



DELEGATE GUIDE

Introduction from your Vice President (Further Education)

Welcome to the Further Education Zone Conference!

The theme of this conference is “Think Tank”, and it’s designed to be an opportunity for you to direct the policy of the National Union of Students for Further Education students throughout the UK. We will be investigating ways in which we can improve the things we already do, as well as stepping in to some uncharted territory and thinking about areas that we’ve never worked in before! – which is very exciting.



There will also be opportunities for you to hold me and your zone committee to account and to run for a position on the next FE Zone Committee.

Although NUS will be delivering campaigns this year about issues that are currently facing students in Further Education, this event is a time to stretch the National Union of Students as possible and challenge us all to become as relevant as possible to all areas of the Further Education sector – including apprentices, mature students and young offenders.

Further Education is incredibly diverse and life changing sector, and so the work that you direct NUS to do in this area can have a real and lasting impact on the future of students’ lives. From lifelong learning to free school meals in colleges, there are loads of areas in which NUS should be making your voices heard.

We all know this year is one of the most challenging for the Further Education sector, and we all know what we’re facing; cuts to EMA, careers services, enrichment and institutional funding are an all too real part of the narrative in our colleges, sixth forms and students’ unions this year. It is however, a massive opportunity for us to really stand up and show the government that we are prepared to defend our students’ rights to an education.

Have a great conference, and a great year.

Toni Pearce,
Vice President (Further Education)

The **Institute for Learning** are proud sponsors of this year’s FE Zone Conference



Agenda at a glance

Day 1		
11.00am Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffet lunch (opens at midday) 	
1.00pm Opening Remarks	Welcome to the Further Education Zone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toni Pearce, Vice President Further Education 	
1.15pm Opening Address	Video address from John Hayes, opening speech from Toni Pearce, and more	
1.45pm Plenary Session	1,000,000 Unemployed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wes Streeting, Helena Kennedy Foundation 	
2:15pm	Break	
2.30pm Workshops Block A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualifications and Admission to HE – Dr. Debbie McVitty, NUS HE Research & Policy Officer • Lifelong Learning – Alistair Thompson, NIACE & Estelle Hart, NUS National Women’s Officer • Keeping Colleges in Check – Susan Parker, Skills Funding Agency • 14-19 Education: Changes on the Horizon – John Brenchley, OCR • Education for Education’s Sake –NUS Further Education Policy Team 	
4:00pm	Break	
4:15pm Plenary Session	Teaching and Learning: A debate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee Davies, IfL & Dennis Hayes, Academics for Academic Freedom 	
4.45pm Workshops Block B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offender Learning – Joe Shamash, Centre for Skills Development • Schools: The issues and NUS – NUS Education Policy Team • Getting your voice heard – Jim Dickinson, NUS Director of Policy & Delivery • Hidden Course Costs – Alan Roberts, NUS Policy Officer • What Else Should Colleges Do? – NUS & ActiveCitizenFE (tbc) • CPD & Brilliant Teaching: Focus Group – Institute for Learning 	
5:30pm	Break	
5.45pm Workshops Block B (repeated)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offender Learning – Joe Shamash, Centre for Skills Development • Schools: The issues and NUS – NUS Education Policy Team • Getting your voice heard – Jim Dickinson, NUS Director of Policy & Delivery • Hidden Course Costs – Alan Roberts, NUS Policy Officer • What Else Should Colleges Do? – NUS & ActiveCitizenFE (tbc) • CPD & Brilliant Teaching: Focus Group – Institute for Learning 	
6:30pm Plenary Session	Who should pay for Further Education?: A debate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Malcolm, NUS Head of Social Policy 	
7:15pm	Break	
7.45pm Reception	Drinks reception: FEfestival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A multi-media display of this year’s FE events 	
8.30pm	Dinner	
9:30pm The Evening Activity	Quiz <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pub quiz and fun at Liverpool Guild of Students 	
Day 2		
09.00am	Reports: (Officers Only) Presidents Report, Zone VP and Committee Reports Zone Committee Elections Delegates stand for election to Zone Committee 2011/2012	Staff Session Learner Voice and your voice: a consultation for Learner Voice Practitioners
10:30am	Break	
10.45am	Policy Foms Opportunity to have your say on the future of NUS policy on issues important to FE students	Staff Session continued
12.15am	Lunch	
1.00pm	Close of conference	

NUS Zone Conferences

What's a Zone Conference?

NUS' policy areas want to involve students' union activists, officers and staff- giving you a chance to hear from experts and each other, spaces to deliberate, network and discuss away from grandstanding speeches, and chances to feed in informally to NUS' priorities and policy making processes.

Our Zone Conferences Feature:

- Big name keynote speakers
- Plenary – issues briefings
- Panel debates – of experts
- Workshops led by external experts
- Student Representative Policy Forums
- Staff/Practitioner Discussion Forums

There are also be formal democratic processes

- Accountability sessions- VP and President
- Report from Zone Vice President
- Zone Committee Elections

During each two day event, we'll be looking for student officers and students to stand to be members of our Zone Committees- an exciting opportunity to get further involved in driving the work of that Zone.

Policy making

Following the consultations at each Zone Conference, Zone Committees will be publishing their policy proposals for the year ahead, and there will be a chance for all unions to consider these, submit amendments or event submit ideas of their own in the new year.

Notes:

- Before sending Policy Recommendations Reports to Constituent members, Zones shall submit to the Democratic Procedures Committee their reports and the DPC shall ensure that the content matches the Zone title.
- All constituent members and the National Executive Council may submit up to 1400 words of policy motions or amendments into the national conference by a deadline set annually by the Democratic Procedures Committee.
- The Democratic Procedures Committee will rule out of order text which has not been submitted on the instructions of the governing body of the Constituent Member concerned or which have not been submitted in a way approved by its governing body.
- Text will be submitted electronically in accordance with rulings from the Democratic Procedures Committee. Electronic submission will be verified by the use of a secret pass code, which will be notified by the Democratic Procedures Committee to the senior Executive Officer of Constituent Members or nominated member of a National Committee.
- A form will be submitted at the same time as the copy(ies) of the text which will detail the word count, the authorising body for the text, the date of the meeting of the authorising body and contact details for at least two senior Executive members of the Constituent Member or National Committee
- 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 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. Any text not submitted in line with regulations issued by the Democratic Procedures Committee will be ruled out of order by Democratic Procedures Committee.
- The Democratic Procedures Committee will send to all Constituent Members zone policy recommendation reports and motions documents which will include all text not ruled out of order.



