

CUSU Council (Lent III)

Monday 17th February 2020, 7pm

Mill Lane Lecture Room 4, 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. **Report from Elections Committee on NUS delegate elections**
	2. **Report on progress to deliver menstrual health products**
	3. **Officer accountability**
	4. **Updates from Campaigns and the Executive**
4. Election of Elections Committee members
5. Approval of Lent Elections rules
6. Ordinary Policy Motions from Previous Council
	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**
		1. **Amendment (Alice Good)**
7. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions
	1. **Motion to increase the effectiveness of strike action**
	2. **Improving International Student Representation**
	3. **Transparent Scholarship Information**
8. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions
	1. **Motion to fund 100GB of extra storage on education@cusu.cam.ac.uk google drive for the purpose of note-sharing from the CUSU Council Free Budget**
9. 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.
	* 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.
	* Elections Committee, CUSUCampaigns and Ethical Affairs will update at Council.
4. Election of Elections Committee member

As Rosie Schofield and Yashodhara Varma stood down from Elections Committee at the end of Michaelmas term, CUSU is seeking to fill up to three places on the Elections Committee.

Nominations for the remaining space will be taken from the floor at Council.

1. Approval of Lent Elections rules

**Election rules – Lent elections 2020**

Contravening the election rules may result in an informal warning, a formal warning, a campaign ban or disqualification. The Elections Committee shall strictly enforce penalties, and all candidates are strongly advised to consult the Committee if they are unsure of any aspect of the rules. The following principles underpin how we believe the elections should be contested:

* Do only what other candidates have an equal opportunity to do
* Treat all students, candidates and staff members with respect
* If in doubt, ask the Elections Committee first

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| **1. campaigning** |
| 1.1 Campaigning is any action that is used for the purpose of promoting your candidacy in a CUSU election. |
| 1.2 This includes: flyers, posters, badges, campaign clothing, props, banners, face to face communication, events (e.g. hustings), use of social media, websites etc. |
| **2. who can campaign?** |
| 2.1 Members of CUSU and GU staff are not allowed to campaign or show preference to any candidates in any elections. Full-time elected Officers may not campaign for any candidate, except themselves. |
| 2.2 Full time elected Officers who wish to stand for election cannot campaign on paid time and must take annual leave if campaigning during work hours.  |
| 2.3 Students should not seek or promote endorsements from anyone not a member of CUSU or the GU. |
| 2.4 Candidates’ campaigners do not have to be registered with CUSU. However, anyone who the Elections Committee believes to be campaigning to the advantage of a candidate will be held to these election rules. Candidates should make all reasonable efforts before and during the campaign to ensure that their campaigners understand and follow the election rules. |
| 2.5 Clubs and Societies may endorse a candidate if they democratically decide to do so in accordance with their own constitutional requirements. Evidence of the way in which the decision was taken must be made available to the Elections Committee on request. JCRs, MCRs and the Liberation Campaigns may not endorse candidates. Selective moderation of posts to email lists, groups or social media pages resulting in any candidate(s) being favoured shall be considered an endorsement. |
| **3. How can I campaign?** |
| 3.1 Fly-posting, graffiti and other forms of defacement are all illegal in Cambridge and cannot be used. In addition, the defacing or removal of other candidate’s materials is prohibited. |
| 3.2 Use of email lists is not permitted. The only exception to this rule is if a Society has decided to endorse a candidate; they may then use their own mailing lists etc. to announce this.  |
| 3.3 Slates (groups of candidates supporting one another) are not permitted. Candidates cannot campaign for candidates in a different election, cannot share resources with other candidates and cannot endorse any other candidates. Campaign team members can support multiple candidates, but they cannot campaign for multiple candidates at the same time. |
| 3.4 Candidates and campaigners may not make reference to another candidate’s personal attributes. They may make reference to their political beliefs, manifesto commitments and record in office providing references are not slanderous. (G.8.iii, *CUSU Standing Orders)*. |
| 3.5 No candidate or member of their campaign team, or any other person attempting to influence a voter may approach within three metres of an individual when they are casting their ballot, unless inadvertently doing so.  |
| **3.6 Hate speech, including any language or action which is deemed racist, sexist, ableist, homophobic or transphobic, is banned in all contexts.** |
| **4. when CAN I CAMPAIGN?** |
| 4.1 Candidates may campaign only during the campaigning period:* Campaigning opens – 09:00 27th February
* Voting opens – 09:00 Monday 2nd February
* Voting closes – 17:00 Thursday 5th February
 |
| 4.2 Candidates **may not** publicly announce their candidacy until the campaigning period opens. |
| **5. campaign spending** |
| 5.1 All candidates in a CUSU election will have access to a campaigns budget provided by CUSU. The amount will depend on the position you are standing for. To ensure that no student is disadvantaged due to financial circumstances, CUSU can order materials on your behalf, reimburse you throughout the election or reimburse students at the end of the election period. Students are also encouraged to use the CUSU Print Service where the cost of printing will be deducted from your spending cost.  |
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| **Position** | **Money you can spend** |
| Full-time positionsPart-time positions | £100£40 |
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5.2 |
| 5.3 If using materials you already own, you must declare these to the Elections Committee, who will attribute a cost to be taken out of your campaigning budget. When using free resources, these must all be readily available to all candidates. |
| 5.4 CUSU must receive receipts to log candidates’ spending no later than noon on the day that voting closes. |
| **6. Queries, concerns and complaints** |
| 6.1 If at any point a candidate, campaigner or student has concerns about the election or its process, the Elections Committee should be contacted immediately: elections@cusu.cam.ac.uk  |
| 6.2 The Elections Committee may be approached informally at any time for guidance, clarification of the rules or a ruling, without submitting an official complaint. |
| 6.3 Complaints must be received by the Elections Committee within 24 hours of observing, or becoming aware of, the incident in question *and* not later than 24 hours after the closing of polls. |
| 6.4 The Elections Committee will acknowledge all complaints within 24 hours of receipt. |

