



Union of Brunel Students
2016-2017 Policy & Motions

Overview

Title	Passed	Lapses	Page
Motion to approve updated Bye-laws	3/11/2016	N/A	2
Postgrad for Postgrad; Motion to amend Bye Law B	3/11/2016	N/A	4
Motion of No Confidence in the Volunteering Chair	3/11/2016	N/A	5
Update the Zero Tolerance on Sexual Harassment policy	3/11/2016	3/11/2019	6
Motion to join the national boycott of the NSS	3/11/2016	3/11/2019	8
Motion for standing committees to report the same way as all other part time officers	3/11/2016	3/11/2019	10
EMERGENCY Motion to oppose the increase in halls rents	3/11/2016	3/11/2019	11
To approve the Student Charter	6/12/2016		12
Zero tolerance to substance abuse	6/12/2016		13
Motion to remove the Sports Federation Chair and Societies Guild Chair positions	8/12/2016	N/A	14
Late submission policy	8/12/2016	8/12/2019	15
Incorporation Recommendation	30/3/2017	N/A	16
Late Submission Policy	30/3/2017		18
Mental Health Awareness/ Exam Stress Campaign	4/5/2017		20
NUS Black Students Campaign- Inclusivity and Representation	4/5/2017		21



MOTION

Title: Motion to approve updated Bye-laws

To: Student Assembly

From: Ali Milani (President)

Date: 03/10/2016

This Union Notes

1. Following the passing of policy in the May Union Meeting we have needed to update the Bye Laws of the Union. The key policies that prompted this where:
 - A change to the nomination process for VP Colleges
 - A change to the Executive posts and introduction of new committees
 - The introduction of a jury system
2. Cabinet approved these new Bye-laws in advance of a Student Assembly Meeting to ensure they have been viewed and approved by a democratic body before being enacted

This Union Believes

1. These new Bye-laws put in place the democratic infrastructure to ensure that the policies passed are enacted upon.
2. The bye-laws had a few areas that needed to be tidied up to make them more accessible to students.
3. The key changes made are:
 - Democracy Committee take over all the functions of ERC. The RO continues to have overall legal responsibility for elections.
 - Union Meetings have a new section outlining how to call a Union meeting under the Emergency Union meeting sections
 - Appointments committee has been added to the bye-laws under select committees of student assembly in order to make its function clearer (previously it was not in the bye-laws at all). All other select committees also have their roles and responsibilities now outlined in this section.
 - The roles and responsibilities of the members of executive have been updated to reflect the new roles.
 - Democracy committee has been added to the elections section along with the new rules of VP colleges.
 - The Student Assembly bye-laws have been edited to include the new jury system
 - Union meeting bye-laws have been edited to have 1 Union meeting a year this is scheduled in for November. This will be the Annual Union meeting.

This Union Resolves



- That Student Assembly ratify these new Bye-laws

This Union Mandates

- The Union to fulfil the requirements of this motion

Proposed by: Ali Milani
Signature:

Seconded by:
Signature:



MOTION

Title: Postgrad for Postgrad; Motion to amend Bye Law B

To: Annual Union Meeting

From: Ali Milani

Date: 03rd November 2016

This Union Notes:

- That the Vice President Postgraduate Students is the lead representative for Postgraduate Students
- That they are expected to lead on issues that are pertinent to postgraduate students.
- As it currently stands, our Bye Laws allow for Undergraduate students to be the main representative of Postgraduate Students.

This Union Believes:

- That the role of Vice President Postgraduate Students requires a certain amount of lived experience as a Postgraduate.
- That the best form of representation is one in which the individual has come from that community and therefore understands its intricacies.
- That from the next election cycle we should limit the candidates for Vice President Postgraduate Students to be Postgraduate students.

This Union Resolves:

- To amend Bye Law B effective December 2016.

