

Queen's University Students' Union

Live Policy File

Last updated: May 2024

Contents

JARGON BUSTER	5
SECTION 1: ACADEMIC & ACADEMIC RELATED ISSUES	6
1.01. Minimal Time Between Examinations.....	7
1.02. Disabled Students' Needs during Examination Periods	8
1.03. Asylum Seekers and Access to Education	9
1.04. Academic Freedom in QUB (Professor Colin Harvey)	11
1.05. Supporting UCU Strike Action	12
1.06. Introduction of Lecture Recording	14
1.07. Student Support for 2021-22 Academic Year University and College Union Strike.....	15
1.08. The Students' Union must make a decision on the strikes.....	17
1.09. Introduce Assessment and Feedback Calendars for All Students	18
1.10. QUB Examination Scheduling	20
1.11. Bereavement Leave for Postgraduate Research Students	22
1.12. National Student Survey (NSS) Boycott	23
1.13. Institution Wide Implementation of Lecture Recording.....	24
SECTION 2: FUNDING ISSUES	26
2.01. Protecting the NHS	27
2.02. Council Condemns Unnecessary Cuts by Queen's University.....	28
2.03. Supporting Students Living Costs	29
2.04. Supporting Nursing Staff, Students and Allied Health Professionals.....	30
2.05. Financial Support for Health & Social Care Students	33
2.06. The Students' Union Calls on the University to Re-evaluate its Decision to Raise Student Accommodation Fees	34
2.07. Queen's Accommodation Charges and Fees	36
2.08. QUB Should Pay Its Fair Share towards Students' Cost of Survival	37
2.09. Oppose Increases in Student Tuition and Accommodation Fees.....	38
2.10. Student Fee Refunds	39
SECTION 3: WELFARE ISSUES	40
3.01. Accessibility for Students with Sensory Disorders to University Fairs	41
3.02. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training for Student Officers.....	42
3.03. Reproductive Justice	44
3.04. Universal Basic Income Trial	46
3.05. Period Poverty	48
3.06. The SU and Council to Declare Gender-Based violence an Emergency	49
3.07. Support for Student Parents and Carers	50
3.08. Support for the Campaign to Ban Conversion Therapy	52
3.09. Period Inclusion Policy Across All Aspects of University Life	53
3.10. Period Inclusion Policy Across All Aspects of University Life	54
3.11. Parity Between Queen's Accommodation Campuses.....	55
3.12. Drug Harm Reduction.....	56
3.13. Abortion Pills in the Students Union Sexual Health Clinic.....	59
3.14. Support for Students with Eating Disorders	61
3.15. Investigate the Potential Implementation of Drug Testing Kits in the Students' Union	63
3.16. Introduction of Mandatory Consent Training for Students at QUB	65
3.17. Provisions for Pregnant Students & Parents.....	66
3.18. Consent, Bystander, Handling Disclosure Training for QSU and QUB Staff	68
3.19. Consent, Bystander and Disclosure Training for All Students' Union Positions	69
SECTION 4: DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE (LOCAL AND NATIONAL) AND REPRESENTATION	70
4.10. An Open and Transparent Students' Union	71
SECTION 5: CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND STUDENT DEVELOPMENT.....	73
5.01. Consent Training for Clubs and Societies.....	74

SECTION 6: COMMUNITY ISSUES	75
6.01. Xenophobia.....	76
6.02. Education for Disadvantaged Communities.....	77
6.03. Establishing a Campaign to Make QUB a University of Sanctuary	78
6.04. Student-Led Campaign for the Improvement of Sustainable Transport in Belfast.....	79
6.05. Off Campus Discipline.....	80
6.06. Anti-Fascism & Anti-Racism.....	81
6.07. Irish Language Residential Scheme.....	83
6.08. An Antifascist and Antiracist Students' Union	85
SECTION 7: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.....	86
7.01. Supporting and Valuing International Students.....	87
7.02. Guarantor Support for International Students	88
7.03. Financial Support for International Students.....	89
7.04. Visa Issues for International Students	91
7.05. Enable International Students to Sit August Examinations in Their Home Countries ..	92
7.06. Supporting the campaign to bring back the post-study work visa	93
7.07. International Student VISA Waiver Scheme	95
7.08. Multilingual Wellbeing Support Information.....	96
SECTION 8: OTHER POLICIES	97
8.01. Constitutional position on Northern Ireland.....	98
8.02. Paying the Living Wage in the Students' Union	99
8.03. Gender Identification and Sexual Identity on Forms	100
8.04. Disclosure of University Investments.....	101
8.05. Fossil Fuel Divestment.....	102
8.06. Organise Mental Health Training for Students.....	103
8.07. Integrated Education	104
8.08. A Breastfeeding Friendly Union.....	105
8.09. Save our Schools – Size and Shape Review 2016.....	106
8.10. Student Staff Alliance	107
8.11. 'Take Back Queen's' Program of Reforms.....	108
8.12. Irish Language Act	110
8.13. Justice and Human Rights for Palestine	111
8.14. Trade Union Alliance.....	113
8.15. Bilingual Signage on Campus	114
8.16. Support The Campaign To Decriminalise Sex Work.....	115
8.17. Reform of Gender Recognition Act (2004).....	117
8.18. Opposition to the Far Right	118
8.19. Opposition to the University's new Chancellor Appointee.....	119
8.20. Solidarity with Indian Students protesting against Hindutva.....	121
8.21. Queen's University Belfast's 'Green New Deal'	123
8.22. Irish Language Rights	126
8.23. Endorsement for the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Bill.....	128
8.24. Fossil Free Careers.....	130
8.25. Supporting University and College Union (UCU) Industrial Action	132
8.26. Supporting University and College Union (UCU) Industrial Action	134
8.27. QUB Should Invest its Substantial Financial Assets in Student-Owned Co-Operatives	136
8.28. QUB Should Invest its Substantial Financial Assets in Student-Owned Co-Operatives	137
8.29. Formalising Logistical and Wellbeing Support for International and Ethnically Diverse Student Officers & Implementing Protocols for a More Inclusive Students' Union	139
8.30. Supporting Postgraduate Students and Postdoctoral LGBTQIA+ Researchers at Queen's	141
8.31. The Students' Union to Include a Working Definition of Antisemitism	143
8.32. Motion for Welfare for Students affected by the Israel/Palestine Situation.....	146

8.33. Decolonise, Demilitarise and Democratise QUB..... 148

JARGON BUSTER

Title

This is the title of policy, which has a number. (e.g. 1.08) The number can change annually in the table of contents of the policy file.