CUSU Returning Officer: Alex Roberts

CUSU Deputy Returning Officer: Aisha Sobey

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

Proposed by: Ben Karsberg (Sidney Sussex College)

Seconded by: Stella Swain (Welfare & Rights Officer)

**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.

**6B. 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 lobby the university and its faculties to ensure that reading lists distributed by faculties include content notes.
			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.

**6C. 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. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions

**7A. Motion to increase the effectiveness of strike action**

Proposer: Henry Wright (Homerton Union of Students JCR)

Seconder: Emily Hall (Robinson College Students Association)

**CUSU Notes:**

1. That this term strike action by the UCU continues in their pursuit of fair and equal pay and the pensions dispute;
2. This council backed a “Motion to support Fair & Equal Pay” in order to support the strikes and to see the underlying issues resolved;
3. The University rarely acts quickly unless it is under wider public pressure or financial pressure;
4. The monetary cost to the university from reimbursing students for missed teaching time during the strikes would cause the strike action to become a financial penalty to the university rather than a financial benefit (from docking lecturers’ pay);
5. UCU General Secretary Jo Grady said that the strike action has “made employers more cooperative, but we [UCU] haven’t seen the movement we need”;

**CUSU Believes:**

1. Applying maximum pressure on the University is the only way to get them to support the lecturers’ demand;
2. The quicker the lecturers’ demands are fulfilled the better this is for lecturers and students alike;
3. This policy would show students’ will to stand against the University in partnership with their lecturers;
4. This will prove to the University the futility of the current fees system and will present a strong blow against marketisation, since:
	1. The strikes themselves are, at least in part, caused by the attitude marketisation has given universities and their national body Universities UK;
	2. This policy would add a financial penalty along with administrative burden which can only happen due to the marketised model;
	3. Taken together, they should cause the University to take a stronger stance against marketisation of education

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To lobby the University to recognise this claim for financial compensation and act accordingly to fulfil it;
2. To mandate CUSU sabbatical officers to work with University management, Faculties and other relevant institutions to see the implementation of financial compensation;
3. To the best of its ability, publicise efforts to gain financial compensation as well as rally and mobilise students in support of such compensation to put additional pressure on the University to accede to the lecturers’ demands.