This Union Mandates:

- The President (as the head of the democratic structures of the organisation) oversees this transition.
-

Proposed by: Ali Milani

Seconded by: Pauldy Otermans

Signature:

Signature:



MOTION

Title: Motion of No Confidence in the Volunteering Chair

To: Student Assembly

From: Aaron Lowman (Vice President CHLS)

Date:

This Union Notes

- The volunteering chair was elected into their position In March 2016 and took office in June 2016
- The chair has not communicated with Union staff or officers since taking office
- The chair has failed to effectively communicate with Brunel Volunteers and has missed commitments without reason given
- The Chair has not submitted any reports to student assembly or exec, nor have they been present at any democratic meeting. She has no sent any apologies to any of these meetings

This Union Believes

- Chairs are elected by the membership and thusly accountable to them
- Those chairs who are not fulfilling their duties in line with the bye-laws are liable to be democratically removed from office
- Despite numerous attempts to support the chair, no correspondence has been received, and seemingly no work has been completed

This Union Resolves

- That Student Assembly pass a motion of no confidence in the chair, removing her from her current position in office, thusly banning her from running for any future position (as outlined in our bye laws)

This Union Mandates

- The Union to fulfil the requirements of this motion
-

Proposed by: Aaron Lowman
Signature:

Seconded by: Michael Darlow
Signature:



MOTION

Title: Update the Zero Tolerance on Sexual Harassment policy

To: Student Assembly

Meeting: 01

From: VP Student Activities (Michael Darlow)

Date: 11/10/2016

This Union Notes

1. University campuses should be safe, enabling students to learn and enjoy the experience without fear of intimidation, harassment or violence.
2. Recognising diversity of cultures, beliefs or political views does not preclude a consistent commitment to **respect** of the individual student, or groups with alternative beliefs, cultures or politics.
3. As a Union representing ALL of our students, we should assume a **zero tolerance** position to hate crime, sexual violence and harassment.
4. Students who experience hate crime, sexual violence or harassment should be confident enough in the systems, processes and responses- both within the Union and the University- to speak up.
5. It is the Unions duty to challenge disparaging and demeaning cultural norms, encouraging our members to respect and support one another.

This Union Believes

1. A national charity 'Drink Aware' survey (2016) found that over half of students surveyed nationally had experienced some level of sexual harassment whilst on campus.
2. NUS conducted national research into harassment on campus, resulting in the report "that's what she said", showing a large amount of students had been victims of sexual harassment on campus.
3. The Union has released a Brunel specific survey aimed at exploring incidences and levels of experience of harassment.
4. UUK (Universities UK) are investigating and addressing sexual violence, harassment and hate crime on campus- with the taskforce findings due to be published on Friday, 21st October.
5. It has received isolated but serious reports of sexual harassment and violence, and incidents of hate crime at Brunel.



6. That over the past year, representatives from the Union have worked with University staff to develop strategies and interventions to challenge sexual violence and harassment- including engaging with the pan-European research project- USVReact- seeking to enhance training for staff who may engage with survivors.

This Union Resolves

1. Seek further partnership with the University, and interested parties within the Brunel Community in reviewing, developing and implementing appropriate interventions against harassment and violence and further enhancing the support of victims/ survivors
2. Develop a declaration of behaviour outlining expectations of students during their time at Brunel
3. Run a series of activities celebrating and supporting the positive contributions of our diverse community at Brunel- building on I AM and Black History month. These events are to include engaging with the national "This BUCS girl can" campaign and developing a "This Girl can- LEAD" campaign.
4. Continue ongoing research regarding the Brunel student experience of Hate Crime, Sexual violence and harassment, driven by priority areas identified in the initial survey, and existing national data.
5. Review our marketing, publicity and communications policies, ensuring they reflect positive representations of all of our members, and prohibit any derogatory, demeaning or offensive language and imagery.
6. Explore and audit our internal processes (including complaints and support structures) relating to hate crime, sexual harassment and violence, with particular focus on creating safe (licensed) venues and union experiences (i.e. clubs, societies, events), delivering improvements as necessary.

This Union Mandates

1. Sports Federation Committee to develop a policy of acceptable behaviour specific to Sports Clubs, including reference to Initiations, language, accessibility and general conduct.
2. Societies Guild Committee to develop a policy of acceptable behaviour specific to Societies, including reference to language, accessibility and general conduct.
3. The President to ensure our licensed venues review response processes to complaints of this nature, and clearly state and enforce zero tolerance to Sexual violence, harassment and hate crime.