NUS' FE Zone An Introduction

Called 'Think Tank', this year's Further Education Zone Conference will be a space in which to explore and debate the future of further education. Of course, NUS will continue to campaign and respond to the immediate issues affecting current students. However, this conference is your chance to outline the kind of further education system NUS should be lobbying for in future.

You will be able to use your experiences of Further Education to influence the future direction NUS will take on FE, and to have your say on current and future FE campaigning priorities. The conference will provide the opportunity to participate in interactive workshops, hear keynote addresses from key experts within the FE sector, and network and share ideas with other FE student representatives and the staff who support them.

As a student representative, you will be able to stand for a position on the National FE Zone Committee, shaping our campaigns and activities for the year ahead.

How can we help?

The FE zone is here for all things education. On issues ranging from EMA & ALG, course closures, course quality, assessment and feedback, course fees, information, advice and guidance and everything else relating to your educational experience, you should always bear us in mind when dealing with issues in your students' union.

Resources

For FE resources to support your students' union work please visit:

- <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/furthereducation/>
- <http://www.facebook.com/pages/NUS-Further-Education-Zone/72757048677>

Key Contacts

Toni Pearce | Vice President (Further Education) | toni.pearce@nus.org.uk
Gemma Painter | Head of Further Education | gemma.painter@nus.org.uk



Further Education Zone Conference Detailed Session Guide

KEYNOTE | Day One | 1.15pm

Opening address:

Speaker: Toni Pearce, VP Further Education and others

Session outline: To get the conference started, we will have a warm welcome from NUS Vice-President of Further Education, Toni Pearce, an opening address from John Hayes, MP, and lots more.

PLENARY | Day One | 1.45pm

1,000,000 Unemployed: Further Education and Social Mobility

Speaker: Wes Streeting, Executive Director, Helena Kennedy Foundation

Session outline: This session will address the role of further education in youth unemployment. Youth unemployment is not a right of passage, it is a national disgrace. Who can fix this? Is minimum wage a barrier to youth employment? This session aims to answer these questions and more.

WORKSHOP BLOCK A | Day One | 2.30pm

Qualifications and Admission to HE

Session presenter: Dr Debbie McVitty, NUS Higher Education Research and Policy Officer

Session outline: This workshop will provide an overview of the relationship between qualifications and admissions to Higher Education. UCAS currently says students should wait to receive their results before applying. Is this the best idea? How should students represent their level 3 qualifications, both in education and employment?

Lifelong Learning

Session presenters: Alistair Thompson, NIACE & Estelle Hart, NUS National Women's Officer

Session outline: This workshop explores further education throughout different stages of life and education in a changing population. Lifelong learning is a nice rhetoric, but where is the delivery?

Keeping Colleges in Check

Session presenter: Susan Parker, Skills Funding Agency

Session outline: This workshop explores inspections, consultations, complaints and the use of college data. How are they affected by our demands on colleges as employers? What are the responsibilities to learners and taxpayers? What are the roles of class reps?

Education for Education's Sake

Session presenter: NUS Further Education Policy Team

Session outline: Exploring education without qualifications and informal adult and community learning, this session asks the questions: Does education always need to be a means to an end? Why do we learn? The session also highlights the role of education in qualifications, jobs and rehabilitation.





14-19 Education: Changes on the Horizon

Session presenter: John Brenchley, OCR

Session outline: With changes to the required participant age and new types of education institutions and environments on the horizon, what does the future of FE look like? This workshop explores UTCs and Academies, 14 and 15 year-olds in colleges, and further education post-Wolf review.

PLENARY | Day One | 4:15pm

Debate: Teaching and Learning

Presenters: Lee Davies, Institute for Learning & Dennis Hayes, Academics for Academic Freedom

Session outline: A debate asking who decides the future of the classroom and how? What is subject currency? Do students still respect academics?

WORKSHOP BLOCK B | Day One | 4.45pm & 5.45pm

Offender Learning

Session presenter: Joe Shamash, Centre for Skills Development

Session outline: Is our large prison population a result of a failure of further education? How can we support learners, no matter who they are?

Schools: The Issues and NUS

Session presenters: NUS Further Education Policy Team

Session outline: This workshop explores the role of learner voice in schools. What issues currently face 6th form students? What role do school councils play? Should NUS represent secondary schools as well as colleges?

Getting Your Voice Heard

Session presenter: Jim Dickinson, NUS Director of Policy & Delivery

Session outline: This workshop explores the history of the student movement, and asks the question: If we had to start again, what parts would you keep? What would you do differently? Exploring a ground-up approach to student voice, this session is a place to let your ideas flow.

Hidden Course Costs

Session presenter: Alan Roberts, NUS Policy Officer

Session outline: Hidden course costs have been a hot topic in Higher Education. How are Further Education students affected? What can you do to increase visibility of costs associated with apprenticeships and vocational qualifications?

What else should colleges do?

Session presenters: NUS Further Education Policy Team & ActiveCitizenFE (tbc)

Session outline: What role should colleges take in their local communities? What else should colleges do to prepare young people and adults for life beyond the curriculum?

CPD & Brilliant Teaching – Focus Group

Session presenters: Institute for Learning

Session outline: A focus group on your teachers' professional development. Have your say in what training you think teachers need in order to be the best teachers they can be.

PLENARY | Day One | 6.30pm

Debate: Who should pay for Further Education?