Policy Reference

A fixed coded reference to the policy. The format is as follows: <CODE FOR POLICY FILE SECTION / YEAR APPROVED / SECTION CODE / POLICY NUMBER IN THAT SECTION APPROVED IN THAT YEAR>. (e.g. ACA/2020/1/2 is the policy in the “academic & academic related issues” section of the policy file, approved in 2020. It is in section ‘1’ of the policy file and was the second policy approved in 2020 in the “academic & academic related issues” category.

Not Closed

Policies categorised as Not Closed refer to policies that the Student Officer Team have not completed actions on or are awaiting an appropriate time to act on a policy.

Continuing Campaign

A Continuing Campaign is one that is very long term in nature with no short-term end goal.

Closed

A policy is categorised as Closed if the end goal has been achieved, or if those responsible for a policy have deemed that all reasonable efforts have been made to progress a policy.

Lapse

Policies are scheduled to lapse as specified within Constitution and Rules of the Students’ Union. Policies due to lapse may be reaffirmed at the Annual Business Meeting of the Students’ Union Council.

Actions Taken/Notes

These are substantial millstones towards the achievement of a policy.

SECTION 1: ACADEMIC & ACADEMIC RELATED ISSUES

1.01. Minimal Time Between Examinations

Policy Title:	Minimal Time Between Examinations		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2015/1/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes that:

- There is complexity in appropriately scheduling tens of thousands of individual examinations each year.
- Examinations will continue to be used for assessment even after the introduction of the proposals for a reformed academic year.
- Most Exams are currently timetabled for 9.30am, 2.30pm and 6.30pm
- The process of constructing examination timetables commences in early October for Semester One examinations and early February for Semester Two examinations.
- Students may find themselves having two exams in one day (ie. one scheduled at 9.30am and the next at 6.30pm)

Council believes that:

- This is unacceptable and that this situation can have detrimental effects on both academic performance and students' wellbeing during what is already a stressful time.
- Students are entitled to a reasonable respite period between individual examinations, to rest, recover, reduce stress and promote a healthy approach to examinations.

Council instructs the Union President, VP Education and VP Welfare:

- To seek to establish a formal University policy regarding the minimum time between examinations, with a minimum time between examinations of twenty four hours, and the average time between examinations being no less than forty eight hours.
- To seek to formalise the process by which students can seek modifications to examination timetables in the event that their timetable has inadequate respite periods between examinations.
- In the interim, to appeal to the relevant University bodies in order to eliminate the potential for students to sit two exams in one day in future exam sessions, with the intention of having this in place by January 2016.

To continue to campaign for on this policy issue, if it is not achieved by January 2016.

Date of Approval: 6 May 2015
Lapse Date: Apr 2025
Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.02. Disabled Students' Needs during Examination Periods

Policy Title:	Disabled Students' Needs during Examination Periods		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2015/1/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes with grave concern that disabled students have been unable to have their needs assessments altered as their condition changes or worsens, primarily prior to examination periods.

Council notes that hospitalised disabled students have been unable to make requests for assignments in lieu of examinations to reflect their worsening condition and change in needs.

Council believes that the University has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students throughout their time at Queen's.

Council instructs the Disabled Students' Officer and the Equality and Diversity Officer to liaise with Disability Services to ensure that Disabled Students needs are met throughout the year, including during assessment periods and that changes can be made successfully throughout the academic year.

In addition, Council instructs the Equality and Diversity Officer to provide an update at the next meeting of Council as to the results of communication with Disability Services.

Date of Approval: 17 Nov 2015

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: VP Equality and Diversity & Disabled Students' Officer

1.03. Asylum Seekers and Access to Education

Policy Title:	Asylum Seekers and Access to Education		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2015/1/3	Policy Status:	Continuing Campaign

This Council recognises:

1. According to Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "Everyone has the right to education... and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit".
2. The term refugee applies to any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.
3. An asylum seeker is someone who has lodged an application for protection on the basis of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention.
4. Discretionary leave to remain (DLR) is a 3 year renewable status that may be granted to individuals on the basis of an asylum claim, including many separated children from countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq.
5. Meanwhile asylum seekers are:
 - not allowed to take out student loans;
 - not allowed to apply for grants and bursaries;
 - unable to study in another country;
 - denied the right to work in the UK;
 - sometimes required to wait like this for years while a decision is made as to whether they can stay in the UK;
 - are given less than £5 a day in Government benefits.
6. Asylum seeker students and students with DLR are routinely charged overseas fees, yet their situation and needs are different to those of international students.
7. There is no consensus policy from UK universities on access to education for asylum seekers and individuals granted DLR on the basis of an asylum claim.
8. A number of UK universities have amended their admissions policies to allow asylum seekers and/or students granted DLR as the result of an asylum application to pay 'home' tuition fees, or have waived fees entirely. These include: Manchester University, Leeds University, Royal Holloway University of London, Salford University and many more.
9. Yet Queens continues to offer no scholarships to asylum seekers forcing them to pay international fees which in the majority of cases is impossible. Student

Action For Refugees QUB have therefore started a campaign at QUB supporting equal access to university for students seeking refugee protection as part of the *Equal Access* campaign. We will ask Queens to introduce a number of fully funded scholarships for asylum seekers already residing in Northern Ireland.

10. The *Equal Access* campaign is being led by the National Union of Students and Student Action for Refugees and is supported by a range of other organisations.
11. The experiences and insights of students seeking refugee protection have the potential to greatly enrich the intellectual and social life of the university.
12. Furthermore giving asylum seekers the opportunity to study at Queens will help the University in its drive to increase its international student population by 2020.
13. This Council Believes:
The University should adopt a fair and equitable approach in providing access to Higher Education on the basis of merit for all, including asylum seekers or individuals granted DLR on the basis of an asylum claim.
14. This Union Resolves:
 - To support the *Equal Access* campaign and work closely with NUS and QUB STAR to create a campaign specific to our institution/students' union.
 - To lobby the University to sign the *Equal Access* Pledge and remove financial barriers preventing students seeking refugee protection from studying here.
15. Specifically to:
 - Enable all those seeking refugee protection to be able to study as home students
 - Recognise that, like other vulnerable groups, students seeking refugee protection have additional needs and give them access to additional support, such as fee waivers, bursaries, scholarships and grants.