Proposed by: Michael Darlow VP

Seconded by: Aaron Lowman VP

Signature:

Signature:



MOTION

Title: Motion to join the national boycott of the NSS

To: Student Assembly

From: Ali Milani (President)

Date: 03/10/2016

This Union Notes

1. The national student survey (NSS) is run every spring to gather final year student satisfaction of their institution
2. The NSS is one of three principle metrics used by the government in the Teaching, Excellence Framework (TEF).
3. The TEF is being intrinsically linked to the further rise in tuition fees.
4. The Union has passed at an annual union meeting of all students, policy to support the campaign for free education.
5. The new question on student union completely ignores all our co-curricular activity, and instead, focuses entirely on academic representation.

This Union Believes

1. The NUS campaign to boycott the NSS will disrupt the government's metrics to raise tuition fees.
2. That it is part of our campaign for free education and against fee's to resist against the Teaching Excellence Framework.

This Union Resolves

- That the Union should vote in favour of the national ballot for an NSS boycott.
- The Union should campaign for students to disrupt the rise in tuition fees and boycott the NSS.

This Union Mandates

- The Union President to vote in support of the national ballot for an NSS boycott.
 - The Union principle officers to reject the TEF
-



Proposed by: Ali Milani
Signature:

Seconded by: Ammaar Ikram
Signature:



MOTION

Title: Motion for standing committees to report the same way as all other part time officers

To: Student Assembly

From: Elisabeth Mahase (Media Chair)

Date: 03/10/2016

This Union Notes

1. That while all full time and part time officers report to assembly through an accountability report, standing committee chairs have to report through minutes of their meetings.
2. Often minutes of these meetings are not complete reflections of the work that the committee chairs do.
3. Standing committee chairs are expected to lead within their remit, not just chair a meeting.

This Union Believes

1. That the reporting structure should be the same for all part time officers and standing committee chairs.

This Union Resolves

- That the reporting structure should be changed to be the same for all part time officers.
- That this should be enacted by the next accountability meeting of student assembly.

This Union Mandates

- The Union President, as the lead on democracy, to ensure this change is implemented.
-

Proposed by: Elisabeth Mahase
Signature:

Seconded by: Michael Darlow
Signature:



MOTION

Title: Emergency Motion: To oppose any increase in halls rent

To: Student Assembly

Meeting: 02

From: Ali Milani

Date: 03/11/2016

This Union Notes

1. Following initial discussing there has been a proposal to increase halls fees by 5%.
2. This price increase is due in the 2017/18 academic year
3. Last Academic year the Union lead a successful campaign against an increase in costs, reducing the proposed 4% increase to only a 2% increase.

This Union Believes

1. Half of Britain's students are struggling to pay their rent as prices spiral every higher
2. University accommodation should not be about making money, but providing a safe and suitable living environment for students.
3. A lack of reasonably priced accommodation leads to Higher Education being inaccessible

This Union Resolves

1. To pass this emergency motion and oppose the raise in accommodation fees.

This Union Mandates

1. The cabinet will get together with Executive Committee and put together a campaign to oppose the rise in Fees.
 2. For the Union to keep everyone informed of the progress of the campaign.
-

Proposed by: Joe Greenwood

Seconded by: Lewis Poolman

Signature:

Signature:



MOTION

Title: To approve the Student Charter

To: Annual Union meeting

Meeting: (AUM 01 - 2016)

From: Aaron Lowman

Date: 10/11/2016

This Union Notes

1. Brunel University London is made up of staff and students who live, study and work within a multicultural society.
2. We all support the right to study and participate in a community where equality is promoted, diversity and inclusivity is respected, and where student representation and engagement opportunities are values as a vital contribution to continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
3. Students and Staff have worked together to develop and update the Student charter.