**7B. Improving International Student Representation**

Proposer: Julia Yan (iCUSU)

Seconder: Edward Parker Humphreys (President)

**CUSU notes:**

* + - 1. The majority of CUSU Council voting members are home students, which is highly disproportionate to the percentage of international students within the University;
			2. CUSU Council is a forum to address issues regarding student welfare, among its other purposes;
			3. CUSU Council is a democratic meeting and endeavours to represent and consider the interests of the whole student body;
			4. CUSU is responsible for maintaining the purpose of CUSU Council and ensuring our democratic spaces are inclusive and encouraging of all student groups.

**CUSU believes:**

As a result of different political and cultural backgrounds, international students might not be familiar with the idea of campaigning for issues they concern; such unfamiliarity might act as an obstacle for their participation in CUSU;

Consequently, issues brought to the council for discussion are often British-centric and the environment of discussion is not inclusive of other cultures, leading to a lack of well-represented ranges of perspectives;

Decisions made in the CUSU council hence do not truly reflect the interests of international student body. Meanwhile, issues discussed in the council are often non-relevant to international student body, which further puts off international students’ participation in CUSU, resulting the propagation of such a vicious cycle;

International students should not feel excluded from the main student body.

**CUSU resolves:**

* + - 1. To actively encourage international students to run for positions on JCR/MCR committees (particularly the role of President) and in CUSU’s Lent Elections for Sabbatical Officer roles;
			2. To work with iCUSU on making elections material and material about CUSU more accessible for international students, and produce election materials which explicitly encourage and facilitate international students to run in elections (in particular, emphasising the availability of visa sponsorship);
			3. To work with iCUSU to provide introductory information regarding student politics in Cambridge to international freshers;
			4. To mandate Cambridge SU, upon its formation, to continue work on this policy and consider this issue when forming longer term strategic decisions relating to representation.

**7C. Transparent Scholarship Information**

Proposer: Julia Yan (iCUSU)

Seconder: Edward Parker Humphreys (President)

**CUSU notes:**

Results of iCUSU’s annual University Wide Survey (2019) indicated that the distribution of international scholarship information varied considerably across different colleges;

Out of 212 respondents who participated in the survey, results indicated that a high majority of respondents rated the information on international scholarships provided by their College or the University as ‘inadequate’ and ‘can be improved’. Only 2 respondents rated it as ‘excellent’;

The present situation in many colleges on international scholarships involve the College Tutorial Office directly informing incoming students of scholarships that they can apply for, after issuing the offers to individual prospective students;

Although there is currently a website that summarizes some available scholarship information, the content is both incomplete and inaccessible for both prospective and current students.

**CUSU believes:**

* + - 1. Information on scholarships should not be offer dependant; rather it should be accessible and transparent for all incoming students;
			2. International students will be greatly benefitted by a more transparent provision of scholarship information.

**CUSU resolves:**

1. To communicate with college Tutorial Offices regarding updating their online information about scholarships;
2. To lobby the University to require each college to set up a one stop webpage that contain a full list of available scholarships at that college;
3. To lobby the University to set up a website that contains a full list of all available scholarships across the University and individual college, and detailed information on applications which is integrated with CAMSIS as a centralised scholarship portal.
4. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions

**8A. Motion to fund 100GB of extra storage on education@cusu.cam.ac.uk google drive for the purpose of note-sharing from the CUSU Council Free Budget**

Proposed by: Ben Margolis (Education PTE)

Seconded by: Emrys Travis (St John’s)

**CUSU notes:**

1. That strikes took place in Michaelmas Term 2019 and will be taking place for 14 days in Lent Term 2020;
2. That Council passed policy in Michaelmas 2019 with a ‘Motion to support Fair & Equal Pay’.

**CUSU believes:**

1. That CUSU should be proactive in supporting students with their learning during strike periods;
2. That running an online system where students could share notes would be constructive to students’ learning during the strikes without undermining the purpose of the strike;
3. That this system could serve beyond strike periods as a means of supporting and enabling student co-learning, enhancing our education and wellbeing as students, against the logic of competition imposed upon us by the marketised university.

**CUSU resolves:**

1. To allocate £24.99 from the Council Free Budget to buy 100GB of extra storage on the education@cusu.cam.ac.uk google drive;
2. To task the education officer and PTE with piloting the administration of this google drive as a notes-sharing system for students to contribute to and access.
3. Any Other Business