Date of Approval: 17 Nov 2015

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.04. Academic Freedom in QUB (Professor Colin Harvey)

Policy Title:	Academic Freedom in QUB (Professor Colin Harvey)		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2019/1/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes that:

- Free speech and debate is the corner stone of any democratic society
- Professor Colin Harvey of QUB law school is a highly respected leading academic
- There have been efforts by paramilitaries, and political parties, to oust Professor
- Harvey due to his opinions and beliefs on the constitutional position of the North of Ireland//Northern Ireland
- Twenty-one years since the good Friday agreement any type of intimidation from
- paramilitaries need to be condemned from the highest levels of political office

Council believes that:

- Everyone has the right to freedom of speech and association
- All professors of this University should not be subject to harassment from sections of society, and paramilitaries
- Twenty-one years since the good Friday agreement the aspirations of both traditions needs to be respected

QUBSU remains politically neutral on the constitutional question and condemns all threats to staff and students as well as the oppression of the freedom of speech.

Date of Approval: Nov 2019

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.05. Supporting UCU Strike Action

Policy Title:	Supporting UCU Strike Action		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2020/1/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- The University and College Union (UCU) have balloted for strike action on two separate legal disputes, one on pensions and one on pay and working conditions.
- In 2019, 79% of UCU members who voted backed strike action in relation to pensions, 74% supported strike action in relation to pay, equality, casualisation and workloads.
- Industrial action has been called for February 20th – March 13th 2020.
- Locally, UCU at Queen's have confirmed their intention to join with 73 universities across the UK in the industrial action.
- This follows strike action taken in 2018 which was initiated by proposed reforms to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme, which UCU UK cost affected staff (both academic and non-academic) up to £200,000 over the course of their retirement.
- These threats are likely to be most damaging to workers at the beginning of their careers, including PhD students, which will have devastating impact in future.

Council believes:

- Staff should receive fair pay, pensions and working conditions.
- Staff's working conditions are inseparable from students' learning conditions.
- Students and staff should stand in solidarity, including the struggle for fair pay, pensions and working conditions.
- Threats to staff pay, pensions and conditions are part of the same ideology of marketization that is to blame for rising tuition fees, rising costs of education and cuts to education.

Council mandates:

- Members of the Executive Management Team to give public support to UCU in their struggle
- To join the picket line during the 14 days in February and March and to encourage students to do the same
- To lobby the University to oppose the proposed reforms in the USS and to improve staff pay and conditions
- To meet, on a regular basis, with the executive of UCU at Queen's to discuss a joint strategy both in relation to this industrial action and in the future in relation to the wider issue of marketization.
- To see that all possible provisions are made by the Union and the University to ensure that students face minimal adverse academic impact from the

strike without compromising the principles of the strike, such as ensuring that students are not assessed on content covered during the eight days of strike action as far as possible

Date of Approval: Feb 2020

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.06. Introduction of Lecture Recording

Policy Title:	Introduction of Lecture Recording		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2020/1/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- SU Council passed policy in 2017 to support lecture recording to aid accessibility
- A high majority of universities in UK have some form of lecture capture. The HeLF report (2017) noted that 86% of universities who responded had lecture capture, mainly taking place in lecture theatres.
- Literature suggests that lecture attendance is not significantly impacted by lecture recording
- In the Russell Group, every university apart from Cambridge, has a centrally supported [lecture capture solution](#).
- The University recently committed to pilot lecture recording

Council believes

- Recorded lectures aid student learning in a number of ways, increasing engagement and accessibility
- Recorded lectures may improve the learning experience by supporting distance/flexible learning, providing an opportunity to better understand content (complex topics, students for whom English is not their first language), allowing content to be viewed when not physically able to attend lecture, providing support for students with disabilities, supporting revision and increasing student engagement
- There is an urgent need for Queen's to develop policy on lecture recording to address staff concerns around the use of lecture recording for issues such as use of recordings for performance management and use during periods of industrial action.

Council mandates:

- Executive Management Committee and in particular the SU VP Education, to campaign for the full implementation of lecture recording across the University.
- SU VP Education to work with Centre for Educational Development to develop policy on lecture recording based on wide-reaching consultation with staff and students.

Date of Approval: Feb 2020

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.07. Student Support for 2021-22 Academic Year University and College Union Strike

Policy Title:	Referendum for Student Support on 2021-22 Academic Year University and College Union Strike		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2022/1/1	Policy Status:	Closed

"The Students' Union should support recently announced strike action by the University and College Union (UCU) staff trade union"

Background to the Strike

At the time of this referendum, the University and Colleges Union ([UCU](#)), which represents over 130,000 academics, lecturers, and university staff, have voted in favour of strike action. This is over the Universities Superannuation Scheme ([USS](#)) pensions and pay, staff workload, casualization, and equality issues. This is a UK-wide strike, meaning the decision was made across UCU's full membership, rather than just one singular branch. This is due to a dispute on a number of topics summarised below:

- **USS Pension Scheme:** University staff are currently in a [defined benefit pension scheme](#), meaning a staff member receives a set amount of benefits every year after they retire. This is not dependent on individual investments, and is based on factors like length of time worked for an employer and salary amount. The proposal is for these benefits to be cut by [35%](#).
- **Pay:** This ask relates to the negotiation of [pay and conditions](#) of employment.
- **Workload:** This ask questions the manageability of workload and its impact on staff wellbeing.
- **Casualisation:** This ask covers [the continuity of employment](#) and a move away from zero hour and temporary contracts to deliver teaching and services.
- **Equality Issues:** This ask covers a range of provisions to ensure equity in the workplace. Find out more [here](#).

More information on why the UCU are striking can be found here ([UCU - HE national disputes](#)).

The Students' Union's Position

The Students' Union has policy which generally supports the aims of these asks and collaborative work with Trade Unions. We will continue to lobby the university on our own policy and prioritise finding possible mitigation to minimize the impact of industrial action on students.

Impact of Students' Union Support for Strike Action

If students vote in favour of Students' Union support for strike action:

- The Students' Union will give full and public support to UCU

- Student Officers will support the cancelling of classes, lectures and teaching where staff members have chosen to strike
- Student Officers will attend and encourage other students to join the picket line when possible
- Student Officers will have very limited attendance at University meetings. (e.g., student disciplinary meetings, meetings about the strike action etc.)

