

CUSU Council (Lent I)

Monday 20th January 2020, 7pm

SU Lounge, 17 Mill Lane  
Agenda

1. Objections to the order of items on the agenda
2. Matters arising from the minutes of the last Council Meeting
3. Announcements by Committees, Campaign Teams and the Executive
   1. **Officer accountability**
   2. **Updates from Campaigns and the Executive**
4. Ratification of Trustee appointments
5. Discussions
   1. **Cambridge SU by-laws**
6. Proposed Standing Orders amendment
7. Ordinary Policy Motions from Previous Council
   1. **Campaigning for Antiracist training for University Staff\***
   2. **Campaigning for Improving Unconscious Bias training for University Staff involved in Admissions Procedures\***
8. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions
   1. **Motion to support campaigns working to cut all ties between Cambridge University and the fossil fuel industry**
   2. **Kashmir Solidarity and Citizenship Act Motion**
9. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions
   1. **Motion to apply for Council Free Budget to run ‘The Art of Being Present’: Exploration of Tarot and Mindfulness Event for women and non-binary people of colour**
   2. **Motion to apply for Council Free Budget to fund the cost of printing Volume 1 of the Decolonise! Magazine**
   3. **Approval of updated BME Campaign Constitution**
10. Any other business

\*For note, except where these items are unstarred by a vote of Council members, or amendments are submitted.

Supporting Information

1. Objections to the order of items on the agenda
2. Matters arising from the minutes of the last Council meeting
   * Council must approve the minutes of the last meeting, which was non-quorate.
   * Minutes can be accessed via the CUSU council page at [www.cusu.co.uk](http://www.cusu.co.uk) and in the papers circulated for this meeting.
3. Announcements by Committees, Campaign Teams and the Executive
   * For updates from Sabbatical officers, please see accountability documents
   * Campaigns and Ethical Affairs will update at Council.
4. Ratification of Trustee appointments
   * To be presented by the Trustee Selection Committee
5. Discussions

The following Cambridge SU By-Laws are presented for discussion and can be accessed at the links below:

[By-Law 3: Sabbatical Officers](https://www.cusu.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/3.-The-Sabbatical-Officers.pdf)

[By-Law 5: Campaigns and Groups](https://www.cusu.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/5.-Campaigns-and-Groups.pdf)

1. Proposed Standing Orders Amendment

**5A. Standing Orders amendment proposal**

Proposer: Edward Parker Humphreys (President)  
Seconder: Joe Foye (Council Chair)

*Purpose: To allow full-time officers representing CUSU Campaigns to send a proxy vote to Council and Executive if they need to be absent.*

* D.7.ii.b: Add, “excluding where a sabbatical officer represents one of the CUSU Campaigns”.
* D.7.ii.c: Delete and replace with “The proxy votes of the Campaigns representatives, including Sabbatical Officers who represent a CUSU Campaign, i.b)(1) and i.b)(2) partially, are limited to Ordinary Members of the respective Campaign Executive.
* H.3.ii.a: After “Full-Time Executive Officers”, add “excluding those representing one of the CUSU Campaigns”.

1. Ordinary Policy Motions from Previous Council

Policy requires approval at two consecutive Councils. The approval of the ‘starred’ motion at the second Council will be deemed to be automatic unless this ‘star’ is removed by a single member at the second Council wanting to revisit the motion for further discussion.

Please find the starred policy motions that were passed at the last Council listed below:

**6A. Campaigning for Antiracist training for University Staff**

Proposer: Stella Swain (CUSU/GU Welfare and Rights Officer)

Seconder: Tyra Amofah-Akardom (BME Campaign)

**CUSU Notes:**

1. CUSU has been working with the University's Equality and Diversity Department on Unconscious Bias training for College staff, fellows and custodians;
2. In recent years, CUSU and the BME campaign have collated evidence and testimonials that a large proportion of students from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds believe racial or culturally-based prejudice is a problem at the University;
3. Proposals for carrying out Unconscious Bias and Equality and Diversity training have been being presented to Bursars, Senior Tutors and HR Managers from 2016, and in 2016 Hughes Hall carried out an Unconscious Bias Training session as a pilot;
4. In 2018 CUSU and the Preventing Prevent Campaign gathered testimonials from BME students on how the Prevent strategy affects them, and found that students who feel they are being racially profiled because of the Prevent Duty experience a “chilling effect”;
5. Also in 2018, the University asked Colleges to report details of welfare meetings to their Prevent board, which CUSU opposed (<https://www.facebook.com/presidentcusu/posts/215201419399806>)
6. The Vice Chancellor Vice Chancellor stated that Prevent “poses a threat” to our students, because they are being racially profiled (<https://www.varsity.co.uk/news/15188>);
7. The University has been working towards the Bronze Race Equalities Chartermark, and as part of which they have committed to “Provide workshops and training on race awareness, white privilege and allyship – for all staff”;
8. The University Equality and Diversity department have developed a training course for staff on unconscious bias;
9. The BME Campaign have run antiracist training with BME Officers across the Colleges;

