The three organisations to which CUSU is affiliated and is reporting on are the National Union of Students (NUS), the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) and Cambridge Council for Voluntary Services (CCVS).

This document aims to provide factual information and promote openness regarding the students' union's affiliations to external bodies. It further provides context to Members ahead of Council approval to re-affiliate to those external bodies it currently holds affiliation to.

External affiliations are entered into on the basis of the external organisation's role in supporting CUSU's charitable purpose, and in the advancement of strategic and membership aims and initiatives; affiliations are reviewed annually and voted on by CUSU Council.

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AFFILIATION TO NUS

NUS is a confederation of over 600 students' unions, amounting to more than 95% of all higher and further education unions in the UK. NUS currently represents the interests of over 7 million students at national level and supports their individual students’ unions locally. It promotes itself as “the national voice of students”.

In May 2016 Cambridge students triggered a referendum of CUSU’s Membership on affiliation to NUS. 6,178 students participated in the ballot votes were cast in total representing 32% of enrolled students in 2015-16 during the year. 46.62% voted to disaffiliate, 51.52% voted to remain affiliated; CUSU therefore maintained its affiliation to NUS.
“To promote, defend and extend the rights of students and to develop and champion strong students’ unions.”

VISION

“NUS as a pioneering, innovative and powerful campaigning organisation: the national voice of students. We will fight barriers to education; empower students to shape both a quality learning experience and the world around them, supporting influential, democratic and well-resourced students’ unions.”

AFFILIATION ARRANGEMENTS

To become a constituent member (CM) of NUS, unions must pay an affiliation fee. This gives CMs access to NUS training, resources, participation in its democratic structures and the ability to buy-in to its commercial arm (NUS Extra cards, NUS media (including website platform), SU bar stocking, etc.).

NUS calculates affiliation on the basis of a union’s block grant in combination with a 10% calculation of full-time equivalent student numbers (e.g. full-time students at 1%, part-time at 0.5%; with total student numbers calculation divided by 10; numbers are provided by Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)).

The fees paid in previous years are as follows:

- 2008-09 £8,706
- 2009-10 £8,593
- 2010-11 £7,429
- 2011-12 £7,429
- 2012-13 £2,000
- 2013-14 £2,000
- 2014-15 £2,240
- 2015-16 £250
- 2016-17 £5,765

The fee for 2017-18 has been communicated as: ~£9,500

CUSU has repeatedly asserted an incompatibility with the NUS fee structure due to it being the only HEI, and only Collegiate institution, not to receive sufficient free University funds to extend to the accepted definition of block grant funding. NUS characterises College affiliation fees (from Common Rooms to CUSU) as part of CUSU’s block grant funding from the institution.

NUS have a long-term commitment to reduce affiliation fees and become less reliant on them as a funding model. As CUSU receives increased resource from the University it will come into new fee brackets defined by NUS and the affiliation fee is expected to increase in the medium-term. NUS expect to propose new affiliation terms to its 2017 Annual Conference in April.

DEMOCRATIC INVOLVEMENT
The main way that CUSU engages with NUS is through its conferences, where NUS and its liberation campaigns approve annual budgets, elect and hold their leadership to account and set policy for the year ahead. These events provide CUSU with opportunities to help direct the NUS agenda, set priorities and see CUSU’s interests pursued nationally.

The NUS has no direct control or discipline over individual students or affiliated students’ unions’ policy decisions.

Cambridge students have been active at a national level since CUSU’s forming, which replaced a Cambridge NUS network in 1964 (CAMNUS). Cambridge students have provided four former NUS Presidents (1924, 1939, 1975 and 2008).

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CUSU sent six delegates to NUS Conference 2016. The 2016 Annual Conference included a busy schedule of matters affecting students, with the election of Malia Bouattia as President and NUS’ resolution to boycott the National Student Survey and oppose the Teaching Excellence Framework attracting headlines.

Whist the NUS Annual Conference is the democratic highlight of the year, a number of events are ran by NUS through the year. These include NUS’s Summer Training Programme for new Sabbaticals, Zone Conferences (one-day conferences themed on the key areas of NUS’ democratic work) and the annual ‘Students’ Unions’ conference for staff and officers, which provides an induction and learning space for new officers and staff early in July. Students from CUSU’s Autonomous Campaigns also attend Liberation Conferences through the year, which are funded by CUSU.

