



**Union of Brunel Students**  
**2020-2021 Policy & Motions**

## Overview

| <b>Title</b>  | <b>Passed</b> | <b>Lapses</b> | <b>Page</b> |
|---|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Enhancing the student experience for deaf Students  | 10/12/2020    |               |             |
| Motion to Ban Companies from Campus   | 10/12/2020    |               |             |
| Motion for Student Union to call for reduction in tuition fees  | 16/02/2020    |               |             |
| Motion for Student Union to support Brunel Student Justice  | 16/02/2020    |               |             |
| Motion for the Union and the University to emphasize the climate crisis and support the campaign against the Third Runway at Heathrow | 16/02/2020    |               |             |
| Motion for the Union to lobby the University to introduce Fixed fees for international students.                                      | 16/02/2020    |               |             |
| Motion to lobby for tuition fees rebate for home, EU, and international students in the COVID-19 pandemic.                            | 16/02/2020    |               |             |
|   |               |               |             |

To: Student Assembly

Meeting: SA02

From: Olivia Smith (Disabled Students' Officer)

Date: 23/11/2020

---

#### **This Union Notes**

1. Research undertaken in 2019 Deaf pupils in England are struggling "at every stage of their education",
2. The national picture of Higher Education for deaf students, shows a lack of support:
  - 46% of deaf students who need support at university were still waiting for it when their course began. Of those, more than half (59%) experienced delays of more than two months and over a quarter (28%) waited six months or more.
  - Of those, over half waited more than two months for it to be put in place.
  - The National Deaf Children's Society has called on the Government and universities to "stop resting on their laurels and start delivering for deaf students."
  - The report was based on 134 deaf students' experiences at university.
3. There is no mandatory deaf awareness training currently in place for staff to undertake at the start or during their employment.
4. Staff are ignorant of the behaviours and actions that hinder deaf students' learning.
5. There are approximately 20 registered deaf students at Brunel, and possibly more unregistered students.

#### **This Union Believes**

1. There should be mandatory deaf awareness training that staff have to undertake at the start of their employment or during the employment contract.
2. Staff behaviour, planning and setup in lectures and seminars can all negatively impact a deaf students' ability to learn at university.
3. Staff members in the University should be ensuring all students have an exceptional student experience. If staff members do not understand their student's abilities and limitations, they cannot provide a high-level student experience.
4. All students should feel adequately supported from the moment they start their course at University. Any additional support or needs should be identified prior to a students start date, and support measures should be put in place ready for the start of term.

#### **This Union Resolves**

1. The union should lobby the university's human resources department to provide adequate extensive deaf awareness training for the university staff on all levels.
  2. To ensure that the University are taking appropriate measures to ensure support is in place prior to students start dates.
  3. To highlight how the lack of deaf awareness can impact students.
- 

**Proposed by: Olivia Smith (Disabled Students Officer)**

**Seconded by: Connie Fernandes (VP SA)**

References:

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/about-us/news-and-media/latest-news/almost-half-of-deaf-students-start-university-without-support/>

## Motion to Ban Companies from Campus

**To: student Assembly**

**Meeting: SA02**

**From: Jeannine Bastard (Design Student Assembly Representative)**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

---

### **1. This Union Notes:**

- 1.1. 50% of online gamblers who have gambled using a mobile phone in the past four weeks
- 1.2. The most recent figures for industry expenditure on advertising show that spend on marketing increased 56% between 2014-17 and is now worth £1.5 billion
- 1.3. While student drinking is common at most universities, binge drinking, and subsequent abuse is a serious problem; 41% of students in a recent study of UK universities are identified as 'hazardous drinkers'.

### **2. This Union Believes**

- 2.1. That the Union should not be an overbearing force in student's lives – students should be able to engage in any legal activity they wish. However, companies that target this demographic solely, or create products designed exclusively for students that will damage their health or bring them into excessive debt should not be able to promote on the University grounds.
- 2.2. That any attempts to undermine the health or financial wellbeing of students for commercial gain is a deplorable act.
- 2.3. Aspects of smoking, drinking, and gambling have strong links to poor or declining mental health and the union has a duty to protect and assist students struggling with such aspects.