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That all staff at the University and Colleges should be consistently trained in how counter their own biases and actively oppose racism;
2. That whilst Colleges seemed supportive of the proposals for Unconscious Bias training at the time, not enough Colleges have demonstrated a willingness to train and educate staff, fellows and custodians in this area;
3. That the Prevent training being rolled out across collegiate Cambridge encourages participants to rely on their biases in the pursuit of preventing people from being drawn to "extremism" as defined by UK Government policy leading to a disproportionate targeting of BME and Muslim students;
4. That Unconscious Bias training is by no means a perfect solution to tackling the concerns consistently raised by BME students, but it creates a platform for starting the conversation and mitigating elements of the Prevent training which disproportionally affects BME students.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To campaign for all members of College and University staff, fellows and custodians to attend compulsory Unconscious Bias training sessions, coordinated or supported by the Equality and Diversity department in conjunction with CUSU and the BME Campaign, and targeting those individuals who regularly interact with students;
2. To work with College JCR and MCR Committees to lobby their respective Colleges to carry out this training;
3. To work with E&D and the Schools and Departments of the University to make unconscious bias training a mandatory part of training for supervisors and tutors;
4. To continue to actively oppose the racist Prevent Duty by:
5. Providing J/MCRs with information about how to effectively argue against it in colleges;
6. Setting up antiracist training to challenge the profiling encouraged by the Prevent training;
7. Providing support for those students most affected by the Prevent Duty.

**6B. Campaigning for Improving Unconscious Bias training for University Staff involved in Admissions Procedures**

Officer responsible – Lily-Rose Sharry (CUSU Access and Funding)   
Seconder: Arran Parry-Davies (BME Campaign)

**CUSU Notes:**

1. Every year University staff who have been appointed as interviewers in admissions procedures for the first time must attend in person unconscious bias training ran by a team of trained admissions tutors.
2. The University's Equality and Diversity Department have collated existing and created their own resources on what unconscious bias is (particularly in relation to ethnicity and gender), how it can affect admissions decisions and how to mitigate the effects of it.
3. These resources are accessible on Moodle for anybody with a raven account.
4. Once a year before interviews take place all University staff that will be conducting admissions interviews not for the first time are reminded by email of the unconscious bias training resources online available on Moodle.
5. There currently exists no mechanism to record if University staff have or have not completed the online training each year.
6. Whilst there has been a positive shift in the admission of students identifying as BAME in the University in the long term, these students are still highly underrepresented within the University. Overall Cambridge University admits a lower proportion of students who identify as BAME than the sector as a whole (Access and Participation Plan 2020-25) with the starkest difference within Black students, Cambridge’s intake being 2.2% compared to the sector’s being 10.5% (APP 2020-25).
7. For Asian and Black students there is a significant entry rate gap; fewer applicants are admitted than would be expected from application numbers (APP 2020-25).
8. For Black students, this gap is explained by prior academic attainment to an extent but not completely (APP 2020-25).
9. The gap for Asian students is currently less well understood consequently the University has acknowledged that this requires further investigation (APP 2020).
10. Whilst the percentage of students identifying as women within STEMM subjects has been increasing incrementally since 2013-14, they currently remain to be underrepresented within the discipline (36.1% in 2015-16 according to the E&D report).

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That presenting staff with the impact that their biases can have on admissions decisions can be an effective method of challenging those biases.
2. That unconscious bias training is by no means a perfect solution to tackling concerns of underrepresentation, but it creates a platform for starting the conversation and mitigating the effects of such biases to an extent.
3. University staff conducting admissions interviews should complete refresher unconscious bias training every year before the interviews take place.
4. Such training should be essential and completion should be recorded to ascertain who needs to be reminded to complete it.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To campaign for the University to adopt a mechanism to record whether or not staff responsible for conducting admissions interviews have completed the online unconscious bias training.
2. To additionally campaign for members of staff who have been recorded as not having completed such training to be reminded by the Cambridge Admissions Office and / or the team of admissions tutors that completing such training is mandatory every year.
3. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions

**7A. Motion to support campaigns working to cut all ties between Cambridge University and the fossil fuel industry**

Proposer: Jake Simms, CUSU Ethical Affairs Campaign

Seconder: Ollie Banks, CUSU Ethical Affairs Campaign

**CUSU Notes**

1. That climate breakdown is one of the biggest ethical issues of our generation. Hundreds of thousands of people are already displaced from their homes every year as a result of climate change, whilst the number of deadly extreme weather events continues to increase.
2. That climate breakdown disproportionately affects those already living precarious lives, and vulnerable populations.
3. That fossil fuel companies are directly responsible for climate breakdown; just 100 companies are responsible for 71% of global carbon emissions.
4. That the University’s mission statement is “to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence,” and that among its core values are stated “freedom of thought and expression,” “freedom from discrimination,” “the contribution which the University can make to society through the pursuit, dissemination, and application of knowledge,” “the place of the University within the broader academic and local community,” and “concern for sustainability and the relationship with the environment.”
5. That the 2019 Dismantling the Fossil Fuel University Report by Cambridge Zero Carbon Society revealed that the University of Cambridge provides direct and legitimising support for fossil fuel companies through investments, research, training, sponsorship and recruitment.
6. That the immediate demands of the 2019 Report are: (i) Stop accepting donations and research grants from fossil fuel companies, (ii) Stop accepting sponsorships and advertising from fossil fuel companies, (iii) Stop inviting fossil fuel companies to careers fairs hosted by the University or its constituent faculties, (iv) Stop awarding honorary fellowships and inviting fossil fuel executives to speak on academic platforms
7. That the medium-term (by 2021) demands of the 2019 Report are: (i) Remove named branding of fossil fuel companies in buildings, departments, prizes, scholarships and academic appointments, (ii) Cut all extractive research conducted by the University, (iii) Establish a programme to find alternative modes of funding for researchers, (iv) Divest fully from fossil fuels and reinvest in climate solutions, (v) End formal consultancy and training of fossil fuel companies and halt fossil fuel commercialisation of academic research.
8. That CUSU has existing policy to support campaigns working towards, and to itself contribute to campaigning for, the divestment of the endowments of the University and its constituent and affiliate bodies from the fossil fuel industry.
9. That CUSU has existing policy to publicly support existing and future student groups, campaigns, and movements which work towards the demilitarisation of the University.

**CUSU Believes**

1. That fossil fuel companies are directly responsible for climate breakdown; just 100 companies are responsible for 71% of global carbon emissions.
2. That the activities of fossil fuel companies are wholly incompatible with a just and liveable future.
3. That supporting or working with the fossil fuel industry in any way runs contrary to the University’s mission statement of ‘concern for sustainability and the relationship with the environment’.
4. That cutting all ties with the fossil fuel industry is a moral imperative and a crucial step to taking tangible action to tackle climate breakdown.
5. That the Cambridge Zero Carbon Society’s demands represent just and practical means of the University transitioning its operations away from supporting the fossil fuel industry.
6. That CUSU should be at the forefront of campaigning for, and supporting student campaigns for climate justice.

**CUSU Resolves**

1. To mandate the CUSU President and sabbatical offers to work with campaigns calling on Cambridge University to cut its links with fossil fuel companies, including Cambridge Zero Carbon Society;
2. To mandate the CUSU President and other sabbatical officers to lobby for the University to cut its links to the fossil fuel industry at meetings with University officials, especially the Vice-Chancellor;
3. That CUSU should make a public statement calling on Cambridge University and its colleges to cut all ties with fossil fuel companies;
4. To formally adopt a policy position that the University and its colleges cut all ties with fossil fuel companies.

**7B. Kashmir Solidarity and Citizenship Act Motion**

Proposer: Jess O’Brien (Disabled Students’ Officer)

Seconder: Stella Swain (Welfare & Rights Officer)

**CUSU notes:**

1. That the Indian government has recent taken action with respect to Jammu and Kashmir. These actions have included:
   1. the decisions to revoke Jammu and Kashmir’s special status under the Indian constitution, and to divide it into two Union Territories with resultant significant loss of autonomy;
   2. the (ongoing) imposition of restrictions that are preventing people in Kashmir from communicating with the outside world.
2. While the Indian government has suppressed communications by Kashmiri people, hindered local reportage and journalism, kept elected Kashmiri politicians under detention, and denied Indian political opposition – including Indian Members of Parliament — from visiting Kashmir; it enabled a visit to Kashmir by European politicians representing far-right parties.
3. These actions are on top of a longer history of militarization of the Kashmir valley, with a recent deployment of 180,000 paramilitary troops supplementing the 700,000 troops which were already present in the region
4. The Indian government has now proposed a  [Citizenship Amendment Act](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-50670393) which actively discriminates against Muslims by offering citizenship to non-Muslims from three neighbouring countries.
5. Students in Kashmir and cross India have been adversely affected by these actions
6. Thousands of students across India have taken to the streets in recent days in an uprising against a controversial law that offers citizenship to non-Muslims from three neighbouring countries.
7. Students are protesting because they feel the [Citizenship Amendment Act](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-50670393) is discriminatory and part of a Hindu-nationalist agenda to marginalise India's 200-million Muslim minority.
8. Student demonstrations were triggered by the perceived police brutality at two leading universities in Delhi and the northern city of Aligarh. Police entered campuses and allegedly attacked students inside the library, reading halls and toilets. Distressing videos of the violence have gone viral and fuelled anger across the country.
9. Ashoka University, one of India's largest private campuses, has described it as "state-sponsored violence". Rights group Amnesty India reminded the government that "students have a right to protest". In a video, a distraught law student asked: "Are we even living in a democracy?"