If students vote against the Students' Union supporting the strikes, this means:

- Student Officers will not attend the picket line
- Student Officers will continue to attend university meetings as normal

Links:

[1] <https://www.ucu.org.uk/>

[2] <https://www.uss.co.uk/>

[3] <https://www.gov.uk/pension-types>

[4] <http://ucu.org.uk/article/11811/UUK-must-withdraw-pension-cuts-if-they-want-to-avoid-strikes-says-UCU>

[5] <https://www.ucu.org.uk/hepay>

[6] <https://www.ucu.org.uk/stampout>

[7] <https://www.ucu.org.uk/equality>

[8] <https://www.ucu.org.uk/hedisputes>

Date of Approval: 04 Dec 2021 (Referendum)

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.08. The Students' Union must make a decision on the strikes

Policy Title:	The Students' Union must make a decision on the strikes		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2022/1/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- The University and Colleges Union (UCU) have recently balloted for strike action over a dispute relating pay and working conditions.
- The ballot received a high turnout and overwhelming support for strike action.
- UCU membership includes many postgraduate student workers who are exploited by the ever-increasing marketisation of higher education - being forced to work unpaid hours and rely on precarious contracts.
- The National Union of Students (NUS) have called for Students' Unions to support the UCU strikes.

Council Believes:

- Time is of the essence and that we must make a decision on the level of support by the Union for the UCU strike.
- Students have been hit hard by the pandemic but so too have staff who have been forced to adjust to teaching, assessing and supervising online - while also being forced at times to work in unsafe classrooms during the pandemic.
- That academic staff have face years of repeated cuts to salaries, pensions, and been forced to sign precarious contracts.
- Student and staff solidarity has been historically, and continues to be, fundamental and been crucial during campaigning such as the 'Save Our Schools' campaign in 2016 which saved Sociology and Anthropology from being cut. Staff have also stood with Irish speaking students time and time again in favour of bilingual signage.
- Not supporting striking lecturers would cause unprecedented damage to the solidarity that has been built up between staff and students, and would also mean the Students' Union would be refusing to support striking postgraduate student members of UCU.

Therefore, this Council Affirms:

- The Students' Union will give full and public support for the UCU strike.
- Union Officers will attend the picket lines with striking staff as often as possible.
- Union Officers will have a very limited attendance at University meetings.

Date of Approval: Dec 2021

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.09. Introduce Assessment and Feedback Calendars for All Students

Policy Title:	Introduce Assessment and Feedback Calendars for All Students		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2022/1/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- Queen’s University Belfast has repeatedly performed poorly in its NSS Scores relating to Assessment and Feedback, with QUB falling to 56% of students agreeing that feedback was timely last year (1).
- This shows that many students face untimely feedback after completing assessments, sometimes receiving feedback after their next similar assessment has already been completed which does not allow for sufficient improvement.
- Assessment and Feedback submission dates can be poorly communicated by Schools, with students being left unsure and anxious as 72% of students struggle with deadlines (2).
- During focus groups conducted by the VP Education, Academic Reps and students identified areas of improvement for academic feedback and every student endorsed the idea of an Assessment and Feedback calendar.
- These calendars should be readily accessible online, and will include module codes, the form of assessment, the date for assessment submission and the date of expected feedback. For example:

Module Code	Module Name	Assessment Type	Assessment Submission Date	Feedback and Marks Return Date

Council believes:

- Assessment and Feedback calendars should be implemented in every School and made readily available at the beginning of each term.
- The calendars will clearly depict incidences of bunched assessments, as it will provide dates across modules and joint degrees, and students will be able to raise it to staff as an issue well in advance.
- The calendars will also highlight if the student will not receive feedback before their next assessment submission and will be able to raise this as an issue with staff if reasonable explanations are not provided.
- It will empower students to study more effectively and manage their timetables efficiently.

Council mandates:

- The VP Education will liaise with the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education and key members of staff to ensure the successful implementation of these calendars university wide.
 - The VP Education will continue to lobby against bunched deadlines and for quality feedback practices to be established university wide.
 - They should be introduced onto Canvas and built into modules' assessment pages.
1. NSS Data for QUB, OfS ([NSS data: provider-level - Office for Students](#))
 2. OMNI Report, QUBSU ([556341_b24ed2e75c2f414ba0ec25faa1820a2d.pdf \(qubsu.org\)](#))

Date of Approval: Mar 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.10. QUB Examination Scheduling

Policy Title:	QUB Examination Scheduling		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2022/1/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council recognises that:

- As it stands in the current Academic Calendar, there are 3 weeks allocated for the May examination period.
- Policy 1.01, 'Minimal Time Between Examinations', already exists within the policy file to support mitigating bunched exams.
- The burden of academics is seen as one of the biggest problems for students, as was seen in the 2019 OMNI report where Academic Pressures was clearly identified as a significant contributor to poor mental health. 44% of students struggled with the number of assessments and 70% struggled with burnout.
- The Development Weeks currently run across the final 2 weeks of semester 2. Their purpose is to allow students dedicated time and space in the academic year to take part in extra-curricular activity and gain Degree Plus accreditation.
- In some schools, the first week of semester 2 is used for alternate forms of assessment. This could include reports, essays, and literature reviews.

Council notes that:

- 6 years ago, in 2016/17 – 2017/18, the number of formal examination weeks was cut in half from 6 weeks to 3 weeks (i.e., The 3-week January examination period was removed), but the number of exams was not.
- Most of the January exams were moved to the summer examination period.
- Students are subjected to an unsustainable exam workload in the current examination period, with undue stress and resultant underperformance or increased examination deferrals.
- In the Academic Year 2021/22, development weeks began Monday 23rd of May and ended on the 2nd of June, however of the 35 events ran over this two-week period, 28 occurred during the first week, and only 7 occurred in the second week.
- There are not enough formal examination weeks in the University Calendar to accommodate the number of examinations taken in this period.

Council therefore mandates that:

- The two development weeks at the end of semester 2 are condensed to the second week only, and the first week is used to extend the examination period. The examination period would therefore be 4 weeks long.
- The VP Education and Undergraduate Faculty Reps work in partnership with faculty staff, and lobby DASA (Directorate of Academic and Student Affairs) to implement these changes.

Date of Approval: Oct 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.11. Bereavement Leave for Postgraduate Research Students

Policy Title:	Bereavement Leave for Postgraduate Research Students		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2022/1/5	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council notes that:

Postgraduate Research (PGR) students in receipt of funding are currently (in many cases) ineligible for bereavement leave during their time of study and that the only option available for many PGR students who suffer a bereavement and who need to take leave from their studies for the duration of the bereavement period is to request a Leave of Absence.