### **3. This Union Resolves**

- 3.1. To ensure that any company that falls within the categories of smoking, drinking, gambling, and pay-day loans do not advertise exclusively to students or create products to the same effect. If it is within our venues (Locos and Academy) they are excluded
  - 3.2. To provide further support and advice to those who have become addicted, have fallen into financial difficulties and have struggles with mental health as a result of the companies within these industries. This support should be demonstrated by student centre and union staff and posters warning students of such problems, such as 'when the fun stops, Stop.'
- 

**Proposed by: Jeannine Bastard**

**Seconded by: Jade Balmer**

**Title: Motion for Student Union to call for reduction in tuition fees**

**To: Student Assembly**

**Meeting:** <insert>

**From:** Alice McCleary, Ciara Haynes

**Date:** <insert>

---

**This Union Notes**

Tuition fees charged by Brunel University for the 2021/22 academic year are set to be £9,250 per year for home students and anywhere between £14,750 and £40,000 per year for International Students.

**This Union Believes**

- These fees are too high and should be reduced.
- If the University is unable to reduce the fees, they need to show us in their finances exactly why this is the case.
- Universities provide a public service and Brunel University senior management should put pressure on the Government to properly fund Higher Education.
- The Vice Chancellor, Julia Buckingham, in her position as President of Universities UK, should urge other Vice-Chancellors to do the same, and back a higher level of Government spending on Universities and other higher education facilities.

**This Union Resolves**

- The Union of Brunel Students should call on the University to reduce fees.
  - If a reduction in fees is not possible, the Union should call on the University to reveal its finances, in full, and explain why it cannot do this.
  - The Union should tell the University and senior management to pressure the Government on the issue of funding Higher Education.
  - The Union should also pressure the Government on the issue of funding Higher Education.
  - The Union should write a letter to the Government on this issue.
  - The Union should pressure the senior management of the University to write an open letter to the Government on this issue, to be signed by the Vice Chancellor and other senior management.
  - The Union should pressure the Vice Chancellor to write a letter to Vice-Chancellors around the country, calling on them to back our position on Government funding of Higher Education.
- 

**Proposed by:** Alice McCleary  
**Signature:**

**Seconded by:** Ciara Haynes  
**Signature:**

**Title: Motion for Student Union to support Brunel Student Justice**

**To: Student Assembly**

**Meeting: <insert>**

**From: Noah Yeates, Arvin Aji George**

**Date: <insert>**

---

**This Union Notes**

1. Students on campus are not allowed to use facilities promised at the start of the year.
2. Many students with a rent contract in halls are currently not allowed to return to campus due to government Covid-19 guidelines.
3. Brunel Student Justice is a movement seeking to improve the student conditions.
4. Over 180 members of the Brunel Student Justice have pledged to Rent Strike till the university offers a deal that improves student conditions.
5. Brunel Student Justice is one of over 50 officially recognised rent strikes in a national movement consisting of movements from over 50 universities across the United Kingdom.
6. Classes have been moved entirely online during the lockdown period which is not what was promised to the students when they paid their tuition fees at the start of the year.
7. If a student chooses to go on rent strike, there is a slight chance there could be legal ramifications.
8. Currently there are two Student Union officers in a University meeting with only of the officers having a vote in the decisions.

**This Union Believes**

1. Brunel Student Justice is a democratic movement which seek to represent students of Brunel facing hardships.
2. With over 700 petition signatures, Brunel Student Justice has successfully broadcasted a growing dissent over the current student conditions from the student populace.
3. Helping Brunel Student Justice reach a wider platform and supporting what they stand for will help the Union represent the students under its care best.
4. No member was elected predicting such unprecedented circumstances, and the best way for accepting a deal from the university is by holding a referendum for all students in the university to agree or disagree upon.
5. There are pathways to securing a refund on tuition fees like the Office of Students (OFS) and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) that the Student union can publicize and help all students file a joint complaint.
6. The legal risks faced by rent strikers are minimised, thanks to the number of current strikers across the country and the bad press taking legal action would generate for the University.
7. The students have some amount of voting power in University meetings however we feel it is not enough and should be increased.

**This Union Resolves**

1. Student Union of Brunel to officially support the Brunel Student Justice movement.

2. An email to be sent to all Brunel Students detailing the unions support. This mail will include the list of their demands in full and contact info of Brunel Student Justice.
3. Not accepting any further deal from the university on the current issues without holding a referendum on its acceptance that is open to all Brunel Students.
4. Posting on the Brunel Union of Students website stating their support, with a list of Brunel Student Justice demands and contact info.
5. Publicize the pathways to securing a refund through official methods (OIA/OFS) and help all students achieve this refund by helping form a joint complaint.
6. Open discussions with the university and pressure the university to publish minutes from all their meetings.
7. Creation of a student role specific to partaking in university meetings to give students more voting power.