RESOURCES

NUS provides CUSU officers with a great deal of resources and materials through a membership web platform, NUS Connect. These range from briefing and information documents to advice on how to conduct students’ union activities. CUSU sabbaticals also receive regular emails containing stories, information and statistics relevant to higher education and students’ unions activity.

NUS conducts research into a number of issues affecting students, ranging from student parents to postgraduate course content. Research and reports are available to member unions for free, on paper and online. Information, advice and guidance from NUS staff and officers is also received by CUSU informally at events and over the phone. This shapes all aspects of CUSU’s work.

NUS Connect also enables different unions to share resources and ideas.

TRAINING

NUS operates a comprehensive Officer Development Programme (ODP) during the summer vacation covering the duties and skills required for sabbatical officers. This year, all officers had the opportunity to attend NUS’ flagship training courses as induction events.
CUSU is able to access free training events throughout the year. These are sometimes linked to specific events or may cover particular aspects of student union work. Attendance at these events gives CUSU officers an opportunity to learn new methods of campaigning, engaging students and delivering services. CUSU’s staff also attend workshops and events periodically, and staff particularly have more frequently participated in free webinars offered by NUS.

**EMAIL NETWORKS**

One of the most useful resources NUS oversees are its email networks. Across our officers and staff team CUSU has direct relationships with hundreds of officers and staff at other students’ unions. This provides a day-to-day discussion on operational and policy issues common to unions, as well as best-practice sharing and case-studies to inform campaigns.

The networks are utilised by NUS to gather information on students’ unions in surveys and research, which CUSU then has access to, such as the annual finance survey indicating size of block grants, staff and officer teams, and service provision at unions nationally. They are helpful communications tools in keeping informed about the sector more generally, for example recent discussions saw unions share drafts of Green Paper responses in the recent Teaching Excellence Framework consultation and unions discussing risk to their respective trustee boards from students attending demonstrations.

Networks range from supporting democratic processes and campaigns, to a finance forum for finance managers and marketing network, meaning any staff member or officer with a question about their role can first approach hundreds of practitioners for advice.

**NUS SERVICES LIMITED (NUSSL)**

NUSSL coordinates national commercial activity on behalf of NUS and its constituent members. NUSSL aims to ‘create, develop and sustain competitive advantages for member Students’ Unions – reducing costs and maximising commercial revenues’. This is done through operating a purchasing consortium, allowing students unions to cut costs through economies of scale, as well as providing marketing and commercial development services to student unions. It is in this latter area that CUSU benefits from NUSSL directly, through sale of the NUS Extra discount card. The cards are sold online by NUS for £12 per student, with a proportion of each sale by a Cambridge student given to CUSU. The additional benefit of NUS Extra is to provide CUSU members with access to national discounts from popular national retailers.

CUSU engages with NUSSL in three further ways: via NUS Digital (a NUSSL Department that provides our new website platform, CUSU.co.uk); via NUS Media (a national marketing company that fundraises on our behalf); and via Green Impact, an initiative owned and run by NUSSL, for which CUSU has received Gold rating in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

**AFFILIATION TO UKCISA**

UKCISA is the national advisory body serving the interests of international students and those who work with them, including universities and students’ unions. UKCISA supports organisations through providing research, training and advice on matters concerning international students.
Its purpose is to “promote and facilitate international student mobility, to and from the UK, to help students (and others involved in international education) develop a global perspective and to contribute to human development, political stability, economic prosperity and greater intercultural understanding.”

The aims of UKCISA are to "increase support for international education and raise awareness of its values and benefits; to promote opportunities for - and identify and work to reduce obstacles and barriers to - greater student mobility; and, to encourage best practice, professional development and the highest quality of institutional support for international students throughout the education sector.”

