

CUSU Council (Michaelmas II)

Monday 28th October 2019, 7pm

Mill Lane Lecture Rooms, Lecture Theatre 1

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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. Elections to Committees
   1. **Elections to the Elections Committee**
5. Ordinary Policy Motions from Previous Council
   1. **Motion to boycott the Socialist Workers’ Party and its front organisations\***
   2. **Motion to support Fair and Equal Pay\***
6. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions
   1. **Motion to endorse the proposals for the creation of a new, single students’ union in the form of Cambridge SU**
   2. **Motion to apply for Council Free Budget to for the BME Campaign to a run Black Muslim Identity Panel**
   3. **Motion to update the CUSU Policy with regards to opposing changes to the Universal bus route**
7. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions
   1. **Motion to advocate that the University end the publication of class lists**
8. 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. Discussions
   * Update and discussion on plans for a New Union.
5. 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:

**5A. Motion to boycott the Socialist Workers’ Party and its front organisations**

Proposed: Kate Litman

Seconded: Stella Swain

**CUSU notes**:

* 1. That in 2010 a member of the Socialist Workers’ Party (SWP) accused a senior member of the organisation of sexual assault. In 2012, she clarified that she had been raped.
  2. The party decided to deal with the complaint internally, through its own Complaints Committee.
     1. Published accounts of the hearing show that the accused was supplied with details of the complainant’s case weeks in advance but the complainant was not allowed to see his evidence beforehand.
     2. Committee members – who included colleagues of the accused – asked the complainant questions about her drinking habits and sexual past.
     3. The complainant was not allowed to speak in the course of the hearings, but had others speak on her behalf.
  3. The internal investigation found the accused member not guilty. A motion to approve the verdict passed by 231 votes in favour to 209 votes against, and SWP leadership insisted that those who did not accept the verdict should leave the party.
  4. In 2013 members were expelled from the party for discussing the case on social media.
  5. In March 2013 and October 2013 two more women made accusations of rape against senior members.
     1. The first woman commented that the problem was ‘a systemic thing’ and that the SWP was a ‘dangerous environment to be in’.
     2. The second commented that ‘the Socialist Workers Party is a group that is sexist, full of bullies, and above all will cover up rape to protect its male members and reputation.’
  6. The handling of the case led to a large number of resignations from the party and declarations by public figures and academics such as Owen Jones and Ilan Pappé that they would not speak at events organised by the SWP.
  7. Lead members of the SWP, such as Weyman Bennett, are also senior figures in other movements such as Stand up to Racism (SUTR) and the Stop the War Coalition
  8. The SWP are often present at protests in Cambridge, handing out promotional material and SWP placards.

**CUSU believes**:

1. Organising spaces must be safe for women and allow recourse to justice for all survivors of sexual violence.
2. The SWP is an organisation which is not safe for women and has systematically covered up allegations of sexual assault made against its senior members.
3. The SWP is using SUTR (Stand Up To Racism) as a front organisation to recruit members and rehabilitate its reputation under the banner of antiracism.
4. There is no place for rape apologism in antiracist and antifascist movements or in broader student organising.

**CUSU resolves**:

1. Not to collaborate or work with the SWP or its fronts in any capacity
   1. The SWP and its fronts cannot book CUSU spaces, be present at the Freshers’ Fair or benefit from CUSU resources, financial or otherwise.
   2. CUSU will not promote or co-host events with the SWP or its fronts.
   3. SWP and its fronts may not distribute promotional material at CUSU events or in CUSU spaces.
2. To support alternative anti-fascist and anti-racist organising in Cambridge
   1. Continue to support the work of the CUSU BME Campaign, the Decolonisation Network, the Preventing Prevent Campaign, and other antiracist organising.
   2. To engage with local antiracist campaigns and facilitate student involvement in local antiracist activism.
3. To circulate information about the SWP as laid out in ‘CUSU notes’ to encourage people to make an informed decision about whether they wish to affiliate themselves with this group.
   1. To support student groups in boycotting the SWP and its fronts.
4. Where practical, to produce alternative placards to hand out at protests where SWP presence is expected.
5. To strengthen our work supporting survivors of sexual violence.
   1. Continue to scrutinise the university and college disciplinary procedures.
   2. Promote support services such as Cambridge Rape Crisis and the Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor.
   3. Establish a Survivors Forum.
   4. Improve CUSU’s own accountability and complaints processes.