This Council further notes that:

Taking a Leave of Absence results in not only the student's research programme being placed on hold for the duration of the Leave, but also is their funding withheld; this funding includes their stipend that is necessary for supporting their livelihood throughout their research programme (which they are effectively conducting as a full-time job).

This Council regrets that:

Northern Ireland employment law only guarantees employees statutory leave without pay for a reasonable period for bereavement but praises the fact that employees may at least be granted paid bereavement leave as part of their employment contracts.

This Council believes that:

Bereavement leave is a necessary right to allow students time to grieve the loss of a loved one and that this is especially prudent in the case of PGR students considering the nature of their work.

This Council mandates:

The VP Postgraduate to investigate methods allowing PGR students to be eligible for bereavement leave by ensuring that their stipends may be funded during said leave.

Date of Approval: Jan 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Student Officer Postgraduate

1.12. National Student Survey (NSS) Boycott

Policy Title:	National Student Survey (NSS) Boycott		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2023/1/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- The NSS, PTES and PRES surveys are used as a way to rank universities according to their students.
- QUB relies heavily on these surveys as a way to generate income via applicants to study at the university.
- Boycotting and threatening to boycott the NSS survey has had massive impacts in terms of negotiations for students here at QUB and elsewhere across the UK.

Council Believes:

- Boycotting the surveys is a weapon that could be heavily utilised by the Students' Union for leverage in the campaigns surrounding the cost of living.

Council Mandates:

- The Full-Time Officer team to use the threat of a boycott or disruption of the survey in negotiations with university management to achieve the demands surrounding the economic crisis.
- The Student Officer Campaigns and Engagement to mobilise a team to campaign for the organisation or disruption of the NSS boycott if these demands are not met.

Date of Approval: Jan 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

1.13. Institution Wide Implementation of Lecture Recording

Policy Title:	Institution Wide Implementation of Lecture Recording		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2023/1/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes that:

- In 2017 SU Council passed a motion to support the recording of lectures to aid accessibility.
- In 2020 SU Council passed a motion to mandate full implementation of lecture recording across the University.
- Queen's University Belfast is the only Russell Group University that does not have a centrally supported lecture capture policy in place.
- According to a survey on digital learning undertaken by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI), lecture recordings are the most in demand digital resource.
- The 2022 OMNI Mental Health survey revealed the top ranked stressor influencing students' mental health was course / academic pressures.
- The University announced the implementation of gold standard lecture capture equipment in the 20 large lecture theatres across the institution by September 2023, following significant delays due to supply shortages.
- The University intends to fully implement Panopto as the centrally adopted lecture capture solution by September 2023.
- Literature suggests that lecture attendance is not significantly impacted by the recording of lectures.

Council believes that:

- Recorded lectures are a vital tool to support students' learning throughout their time at University.
- A wide range of students are impacted by lack of lecture recording for various circumstances including disability and illness.
- There is an urgent need for Queen's to develop and implement a policy on lecture recording that addresses staff concerns around the use of lecture recording for performance management, and use during periods of industrial action. The policy should ensure recordings cannot be used without staff permission.

- The Cost of Living crisis makes it increasingly difficult for students to attend all of their lectures in person, and students' access to learning materials should not be impacted as a result of this.

Council therefore mandates:

- The Undergraduate & Postgraduate Education Officers should work with the Centre for Educational Development to develop and implement policy on lecture recording. This should be based on institution wide consultation with staff and students and should take into consideration the concerns of the University and College Union (UCU), specifically relating to replacement of contact-based teaching and the right to remove electronically produced teaching materials.
- The Students' Union to lobby for the introduction of lecture capture equipment in smaller teaching spaces.

Date of Approval: Feb 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

SECTION 2: FUNDING ISSUES

2.01. Protecting the NHS

Policy Title:	Protecting the NHS		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2016/2/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council recognises the importance of the NHS to all students in this country, with particular importance to those studying medicine and nursing. This Council expresses its concern at recent Government action towards junior doctors and nursing students. This council states its opposition to:

- The ongoing reduction of bursaries for nursing students and the drive towards replacing bursaries with loans.
- The ongoing threat to social work bursaries.
- The attempts to implement a new contract for Junior Doctors which would increase working hours from 60 hours to 90 hours per week with a 30% cut in wages

This Council believes protecting the interests both of students and graduates falls under the remit of the Union. Equally this Council believes these changes would weaken the standard of care provided by the NHS by reducing the number of talented individuals able to work in the Service. Therefore council requests that the President and Vice President of Campaigns and Communications to:

- Lobby the both the Secretary of Health and the Northern Irish Minister for Health to reverse these proposals
- Support relevant trade unions such as the BMA and offer assistance to medical and nursing students in their campaigns against the proposed changes.

Date of Approval: 8 Feb 2016

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Union President

2.02. Council Condemns Unnecessary Cuts by Queen's University

Policy Title:	Council Condemns Unnecessary Cuts by Queen's University		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2016/2/2	Policy Status:	Continuing Campaign

Council notes that the results of a recent FOI request have revealed that Queen's University has introduced cuts to its budget of almost twice the amount the reduced funding from Stormont would require. This has led to job losses, academic or otherwise, and possible course closures and mergers that are simply unnecessary. Council refutes that an ambition to pursue 'Vision 2020' is a legitimate reason for ideologically driven budget cuts.

Council believes that universities should not be run like businesses or for profit, instead they should aim to foster a public good, academic excellence, critical thinking skills, a social conscience and the broadest and best education possible to its students. Council also believes that important decisions regarding the future direction of higher education at Queen's should be driven by students and their needs, not by corporate concerns.

Council therefore condemns the decision by Queen's to introduce unnecessary and damaging budget cuts and calls upon the university to provide to Council and the student body a more detailed justification as to why staff, courses and student support continue to suffer to bolster a marketisation agenda.

Date of Approval: 8 March 2016

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

2.03. Supporting Students Living Costs

Policy Title:	Supporting Students Living Costs		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2017/2/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- There are a variety of reasons students may be entitled to Maintenance Loan Only. Students studying a three year course are generally entitled to four years of Student Finance, allowing them one repeat year as a result. Students who change course, or drop out only to resume studies later in life, along with those who suffer from medical conditions, disabilities or other compelling personal reasons, may use up their entitlement and be left in a position where they are entitled to Maintenance Loan Only.