Speaker: A lively debate on the future of funding in FE, and where the money should come from.

DRINKS RECEPTION | Day One | 7.45pm

Further Education: A year in review

Enjoy a delicious drink, network with other delegates and watch a multi-media display featuring highlights from FE Festival and other great Further Education events throughout the past year.

EVENING ACTIVITY | Day One | 9:30pm

Quiz!

The Liverpool Guild of Students is putting on a special all-ages pub quiz just for FE Zone. After dinner you are all invited to head over to the Guild for an evening of fun.

STAFF SESSION | Day Two | 9:00am

Learner Voice and your voice: a consultation for Learner Voice Practitioners

In a climate of significant change to FE, what support and understanding is there for the Learner Voice Practitioner role? Join us to discuss the developing role of the LVP, addressing how this role is recognised and integrated by colleges, and considering the opportunities for staff development and career progression.



We want everyone at our events to feel and be safe, which is why NUS has adopted a Zero Tolerance approach to Sexual Harassment. That means that under our code of conduct, which applies to all our members, we would consider any of the following as unacceptable:

1. Unwanted sexual comments, including comments about someone's body or private life
2. Unwelcome sexual invitations, innuendoes, and offensive gestures
3. Wolf whistling, catcalling or offensive sexual noises
4. Groping, pinching or smacking of someone's body
5. Moving or grabbing someone's clothes without agreement
6. Exposure of sexual organs without consent

If you witness or experience Sexual Harassment of any sort, we want you to be able to raise it with us and have confidence that it will be taken seriously. That means:

We'll deal with it seriously

At every event there will be at least two senior staff members who are trained and ready to discuss any concerns or issues you might have about others' behaviour. They will deal with your concerns swiftly and seriously and the perpetrator will be removed from the event if necessary. These staff members will be highlighted at the start of every event.

If you see it, you should report it

Just because something wasn't done to you personally doesn't mean that you can't or shouldn't raise a concern - it is much better if you do.

You can choose whether to make something "formal"

NUS' code of conduct distinguishes between formal and informal complaints, which we are currently in the process of reviewing. In the meantime, you can choose whether you want to make a 'formal' or less formal complaint. Making a formal complaint may sound daunting but all it means is that we can record that you've raised a concern, and can contact you with progress on our investigations. Making a 'formal' complaint makes it easier for us to take firm action. However, if you would rather raise something informally we will still support you and take your concerns seriously.

You can choose whether to be "on the record" or anonymous when raising an issue

If you've seen or heard something unacceptable, or something has happened to you, we can ensure that the perpetrator is not told who made the complaint. We understand that it can be difficult to come forward with complaints about sexual harassment, and we will ensure you are supported at every step of the process.

Delegate List (as at 17/10/11)

City College Norwich Students' Union	A N, Other
Walsall College	Abbotts, Jamie Leigh
Walsall College	Agba, Natia
Wakefield College Students' Union	Allison, Lewis
Bridgwater College Student Union	Bailey, Aaron
Aberdeen Cllege Students Association	Baird, Lani
Edinburgh's Telford Colledge Students Union	Bashir, Mouris
Leeds City College	Birch, Penny
Sunderland College Students' Union	Bond, Kirsty
Middlesbrough College	Bulmer, Michael
Bridgwater College Student Union	Bussell, Beaujolais
Liverpool Community College	Carvin, Jack
Carmel College	Cash, Louise
The Manchester College	Chowdhury, Sebastian
Leeds City College	Clements, Craig
Worcester College of Technology's Students Union	Clowes, Kelly
South Devon College	Courtney, Roy
North Hertfordshire College Students' Union	Coyle, Charlotte
Canterbury College Students' Union	Curran, Daniel
Dudley College	Daly, Sophia
Highbury College	Davenport, Jack Gary
Derby College Students' Union	Davis, Rebecca
Worcester College of Technology's Students Union	Engele, Sammy
Bridgwater College Student Union	Fish, Cameron
York College Students' Union	Fletcher, Ali
Newcastle College Students' Union	Foreman, Samuel
Aberdeen Cllege Students Association	Forrester, Isla
University College Birmingham	Fowles, Tyrone
Canterbury College Students' Union	Fox, Harry
Derby College Students' Union	Gilbert, Matthew
Prior Pursglove College Student' Union	Giles, Cameron
Wakefield College Student Union	Goldspring, Sophie
BCOT	Gomes Leite, Pam
Sunderland College Students' Union	Hall, James
City College Norwich Students' Union	Hollick, Tom
Sunderland College Students' Union	Holliday, Daniel
Worcester College of Technology's Students Union	Hull-Blanshard, David
Bradford College Students' Union	Hussain, Mobeen
Bradford College Students' Union	Hussain, Nabeel
The Manchester College	Igbokwe, Daniel
Aberdeen Cllege Students Association	Innes, Heather
Coleg Gwent Students' Union	James-Watkins, Christian
South Downs College	Joshi, Roshni
Marple Sixth Form Student Union	Kelly, Joe
Mid Cheshire College	Kettlewell, Victoria
Walsall College	Khan, Raja
BCOT	Kinross, Ben
NUS Scotland	Kirkpatrick, Graeme
Cornwall College Students' Union	Knight, Charlotte
Tresham Students' Union	Langley, Adam
York College Students' Union	Laskey, Craig
Bradford College Students' Union	Mackenzie, Neil
Tresham Students' Union	Mallery, Charlotte
Sunderland College Students' Union	Mallett, Alex
Worcester College of Technology's Students Union	Marter, Jordan



