

CUSU Council (Michaelmas III)

Monday 11th November 2019, 7pm

Lecture Room 4, Mill Lane Lecture Rooms

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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**
   2. **Elections to the Trustee Selection Committee**
5. Discussions
   1. **Strikes FAQ with UCU**
6. Ordinary Policy Motions from Previous Council
   1. **Motion to advocate that the University end the publication of class lists\***
7. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions
   1. **Application for funding for UK Disability History Month from Council Free Budget**
   2. **Motion to apply for Council Free Budget to fund the Sex Workers Opera Workshop**
   3. **Motion for CUSU to run a postal vote registration drive**
8. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions
   1. **Motion to support and encourage a boycott of the NSS (National Student Survey)**
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, 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. Elections to Committees
   * Applications to stand for either committee may be taken from the floor, or submitted to the chair at [chair@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:chair@cusu.cam.ac.uk) by noon on the day of the meeting.
5. Discussions
   * Strikes FAQ with a representative from Cambridge UCU
6. 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 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.

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

**CUSU Notes:**

1. That CUSU Council voted in favour of renewing the 2016/17 policies on 14 th October 2019;
2. 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;
3. The U-bus service (formerly known as the ‘Uni 4’) was the only public transport link between Homerton, the Education Faculty, the Sidgwick and West Cambridge sites as well as the hill colleges;
4. That despite opposition from CUSU, the Homerton Union of Students and Homerton college senior staff, no service has been restored to Homerton College;
5. 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;
6. That disabled students living on Girton main site and at Homerton College, as a result, suffer from unequal access, not only to education, but more generally.
7. That since the new route was introduced, several changes have been made to the route and operating frequency

**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 and Homerton College are disadvantaged by the current U-bus route.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To continue to oppose the changes to the Universal bus route alongside Girton College, Homerton College and Education Faculty students;
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.
3. To replace the previous Universal bus policy with this updated version.
4. Proposed Ordinary Action Motions

**7A. Application for funding for UK Disability History Month from Council Free Budget**

**CUSU Notes:**

1. That the UK Disability History Month will be taking place from the 22 nd of November 2019 to the 22nd December 2019
2. That unlike other months in celebration of marginalised identities, e.g. Black History month, LGBT+ History month, Pride month, etc. that there has been little effort made in the past by the CUSU campaigns or the central university to celebrate the history of disabled people
3. That the University has consistently failed to celebrate disabled people and their histories.
4. That there is little to no investment by the central university in celebrating these histories, especially when compared to other groups
5. Disabled people’s stories are often only told by the efforts of disabled people to provide unpaid labour in telling them, and educating people and institutions
6. The budget of the disabled students’ campaign is insufficient to make up for the lack of investment its history month receives as compared to other marginalised groups

**CUSU Believes**

1. That disabled history should be celebrated and invested in at the University
2. That CUSU should be encouraging students to learn about disabled history
3. That CUSU should fund and promote disabled history month, and facilitate the reimbursing of disabled speakers who are often asked to provide unpaid labour

**CUSU Resolves**

1. To use a proportion of the Council Free Budget amounting to £350 to fund this year’s UK Disability History Month, its promotion, and the cost of facilitating speakers to spend their time educating Cambridge students on disability history. The money shall be spent on reimbursing travel costs, publications and printing, and paying for high quality speakers.

**7B. Motion to apply for Council Free Budget to fund the Sex Workers Opera Workshop**

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

Seconded by: Kate Litman (CUSU Women’s Officer)

**CUSU Notes:**

1. In a 2016 report by the National Union of Students (NUS)[[1]](#footnote-1) less than 15% of respondents thought their institution or students’ union was providing sufficient support;
2. In 2015, the Student Sex Work Project at Swansea University surveyed 6,773 students and found 5 per cent had engaged in sex work – and a further one in five students had considered it[[2]](#footnote-2);
3. A high percentage of student sex workers identify as LGBTQ+ and/or disabled[[3]](#footnote-3);
4. One of the Welfare and Rights Officer’s main campaigns this term is around increasing support for student sex workers at Cambridge University;
5. As part of this work, the Welfare and Rights Officer hosted a training session with the Sex Worker’s Opera collective[[4]](#footnote-4);
6. In total this cost £730, but the Welfare and Rights Officer will use some of her own budget to cover the cost.