**CUSU believes:**

1. These actions amount to an undemocratic and unlawful attempt to suppress Kashmiri, Muslim, and student voices across India
2. India has engaged in various human rights violations, including the denial of the Kashmiri people’s right to self-determination under international law.
3. CUSU should defend the right of all students to protest, especially in defence of their human rights

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. Lobby local MPs and representatives of the UK and EU governments to:
   1. Recognise the ongoing humanitarian crisis and rights abuses in Kashmir
   2. Press for fulfilment of the Kashmiri people’s right to self-determination under international law
   3. Press for the release of Kashmiri people from unlawful detention and for the freedoms of speech, communication, and education to be restored in Kashmir
   4. Act to compel British companies to cease trading in arms and arms components that could be used against the civilian population under occupation in Kashmir
   5. Insist that humanitarian aid organizations and international observers must seek to and be allowed to enter the region
2. Where possible reach out to Kashmiri students and Indian student protesters to offer resources and support
3. Pressure the University to condemn any suppression of student protest, especially through violence, and including the actions of the Indian government
4. Campaign to raise awareness about the atrocities committed in Kashmir and across India more widely
5. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions

**8A. Motion to apply for Council Free Budget to run ‘The Art of Being Present’: Exploration of Tarot and Mindfulness Event for women and non-binary people of colour**

Proposed by: Melissa McNichol-Antwine (mam235)

Seconded by: Rensa Gaunt (krg25)

**CUSU Notes:**

1. FLY Cambridge are running an event that explores mindfulness through an exploration of tarot.
2. This event will be for women and non-binary students of colour and will provide a valuable self-care space for the FLY community in Cambridge.
3. We will be inviting Tarot practitioner Suhaiyla Shakuwra who has hosted The Art of Being Present in collaboration with various brands such as Elle, gal-dem and Samsung UK.
4. It will cost £220, which covers the price of 20 people attending the workshop. (including a student discount) and travel costs for Suhaiyla.
5. This event will offer attendees the opportunity to practice mindfulness with the aid of Tarot. We rarely pause to take moments to check-in with ourselves and be completely present. Through the workshop we will take the time to explore what it means to be present and the importance of listening to our intuition.

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That safe spaces for women and non-binary people of colour should be created within Cambridge.
2. That work must be done to ensure the positive mental health and welfare of WoC and NbPoC.
3. Welfare is political and as such the specific needs of disenfranchised groups, such as women and non-binary people of colour, must be taken into account.
4. This event will provide WoC and NbPoC a safe space to speak openly, support one another and explore mindfulness and other avenues of self-care.
5. This event will lead to a positive engagement with mindfulness that is different to other programmes on offer at the university and will be particularly beneficial for WoC and NbPoC for whom Tarot can be a way of reclaiming power.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To assign £220 of the Council Free Budget to fund Cambridge FLY’s ‘The Art of Being Present’ Workshop.

**8B. Motion to apply for Council Free Budget to fund the cost of printing Volume 1 of the Decolonise! Magazine**

Proposed by: Song Mingwei (CUSU BME Campaign)

Seconded by: Tyra Amofah-Akardom (CUSU BME Campaign)

**CUSU Notes:**

1. Students involved in Decolonise Cambridge working groups have created the Decolonise! Magazine, which discusses what decolonisation means in the Cambridge context;
2. 100 copies of the first volume were printed and distributed at Fresher’s Fair and various departments and libraries;
3. The total printing cost was £172, paid by an editor of the magazine using personal funds.
4. Funding the magazine’s printing costs is essential for ensuring the feasibility of its continued publication.

**CUSU Believes:**

1. Efforts to address eurocentrism and racism in Cambridge institutions, curricula, etc. should be strongly supported;
2. The Decolonise! Magazine helps to advance understanding of eurocentrism and racism in Cambridge;
3. It also serves as a record of existing decolonising work and thought in Cambridge, which facilitates knowledge-sharing between successive generations of students.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To assign £172 of the Council Free Budget to fund the cost of printing Volume 1 of the Decolonise! Magazine.

**8C. Approval of BME Campaign Constitution**

An amended Constitution for the CUSU BME Campaign is presented here: <https://www.cusu.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/BMEC-Constitution-FINAL.pdf>

1. Any Other Business