NUS WALES	Mattey, Raechel
Wakefield College Students' Union	McKay, Naomi
LMC Students' Union	Mills, Kat
Sunderland College Students' Union	Mitford, Laura
Edinburgh's Telford College Students Union	Moohan, James
Liverpool Community College	Moore, Alison
Aberdeen College Students Association	Murison, Kyra
Cornwall College Students' Union	Nelson, Carrie
York College Students' Union	Other, A N
City College Norwich Students' Union	Other, A N
Canterbury College Students' Union	Other, An
Canterbury College Students' Union	Other, An
Canterbury College Students' Union	Other, An
Canterbury College Students' Union	Other, An
Dudley College	Other, An
Dudley College	Other, An
Dudley College	Other, An
Dudley College	Other, An
BCOT	Other, AN
BCOT	Other, AN
BCOT	Other, AN
NUS Scotland	Parker, Robin
Colchester Institute	Perry, Ruth
MidKent College Students' Union	Phillips, James
City College Norwich Students' Union	Pittuck, Jeni-Marie
LMC Students' Union	Price, Luke
Cornwall College Students' Union	Ralph, Martin
Liverpool Community College	Rattigan, James
Bridgwater College Student Union	Reed-Fry, Jackson
Aberdeen College Students Association	Rheiner, Justin
Canterbury College Students' Union	Roberts, Grace
Aberdeen College Students Association	Ross, Jordon
Bridgwater College Student Union	Rowland, Emily
Canterbury College Students' Union	Rowlands, Josh
Cornwall College Students' Union	Rowswell, Ben
York College Students Union	Savage, James
Cornwall College Students' Union	Searle, James
Worcester College of Technology's Students Union	Sheppard, Amiee
Coleg Gwent Students' Union	Smith, Adam
Mid Cheshire College	Spiers, Emily
Cornwall College Students' Union	Sutton, Leona
Amersham & Wycombe College	Sutton, Mike
Cornwall College Students' Union	Sutton, Rosie
Derby College Students' Union	Thompson, Benjamin
Coleg Gwent Students' Union	Thorne, Craig
North Hertfordshire College Students' Union	Thorpe, Jon
North Hertfordshire College Students' Union	Tomlinson, Jack
bridgend college student union	Townsend, Hailey
Mid Cheshire College	Tsang, Kathy
Cornwall College Students' Union	Vinson, Joe
Sunderland College Students' Union	Walton, Calvin
Blackpool and The Fylde College	Wassell, Tyrone
North Hertfordshire College Students' Union	Wheatley, Pete
Canterbury College Students' Union	Willis, Amanda
Cornwall College Students' Union	Woodhouse, Alex

Reports and Plans

Introduction

Under the constitution, the Vice President of the relevant Zone is required to present a report on the work of their Policy Zone so far this year. Their Zone Committee will have been meeting to drive the work of the Zone following debates and mandates arising from National Conference. In addition, the National President is required to attend at each Zone Conference and present a report on the Priority Campaign(s) of the National Union.

During this session of Zone Conference (which will be student only) you will hear from the relevant VP and the National President and will be able to ask questions about their work. At this time you may propose formal report motions as follows:

- The reference back of a specified part of the relevant Report.
- A motion of censure on the Zone Vice President, Zone Committee or National President
- A motion to commend the Zone Vice President, Zone Committee or National President for a specific area of work.

If you have any questions about Reports and Plans, you should raise them with the relevant Vice President or the Chair for this session of Zone Conference

Further Education Zone: Toni Pearce

Report and Plan

Defending Adult Education & Lifelong Learning

Further Education plays a key role in our society. Adults make up the majority of students in further education, and it is no longer just the lifelong learning sector which is being threatened with rising fees and course closures. We are now seeing the effects of swingeing cuts to the adult learning budget, the average being 12%, but the reality for some colleges and learning providers being nearer to 16 or even 20%.



So far, we have seen FE students threatened with course and departmental closures, and jobs under threat amongst teaching and support staff alike. Whole swathes of provision are disappearing within localities, leaving students with limited choices.

Indeed, the effects of cuts to the adult learning budget are not exclusive to learners of this age group. 16-19 year olds do not learn in isolation from adult students, and merged classes and fewer choices will effect them too.

Given the locally and regionally specific effects of the cuts, it is vital that students' unions are equipped to lobby their colleges and providers for transparency and to fight back against attacks on adult education and lifelong learning.

As part of this campaign, the FE Zone has:

- Supported and trained students' unions to protect the provision of adult education and lifelong learning
- Continued to attend steering groups for the CALL Campaign, with whom we have developed strategies for defending Lifelong Learning on a local level, including the sharing of intelligence on cuts with the other founders of CALL (UCU, Unison, NIACE, WEA)
- Lobbied the government to increase the entitlement to a fully funded level 3 qualification to over 25s, to ensure that adults have a second chance at learning. This featured highly in our Skills

Strategy Consultation response.

- Produced editions of the weekly 'Shane Explains' briefing on 'Cuts to adult education funding in FE', 'Campaigning against cuts,' and later an edition on 'FE in the cuts announcement'
- NUS continues to maintain the CALL website: www.callcampaign.org.uk
- Supported NIACE Adult Learners' Week earlier this year
- Attended a BIS Select Committee Meeting on the cuts to the Adult Learner Responsive Budget
- Contributed to BIS Review of Further Education Fees and Co-funding
- Contributed to BIS *Skills for Sustainable Growth* consultation
- Mobilised 11 FE unions to support the UCU London Regional Strike, and spoke at the rally
- Mobilised coach loads of FE students to attend the NUS/UCU demonstration against education cuts on November 10 2010

Teaching & Learning

Last year, we saw colleges and learning providers placed under increased scrutiny on Learner Involvement, with Ofsted turning its attention to learner involvement practices under their new Common Inspection Framework for Further Education & Skills 2009. Whilst within some providers there are some shining examples of learner involvement in strategic decision-making processes, students are rarely given the opportunity to shape their experience of teaching and learning.