Council recognises:

- Students who are entitled to Maintenance Loan Only may suffer from extreme hardship as a result. The Maintenance Loan itself does not even cover full tuition fee costs and leaves students with nothing to live on for the remainder of the year. Such students do not generally qualify for benefits, and support fund arrangements do not make a significant difference.
- This hardship is not made easier by the University expecting students to make tuition fee instalments before students even receive their student loan payments.
- This hardship can be particularly difficult for those students from low-income backgrounds and those suffering from medical conditions, disabilities and other compelling circumstances.

Council believes that no human being, student or otherwise, should be expected to live on nothing for an entire year.

Council mandates:

- The President, VP Equality & Diversity, VP Welfare and VP Education to lobby government to ensure that all students are provided with a basic income that will be sufficient to meet their basic needs.
- The President, VP Equality & Diversity, VP Welfare and VP Education to lobby the University to ensure students who receive Maintenance Loan Only no longer have to make tuition fee instalments prior to receiving their student loan payments, and to increase support fund payments to such students.

Date of Approval: 2 May 2017

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

2.04. Supporting Nursing Staff, Students and Allied Health Professionals

Policy Title:	Supporting Nursing Staff, Students and Allied Health Professionals		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2019/2/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- Members of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) in Northern Ireland have voted overwhelmingly to take industrial action, including strike action, over the current nursing staffing crisis and pay discrepancies when compared to nurses working in England,
- Scotland and Wales. This is the first time in the history of the organisation that RCN members have voted to take strike action. 96% of those members who returned their ballot papers voted to take industrial action and 92% voted to take strike action (1) The total number of those balloted was around 8,000, with turnout of 43.3%. The main driver behind this decision is that staff feel all other avenues to advocate for building a safer health service have been exhausted and this is the only way to bring about the changes necessary to deliver the expected high standard of patient care.
- On December 3rd, 10th and 11th members of the RCN intend to take Industrial Action including not carrying out overtime, they will not work unpaid additional hours, they will not be answering phones, they will not be doing administrative tasks and will only complete paperwork directly related to patient care, and they will not be collecting bloods or pharmacy prescriptions in the community. This will subsequently be followed by full strike action on December 18th. The RCN will work with the employer to agree exemptions from taking action where there would otherwise be direct harm to patients or danger to the life or limb of any person. This means that members covering roles that are exempted are not expected to participate in strike action. (2)
- There are currently 3000 unfilled nursing staff vacancies within Health and social care
- Northern Ireland (1). Across the NHS 1 in 10 posts are vacant (3). A newly registered nurse in Northern Ireland currently earns £1,419 less each year than in England and
- Wales, and £1,875 less than in Scotland. This is a major contributing factor to the number of vacancies in the country, which in turn has a significant impact on patient care. (4)
- The British Medical Association is supportive of this action and is in agreement that “the current Northern Ireland nursing workforce is in crisis. Nursing staffing levels has a serious impact on service delivery and patient care as well as having a negative impact on the productivity of the medical workforce in many parts of the health and social care system.” (5) In particular Emergency Departments and the mental health sector are particularly affected by staff shortages (6).

- The Conservative Party, the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrat Party are standing on manifesto pledges to increase NHS funding if they are successful in the December 12th Parliamentary election
- Throughout their training Queen’s Nursing Students undertake regular clinical placements in which they contribute significantly to the care of patients. After they graduate they continue to contribute to the education of future nurses through acting as mentors and tutors for QUB students. Without the input of these mentors the QUB nursing programme would not function. Furthermore, nursing students spend half of their training in clinical practice placements, and due to staff shortages are being relied upon more and more when staffing the ward, even though they are supposed to be supernumerary. The effect of this on their learning is that they get less one to one time with their mentors and cannot always avail of learning opportunities such as going to theatre or observing procedures, which translates to poorer development of their clinical practice, due to the fact they are relied upon to essentially work as an unpaid nurse.
- There are very limited placement opportunities for current nursing students. The School of Nursing and Midwifery is finding it challenging to get all their students good quality placements despite the Nursing and Midwifery Council requiring all providers to offer student placements

Council believes:

- The NHS is a public service we should all be proud of, and one which serves a vital function in caring for all members of society in times of sickness, injury and other medical situations such as child-birth. The dedication and commitment of all NHS staff to their patients is to be commended, and the future of the NHS must be protected
- The high level of vacancies puts staff under considerable pressure with staff having to work extra shifts and many wards not being covered with the number of staff the Regulatory and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) sets out as being required. This leads to a detrimental impact on patient care (7)
- The training of nursing students by Queen’s University must not be compromised by using nursing student merely for service provision due to staffing shortages as it is vital that all students are fully trained, educated and prepared for the roles they will be fulfilling in the NHS in the coming years.
- Local political parties should advocate for an increase in local NHS spending to be prioritised on hiring and retaining nursing staff and allied health professionals to ensure all Northern Ireland hospitals are staffed to a safe level (as advised by RQIA)
- Nursing staff working in Northern Ireland should receive fair and equal pay, pensions and working conditions to those working across the rest of the United Kingdom

Council mandates:

- The SU President and Faculty Officer for MHLS shall write to the Minister of Health (or if one is not in place at the time, to leaders of all parties that stand in the upcoming
- December 12th election in Northern Ireland) along with the permanent secretary for health to outline our above concerns relating to patient care and to encourage them to take action to improve staff levels and working conditions for nurses and allied health professionals within the NHS; and to acknowledge the invaluable contribution being made by QUB nursing students to the NHS in Northern Ireland
- Executive Management Committee to lobby for an increase in the number of nursing course places made available by the University to help train additional nurses to fill vacancies and support this by advocating the Faculty Education Board to encourage more providers to facilitate more nursing students as they are duty bound to do by the Nursing and Midwifery Council
- SU Welfare Officer to release a press statement in support of nursing students and communicate via global email to all current QUB nursing students to advise on the outcome of this motion in order to communicate to students that the Students Union is fully aware of the concerns about NHS working conditions along with student placement difficulties and is using its voice to lobby for reforms on their behalf

References

1. NI, Royal College of Nurses. RCNNI. [Online] [Cited:] <https://www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/news/nurses-vote-to-take-industrial-action-including-strike>.
2. Ballot FAQs. RCN. [Online] [Cited:] <https://www.rcn.org.uk/northernireland/getinvolved/ballot/ballot-faqs>.
3. Smyth, Chris. NHS figures bad news for Tories. The Times. 2019. Vol. 14/11/19.
4. Nurses feel exploited and can take no more. RCN. 2019, s.l. : RCN Bulletin, Vol. August.
5. BMA. [Online] [Cited:] <https://www.bma.org.uk/news/media-centre/pressreleases/2019/november/bma-statement-on-rcn-vote-to-take-industrial-action-in-ni>.
6. Graham, Seanín. Mental health service shortages putting vulnerable patients at risk, campaigner warns. The Irish News. May 30th, 2019.
7. Smyth, Lisa. Shocking number of nurses giving up jobs in Northern Ireland. Belfast Telegraph. January 1st, 2018.