This Union Believes

1. The Brunel Student Charter summarises the way that the University, our students and the Union of Brunel Students work in partnership to develop a high quality educational experience. This is done by generating employable and community aware graduates who are responsible for themselves as learners and individuals.
2. This new version of the Charter is designed to be more student friendly.

This Union Resolves

1. To approve this new version of the student charter

This Union Mandates

1. The Union to work in partnership with the University to ensure it is circulated and publicised to both Student and Staff.
-

Proposed by: Aaron Lowman

Seconded by: Ceri Williams

Signature:

Signature:



MOTION

Title: Zero tolerance to substance abuse

To: Annual Union meeting

Meeting: (AUM 01 - 2016)

From: Naomi Taiwo

Date: 10/11/2016

This Union Notes

1. The prevalence of recreational drug-taking on campus has reached an all-time high
2. Students are plagued with the scent of drugs all the time, all over campus

This Union Believes

1. Illegal substances such as cannabis can not only have physical effects such as triggering asthma but has also been linked to psychological problems such as schizophrenia, psychosis, paranoia, confusion, lethargy
2. Not only are those taking such substances on campus affected, but the student body as a whole. This affects how safe campus is deemed by the students that live in it, particularly in the evenings
3. The union already has a zero tolerance policy against drugs if a person is caught in possession of them, but more preventative measures need to be put in place as this is not seeming to be effective enough in preventing the rise of illegal substance use on campus

This Union Resolves

1. The union as a whole to launch a collective drug awareness campaign aimed at all students / as many students as possible – in order to best tackle to problem.
2. The campaign should focus not only on raising awareness on drugs but all illegal substances that are hazardous, along with signposting individuals who may be struggling, to the appropriate services and charities.

This Union Mandates

1. The Vice President Student Activities to work with Sports clubs launching a campaign on drugs in sport.
2. The Women's Officer to raise awareness on drug-taking amongst women and some of the reasons why.
3. The BME Officer to raise awareness on drug issues within the BME community.
4. The Disabilities officer to launch a campaign raising awareness on the effects of drug taking on mental health

Proposed by: Naomi Taiwo

Seconded by: Natasha Kamuna

Signature:

Signature:



MOTION

Title: Motion to remove the Sports Federation Chair and Societies Guild Chair positions

To: Student Assembly

Meeting: 03

From: Michael Darlow (VP Student Activities)

Date: 24/11/2016

This Union Notes

1. The Sports Federation and Societies Guild Committees are the democratic areas where decisions should be made in their respective fields.
2. Only one of the last five elections has been contested.

This Union Believes

1. Despite terms of reference being put into the place for both committees, they are not fulfilling their remit.
2. The current structure does not work. The roles have become ineffective and those elected into the positions find there is no value in their role.
3. The Vice President Student Activities is a full-time role and therefore would be able to dedicate more time and experience to ensure these committees are effective.

This Union Resolves

1. To remove the positions of sports federation and societies guild chair.
2. To amend Bye Law H 4.1.1; The Chair of the Sports Federation shall be the Vice President Student Activities.
3. To amend Bye Law H 5.1.1; The Chair of the Societies Guild shall be the Vice President Student Activities.
4. Removal of Bye Law H 4.1.2 and 5.1.2.
5. Amend all other Bye Laws as required to uphold the spirit of this motion.

This Union Mandates

1. The Vice President Student Activities oversees this transition.
-

Proposed by: Michael Darlow

Seconded by: Noor Almadani

Signature:

Signature:



MOTION

Title: Late Submission Policy

To: Student Assembly

Meeting: 03

From: Yousef Mohamed

Date: 24/11/2016

This Union Notes

1. The University has changed the late submission policy, where before a student could submit up to two weeks after the deadline, this is now only 48 hours.
2. This is also for a pass mark only, 40% for undergraduates, 50% for postgraduates, where before the maximum cap would decrease slowly from the deadline.
3. This was put in place by the University to improve the time to return of feedback to students.

This Union Believes

1. The Union needs a position on the late submission policy, as the university does not have sufficient support mechanisms for when a student needs more time.
2. The change to the policy was not adequately circulated to Students.
3. This is more likely to have an effect on Disabled Students, Students with Caring responsibilities, and students from poorer backgrounds and Black & Ethnic Minority Students.