As part of this campaign, the FE Zone has:

- Worked with the Institute for Learning to create a Teaching & Learning campaign
- Lobbied teachers to allow students more opportunities to shape their learning experience, in particular through informal adult-to-adult conversations
- The VPFE has recorded a podcast on student involvement in shaping teaching and learning, soon to be appearing on the NUS website
- Looked for opportunities to support teaching unions to protect jobs in view of the cuts crisis
- Carried out consultation with the membership on a model complaints system for further education
- Created an edition of the 'Shane Explains' weekly briefing on 'Brilliant Teaching & Learning'
- Generated support for Teaching & Learning Campaign via Facebook page

IAG

The FE sector desperately needs an independent Careers and Advice Service for young people and adults, focused on the needs of students, rather than educational institutions

As part of this campaign, the FE Zone has:

- Attended BIS Careers Guidance Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Gained agreement from LSIS to fund a piece of research into the student experience of Information, Advice and Guidance
- A significant outcome of the research will be a model for learner voice within Information, Advice and Guidance, allowing students themselves to shape IAG services in the future

Fix It Back It

The FE Zone has launched a high profile and active campaign to secure the future of financial support for FE students and have focussed specific attention on the Education Maintenance Allowance as we believe this is most at risk from severe cuts. The campaign also challenges cuts to other forms of student support such as the Adult Learning Grant and Learner Support Funds.

- Successfully lobbied the Young People's Learning Agency, who administer EMA on behalf of the Government, to issue urgent guidance to Colleges and other providers to make sure that students didn't miss out during industrial action taken by lecturers in May 2010
- NUS strengthened the position of the British Youth Council in defending EMA by getting a motion passed at their Annual Council.
- We met with Iain Wright MP when he was Minister for 14-19 Education under the last Government

- Continued our partnership with the Save EMA campaign and the VPFE has written articles for their website
- The VPFE co-ordinated delegates at a FE Leadership training event to challenge anti-EMA comments on the Governments 'Spending Challenge' website when they were consulting on where to save public money
- We have successfully collected case studies from students now in Higher Education who testify that EMA was vital to them completing and progressing from sixth form and College.
- We have successfully worked with the Association of Colleges who now support the £10/£20 brackets of the EMA and are regularly sharing intel and resources including case studies in parliamentary lobbying and other campaigning activity.

Vocational Education

Whatever your views on the academic/vocation divide, students studying on the different routes have different experiences. Often, students choosing to take vocational courses are subjected to being told that their courses are "easier than alevels" and that it is an unworthy and second class education. The FE Zone wanted to launch a campaign to call for parity of esteem between academic and vocation learning

- After several meetings with Pearson and PR company "Blue Rubicon", we put together a plan for this campaign.
- The Zone decided to run a competition to name the campaign. The name "Vocation Nation" came out top.
- We met with vocational education charity Edge to discuss areas where our campaigning activities could join up. We shared common ground on some issues but as they have now dropped their student voice work our activity with them will be limited.
- We took a motion to the British Youth Council Annual Meeting to call for better IAG on the vocational route in 14-19 education which passed into policy
- Launched a Vocation Nation Facebook group containing name and shame photos and quotes of people who have spoken down vocational learning
- Contacted Professor Alison Wolf who has been asked to lead a 6 month review of 14-19 vocational education by Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove.
- We have issued a Vocation Nation Challenge to Professor Wolf as part of her review.

Student Voice

The FE Zone continues to fight for better and more diverse mechanisms of student voice within the further education sector. We have worked to identify where the opportunities and threats are with student voice and are taking action to protect and extend the role of students in co-owning their learning experience.

- The National Learner Panel and 14-19 Learner Panel were both abolished under the last government and NUS were invited to tender for the replacement of the NLP. Our bid was initially successful but the contract was pulled by BIS Ministers, instead favouring a purely online approach to national student engagement.
- The Zone successfully won almost £100,000 in funding to run a National Class Rep training programme from the Learning & Skills Improvement Service.
- With the Class Rep Training Project we have so far:
 - Recruited a Project Manager
 - Formed a National Advisory Group made up of sector experts
 - Formed Train the Trainer Materials for Learner Voice Practitioners and consulted on them
 - Trialled the Train the Trainer training
 - Recruited Pilot Colleges for the first year of the project
- VPFE wrote to the Sixth Form Colleges Forum to protest at an announcement from Schools Minister Nick Gibb to exempt Sixth Forms from conducting the Learner Views Survey
- The new Minister for Further Education invited the VPFE to be part of the new FE Ministerial Advisory Panel
- Conducting a complete overhaul of student governor support through the new NUS Student Governor Support Programme. This includes a comprehensive training package and the Student

Governor Survival Guide which is under construction. Training events and materials for the sector are also part of this new programme.

- We argued in the Association of Colleges Governors Council consultation strongly in favour of keeping student governors as a distinct membership group of College governing bodies.

Report and Plan National President | Liam Burns



Party Conferences

I attended all three of the main political party conferences. This was an opportunity to meet with a wide range of people either in political parties and other organisations who we share common interest with. Whilst I met a lot of people and attended a range of

Liberal Democrats

Spoke on the following panel:

- NUS/New Statesman/Million +
All in it together? Winners and Losers of university reform,

Labour

Spoke on the following panels:

- Social Market Foundation and Universities UK
Widening Participation in Higher Education
- 1994 Group
The Progressive Academy: How should Labour respond to the coalition's university reform plans?
- NUS/New Statesman/Million +
No turning back: Where next for universities and students?

Had meetings with:

Sunny Hundall – Editor of Liberal Conspiracy
Simon Baker – Times Higher Education
Martin Doel – Association of College
Interview with LBC

Conservatives

Asked a question of David Willetts MP in the main conference hall from the main stage

Spoke on the following panels:

- Social Market Foundation and Universities UK
A Market in Higher Education: Is it achievable?
- NUS/Total Politics/Million +
Beyond the Oxbridge Obsession: Will the coalition deliver for universities, students and social mobility?
- Policy Exchange and University Alliance
Beyond the Cuts: Universities and graduates at the heart of growth

Had meetings with:

Ben Howlett – Chair of Conservative Future
Martin Bean – Open University

White Paper Response

In September we submitted our response to the HE white paper. The title of the white paper, “*Students at the Heart of the System*” suggests that ministers are seeking to express and represent a positive attitude to the notion of a powerful and influential student in higher education. We believe it delivers nothing of the sort.

