

**Collegiate funding of central students' unions**  
**Executive Summary**  
**(v2 following consultation)**

**Background and proposal**

CUSU and the GU have two independent categories of constituent: their members (individual students) and their affiliate unions (J/MCRs). At present, the central unions do not charge for personal membership, but do charge for J/MCR affiliation. There are a number of difficulties caused by this model.

This year the bursars were consulted on replacing J/MCR affiliation fees with a per-capita levy on colleges. An equal number of respondents were supportive (including those who pay their college unions' fees on their behalf already) as opposed to the proposal. The major reason for opposition was the perceived loss of accountability of the central unions if there was no mechanism to cut off collegiate funding as a consequence of losing students' confidence.

CUSU and the GU propose a levy on colleges which addresses both the fundamental problems of the current model, and also the criticism of previous proposals. The new proposal is based neither on the number of affiliated J/MCRs, nor on the number of students, but on the number of registered members of central students' unions. Students have a legal right to resign their membership of any students' union, and the University and Colleges have a legal duty to ensure their students are informed of this right annually.

Under the current system, the financial burden of supporting the central unions falls inequitably – as students of a disaffiliated J/MCR benefit without contributing, and students of affiliated J/MCRs pay more than necessary to support students of disaffiliated J/MCRs. The new proposal resolves these difficulties while maintaining a financial incentive for the central unions to retain the confidence of their constituents.

## Figures and details

	<u>Undergraduate</u>	<u>FT graduate (excl PGCE)</u>	<u>PT graduate</u>	<u>PGCE</u>
<b>CUSU fee</b>	£6.70	£3.00	£3.00	£1.50
<b>GU fee</b>	-	£3.50	-	-
<b>Total fee</b>	£6.70	£6.50	£3.00	£1.50
<b>Proposed levy</b>	£6.00	£6.00	£3.00	£1.50

*Note 1: All data reflect 2015-16 figures.*

*Note 2: For 2016-17, the GU Council has voted to charge affiliation fees on a FTE basis, i.e. a half-cost fee for part-time and PGCE students.*

CUSU and the GU propose that the College levy on union members be charged at £6.00 per undergraduate and full-time graduate student, excluding part-time graduate students and PGCE students who would count as 0.5 and 0.25 of a student respectively for the purposes of calculating the levy.

Membership would be calculated at a “census date”, proposed as the start of Lent Term to give students enough time to resign their membership in the Michaelmas Term if they do not want the central unions funded in their name.

The revenue from graduate students would be split 50:50 between CUSU and the GU.

This proposal would maintain the 2015-16 level of funding for CUSU from fee income, under the assumption that (a) there would be a modest increase in the number of students opting-out of membership and (b) J/MCR affiliation would cost less than £100.

CUSU and the GU also propose that the £6.00 figure be uplifted annually in line with inflation to retain the real value of the collegiate contribution.

## **Proposed arrangements for service provision**

### **(a) Independent of J/MCR affiliation or personal membership**

The following services will be provided irrespective of the status of the individual of organisation accessing the service:

- Personal access to Students' Unions' Advice Service
- Distribution of sexual health supplies to J/MCRs and Colleges
- Eligibility to take part in the Access Shadowing Scheme

Furthermore, CUSU and the GU will continue their University representative work for the benefit of *all* students irrespective of status – under the direction of the unions' policy.

### **(b) Dependent on J/MCR affiliation**

The following services are dependent on the affiliation status of J/MCRs, and may be withheld from disaffiliated J/MCRs:

- Voting membership of the unions' Councils
- J/MCR officer training, including welfare officer signposting training etc.
- Institutional support, e.g. for purposes of rent negotiations
- Access to institutional commercial discounts, e.g. Sky TV subscription
- Access to CUSU online voting platform for running J/MCR elections

This list is subject to change, as the range of services offered to J/MCRs develops.

### **(c) Dependent on personal membership**

The following services are dependent on the personal membership of the individual concerned, and may be withheld from individuals who have opted-out of membership:

- "Front desk services"
  - Hard and soft thesis binding
  - Print shop, including reprographics and lamination
  - Stationery shop
  - Cycle equipment shop
  - Gown shop, including rental, sale and buy-back
  - Per-box storage service (launching Christmas Vacation 2016-17)
- Eligibility for NUS Extra cards
- Enfranchisement in Union elections and referenda, and eligibility to stand for election
- Access to union funding for student projects, e.g. from CUSU Council's "free budget"
- Access to union events, e.g. the Freshers' Fair
- Access to CUSU online voting platform for society elections (those in charge of running the election must be members)

Once again, this list is subject to change, as the range of services offered to individuals develops.