Date of Approval: Dec 2019

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

2.05. Financial Support for Health & Social Care Students

Policy Title:	Financial Support for Health & Social Care Students		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2021/2/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- Students on health and social care-related degrees in NI do not receive payment for the work undertaken on mandatory educational placements throughout their degrees
- Many students are eligible for bursaries, but it is widely acknowledged that the bursaries available are insufficient to cover costs of living.
- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, students on placement in health and social care settings have proven to be an invaluable resource in ensuring patient care and service user support.
- Queen’s University educates students across medicine, nursing, midwifery and social work degrees, who undertake regular, unpaid placements across NI in clinical, community and residential health and social care settings.
- The School of Nursing & Midwifery and the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences have the highest rates of students applying for the Student Support & Hardship Funds, with these students accounting for 38.1% of applications in 2019/20.

The council believes:

- students on health & social care degrees should receive financial support for the work they undertake on their educational placements.

The council mandates:

- QUBSU to work alongside UUSU and NUS-USI to lobby the NI Executive to provide increased funding for students in health & social care disciplines.

Date of Approval: 27 January 2021

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: VP Welfare

2.06. The Students' Union Calls on the University to Re-evaluate its Decision to Raise Student Accommodation Fees

Policy Title:	The Students' Union Calls on the University to Re-evaluate its Decision to Raise Student Accommodation Fees		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2022/2/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- The University in mid-December indicated via the media that there will be an increase in student accommodation fees in the next academic year. Considering that these fees have not yet been implemented, the Student Union is empowered now to swiftly act and support the efforts by Student Officers to avoid fee increases
- The Students' Union has long called on the University to suspend increases to student residential fees
- The Students' Union and Student Officers have a demonstrated record of advocacy for equitable and affordable housing

This Council Further Notes:

- The Students' Union reserves the right to organize protests surrounding the hyper-commercialization of housing costs at Queen's Accommodation sites if the proposed increases move forward
- The University received nearly £50m in fees paid by international students in the last academic year
- The University has decided to continue to subsidise housing for only 800 rooms in halls, leaving a remaining expected 1,600 students without support
- The University cites utility costs for the fees increase; however, there has been little transparency from the University to support this claim
- It is highly likely that these fee increases will disproportionately impact international students – who remain critical to the University's 2030 strategy – yet face additional hurdles securing alternative accommodation
- The NUS has denounced the commercialization and outpricing of student accommodation fees

The Council Believes:

- Students have been heavily financially impacted by the ongoing global Covid-19 pandemic with access to limited savings and limited access to loans and borrowing schemes
- The University should stand by its commitment to providing affordable housing to students

- The University must commit to a robust and transparent review of its accommodation fees and collaborate with the Student Council on a sustainable and equitable fee system moving forward

Therefore, this Council Resolves:

- To reaffirm its commitment to equitable and affordable student housing
- To reaffirm its commitment to empowering the Student Union to support and engage with any and all campaigns to fight against the hyper-commercialization of accommodation fees
- The Student Union will request that the Director of Student Plus outline a plan in which student accommodation fees remain below market value indefinitely, in line with the University's commitment to providing affordable education and alignment with SDG 11
- Union Officers will develop a scheme for a student accommodation guarantor system, inclusive of international students, to support students forced to seek accommodation elsewhere

Date of Approval: Mar 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

2.07. Queen's Accommodation Charges and Fees

Policy Title:	Queen's Accommodation Charges and Fees		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2023/2/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

1. That QSU is engaged in a cost of living campaign in the face of cost of living crisis facing society.
2. That Queen's Accommodation has assisted in this campaign by removing certain fees and fines.
3. That many residents of Queen's Accommodation are first year students living away from the family home for the first time.

Council Further Notes:

1. That certain costs of Queen's Accommodation are presently quite high. These include, but are not limited to, laundry and vending machines on-site.
2. That residents of BT9 - Willow Walk are entitled to a statement at the half-term updating them on their energy usage, which is measured by an energy meter, and they have not as-of-yet received this.

Council Therefore Mandates:

1. That QSU lobbies to seek a reduction on price for laundry and the usage of vending machines for Queen's Accommodation residents.
2. That QSU lobbies for residents to receive their energy statements.

Date of Approval: Jan 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

2.08. QUB Should Pay Its Fair Share towards Students' Cost of Survival

Policy Title:	QUB Should Pay Its Fair Share towards Students' Cost of Survival		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2023/2/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

In the current economic situation, the already vulnerable state that students are in has worsened.

Queen's needs to address this economic crisis seriously and give students what they need for basic survival.

Students **demand** that:

- QUB works with Translink to subsidise the cost of transport for students.
- QUB works with local eateries to subsidise the cost of food for students.
- QUB works with placement institutions to provide bursaries for placement students and cover placement travel costs.
- QUB to extend its staff Cost of Living payment to all student workers.
- QUB to work with energy distributors to provide a discount for students.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

Date of Approval: 28 Jan 2023 (Referendum)

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

2.09. Oppose Increases in Student Tuition and Accommodation Fees

Policy Title:	Oppose Increases in Student Tuition and Accommodation Fees		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2023/2/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

The University has recently approved increases to international, postgraduate and GB tuition fees – to take effect in the next academic year.

The University has also approved increases to QUB Accommodation Fees from next year.

Students **demand** that:

Increases to Student Tuition and QUB Accommodation Fees be reversed now, especially as students struggle to survive financially during a cost-of-living crisis.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

Date of Approval: 28 Jan 2023 (Referendum)

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

2.10. Student Fee Refunds

Policy Title:	Student Fee Refunds		
Policy Reference:	FUN/2023/2/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- There have been a multitude of days of strike action which have affected students' studies and education.
- There is currently a marking boycott (classed as Action Short of Strike) which is looking to affect students' grades and graduations.
- Students have paid for an education and a graduation at the end of that education which means that the university is not upholding its side of the contract.