Our response shines a light on the following messages to government.

- The strategy could destabilise the higher education sector and damage quality
- The strategy will not empower students in a way that matches its ambitions
- The strategy is socially regressive and tends to worsen inequality in higher education
- The strategy has no answers to crucial questions facing the higher education sector

Following on from the white paper I have commissioned a series of briefings that will look at the a series of topic areas covered and have asked that each briefing looks at NUS response, other sector bodies response, an analysis of what this means for students and any actions that students’ unions should take locally on these issues. The topic areas that will be covered over this term are:

- Part-time study
- Payments
- Student experience
- Returning to study
- Student choice and information, advice and guidance
- Postgraduates
- Employer links, work placements and HEAR
- Equality impacts
- Access and social mobility
- New providers of HE

The full report can be found here: <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/asset/News/6001/White-Paper-Response-NUS.pdf>

HE Bill

It is anticipated that the government will release its higher education bill in the spring of 2012. In order to predict what we are going to be campaigning for and against we will be carrying out an exercise that takes the issues contained in the White Paper to work out what does and doesn’t need primary legislation.

The Pound in Your Pocket: The Future of Student Financial Support - Commission

The ‘Student Support Commission’ is now underway. The scope of the commission’s work will cover student support in both further and higher education in England.

Membership

Name	Position	Institution
NUS NEC		
Liam Burns	National President	NUS
Pete Mercer	VP Welfare	NUS
Student Officer Section		
Rebecca Bridger	President	Loughborough Uni.
Josh Clare	President	Newman Uni. Col.
Hannah Cusworth	VP Access & Academic Affairs	Cambridge Uni.
Meg Evans	Academic Officer	Uni. East Anglia
Jake Kitchener	President	Sheffield Hallam
Thomas Hollick	President	City College Norwich
Georgia Thresh	Postgraduate Officer	Nottingham Uni.

Joe Vinson	President	Cornwall College
Expert Adviser Section		
Brian Carroll	Head of Learner Services	Chesterfield Col.
Lynne Condell	Chair of NASMA	LivJM / NASMA
Paul Norman	Membership Manager	Services Man Met Uni.

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for the Commission:

1. *Make the case, based on evidence, for reform of and additional investment in student financial support*
2. *Raise the profile of student financial support issues broadly and within students' unions, improving their knowledge and understanding of those issues*
3. Develop proposals for reform and improvement of the financial support system, establishing a foundation for future campaigning by NUS and students' unions

The planned duration of the Commission's work is nine months, taking us to the end of the NUS 'political year' in June/July.

Teaching Grant for 2012/13

We have submitted our consultation response to HEFCE regarding how teaching funds will be distributed for students beginning study in 2012. The full response is available here:

<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/news/article/highereducation/2642/>

However the main points made included:

- HEFCE must ensure 2011/12 students have parity in terms of treatment and spending compared to students 2012/13 and beyond, throughout the course of their degree.
- Non-mainstream spending on Widening Participation must be protected, if not increased, for 2012/13 and onwards.
- Clarity and protection of funding for students who undertake sandwich years (ERASMUS, placements etc) must be given.
- It should be mandatory for institutions to publish how fees are spent and in what subject area so that cross-subsidising between subjects/services can be scrutinised by students' unions.
- OFFA should monitor how institutions mitigate against a narrowing of access caused by the AAB+ offquota mechanism.
- HEFCE should allow, and give guidance on, using contextual information when defining which students fall into the AAB+ cohort.
- QAA should report on the accuracy of KIS data presented to 2012/13 students as part of their new judgement on public information.
- The average fee for an institution, in terms of reaching £7,500 to allow participation in the 'auction', should not be inclusive of fee waivers.
- HEFCE should de-couple FECs from HEIs in regards to the average fee level as a measure for entering the auction process.
- HEFCE should give a formal role to the students' union in confirming/reporting 'quality' before an institution can enter the auction.
- HEFCE should have powers to ensure retrenchment of subject areas are done in a geographically coherent manner.
- HEFCE should produce modelling of the differential institutional impact of the proposals, including the impact that this may have on WP for the sector as a whole reflecting the different students attending these institutions.
- OFFA must be given sufficient regulatory power to request financial intervention by HEFCE where it is clear lower socio-economic backgrounds disproportionately attend institutions with reduced funding.

- Support should be given to explain the new system to prospective students free of judgements as to the merits, or otherwise, of the system itself.

Early Repayment Response

NUS responded to the BIS consultation on early repayments as well as including our views on this in the NUS response to the HE White Paper. As a part of the follow up briefings to the White paper response, we will be releasing a more detailed briefing on this issue alongside the views of other sector bodies to the membership. Our views on early repayments have been referred to in press work and public engagements.

Our position is that if government wanted to make the higher education funding system as a whole considerably more progressive, it would implement a graduate tax. That is not on offer, and in seeking to make the system it has announced more progressive, the focus should be on the treatment of low-to-medium earners not high earners.

Government should not implement large (and potentially punitive) early repayment penalties for high-value payments or on voluntary payments by high earners. Instead, it should act to further protect low-to-medium earners from repaying early on the basis of debt aversion, by enabling them to put the money they would have spent irrationally on paying down their debt into a special savings account offering interest relief of greater value than interest currently obtainable on the market.

Additionally, it may be practical and proportionate to fund the costs of this scheme through a low early repayment surcharge on high-value early repayments. The aim would be to fund some specific, direct costs, and not to haphazardly simulate the accrual of interest that may or may not have been avoided in repaying early.

