee.

I hope that you enjoy Conference 2014.

Yours,

Yemi Gbajobi

Chair, Democratic Procedure Committee

Who sits on the Democratic Procedures Committee (DPC)?

The Democratic Procedures is made up of nine members, each elected by National Conference.

Yemi Gbajobi Chair – Elected 2012	Fatima Junaid Vice-Chair Elected 2013	Nabil Alizai Elected 2012	Hanif Leylabi Elected 2012	Will Watson Elected 2012
Mike Ross Elected 2013	Jo Johnson Elected 2013	Sam Gaus Elected 2013	Guy Drury Elected 2013	Colum McGuire NEC observer (appointed by NEC)

When has DPC met?

DPC has met on the following occasions in 2013/4:

September 7th 2013

December 7th 2013

February 15th 2014

March 9th 2014 (Drafting commission)

March 16th 2014 (Compositing)

The committee also regularly keeps in touch via email and telephone calls.





What does the Democratic Procedures Committee do?

From the NUS Constitution

Democratic Procedures Committee

62. The Democratic Procedures Committee of the National Union shall be responsible for the democracy of the National Union and shall have the power to govern and interpret all matters relating to democratic procedures except elections.

62.1 It shall also be needed to structure and run National Conference in such a way as to guarantee the accessibility of proceedings for delegates in line with the Democratic Procedures Rules

63. The composition of the Democratic Procedures Committee shall be as follows:

63.1 nine Individual Members, four of which will be elected by the National Conference in even years and five in odd years. All of these will serve two year terms at its annual meeting; and

63.2 non voting members which it chooses to co-opt that shall not usually be Individual Members of the National Union.

64. A Full Time Officer appointed by the President shall be entitled to go to meetings of the Democratic Procedures Committee as a non- voting member.

65. The procedures of the Democratic Procedures Committee shall be further defined in the Democratic Procedures Committee Rules.

Activity and Decisions of the DPC

This section describes the decisions taken by the Democratic Procedures Committee since National Conference 2012. We have made 3 types of decision: the acceptance of new members; decisions around the democratic rules of NUS and rulings on the eligibility of motions.

New Members

Since the last National Conference in 2013 DPC has approved the following on an interim basis:

- Linkage College Students' Union
- Havering Sixth Form College Students' Union
- East Norfolk Sixth Form College Students' Union
- Wigan and Leigh Sixth Form College
- First4Skills training provider
- Oaklands College
- London School of Marketing
- Pearson College

Mergers

Since the last National Conference in 2013, a number of students' unions have merged as a result of university and college mergers. These new members are:

Previous Institutions	New Institutions
University of Glamorgan	University of South Wales Students' Union
Newport	
Swansea Metropolitan	University of Wales, Trinity St David Students' Union
University of Wales, Trinity St David	
Neath Port Talbot College	Grwp Neath Port Talbot Group
Powys College	
Coleg Morgannwg	Coleg Y Cymoedd
Ystrad Mynach	
Yale College	Coleg Cambria
Deeside College	



Coleg Llandrillo	Coleg Llandrillo–Menai
Coleg Menai	
John Wheatley College	Glasgow Kelvin College SA
Stow College	
North Glasgow College	
Elmwood College (land-based)	Scottish Agricultural College
Barony College	
Oatridge College	
SAC	
Aberdeen College	North East Scotland College
Banff and Buchan College	
Ayr College	Ayrshire College
James Watt College (Kilwinning)	
Clydebank College	West College Scotland
Reid Kerr College	
James Watt College (Greenock)	
Adam Smith College	Fife College
Carnegie College	
Elmwood College (non-land)	
Jewel and Esk College	Edinburgh College
Telford College	
Stevenson College	
Dundee College	Dundee and Angus College
Angus College	
Anniesland College	Glasgow Clyde College
Cardonald College	
Langside College	
Coatbridge College	New College Lanarkshire
Cumbernauld College	
Motherwell College	
West Kent College	Kent College
South Kent College	
Herefordshire College of Technology	Herefordshire and Ludlow College
Ludlow College	
Lewisham College	LeSoCo
Southwark College	



Decisions on the democratic rules

- Since the last National Conference in 2013, DPC has ruled on the following:
- Discussed and approved new debating regulations for National Conference.
- Discussed and clarified the rules around voting for delegations with an HE/FE split and provided more guidance to unions on this issue.

Motions and the democratic processes

Since the last National Conference in 2013, DPC has:

- Held a drafting commission to assist with the compositing of motions.
 - Held a compositing session to re-allocate ordinary motions as amendments where appropriate and compiled motions to ensure smooth and democratic running of National Conference.
 - Sent all delegates a Priority Ballot in order to give delegates the opportunity to influence the order of Zones and Motions discussed at National Conference.
 - Ruled out motions which were submitted after the Motions deadline.
 - Over 150 delegates responded to the Priority Ballot and had a say on the order of motions debate.
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Accessibility of Conference

DPC is also responsible for overseeing the accessibility of Democratic Events in terms of policy and procedure as well the venue and activities around the main debate sessions of Conference. We have:

- Produced and publicised a timetable for conference documents
- Produced, in time of all deadlines, the conference documents
- Produced a democracy update distributed to all CMs to promote deadlines ahead of National Conference
- Introduced each conference document by explaining its role and the actions required by delegates in relation to it.
- Updated a training presentation for students' unions to use to train their delegates, available on the National Conference hub.
- Undertaken a review of Access needs at National Conference in order to make Conference more accessible for delegates. This includes the introduction of Access Agreements whereby access needs are discussed with students' unions ahead of National Conference to ensure that access needs can be accommodated for.