CUSU Believes:

1. All students should be supported in their time at Cambridge;
2. Students at Cambridge do engage in sex work;
3. The training event will enable campaigns to better support sex workers and to campaign for better support for sex workers.

CUSU Resolves:

1. To assign £400 of the Council Free Budget to fund the Sex Worker’s Opera Workshop.

**7C. Motion for CUSU to run a postal vote registration drive**

Proposed by: Kate Litman, CUSU Women’s Officer

Seconded by: Stella Swain, CUSU-GU Welfare Officer

CUSU notes:

1. A general election will be held on 12th December 2019
2. Full Michaelmas term ends on 6th December
3. There are over 20,000 Cambridge University students, many of whom will not be in Cambridge on election day
4. Students may register in both their home and university constituency and then decide where to vote
5. Students who are leaving Cambridge before the election will only be able to vote in Cambridge if they register for a postal vote by 26th November

CUSU believes:

1. The timing of this election may suppress the student vote.
2. It is important for students to make their voice heard in this election on issues that will affect them.
3. Students should have the opportunity to exercise their vote in Cambridge if they prefer.
4. Encouraging students to register for a postal vote will give them the option to decide if they want to vote in their home constituency or in Cambridge.
5. Registering for a postal vote has broader advantages, allowing people to work around contingencies such as bad weather and transport problems, and makes voting easier for people who work or have certain disabilities.

CUSU resolves:

1. To run a voter registration drive, particularly focusing on encouraging students to register for a postal vote.
2. Proposed Ordinary Policy Motions

**8A. Motion to support and encourage a boycott of the NSS (National Student Survey)**

Proposed by: Ali Hyde, CUSU Education Officer

Seconded by: Edward Parker Humphreys, CUSU President

**CUSU notes:**

1. That the NSS (National Student Survey) requires a 50% response rate to be valid;
2. That Cambridge students have successfully boycotted the NSS for the past three years, response rates not having reached 50%;
3. That NSS data is used as a metric in the TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework);
4. That institutions with a TEF award can charge higher fees;
5. That CUSU has current policy to oppose the TEF and to support Free Education;
6. That the HE (Higher Education) sector is waiting to see the outcomes of the Pearce Review of mthe TEF, particularly the implications of any continuing proposals for subject-level TEF and of any continued link to tuition fees;
7. That Oxford is the only other university to have boycotted the NSS for the past three years;

**CUSU believes:**

1. That the TEF does not accurately reflect the educational excellence of an institution, as the NSS places weight on non-educational related outcomes, such as graduate destinations, and has been shown to reveal a negative bias towards female and BME academics;
2. That we should use the leverage students collectively have through the NSS to express our discontent with the TEF and to disturb its implementation;
3. That invalid NSS results due to a student boycott would frustrate the implementation of the TEF in the future and show how easily TEF data can be manipulated;
4. That CUSU’s continued boycott of the NSS is a powerful signal of students’ discontent with the marketisation of HE and the extortionate level of fees students are charged;
5. That we do not yet know the potential implications of Cambridge and Oxford’s boycotting of the NSS for our position in the TEF and what that could mean for the undermining of this facet of marketisation;
6. That boycotting the NSS would not negatively affect CUSU’s ability to make students’ voices heard at a University level due to the existence of other more robust student surveys, such as the Student Barometer and CUSU’s Big Cambridge Survey;

**CUSU resolves:**

1. To actively encourage finalists to boycott the NSS.
2. Any Other Business

1. <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/student-sex-worker-research> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.thestudentsexworkproject.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/TSSWP-Research-Summary-English.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/student-sex-worker-research> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://sexworkersopera.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)