---

**Proposed by: Noah Yeates**

**Signature:**

**Seconded by: Arvin Aji George**

**Signature:**

## Motion for the Union and the University to emphasize the climate crisis and support the campaign against the Third Runway at Heathrow

To: AGM

From: Jade Balmer

Date: 11/11/2020

---

### This Union Notes:

1. The University and Students Union has already declared a climate crisis and is taking active steps to lower our carbon footprint on campus/local community
2. The third runway at Heathrow will further destroy local habitats and environment and the increased of flights will increase carbon emissions, as well as in the increased traffic towards the airport (only 4 miles away)
3. In order to build the runway, 700 homes and livelihoods in local villages will be taken down and the houses left will make unlivable villages and break the local community<sup>1</sup>
4. The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change, that the UK has signed which promises to reduce air traffic - Expansion would not be possible within this agreement unless regional airports were scaled back, which would mean more job losses<sup>2</sup>
5. The main body of Heathrow will not be affected and the same number of flights will be available for international students
6. There are many active pressure groups, in favor for acknowledgement and governmental change of climate change, most are very vocal in the local community and already stand against the runway and HS2 (These include XR, Hillingdon Council Labour and conservatives, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth etc.)
7. Heathrow is the UK's single biggest polluter<sup>3</sup>
8. The Union believes that Black lives matter and supports with Black History Month. The Climate crisis will have a disproportionate impact on the Global South whom are mainly people of Colour.
9. The Global Pandemic has permanently reduced the need for international Business flights (Amazon have said they will be using Zoom more)
10. In 2015, Boris Johnson (Brunel's Local MP) said he would lie down in front of bulldozers to prevent Heathrow expansion. As Prime Minister, he has the power to cancel Heathrow expansion once and for all.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://metro.co.uk/2018/06/08/heathrows-third-runway-plan-will-destroy-my-home-friendships-and-leave-me-a-refugee-in-my-own-country-7613484/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

<sup>3</sup> <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/why-were-fighting-against-third-runway-heathrow#:~:text=all%20these%20warnings,-.Climate%2Dwrecking%20third%20runway%20at%20Heathrow.CO2%20into%20the%20atmosphere.>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/london/west/hillingdon/boris-johnson-to-miss-heathrow-vote-bulldozers/>

**This Union Believes:**

1. It is unacceptable for the local community and environment to be broken in this way, for the sake of more flights that already harm the environment.
2. We have a duty to support a promise already created by the University/Union and it would be hypocritical to the go against this.
3. Everyone deserves to breathe in clean air and to feel safe in their environment.
4. It is our duty to provide and protect the next generation, this would be a step in the right direction.
5. The increase of air traffic will be further noise disruption but also increased local traffic, which will affect students especially those who travel into campus

**This Union Resolves:**

1. To lobby Boris Johnson to cancel Heathrow expansion.
2. To educate the Student Population on the threat of Heathrow expansion to the environment and climate
3. To release a statement solidifying the cause against the expansion and also lobby the university to do so

**Proposer:**

Jade Balmer

**Secunder:**

Connie Fernandes

## MOTION

### Motion for the Union to lobby the University to introduce Fixed fees for international students.

**To: Annual General Meeting**

**From: Anvitha Paruchuri**

**Date: 11/11/2020**

---

#### **This Union Notes:**

1. Brunel review tuition fees for International Students on an annual basis. This means that International Students can pay different amounts for each year of study<sup>i</sup>.
2. Many other Universities, including UCL<sup>ii</sup>, Sheffield<sup>iii</sup>, Manchester<sup>iv</sup>, and Edinburgh<sup>v</sup> have implemented a 'fixed fee' policy, keeping tuition fees at the same level for each year of their study<sup>vi</sup>.
3. International students pay between 15000-29000 pounds for each year for their study depending on their course.
4. From next academic year EU students will have to pay international tuition fee.

#### **This Union Believes:**

1. It is wrong for the University to increase fees for international students during the middle of a course of study.
2. International Students should know how much they are going to be paying for each year of their study when applying for their course.
3. The constant increase in international tuition fee is making international students feel discriminated.
4. Not knowing what the tuition fee is going to be in creating a lot of stress for students while planning their financial arrangements
5. The financial impact this year on the university will have a direct impact on increase international student tuition fee in the future as it's a massive source of income to the university and is uncapped.

