

CUSU Council (Lent II)

Monday 3rd February 2020, 7pm

Mill Lane Lecture Room 2, 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. Ordinary Policy Motions from Previous Council
   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\***
5. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions
   1. **Motion for a Harm-Reduction Policy on Drug Taking**
   2. **Motion for it to be mandatory for every tripos to include content notes in all faculty produced reading lists**
   3. **Motion on Firearms at Freshers’ Fair**
6. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions
   1. **Motion to apply for Council Free Budget: ‘Fly Hosts Gal-dem’: A writing workshop and insight into journalism for women and non-binary people of colour**
   2. **Motion for an update on progress towards free menstrual products in department toilets**
7. 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. 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:

**4A. 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.

**4B. 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 Policy Motions

**5A. Motion for a Harm-Reduction Policy on Drug Taking**

Proposed by: Ben Karsberg

Seconded by: Stella Swain

**CUSU Notes:**

1. That the NUS survey ‘Taking The Hit’ reported that 4 in 10 students currently use illegal/un-prescribed drugs and a further 17% have done so in the past;
2. That 2 in 10 disabled students said they used drugs to medicate an existing physical health condition and twice as many said they used drugs to medicate an existing mental health condition;
3. That ‘Heterosexual students were less likely than their LGBT+ peers to say that they self-medicate for an existing mental health problem’ (Taking The Hit report);
4. That drugs can be contaminated and/or adulterated, and by being able to test them, students will have as much knowledge about what is in them as possible before making the final decision whether to take them or not;
5. That other Students’ Unions, including Manchester, Sussex, and ARU, provide their students with drug testing kits and harm reduction information;

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That a zero-tolerance approach to drugs is harmful, and that a harm-reduction and education-based approach is more effective;
2. That we should acknowledge that Cambridge students use drugs, and there is no single reason for this;
3. That illegal/un-prescribed drugs can be dangerous, and we have a duty to ensure students’ safety;

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To provide accessible resources on harm-reduction that can be obtained anonymously, so that anyone wishing to educate themselves can do so without fear of judgement;
2. To include basic training on drugs and addiction for Union and College officers involved in student welfare;
3. To provide free drugs testing kits from the CUSU reception (much like the sexual health supplies) so that students who choose to still take drugs after educating themselves on the risk are more aware of what’s in their drugs, and so they can make as informed a decision as possible;
4. To hold the stance that the University should move away from a zero-tolerance approach to drugs, and it should not adopt a punitive system towards students, and to lobby the University with this intent.

**5B. Motion for it to be mandatory for every tripos to include content notes in all faculty produced reading lists**

Proposer: Umme Pisavadi (Homerton College)

Seconder: Henry Wright (Homerton Union of Students JCR)

**CUSU Notes:**

* + - 1. That there is currently no policy from the University or the Union that mandates the inclusion of content notes in reading lists.
      2. That some lecturers do include content notes (such as Shakespeare lectures for the English faculty), but this is done by their own choice.
      3. That in several cases, the lack of content notes has had adverse effects on both students’ emotional and academic wellbeing.
      4. That some supervisors have shown a concerning lack of understanding for students who may struggle with triggering content.

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That in order to be as inclusive as possible, content notes should be made mandatory on all reading lists created by faculties.
2. That individual lecturers and supervisors should include content notes on any extra reading lists they provide, and before any lectures which involve sensitive content.
3. That if a student expresses their discomfort with a certain topic, it is unacceptable for a supervisor to dismiss this.

**CUSU Resolves:**

* + - 1. To ensure that all reading lists distributed by faculties include content notes by the start of the next academic year.
      2. That all teaching staff across the university will be given training/guidelines regarding the importance of content notes, what topics require content notes, and when and how to use them.

**5C. Motion on Firearms at Freshers’ Fair**

Proposed by: CUSU Welfare & Rights Officer

Seconded by: CUSU Access & Funding Officer

**CUSU Notes:**

1. Every year, some societies bring firearms to the CUSU Freshers’ Fair;
2. In order to safely have firearms on the premises, an in depth safety procedure must be observed with two Police forces;
3. Student branches of military organisations such as the Officer Training Corps, Royal Navy Units and the Territorial Army often attend the Freshers’ Fair;
4. These societies, supported by external organisations, often bring firearms and explicitly serve as military recruitment;
5. CUSU’s policy on student societies is that they must not be ‘merely fronts for external organisations’, and they must ‘not organise or promote any activity which conflicts with the charitable aims, mission statement, and values of CUSU’ (<https://www.cusu.co.uk/communities/clubsandsocs/start-a-society/>);
6. One of CUSU’s aims is ‘promoting the interests and welfare of Students at the University of Cambridge’;
7. In Michaelmas 2018, CUSU Council passed a ‘*Motion to support student campaigns and movements working towards the demilitarisation of the University*’ which resolved ‘to uphold the principles of demilitarisation wherever possible and appropriate/relevant’;