This Union Resolves

For the Union to have a position against the policy

This Union Mandates

The Union to create an open forum for discussion, to help develop a policy to be approved by Student Assembly.

Proposed by: Yousef Mohamed

Seconded by: Ali Milani

Signature:

Signature:



Incorporation Recommendation to the Trustee Board

From : Trustee Board

Date : 30.3.17

Background and Summary

The Trustee Board has been looking at the issue of whether the Union should incorporate throughout this last year. Many Unions have decided to incorporate in recent years, some when they initially registered as charities and some more recently as a newer vehicle, the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) has been created and agreed. Currently the Union of Brunel Students is a Charitable Unincorporated Organisation and therefore has no corporate legal identity as such, in that its legal status is provided by the Trustees.

The main drivers for incorporating in the Union movement are:

1. Protection of Trustees from personal liability
2. Recruitment of Independent Trustees
3. Providing a stable recognisable entity for other business or organisations to engage with (contracts, investments, loans etc).

These issues have become much more prevalent since the introduction of the accounting regulation FRS102 which requires Unions to declare their entire pension liability on their balance sheet, rather than just the liability in that financial year, which can make the Union's funding look unstable. We are also in an increasingly litigious environment and although not a regular occurrence, when cases are brought often the sums involved are significantly large nowadays.

The Board has sought legal advice and has had a briefing prepared and have met in person with Nick Burrows, a partner at our Lawyers. The case for and against incorporation were explored as were the two vehicles to achieve it, either a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee or a CIO. It was evident that although risks of personal liability were very slim, the effects could be catastrophic for the individuals concerned and that there was no real reason not to incorporate other than affordability. It was also considered that the best fit vehicle for us would be the CIO.

Our constitution allows the transfer of assets and liabilities to a limited liability entity.

Following the recommendation of the Board of Trustees; the Members at a Union Meeting or by Referendum may authorise the Trustees to transfer the assets and liabilities of the Union to a limited liability entity established for exclusively charitable purposes with the same or similar objects, and to dissolve the Union at any time following the transfer if it is considered appropriate to do so.

Risks & Considerations

The key risk is in the transfer of liabilities and assets, particularly the pension liability which if not administered properly could trigger a debt under Section 75 of the pensions act which would force us to settle the pension debt in full rather than transfer the liability to the new entity. This would be in the region of £1.75M

The Trustees of the pension scheme are well versed in these practices and will be opening the scheme to enable liability transfers between July and September 2017.



Changing status will not affect the current Governance or Democratic structures as the current constitution can be transferred as the binding document for the new entity.

Recommendation

It is the recommendation of the Board of Trustees with the full support of the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance that the organisation change its corporate status from an Unincorporated Organisation to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It is recommended that this take place on August 1st 2017 or as close as is reasonably practicable thereafter.



MOTION

Title: Late Submission Policy

To: Union Meeting

Meeting: 03

From: Yousef Mohamed

Date: 23/2/2017

This Union Notes

4. During the summer, 2016, the University changed its course work submission policy. It noted that academics were struggling to return coursework within a 3 week period. On top of requiring departments to measure when work was returned late, it was decided to remove regulations which allowed students to submit work up to 15 working days (3 weeks) after the deadline. Therefore leading to a shorter return time, as staff will have all to coursework to compare. This also brought it in to line with policies at other Universities. A summary of the changes are below.
5. The University has changed the late submission policy, where before a student could submit up to two weeks after the deadline, this is now only 48 hours.
6. This is also for a pass mark only, 40% for undergraduates, 50% for postgraduates, where before the maximum cap would decrease slowly from the deadline.
7. This was put in place by the University to improve the time to return of feedback to students
- 5- Summary comparison between the current and old policy University Coursework submission Policy.