#### **This Union Resolves:**

1. To lobby the University to implement a fixed tuition fee policy for all International Students.
2. Campaign for fixed international tuition fee if needed

**Proposed by : Anvitha Paruchuri**

**Seconded by: Eshna Sikr**

---

<sup>i</sup> Brunel University London, <https://www.brunel.ac.uk/about/information/student-fees>

<sup>ii</sup> UCL, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/tuition-fees/overseas-students-fees>

<sup>iii</sup> Sheffield, <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/international/fees-and-funding/tuition-fees>

<sup>iv</sup> Manchester, [https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/international/finance/fees/;](https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/international/finance/fees/)

<sup>v</sup> Edinburgh, <https://www.ed.ac.uk/tuition-fees/find/undergraduate/2020-2021/study-away/overseas;>

British council, <https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk/eu-students#:~:text=Will%20EU%20students%20have%20to,fee%20status'%20in%20the%20UK.>

---

## MOTION

**Title: Motion to lobby for tuition fees rebate for home, EU, and international students in the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**To: Student Assembly**

**Meeting: Meeting number**

**From: Eshna Sikri, VPCEdPS**

**Date: Friday, 29 January 2021**

---

### **This Union Notes**

1. The university promised dual learning to students at the start of the academic year 2020/21 which was not achieved.
2. The university has stated that they have followed the OFS (Office for students) guidelines for teaching, meaning all guidelines have been followed to achieve the learning outcome.
3. The OIA guidelines state that 50% of tuition fees from students goes into campus facilities.
4. The education minister has stated that the universities can access money for hardship funds through OFS but not helped with funding for tuition fees specifically.
5. The university has also stated that this is a governmental issue and needs to be tackled at a higher level.
6. The Westminster government has accepted that students should act if they are not satisfied with their university's response to the pandemic.
7. Universities UK have urged students to complaint to their university in case the learning outcome has not been achieved.
8. More than half of Britain's students are struggling to pay their tuition fees.
9. International tuition fees have inflated regardless of the pandemic.
10. The university have not published a form based on the pandemic structure to file a complaint against having learning outcomes achieved.

### **This Union Believes**

1. The students at Brunel have been disadvantaged as they were not delivered what they were promised. The dual learning was not achieved due to the current circumstances.
2. The university have tried their best to facilitate an educational experience, but the government have not supported the university. The students are suffering due to this.
3. There should be a threshold of rebate (50%) that all students (Home, EU, and international students) should be eligible to apply for based on the OIA guidelines.
4. The student's mental health is getting affected due to the stress of paying such high amounts of tuition fees in a pandemic.
5. The standard of online teaching is not like face-to-face learning, which becomes equivalent to distance learning.

### **This Union Resolves**

1. To run a nation-wide campaign with other student unions and trade unions.
2. To create a campaign with the NUS for tuition fees rebates by passing the motion in NUS conference and getting their support.
3. To be on the advisory panel for the national campaign, VPCEdPS, union elected officer has already been involved as the reserved member for this panel.

- 
4. To speak to the university about the amount of finances going to the facilities on campus that students are not able to access.
  5. To lobby with our local MP for financial support to the university.
  6. To look at different modes of payments and offer negotiations for rebates according to individual situations.
  7. The VPC's to work with the university on a form for complaints specifically based on COVID-19 to cover OFS guidelines on a course-by-course basis.
  8. To work with the university officials to gain attention from the government to support the university finances for tuition fee rebates on course-by-course basis.
- 

*All motions require 2 students to sponsor the motion. Usually, the proposer is the student submitting the motion, the seconder is another student who supports the motion.*

**Proposed by: Eshna**

**Seconded by: Aaron Sonny**

---

Westminster government's statement:

<https://wonkhe.com/wonk-corner/students-are-entitled-to-tuition-fee-refunds-over-covid/>

Students petition:

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/mar/25/hundreds-thousands-uk-students-call-tuition-fee-refunds>

[Statements from different bodies on tuition fees](#)

[Tuition Fees - Monday 16 November 2020 - Hansard - UK Parliament](#)

OFS warns universities against blanket tuition fees rebates

[English universities must consider partial fee refunds, says regulator | Tuition fees | The Guardian](#)

Tuition fees rebates guidelines by OIA

[Coronavirus - FAQ for students - OIAHE](#)

Students struggle with COVID-19

[80% of UK Students Struggling Financially Due to COVID-19 | Top Universities](#)