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That having firearms at Freshers’ Fair is unnecessary and actively works against CUSU’s charitable aims, mission statement, and values;
2. That the presence of firearms and military personnel at Freshers’ Fair is alarming and off-putting for some students, and has the potential to detrimentally affect students’ mental welfare;
3. That the CUSU Freshers’ Fair should be an opportunity for students to find out about societies and campaigns at Cambridge, not for military organisations to recruit;
4. That this is in line with our previous policy to ‘uphold the principles of demilitarisation’;
5. That this does **not** ban individuals from engaging in, for example, the Officer Training Corps, Royal Navy Units or the Territorial Army whilst at University;
6. That the presence of firearms and military personnel at CUSU Freshers’ Fair shows implicit approval of their use, despite the links between military and firearms and violence on an international scale as outlined in the Council’s 2018 Policy on demilitarisation referenced above;

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To ban all societies and external organisations from bringing firearms of any sort to the CUSU Freshers’ Fair or other CUSU-run or supported events;
2. Not to allow military organisations to attend the CUSU Freshers’ Fair or other CUSU-run or supported events, or to be advertised on CUSU’s social media channels;
3. To ensure that external military organisations do not attend CUSU Freshers’ Fair by using a society as a front.
4. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions

**6A. Motion to apply for Council Free Budget: ‘*Fly Hosts Gal-dem’*: A writing workshop and insight into journalism for women and non-binary people of colour**

Proposed by: Rachel David

Seconded by: Rensa Gaunt

**CUSU Notes:**

1. FLY Cambridge are running a Creative Writing Workshop hosted by gal-dem
2. It will cost £200, which covers the speaker’s fee and travel costs of the facilitator of the event.
3. The event will be for women and non-binary students of colour and will provide an insight into the world of journalism for writers of all levels and help improve writing and pitching skills.
4. We will be welcoming Micha Frazer-Carroll, a former Cambridge student and CUSU Welfare & Rights officer, now editor at gal-dem to host the workshop.
5. gal-dem is an an ‘online and print publication committed to sharing perspectives from women and non binary people of colour’.
6. Many W&NB PoC are familiar with gal-dem and are regular readers, therefore this would be a very popular event for not only those who are certain about a career in journalism and are already writing articles, but also for those who admire the publication and are open to learning about this career avenue.

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That safe spaces for women and non-binary people of colour should be created within Cambridge.
2. That all students should have access to equal opportunities with regards to creative outlets and career paths.
3. This event will give W&NB PoC students unique direct access to an opportunity for self-improvement and upskilling from an individual who was once in their position as a Cambridge student.
4. That the creative expression of students is important and diversity of gender and race in student journalism is also essential.
5. That we should challenge institutional racism. This goes for within Cambridge, but also in terms of helping our students challenge institutional racism elsewhere. Racism and sexism are still major issues in the media and communications industry, therefore events such as these will help our students make a positive change in the near future through learning new skills, perfecting their craft and underpinning they key to access into journalism.

**CUSU Resolves:**

* + - 1. To assign £200 of the Council Free Budget to fund Fly Cambridge’s event ‘**‘**Fly Hosts Gal-dem’: A writing workshop and insight into journalism for women and non-binary people of colour

**6B. Motion for an update on progress towards free menstrual products in department toilets**

Proposer: Helena Trenkic (Homerton College)

Seconder: Henry Wright (Homerton Union of Students JCR)

**CUSU notes:**

That this council unanimously voted to support the provision of menstrual products in department and college toilets on 4th February 2019

The status outlined by the previous policy of few departments and exam venues providing menstrual products has not changed

A campaign founded by a Cambridge student resulted in the provision of free menstrual products across schools in the UK by the Department for Education

One purpose of this council is to scrutinise adherence to the policy which it sets

**CUSU believes:**

1. The principles and goals of the original policy still stand and that everybody should get access to menstrual products when they need them
2. Progress towards the goals of the original policy has been inadequate in the last year, especially when compared to the success of the campaign to get them in all UK schools.

**CUSU resolves:**

1. To receive a report at the next council from the sabbatical officer with responsibility for this policy detailing:
   1. what progress has been made since the policy was passed
   2. what actions are planned to ensure free menstrual products are available in all exam venues from this exam season
   3. what actions are planned to ensure free menstrual products are available in all department toilets as soon as possible

2. To continue to scrutinise progress towards this goal

1. Any Other Business