Hidden Course Costs

NUS is producing a toolkit to support students' unions who are campaigning to remove hidden costs at their institution. We have already had significant wins in Wales, with HEFCW's guidance letter on publishing costs upfront. Their guidance letter outlines the following:

The cost of attending higher education covers a wide range of elements in addition to tuition fees, accommodation and travel costs. Some costs are within the control of HEIs (eg, cost of study visits/field courses), while others are not (eg, cost of equipment).

There are three categories of costs:

- mandatory costs,
- necessarily incurred costs, and
- optional costs.

Along with gathering some excellent local work by students' unions in England, we hope to ensure that HEFCE delivers similar guidance and that we are able to make the case beyond simply publishing costs up front.

We believe that in addition to this, universities should be including far more within their fee – indeed any activity which is necessary to pass the programme should be included in the tuition fee. Where there are high cost optional activities such as international field trips, we expect means-tested support from the institution; and finally we believe that resources such as books and journals should be at a sufficient level within institutions so as to minimise a students' outgoings. Along with this final belief, we have supported the journal costs campaign with UUK.

We have conducted a short survey with the membership, with 51 unions answering to the range of costs covered by their institution. The majority of institutions are still charging resit fees, and simple things like printing and laboratory clothing are still not included. It was heartening to see that three quarters of respondents were actively discussing course costs at institutional level, but it is clear that we have more work to do as a movement to secure a better deal for our members.



To this end we have held workshops at NUS with campaigns staff from across the movement and have included our beliefs about course costs in our responses to the White Paper and in the press.

Long Term Election Strategy

Over this year we will be using opportunities where we interact with students' unions to get input into our thoughts on where we go with regards to our planning for the 2015 general election. The next General Election is due to be called in May 2015. It has been mooted that NUS should focus a future strategy on 'reversing the market' ahead of the GE2015. The challenge ahead is for NUS to develop a clear vision for further and higher education for 2015 and then to plan on how to deliver this vision.

We will be looking for input from students' unions in this process in a variety of ways as well as having key meetings with stakeholder organisations to carry out some 'horizon scanning' exercises.

Activism 2011

Taking place in central London on Saturday 19 November, [Student Activism 2011](#) is a free event which will include workshops, debates, training sessions and talks, organised by you – students, student officers and figures from other sister organisations. Sessions will no doubt be varied – from discussions about how we best utilise social media in campaigning; to debates about the costs of education, who should pay, and how; to the sharing of experiences from other campaigners and campaigning organisations; to workshops on how best to develop a local campaign. **ACTION:** Get students registered for this event now.

Work with HE Zone

As part of the 'presidential priorities' I have also been heavily involved in work around widening participation and admissions and access with

Widening participation

- **Supporting students' unions to engage in WP**

Widening participation champions: We have recruited and met with 20 HE students' unions from around the country who have committed to deliver widening participation activity and to share their practice while doing so.

Widening participation webpage: We have created a WP webpage to bring together policy and practice on widening participation including outreach, admissions, access, and retention for the benefit of students' unions. We will add briefings and information throughout the year.

- **Admissions and access**

Post-qualification admissions: We have represented students on the UCAS admissions process review and tariff points review, supporting the introduction of post-qualification admissions.

AAB and contextual data: We have responded to both the HEFCE consultation on student number controls and the BIS consultation on the White Paper outlining our concerns around how we believe the AAB policy is regressive and inhibits the use of contextual data in admissions.

Access agreements: We are discussing with OFFA how we can formalise student union involvement in shaping and commenting on access agreements. We will be providing students' unions with a range of materials and resources to ensure that they are able to lobby and negotiate locally to improve their institutions offer.

Work with Welfare Zone

In addition to working with the VP Welfare on the student support commission I have also been involved in the "Get on the Bus" campaign set up with a view to Assisting FE students' unions locally to lobby their local decision makers to protect travel subsidies for 16-19 year olds where under threat and nationally challenge decision makers to consider how we can ensure that further education remains accessible for all. We launched this campaign at FEFest and already have a road trip planned, building up to Student Activism 2011.

We are pulling together resources to assist students' unions to be able to:

- Campaign against Local Authorities that are attempting to remove travel subsidies
- Lobby transport bodies to ensure that travel discounts for students are clearly advertised and easy to access.

Standing for Election To Zone Committee

All the activities, briefings, reports and training that you see at Zone Conference will have been led by the Zone Vice President and the Zone Committee. These committees consist of elected students and co-opted members of union staff who have an interest in the Zone’s work – and you could be one of them.

If you are a student, then at the conference you’ll have the chance to stand for election to the Zone committee. This guide offers you some reasons why you may want to stand, what you should know about being on a zone committee and also some things you might want to do to get elected.

Zone Committees

To help divide the work of the National Union there are 5 NUS “Zones”, each of which deals with a different portfolio of work. These portfolios are Further Education, Higher Education, Society and Citizenship, Union Development and Welfare. The Zones are led by a committee and report to the National Executive Council on the work they do; as noted in the constitution:

1. Each zone will have a coordinating committee consisting of the following members:
2. The Vice President (Full Time Officer) for that Zone who will act as the Chairperson
3. The National President (Ex Officio)
4. Five individual members elected by and at the Zone Conference, where except for the FE Zone Committee and the HE Zone Committee at least two of which must be from the FE Sector. In the case of the FE and HE committees all of the six individual members must be from the relevant sector.
5. Non voting representatives of Nations, NUS-USI, Social Policy Campaigns and Liberation Campaigns as the Zone committee sees fit.
6. One individual member elected by and at Zone Conference, who shall also act as the NEC member for that zone.
7. Up to three co-opted members at the invitation of the committee who will be non voting and may not be individual student members of the National Union.
8. Zone committees will regulate their proceedings as they see fit save that they must meet at least 4 (four) times per year. They will report their work to the National Executive Council.

This means that a zone committee member will:

- Help the Vice President decide what the priorities for the Zone are
- Feedback on work done during the year and monitor policies from National Conference
- Help steer what the Zone works on next
- Ensure that the wider membership are consulted on what is going on

This will be done through a series of meetings and discussions. If elected you will get support from NUS staff to make sure you can involve yourself in this without personal expense to you and that your experience is a positive one.