These aims are fulfilled via a range of activities, which include:

- "Monitoring and influencing government and education sector policy through close contact with senior officials, policy makers, MPs, partner organisations and sector bodies throughout the UK.
- "Producing regular publications to keep members and students up to date on current legislation, regulations and resources.
- "Delivering high quality advice line services and training to assist with immediate areas of difficulty and contribute to greater professional expertise. Supporting, sustaining and expanding a network of members committed to the ideals of international education and the highest standards of international student support.
- "Initiating and encouraging research to identify key issues and areas for future investigation and development.
- “Working indirectly and in partnership with others to encourage greater mobility from, as well as to, the UK.”

**BENEFITS AND INTERACTION WITH UKCISA**

UKCISA launched free membership for students' unions in 2015. The initiative aims to ensure 'student voice' is well represented in UKCISA’s work, and is designed to enable students' unions who do not provide technical advice to access their range of member services.

As an affiliate, CUSU is entitled to access an information advice-line, training courses, research and publications devised by experts from UKCISA on issues concerning international students, immigration and government legislation.

CUSU also has the opportunity to shape the lobbying and research of UKCISA submitting evidence and information to its policy committees. CUSU’s main contact with UKCISA is via the Students’ Unions’ Advice Service, which is the main recipient of CUSU’s affiliation with the organisation (in a service-provider capacity).

UKCISA’s advice and support has been invaluable in allowing CUSU to undertake complex casework to help individual students. UKCISA has kept CUSU up to date with the latest developments in government legislation and procedures as well as continuing to put pressure on the UK Border Agency to improve the international student visa situation. While UKCISA’s work tends to inform and support the work of CUSU officers, rather than being delivered directly by UKCISA to
Cambridge students, its value to students remains high. This is especially true as the landscapes surrounding points based immigration, fees and funding continue to change and CUSU officers are faced with these issues more regularly.

**AFFILIATION TO CAMBRIDGE COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICES (CCVS)**

CCVS is an independent registered charity, set up by local organisations in the 1980s as a support and network organisation to help community and voluntary groups in Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and Fenland.

### AIMS

“We bring groups together and provide the communication support for themed and geographical networks. We provide training and one-to-one development sessions to enable community and voluntary groups to become stronger and more sustainable.”

### PURPOSE

“We act as a voice for voluntary groups in our area, contributing to all the major committees and partnerships that meet to determine public policy and action in Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire, Fenland and the County.”

### ACTIVITIES AND INTERACTIONS

CCVS has provided ongoing support and advice to CUSU in relation to charity governance. Cambridge RAG are also members of the association, and a range of associated bodies of the Collegiate University are members.

CCVS provides an opportunity for CUSU to establish links with local voluntary organisations, to network and share information. For example, recent links have furthered discussions relating to students' access to funding and are aiming to establish links between CUSU's autonomous campaigns and active voluntary groups working on similar issues.

Affiliation, which costs £60 annually, also provides a platform for CUSU to share its own expertise and experience with local organisations, as well as an additional space to promote CUSU's aims, purpose and reputation as the central voice for all Cambridge students. CUSU's General Manager contributes to the group periodically on behalf of the organisation and CUSU recently endorsed the General Manager's application to be trustee of CCVS, taking on the role of Treasurer (trusteeship remains with the individual, not with CUSU) and such represents a non-political position.

### ADDITIONAL MEMBERSHIPS
In addition to the Union's external affiliations to NUS, UKCISA and CCVS, the Students' Union's Advice Service (SUAS) also registers with external bodies, namely, Advice UK, and in the coming months, the National Association of Student Money Advisers (NASMA).

- Advice UK is a support network for advisory groups and advice-giving organisation's. Advice UK represents the interests of advice-giving groups to stakeholders, such as government, and provides a range of support services to members. CUSU has historically accessed training, the Advice UK hotline, and used to use its casework software, AdvicePro. Advice UK also provides SUAS with insurance for its advice-giving work.
- NASMA "acts as a focus for exchange between practitioners in the field of student funding...[and] work closely with national decision makers and their influencers on student finance policy."

The engagement of SUAS with these organisations takes the form of subscriptions to services and networks that facilitate the daily work of SUAS, such as via training and information to personnel. SUAS does not recognise Advice UK nor NASMA as political affiliations. In a similar capacity, CUSU also receives free membership to the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) as part of its membership with NUS, however CUSU does not actively partake in an affiliation or have any explicit involvement with NCVO's policy- or decision-making.