**5B. Motion to support Fair & Equal Pay**

Proposed by: Stella Swain, CUSU-GU Welfare and Rights Officer

Seconded by: Edward Parker-Humphreys, CUSU President

**CUSU Notes:**

1. The University and College Union (UCU) is conducting a ballot of its members on industrial action, which opens on Monday 9th September and closes on Wednesday 30th October;
2. The ballot relates to a claim jointly lodged by the five higher education trade unions (Unison, Unite, GMB, EIS and UCU) in March 2019 on the issues of pay, the gender pay gap, precarious contracts and workloads;
3. Staff across the UK HE sector have suffered a cumulative real terms pay cut of over 17% since 2009;
4. There are large and persistent gender pay gaps across UK universities, with disparities in excess of 15% across Russell Group institutions;
5. The gender pay gap in Cambridge is worse than the sector average: the mean hourly wage for women working for the University of Cambridge is 19.7% lower than for men (<https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/Employer/cKLM2VVR/2018>, March 2018);
6. A 2016 survey of UCU members found that academic staff work an average of 50.9 hours FTE per week;
7. Early career academics and postgraduate research students are often employed on hourly-paid contracts which limit their rights as workers and provide little security of employment;
8. UCU members engaged in industrial action over a dispute on the USS pension scheme during Lent Term 2018 with strong student support, including from CUSU and the GU;
9. Many staff are also students and GU/CUSU members;
10. At the Michaelmas I 2018 Council, CUSU Council resolved to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding with the Graduate Union and Cambridge UCU, which said:

*The unions' interests are aligned: staff working conditions are the conditions in which students learn. They also represent the current and future working conditions of many students: postgraduate students in particular are often both staff and students. A university education is a collaborative relationship between staff and students and each benefits from the advancement of the other's interest.*

1. At the Lent I 2019 Council, CUSU Council resolved to support UCU’s Get the Vote Out Campaign, and, “*In the event that the ballot is successful, to fully and publicly support staff in their upcoming strike action and action short of a strike*”;

**CUSU believes:**

1. All workers have a right to fair pay, pensions and fair treatment and should not be discriminated against because of gender, race, ability, or any other protected characteristic;
2. Many of the issues at stake in the dispute, including precarious contracts, disproportionately affect postgraduate research students who are CUSU/GU members;
3. Students benefit from working with and being taught by staff who are fairly paid, have job security, and are not forced to take on an excessive workload;
4. Student support for the 2018 UCU industrial action on pensions had a significant impact on both the success and impact of the strike, and the increased collaboration between CUSU, the GU and Cambridge UCU that followed it has benefitted all three unions;
5. The decline in staff pay and conditions is directly linked to the marketisation of higher education, as the current funding system dis-incentivises universities from adequately funding their staff and should therefore be opposed where possible.

**CUSU resolves:**

1. To lobby the university, faculties and colleges to provide fair pay, pensions and conditions to all of their employees;
2. To educate and inform students about these ballots, any subsequent industrial action, and what this will mean for students;
   1. To assist JCR/MCRs in informing their members about these issues, and to help them show their support for the strikes e.g. through motions, putting up posters etc.;
3. To support the ongoing ballots by sharing materials relating to UCU's Get the Vote Out effort on CUSU's social media, the CUSU bulletin, and in person;
4. To produce statements of support for the dispute, to be shared with UCU and other relevant groups;
5. To mandate the CUSU Executive to engage with Cambridge UCU and other trade unions during the period of the ballots and potential future industrial action on this dispute, and to support those trade unions as the Executive see fit;
6. To allocate £250 of the Council Free Budget to actions in support of these ballots and industrial action, including but not limited to flyers and posters providing information about the strike;
7. And, in the event that the ballots are successful and result in industrial action:
   1. To provide information on the industrial action that is taking place to members of CUSU, including details of how to support the industrial action, how we are supporting students during the strikes, and the work we are doing as CUSU on this issue;
   2. To make provisions to mitigate the negative impact of disruption on CUSU members while not undermining industrial action;
   3. To lobby the University departments affected by strike action to put in place alternative arrangements for affected students including changes to exam structures is required.
   4. To encourage students to where possible not attend lectures, seminars or other university-organised activity still in operation on strike days;
   5. To fully and publicly support student campaigning and actions in support of strike action, including but not limited to sharing and producing resources and publicity, funding and supporting campaigning and actions, as led by students;
   6. To promote the UCU reporting mechanisms available for raising concerns about behaviour on picket lines;
   7. To promote the UCU reporting mechanisms available for raising concerns about behaviour on picket lines;
   8. To fully and publicly support staff in their strike action and action short of a strike, including but not limited to sharing and producing publicity, organising and funding picket line support and supporting actions UCU decide to take during the strike.
8. And, should the ballot not result in industrial action:
   1. To continue to lobby the University to address the issues of pay, pensions, the gender pay gap, precarious contracts and workloads. This may include having consultation with UCU and other trade unions on further action short of a strike as well as raising awareness and sharing and producing resources, and supporting student groups that also campaign around these issues;
   2. To continue to provide information about, and publicly promote, UCU membership for those CUSU members who are eligible;
   3. To actively and publicly support similar ballots, whether by UCU or another union, over issues such as pay, pensions, the gender pay gap, precarious contracts or workloads.
9. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions

**6A. Motion to endorse the proposals for the creation of a new, single students’ union in the form of Cambridge SU**

Proposer: Edward Parker Humphreys

Seconder: Ali Hyde

**CUSU notes:**

1. That proposals for the creation of a new, single students’ union in the form of Cambridge SU were presented to CUSU Council on 14th October 2019;
2. That these proposals are the result of extensive negotiations between CUSU and the Graduate Union;
3. That these proposals have been informed by many months of consultation with students and student representatives;
4. That while there has been broad support for the creation of a new, single students’ union in the form of Cambridge SU, concerns have been raised about access policy and representation, the role of campaigns, and the need to ensure fair representation of both undergraduate and postgraduate students;
5. That elements of these proposals have been modified in light of the concerns raised and the updated proposals can be found in full at [www.new-su.co.uk](file:///\\fileserver.cusu.cam.ac.uk\cfvm2\All%20areas\Democracy%20and%20Development\Union%20Meeting%20Records\CUSU%20Council\2019-20\Michaelmas%20II\www.new-su.co.uk) and in Appendix A.
6. That a draft constitution based on these proposals can be found in Appendix B.

**CUSU believes:**

1. That a new, single students’ union in the form of Cambridge SU would result in improved representation for both undergraduate and postgraduate students;
2. That a new, single students’ union in the form of Cambridge SU would avoid unnecessary duplication and waste and allow for a better-resourced and more efficient students’ union;
3. That the introduction of a full-time BME sabbatical officer in Cambridge SU would help improve BME representation within the students’ union;
4. That the introduction of two Access, Education and Participation Officers (UG/PG) in Cambridge SU would help ensure access is at the heart of the students’ union’s mission and enable a more holistic approach to access;
5. That Campaigns in Cambridge SU should have both undergraduate and postgraduate representation and their leadership structures should reflect this;
6. That the existing CUSU Campaigns and their GU Executive counterparts should be able to devise the structures of the new Campaigns in Cambridge SU;
7. That students should have a final and direct say on the proposals and the creation of Cambridge SU.

**CUSU resolves:**

1. To endorse the proposals for the creation of a new, single students’ union in the form of Cambridge SU;
2. To authorise a referendum on the creation of Cambridge SU, to be held on the basis of the timetable set out in Appendix A;
3. To mandate the CUSU Executive to campaign in favour of the proposals;
4. To mandate the CUSU Executive to work with the existing CUSU Campaigns and their GU Executive counterparts in devising structures of the new Campaigns in Cambridge SU.

**6B. Motion to update the CUSU Policy with regards to opposing changes to the Universal bus route**

Proposed: Dea Begaj (Girton College JCR VP)

Seconded: Henry Wright (Homerton College JCR VP)

**CUSU Notes**:

That CUSU Council voted in favour of renewing the 2016/17 policies on 14th October 2019;

That one of those policies concerned opposing changes to the Universal bus service, henceforth U-bus, that negatively impacted students at Homerton and Education Faculty, particularly those who experience issues of accessibility;

Additionally, that the U-bus does not serve students at Girton College main site, but rather only at Swirles Court which is approximately a 20-minute walk away from main site and only houses some Girton undergraduate and graduate students;

That disabled students living on Girton main site, as a result, suffer from unequal access, not only to education, but more generally.

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That disabled students from all colleges across the university are entitled to equal access to education and social events;
2. That plans to oppose the current U-bus route should include all colleges where students may be disadvantaged in terms of accessibility;
3. That students at Girton College are disadvantaged by the current U-bus route.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To include Girton College in its plans to oppose the changes to the Universal bus route;
2. To collaborate with JCR officers from both Homerton College and Girton College in finding a solution and seeing the bus route reintroduced to Homerton and introduced to Girton main site.

1. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions

**7A. Motion to advocate that the University end the publication of class lists**

Proposed by: Ali Hyde, CUSU Education Officer

Seconded by: Edward Parker Humphreys, CUSU President

**CUSU Notes:**

* + - 1. That 47.3% of students opted out of having their name published on class lists in 2019, an increase from 36.5% in 2018;
      2. That 61.5% of women opted out in 2019, compared to 36.4% of men;
      3. That Oxford abolished Class Lists in 2009 when around 40% of their students chose to opt out;
      4. That University Committees, including the General Board’s Education Committee, are currently discussing whether the University should cease the publication of class lists;
      5. That CUSU policy passed in the academic year 2016/17 on class lists has recently lapsed;

**CUSU Believes:**

If the University is to proceed with deciding whether to cease the publication of class lists, it is important that CUSU has policy so that it can best represent the views of students in these discussions;

That class lists promote an unhealthy culture of competition and encourage students to focus on their academic success relative to others;

That class lists seek to demonstrate academic excellence of students without recognising the structural educational disadvantage faced by certain groups;

That class lists are obsolete in that they do not fulfil their own purpose of demonstrating what grades students in a particular cohort received due to the high number of opt outs;

**CUSU Resolves:**

* + - 1. To advocate that the University end the publication of class lists.

1. Any Other Business