DPC is responsible for the smooth and democratic running of National Conference and are always looking for ways to ensure that delegates have an enjoyable Conference and are able to fully participate in the democracy of NUS.

131 delegates responded to the National Conference 2013 feedback survey.

- 87% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that DPC were successful at explaining the business of National Conference.
- 94% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that they understood how motions worked
- 80% of delegates felt positive or very positive about setting NUS policy
- 90.3% of delegates would recommend the event to others (against a KPI of 90%)

Following the feedback survey given to delegates after National Conference 2013, DPC has taken the following actions to improve the conference experience.

Delegates said	DPC did
We want more guidance on the process for submitting statements	Agreed a new set of debating regulations with a section on a process for statements
We want a better electronic voting system	DPC have chosen a new and more reliable voting system
We want more access breaks	Fringe breaks have been made the same length to give delegates a break from Conference floor and Conference will be streamed at the venue in Liverpool to allow people to get off Conference floor and still follow the motions debate
We want better trained chairs	Ensured that all chairs were adequately trained before National Conference
We want Conference documents to be more accessible	Conference documents reviewed and made more accessible on NUS National Conference hub
Delegates who may have wished to stand for DPC sometimes felt unsure of the requirements of the role	Volunteer role descriptions have been produced and will be available alongside nomination forms at National Conference
We want a more accessible National Conference	An Access working group was established to review access to National Conference and has made recommendations for improvement
Parts can be confusing when debating motions	DPC reviewed the parts process and have included an more thorough explanation in delegate training
We want more training ahead of Conference	Training was uploaded onto the National Conference hub and made available to students' unions to use prior to Conference



Submission of Motions and Amendments

194 motions were submitted to National Conference this year by students' unions across the country, Zone committees, the National Executive Council and NUS committees, adding up to over 13,000 words of policy. These were submitted in a number of ways:

Motions passed through an Executive Committee:

Cornwall College Students' Union, SOAS Students' Union, University of Lincoln Students' Union, Stanmore College Students' Union, Middlesbrough College Students' Union, Hope Students' Union, Mid-Kent College Students' Union, NUS International Students' Committee, Dudley College Students' Union, Central Students' Union, Bath Students' Union, Belfast Met Students' Union, NUS Black Students' Committee, Middlesex Students' Union, NUS Women's Committee, Gateshead College Students' Union, NUS Mature and Part-Time Committee, DeMontfort Union, Loughborough Students' Union, Heriot-Watt University Students' Union, LSE Students' Union, York University Students' Union, University of Bristol Union, NUS Postgraduate Students Committee, Winchester Students' Union, York St. John Students' Union, Hull College Students' Union, South and City College Birmingham Students' Union, Hull University Union, Ravensbourne Students' Union, SU Arts.

Motions passed through a National Conference meeting:

University of Leicester Students' Union

Motions passed through Student Council:

Edinburgh University Students' Association, Union of UEA Students, UWE Students' Union, Birmingham City University Students' Union, Oxford University Students' Union, Students' Association University of the West of Scotland, Leeds Trinity Students' Union, Chester Students' Union, Birkbeck Students' Union, Northumbria Students' Union, UCL Union, Coleg Gwent Students' Union, Teesside Students' Union.

Motions passed through a Union General Meeting

Students' Union Royal Holloway University of London, Bexley College Students' Union, LeSoCo Students' Union, Mid-Kent College Students' Union.

Delegate Entitlement

In the NUS Core Constitution, the bulk of participants in national Conference are made up of:

..."a number of representatives from each Constituent Member, as decided in line with the National Conference Rules. An entitlement to a number of delegates per "full time equivalent" student at the Constituent Member, where "full time equivalent" means the total number of full time students added to 0.6 of part time students will be proposed by the Democratic Procedures Committee and agreed by Conference in accordance with the National Conference Rules; save that in proposing the entitlement figure the DPC shall ensure that the total number of delegates entitled to attend National Conference is calculated to not fall below 1400"

The National Conference rules say that:

"the number of full-time student members of the National Union who are members of that Constituent Member, and three fifths of the number of part-time student members of the National Union (rounded upwards in the case of fractions, to the nearest integer) who are members of that Constituent Member, will be added together. This figure will be known as the number of 'full-time equivalent students'. In adopting the relevant section of the Democratic Procedures Committee report, the National Conference will annually set a figure, which each constituent member may elect one delegate for from their full time equivalent students. In proposing the figure the Democratic Procedures Committee will consult with the trustee board and pay due regard to the need to ensure wide participation, demographic change, accessibility and an event within financial means. In the event that the relevant section of the Democratic Procedures Committee report is not approved the entitlement figure will be the one last used for National Conference"





In short, DPC must propose a delegate entitlement that is within the finance allocated to it by conference and as wide as possible to allow unions to send a range of delegates.

The proposal for the year ahead

As the NEC has not proposed an increase in the conference budget for 2014-15 in the Estimates, we do not have any real room to increase delegate entitlement. There isn't an increased budget in real times however the number of students has increased.

Therefore, for the next year, DPC continue to propose a delegate entitlement of 1 per 3,500 full time students and 0.6 per 3,500 part time students.






National Union of Students

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