Why would I stand?

The only prerequisites for standing for election to Zone committee are that you are a student and that you are passionate about the work that the Zone is doing. You will want to make a difference to the lives of your fellow students and to make sure that their leaders are working on the right things. You’ll want to listen to what others say and with them come up with ideas for NUS to implement across the United Kingdom. In short – you’ll want to offer ideas, promote students and offer guidance to the National Vice- Presidents.

How do I stand?

The election rules are set by the NUS Chief Returning Officer, Matt Robinson. There are 6 positions on each zone committee that are available for election.

- Nomination** | Nominations will open during the opening plenary of each event. Nominations will close at 6pm on day one of each event. Candidates not intending to attend at day one of the event may obtain a nomination for from elections@nus.org.uk. Forms submitted in this circumstance must reach NUS HQ in London by 5pm on the Friday before the event. Those seeking to stand in the election must obtain five nominations from at least five constituent member unions.
- Publication of nominations** | All received nominations will be published in a prominent place on the first night of each event. Anyone wishing to object to the nomination of a candidate on the

grounds of eligibility or for any other reason will be able to do direct to the Returning Officer and Deputy until 8.00am on the second day of each event.

Manifestos | All candidates in attendance at the event will be able to book to use computers to design a manifesto which will be no larger than a single MS PowerPoint Slide and will be reproduced by NUS in time for the election to an A5 size. Anyone not intending to attend at day one of the event may submit camera ready artwork with their nomination form to NUS HQ in London by 5pm on the Friday before the event. No other printed campaign material shall be allowed for these elections.

Question Time | There will be a question time between 9.00am and 11.00am on the second morning of each event. Candidates must attend in person. Failure to do so will result in automatic withdrawal from the election.

Balloting | Ballot papers will be issued on a one ballot per union basis at registration. No replacements will be given. Ballots will be collected by the returning officer or their deputy following the question time for each election.

Count | The count for each election shall take place in the Hotel in a room notified by the returning officer or their deputy. Each candidate may send one observer to attend at the count.

If you have any questions you should contact the election representatives present at the conference who will be made clear to you or contact us at elections@nus.org.uk.

How does voting work?

NUS, and most students' unions, use a transferable vote system for their elections. This means that you don't just vote for one candidate, instead you vote for all of them giving different preferences. You vote #1 for your first choice, #2 for your second and so on. The candidate with the least votes, or who gets enough to be elected, is taken out and their votes are transferred to the next (i.e. if your #1 candidate got the least votes and was removed, the vote would go to the #2 candidate).

Although relatively complicated to count, what this means for candidates is that it is worth trying to get everyone to vote for you. This is because even if you aren't their #1 choice their vote could still be worthwhile.

How do I get people to vote for me?

The manifestos you produce and the speeches you do will help, but the main way you will get votes is by talking to other delegates. Find out what they care about and what they want to see. Explain your background and how you want the Zone to develop. Remember that you are representing all students and students' unions, not just your own and so you'll want to reflect this in what you do and say.

Remember that unions only have one vote and that it is the students, not the staff, who have a say in who gets elected – so use your time wisely.

How should I prepare?

Think carefully about why you are running and pick your most important points. This will normally be no more than 3. You can use these as the basis for your manifesto and speech. You should practise what you plan to say in your speech beforehand, and remember that you always speak faster when you are nervous.

What happens if I get elected?

There will be a big round of applause in the immediate aftermath, but you will be contacted soon after the end of the Zone Conference by the people in NUS who are there to support volunteers. They will give you some key dates and information that you should read through so you can quickly get involved in the work that you ran to do.

What happens if I don't get elected?

Zone committee is just one of a great many opportunities that are available for students to get involved in the student movement. NUS always need campaigners and activists, contributors to our online and print publications and representatives for our other democratic groups. Your students' union will also need students to be involved for their campaign work as well as representatives and people to take part in running their union. As such, even if you don't get elected you should stay involved and use the passion that made you run in the first place.

ARE YOU UP TO DATE?

Every week NUS publishes a range of information products- to ensure you are getting all of these just contact us at conversation@nus.org.uk

Every Day By Midday- Daily Media Digest

All the day's education news direct to your inbox

Monday

FE explained- briefings that ensure you're in the know

Tuesday- NUS Update

The very latest from NUS' campaigns

Wednesday- Last Week Next Week

Find out what NUS has been saying to people that matter

Thursday- Education Information

The latest from the HE Policy Team

Friday- Social Policy Briefing

The latest from NUS' Welfare and Social Policy Teams

NUS' e- networks provide a way for student officers and staff to share best practice and information on a number of different issues.

presidents@jiscmail.ac.uk

This is primarily aimed at Presidents and lead officers in students' unions to enable them to network and share best practice. To join visit www.jiscmail.ac.uk/presidents

education@jiscmail.ac.uk

This is aimed at education officers or those responsible for academic representation within unions. To join visit www.jiscmail.ac.uk/student-education

student-welfare@jiscmail.ac.uk

This is aimed at Welfare Officers and those with responsibility for student support, equal opportunities or wellbeing issues within unions. To join visit www.jiscmail.ac.uk/student-welfare

Student-activities@jiscmail.ac.uk

This is aimed at sports, societies, volunteering and Rag officers and those with responsibility for supporting a range of student activities. To join visit www.jiscmail.ac.uk/student-activities

Student-media@jiscmail.ac.uk

This is aimed at student newspaper, magazine, radio and television outlets within students' unions. To join visit www.jiscmail.ac.uk/student-media

finance-and-governance@jiscmail.ac.uk

This is aimed at officers with responsibility for the 'internal affairs' of a students' union such as finance, services and governance. To join visit www.jiscmail.ac.uk/finance-and-governance

fe-officer@jiscmail.ac.uk

Is aimed at student officers in FE. Join at www.jiscmail.ac.uk/fe-officers

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