submitted up to:	Old policy	Current policy
1 working day	Capped 70%/ A-	Up to 48hrs late
2 working days	Capped 60%/B-	Capped D-
working days	Capped 50%/ C-	Failed
10 working days	Capped 40%/ D-	
15 working days	Capped 30%/ E-	
> 15 working days	Capped 0%	
Mitigating (exceptional) Circumstances	Students can apply for MCs before a deadline, or up to 5 working days after, they can either submit for the full amount, be reassessed or ask for an extended deadline	

This Union Believes



4. The Union believes that it is important to have coursework submission policy that enables the university to meet the 3 weeks feedback return policy ensuring meaningful feedback on assignments.
5. The union believes that university mitigating circumstances policy has to be improved in response to the changes in the coursework submission policy to accommodate any new circumstances that may become relevant as result of any changes.
6. The union believe the current late submission policy is far too harsh and it does not accommodate students with disabilities and mental health issues or any technical issues that may be encountered
7. The union believes that current late submission policy is unfair as it does not distinguish between being late for 1 minute and 48 hours.

This Union Resolves

1. For the Union to have a position against the current late submission policy as it is far too strict and the university does not have sufficient support mechanisms for when a student needs more time.
2. For the union to lobby to enhance the mitigating circumstances policy accommodate any changes in the coursework submission policy.

Proposed by: Yousef Mohamed

Seconded by: Mohamed Omar

Signature:

Signature:



MOTION

Title: Mental Health Awareness

To: Student Assembly

Meeting: 05

From: Ceri Williams

Date: 27/04/2017

This Union Believes

1. During the exam period May 8th – 26th 2017 the VPPG will be running and organising a Stress Less Campaign as a way of challenging mental health stigma and providing resources, workshops and sessions to help with students mental health.
2. The ChildLine National Exam Stress Survey revealed that 96% of the 1300 who completed the survey felt anxious about exams and revision, with 59% feeling pressure from their parents to do well and 64% saying they have never received any support in dealing with exams.
3. The purpose of this campaign is to ensure that students have access to help, advice and simple sessions such as dance, yoga, animal therapy, colouring and movie nights which are shown to help reduce anxiety levels and allows students a platform to speak and share their stories.

This Union further believes

4. It would be beneficial for the student body if this campaign was an annually run campaign and was set as a mandate for the officers elect every year.

The Union Resolves

For this campaign to be run annually.

This Union Mandates

The officers elect to ensure this campaign is run annually

Proposed by: Ceri Williams
Signature:

Seconded by: Kushti Westwood
Signature:



MOTION

Title: NUS Black Students Campaign Inclusivity and Representation

To: Student Assembly

Meeting: 05

From: Nikita Quartey

Date: 27/4/2017

This Union Believes

1. NUS Black Students campaign is an opportunity for Black Students to come together, discuss relevant issues and solutions and be well represented. It is particularly a place where Black Students in leadership (BME officers and Union Presidents) come, bringing the experience of their roles from their various institutions to share, support one another, change policy and make an impact on the advancement of the Black Community.

This Union further believes

2. Whilst the NUS Black Students Campaign has made many steps in the right direction, it seems (particularly at conference) that only Black students with certain specific viewpoints are catered for and represented. There seems to be heavy emphasis on fighting “the White enemy” and less emphasis on solution based action according to issues that are currently affecting the black community in this country at this time. There also seems to be emphasis / particular support of certain political viewpoints, not taking into account the fact that many at conference do not share the same political viewpoints, and at times may feel ostracised because they may feel they do not fit the specific type of black person being represented and celebrated here.

This Union Resolves

To send this motion to NUS Black Student Conference calling for the NUS Black Students Campaign to:

1. To put a restriction on assuming certain political stances concerning political issues without first taking a vote to ensure that conference agrees with what is being said from the front
2. To make an active effort towards focusing on major issues that face our black community in the UK today – issues such as Black on Black crime,



Black mental health , lack of support for Black businesses, lack of aspiration, individualism, prejudice within the black community (to name a few).

3. To make an active effort to take the emphasis off “the White enemy” and more on what we can do as officers and Black students to effect positive change

This Union Mandates

The delegate to Black Student Conference to support this motion

Proposed by: Nikita Quartey Seconded by: Tiffany Taderera

Signature:

Signature: