

minutes & resolutions

meeting of: National Executive Council (twenty third meeting)

place: Unison Centre, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY

date and time: 25th February 2013, 11am

Members:	Name
President & Chair	Liam Burns
Zones	Toni Pearce & Jeni-Marie Pittuck (Further Education) Rachel Wenstone & Rachel Thornton (Higher Education); Danielle Grufferty & Dom Anderson (Society & Citizenship); Vicki Baars & Maggie Hayes (Union Development); Pete Mercer & Colum McGuire (Welfare)
Liberation	Aaron Kiely & Malia Bouattia (Black Students); Hannah Paterson & Daryl Jones (Disabled Students); Sky Yarlett & Finn McGoldrick (LGBT); Kelley Temple & Jo Johnson (Womens);
Sections	Daniel Stevens & Dennis Esch (International Students) Sean Rillo Razcka & Fee Wood (Mature & Part Time Students); Robin Burrett & Luke James (Postgraduate Students)
Nations	Stephanie Lloyd & Sam Reid (NUS Wales) Robin Parker & Stacey Devine (NUS Scotland); Adrienne Peltz (NUS-USI)
Block	Aidan Mersh, Alex Causton-Ronaldson, Mark Sowards, Caroline Dangerfield, Emma Meehan, Jake Kitchiner, Jamil Keating, Jamie Woodcock, Joe Vinson, Matt Stanley, Michael Chessum, Roshni Joshi, Surya Prakashsh Bhatta,
In attendance	
Staff	Matt Hyde (Group Chief Executive); Jim Dickinson (Director Policy and Delivery); Amy Davies (Executive Office Manager); Ffion Bartley (Democratic Services Coordinator); Amy Elkington (Executive Administrator); Dan Francis (ACTS representative)
Apologies	Dennis Esch, Aidan Mersh, Hannah Paterson, Daryl Jones, Finn McGoldrick, Robin Burrett, Sam Reid
Absences	Emma Meehan, Alex Causton- Ronaldson, Sean Rillo Razcka

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1. Introductory & Administration

1.1 Liam Burns (LB) opened the meeting

1.2 Apologies were *noted*.

LB recognised the resignation of Reni Eddo-Lodge from the Block of 15 and thanked her for her work. Her resignation conveyed discontent at current structure and function of NEC and this feedback will be fed into new volunteer management programme. LB also noted the implicit resignation of Sean RR, who has been absent from at 5 NEC meetings, without apologies. This is in breach of the NEC by-laws and he is thereby removed from his position.

1.3 There were no conflicts of interests.

1.4 The minutes of the NEC meeting on 24th January were approved, with a correction. Vicki Baars (VB) wasn't able to attend the Small and Specialist day or the NUS Scotland Charity Board due to travel problems following the Christmas holidays.

1.5 There were no matters arising.

2. Reports and accountability

2.1 Presidents' Report was *approved*.

2.2 Zone Convenors reports were *approved*.

2.3 Liberation reports for *approved*.

Aaron Keily (AK) talked about issue at City University London, where Muslim students have been refused access to prayer rooms. Liam Burns (LB) spoke of the need to liaise with Pete Mercer (PM) over this issue with PM adding that faith is an issue that sits within his remit as VP Welfare.

2.4 Reports from the sections were *noted*.

Rachel Wenstone (RW) formally congratulated Daniel Stevens (DS) for his recent work to clarify guidance to institutions on attendance monitoring. Toni Pearce (TP) reiterated this but said that it is often different in FE colleges, where the smaller classes mean attendance monitoring is easier.

2.5 The nations reported verbally to NEC and these were *noted*.

2.6 Report and Notices from the Scrutiny & Special Groups

Robin Parker (RP) asked about the work being done to influence conversations in the run up to the 2015 general election. NUS is currently working with Compass to influence Labours review process being led by John Crudas, as well as working directly with Shbhanna Mahmood (sp.) Shadow spokesperson on universities. We continue to meet with Baroness Sal Brinton, who is leading the liberal Democrats post-16 education review. Various policies were going to National Conference to debate NUS' approach to the 2015 General Election

2.7 Block of 15

Michael Chessum (MC) asked LB about the HEPI seminar, "What role for the market in higher education?" he is attending at in April and whether NUS' presence was appropriate. LB

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responded that NUS should be there to voice an opinion on this issue, even if we are in disagreement.

AP asked a question about the 'Bring Back EMA' campaign and how this fits in with the work on PIYP that is being undertaken by PM and others. There was a discussion around whether the two campaigns send out conflicting messages or undermine one another. AK said that the EMA campaign is a priority Black Students' Campaign and reiterated that the loss of EMA affects black students disproportionately. PM requested more communication between different areas of work. LB said that the organisation can't work to support priority campaigns without this communication

ACTION: PM/AK to liaise on this issue

3.1 Equality & Diversity

Daniel Stevens (DS) said that a framework for recruiting international students and workers into NUS should be included in this plan. There was a query as to whether a migrant is eligible for a tier 4 visa in this instance.

The paper was *noted* with addition of international employment point.

3.2 KPIs

Joe Vinson (JV) asked why the visit target for FE unions is 75 and actual visits amount to 22. There was a general agreement that this is down to the reporting methods being inadequate. FTOs should be trained in using CRM and this will be included in training programme for next year. RP questioned why the section on new CMs was marked as 'on track'. LB clarified that this is an error to be amended.

ACTION: JD to correct error in document
FTOs to ensure that they record visits

3.3. PIYP research

Graeme Wise (GW) presented the PIYP research. There followed a long discussion regarding the focus on reallocation of current funds, as opposed to the need to campaign for greater funding across the board and about the different changes that could be made to the terms of conditions of loans, such as increasing interest rate of loan terms.

Jamie Woodcock (JW) asked why NUS is not demanding more funding. This was reiterated by AK, and Luke James (LJ), who pointed to the low percentage of GDP spent on education in the UK, as opposed to other European countries. MC asked what exact cost difference for the states is between loans and grants, pointing out that loans don't save the government much money because there is low level of repayment, and called for more ambitious demands from NUS.

Counter points talked to NUS calling for greater investment and making a strong case for this on the basis of preventative spending, but in the context of the current economic and political landscape, to not have an alternative on the basis of little additional funding would mean letting those PIYP identified as struggling down. Policy to conference was seeking permission to explore, not commit us to accepting no additional funding. LB clarified that we are talking about redistribution of the public subsidy, rather than reducing any one students overall cash support.

LB questioned whether there is any realistic possibility of additional spending and said that, even with a bigger pot, the disparity between HE and FE spending needs to be addressed.

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3.4 Motions to National Conference

Amendment 1

Proposing speech: Toni Pearce
Speech against: Sky Yarlett
Speech for: Rachel Wenstone
Speech against: Vicki Baars
Speech for: Maggie Hayes
Speech against: Aaron Kiely

Vote of amendment: amendment passes

Amendment 2

Proposing speech: Pete Mercer
Speech against: not taken

Vicki Baars call for parts on Amendment 2: Remove FB 7
Speech for part: Adrienne Peltz
Speech against part: not taken

Vote of part: part remains

Roshni Joshi call for parts on Amendment 2: CB2
Speech for part: Jake Kitchiner
Speech against part: Michael Chessum
Speech for part: Colum MacGuire
Speech against part: Aaron Keily
Speech for part: Dom Anderson

Vote on part: part remains

Michael Chessum call for parts on Amendment 2: CR1
Speech for part: Rachel Wenstone
Speech against part: Vicki Baars
Speech for part: Pete Mercer

Vote on part: part remains

Sky Yarlett call for parts on Amendment 2: CFB10
Speech for part: AP
Speech against part: VB
Speech for part: RW
Speech against part: MC
Speech for part: Robin Parker

Vote on part: part remains

Summation: PM

Vote on amendment: amendment passes

Motion 3: A Fair Deal for Postgraduate Workers

Proposing speech: Luke James

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Speech against: not taken

Vote on motion: motion passes

3.5 Emergency motion

In lieu of the presence of the NEC Clerks, the committee took a vote on whether to accept that this submission met the criteria of an emergency motion. This was agreed.

Proposing speech: MC

Speech against: not taken

DG call for partial parts on Motion 3: CFB2

Speech for partial part: AK

Speech against partial part: DA

Speech for partial part: JW

Vote on part: part passes

DG call for parts on Motion 3: CR3

Speech for part: SY

Speech against part: Rachel Thornton

Speech for part: MC

MC asked for a count on the vote on part: part removed

Remove	SB, RP, DG, DA, TP, JK, PM, AP, MH, SL, JV, JJ, CM, JP, RT, RW,
Keep	MB, VB, SD, DS, MS, AK, JW, SY, FW, MC, RJ, KT, CD, LJ,
Abstain	

Summation: MC

Vote on motion: motion passes

AOB

The next meeting will be held in Sheffield the day before National Conference and further information will be emailed to all NEC members.

ACTION: FB to send all NEC email with details

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MOTIONS TO NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Amendment A: 101 (506 words)

Conference Further Believes

1. That the coalition's reforms across further and higher education have acted to undermine the concept of 'trust' within the system, including 'trust' between student and institution. Conference believes that this 'trust' between all stakeholders in education is critical to any progressive and sustainable approach; forcing a system on students, teachers and a public who do not support it will never work in the long term.
2. That investment in education is investment in human capital, but it is a mistake to imagine that this is only about individual investment and returns; it must also be about social investment and returns.
3. That public support for investment in higher education is demonstrated by polling to remain weaker than for other area of spending. A broader approach to tertiary education could broaden support for investment, as well as being a fairer and more coherent approach.
4. That structural barriers that exist across different forms of tertiary education are an issue of social justice, as well as being impractical. We believe that building a more coherent, fluid system of tertiary education could open up education to many who otherwise miss out.
5. That lifelong learning is important, but we should concentrate on broadening the initial phase of adult education towards lifelong engagement and capability.
6. That further education should be the highest priority for funding, with the aim of ensuring almost all adults obtain a Level 3 qualification; and that this first full Level 3 qualification should be free from fees and charges at any age.
7. That the new undergraduate funding system effectively limits the number of places available and also limits most people who gain those places to 360 credits of undergraduate level education and this limit is both artificial and inappropriate; we oppose this blunt rationing of higher education.
8. That postgraduate education can be recognised as a triumph in the integration and mutual recognition of liberal and vocational education, but it currently on the brink of an 'access crisis' that must urgently be resolved.
9. That getting a job isn't the purpose of education, but most people want to get a good job that enables them to have agency, dignity and a secure life; we must develop a view of education that is engaged with the labour market.
10. That the local and regional dimension of education is often ignored; we must develop a view of education that sees the activity associated with educational institutions as being imperative to citizenship, voluntarism, urban development, and the richness of community life; the relationship between civic institutions and educational institutions should be enhanced.
11. Universities and colleges are an essential component of the public sector embody important ideals of universal benefit for citizens rooted in their communities.
12. That a vision for education along these lines is not just intellectually defensible and responsive to the real needs of our times, but is also politically compelling; the people at large are crying out for such a vision, for such an agenda, and we have the opportunity to define it.

Amendment E: 602 (610 words)

Conference Further Believes:

1. The most important priority is to ensure all students have enough personal funding to meet their needs
2. In a scenario in which the current program of austerity continues throughout the current and next parliament, where we see no increase in spending on student financial support, we must prepare a solution in the medium term that shifts current funding to create a fairer, more equitable system
3. When we now have evidence through Pound in your Pocket research that there are particular groups badly let down by the current system, abdicating an opportunity to invent

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solutions that create a more equitable system within the current spending envelope would be irresponsible

4. However, our long term ambition should never waver from a demand for greater public investment. Student financial support represents an incredibly powerful form of spending – so ultimately we should make a strong case for more public funding in this area targeted at the students that need it most
 5. There should be a central co-ordinating office for student support with a remit across government departments and across educational sectors, and an independent appeals process for financial support
 6. There should be an independent national student financial advice service
 7. There should be a standards accreditation system for student employment opportunities
 8. Support for disabled students is inconsistent across sectors and poorly targeted and administered; sorting this mess out must be a top priority
 9. It is absurd that full time undergraduates now borrow up to £27,000 to pay for a degree but the vast majority can only borrow between £10,000 and £15,000 to meet their living costs during that degree
 10. The mainstream system of student loans should enable all students to meet most of their best-estimated costs without turning to other sources of income; this means having much larger maintenance loans
 11. There should be a better system for recognising intermediate areas of high cost outside London; a middle tier between the baseline and the London rates should be introduced
 12. There should be more frequent instalments of loan payments, with a front-loaded payment of loans to help people meet 'set up' costs
 13. These measures should be funded by means-testing the repayment conditions for student maintenance loans
 14. Grants for students from low income households in further education should be given as much priority as funding to grants for the same group in higher education
 15. In principle this move would restore the EMA, although it is recognised that the EMA itself was not perfect and a different structure may be better
 16. These support streams should be integrated with each other (though may not pay the same rates at all levels), and should be made more compatible with the benefits system
 17. This will recognise the need for a redistribution of funding to deliver an equitable settlement between FE and HE - a false construct we are increasingly rejecting – creating a single grant system across both sectors
 18. The system of regulated discretionary bursaries and fee waivers in higher education is highly dysfunctional and has little positive effect on access
 19. The multitude of discretionary funds and pots in further education is also highly dysfunctional, poorly focused, and a source of unequal treatment of students
 20. These systems should be abolished; in their place there should be a single 'student safety net' fund across both sectors, paid for by government and institutions, with support given objectively in cases of acute financial difficulty, and on the basis of both means and needs
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Conference Resolves:

1. To mandate the NEC to produce detailed proposals reflecting the principles set out in this motion (as amended) and to pursue their implementation

Motion H: A Fair Deal for Postgraduate Workers (247)

Conference Notes:

1. The publication of the NUS survey of Postgraduate Employment
2. The findings of this survey suggest:
 - Almost one in three postgraduates who teach earn below minimum wage in real terms.
 - The average postgraduate teacher will work almost twice the hours they are paid for.
 - At least 30 per cent of postgraduate teachers have no departmental representation.
 - Nearly half of respondents claimed that they did not receive a job description when applying for their position.

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- The experience of postgraduates who teach differs widely between institutions as well as internally between departments.

Conference Believes:

1. Teaching is a hugely rewarding job, and is a chance for PGR students to gain valuable skills and experience to help them in their future career paths.
2. The report reveals much postgraduate work is undervalued and underpaid by their institutions.
3. Institutions should provide, where possible, formal induction training for all postgraduates before they commence their teaching duties.
4. That trade unions, particularly the UCU play an important role, in coordinating good practice and negotiating with institutions on behalf of their employees.

Conference Resolves

1. To promote joint UCU/Student Union meetings with graduate employees to discuss the survey's findings and the related recommendations.
2. To encouraging students' unions to build close partnerships with local UCU branches to collaborate and steer policy and campaigns relating to postgraduate teaching.
3. To encouraging student unions to create a graduate teaching committee with representatives from UCU, students union and graduate teaching reps from university departments.

EMERGENCY MOTIONS

Motion 1: An injury to one is an injury to all – defend Alfie Meadows and Zak King

NEC Believes

1. Alfie Meadows and Zak King are facing retrial at Woolwich Crown Court on a charge of violent disorder in relation to the fees protests of 2010.
2. Alfie Meadows was almost killed by police on December 9th 2010, in one of the most violent police responses in many years.

NEC Further Believes

1. The judicial attack on Alfie and Zak is an attack on the student movement and our right to resist
2. The retrial is an absurdity.

NEC Resolves

1. To express our solidarity with Alfie and Zak, and all others who are going through similar proceedings
2. To encourage officers to attend court to support the defendants
3. To make a donation of at least £1000 to Defend the Right to Protest in solidarity with the defendants.