Council Believes:

- While education shouldn't be marketised, the current situation is that it is and students have entered into a consumer relationship with the university.
- The university is not upholding this side of the contract.

Therefore council mandates:

- The President to write to the Vice Chancellor demanding refunds for lost days due to strike action and compensation for delayed graduations?
- The Students' Union to make a statement on how to demand refunds for students on its social media. Academic Representatives to engage with their constituents and communicating on how to demand refunds from the university.
- The Campaigns and Engagement officer to communicate with clubs and societies to encourage them to share information to their members on how to demand refunds and compensation.

Date of Approval: Apr 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

SECTION 3: WELFARE ISSUES

3.01. Accessibility for Students with Sensory Disorders to University Fairs

Policy Title:	Accessibility for Students with Sensory Disorders to University Fairs		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2018/3/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council notes that currently access to Freshers' Fairs, Employment Fairs, and Placement Fairs are inaccessible to students with sensory disorders such as Autism Spectrum Disorder due to their massive crowds. The Union should implement a system to make sure that these events are accessible to everyone.

This motion calls on Council to introduce a system where students who otherwise couldn't, can access these events. The finer details as to how this will be implemented should be decided in conjunction with disability services.

Date of Approval: 12 February 2018

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.02. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training for Student Officers

Policy Title:	Mental Health First Aide (MHFA) Training for Student Officers		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2020/3/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- Northern Ireland is currently facing a mental health crisis and students across the UK are increasingly reporting mental health difficulties
- In 2015/16, 15,395 UK-domiciled first-year students disclosed a mental health condition – almost five times the number in 2006/07. (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2017)
- Just under half of students who report experiencing a mental health condition choose not to disclose it to their university (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2017)
- This evidence suggests that there are many students dealing with mental health difficulties not in contact with disability services. It is important that Student Officers feel confident when interacting with students experiencing mental health difficulties to ensure the correct language is used and gain skills in identifying students in crisis
- One study found that one of the main reasons students do not disclose their mental health conditions is they do not think they would receive any support. This training will allow officers to meet students where they are at and signpost on to the relevant services. (Equality Challenge Unit, 2015)
- Kings College London provides MHFA training for student-facing staff members as part of a £500,000 pledge to tackle the student mental health crisis.

Council believes:

- Student officers are in contact with a wide range of students from across the university. It is important that officers are better equipped to identify students in a crisis and use appropriate language to support and signpost students to the appropriate support services
- Student officers are not expected to diagnose or treat students experiencing mental health difficulties however MHFA training will enable officers to recognise signs/symptoms when interacting with students.

Council mandates:

- The Students Union to fund and source a qualified service provider to deliver Mental Health First Aid Training to all Sabbatical and Non-Sabbatical Officers at the beginning of their elected term.

References:

1. Institute for Public Policy Research - <https://www.ippr.org/files/2017-09/not-by-degrees-summary-sept-2017-1-.pdf>
2. Equality Challenge Unit: https://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ECU_Understanding-adjustments.pdf

Date of Approval: Feb 2020
Lapse Date: Apr 2025
Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.03. Reproductive Justice

Policy Title:	Reproductive Justice		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2020/3/5	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes the following:

- Abortion was decriminalised in Northern Ireland in October 2019 under The Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2019 (NI EF Act), and a new framework to provide lawful access to abortion services in Northern Ireland must be created by 31 March 2020.
- The NI EF Act states that this new framework must be informed by paragraphs 85 and 86 of the United Nations CEDAW report of March 2018.
- In the absence of local abortion access, Northern Ireland residents must travel to receive abortion care. During 2018-19, 8 abortions were performed in NI hospitals while 28 people a week travelled from Northern Ireland to Great Britain to access abortion.
- Abortion access is restricted by factors other than criminalisation such as stigma, conscientious objection, rural health deprivation, and barriers relating to gender identity, migrant status, disability, or socio-economic class.

Council further notes:

- Protests outside healthcare facilities intimidate patients and staff within the facilities, and cause significant emotional distress.
- The concept of reproductive justice includes the right not to have a child; the right to have a child; and the right to parent children in safe and healthy environments.
- Reproductive justice is an intersectional framework which aims to address the specific barriers that marginalised groups face in accessing equal reproductive and sexual healthcare e.g. the UK maternal mortality rate is five times higher among Black women than white women.
- Core components of reproductive justice include equal access to safe abortion, affordable contraceptives, comprehensive sex education, and freedom from sexual violence.
- The work currently being done by students' unions and grassroots organisations across the rest of the U.K. and Ireland to decriminalise abortion in England and Wales, to reform abortion and sex education legislation in the Republic of Ireland, and the campaigns for reproductive justice in Argentina, Gibraltar and throughout the world.

Council believes that:

- Access to reproductive healthcare is a student welfare issue. The lack of free, safe, and local access to abortion services in Northern Ireland can significantly impact the personal and academic lives of students with unintended pregnancies. The inaccessibility of abortion in Northern Ireland places an undue burden on students in an already stressful situation.

- A commitment to reproductive justice is essential to ensure that every student of this university has equal access to reproductive and sexual healthcare.
- No healthcare professional should be criminalised for providing reproductive healthcare services, including abortion services.
- Safe access zones must be created to safeguard the rights of staff, patients and members of the public to enter healthcare facilities without fear of harassment or intimidation.

Council thus resolves:

- To campaign for reproductive justice and for all barriers to accessing reproductive and sexual health services to be eliminated. This will involve campaigning for:
 - Safe access zones so that no person will be harassed, intimidated, or shamed when seeking healthcare.
 - Abortion access that is completely in line with the CEDAW recommendations, and is free, safe, and local. This will take into consideration the barriers that groups such as transgender people, migrants, international students, disabled people, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds face when seeking abortion care.
- To maintain a strong relationship with organisations including but not limited to Alliance for Choice and Doctors for Choice NI in campaigning for free, safe, and local abortion services, safe access zones, and against the potential criminalisation of healthcare professionals.
- To stand in solidarity with reproductive justice movements globally and to support all campaigns for the decriminalisation of abortion worldwide.

Date of Approval: May 2020

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.04. Universal Basic Income Trial

Policy Title:	Universal Basic Income Trial		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2020/3/6	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes the following:

- The latest Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index indicates that economic output decreased by 13.6% in real terms over the quarter to June 2020. Meanwhile economic output in the year to June 2020 decreased by 17.8% compared to the same period in the previous year. Furthermore, from October 1st, 2019 - 30th September 2020 with nearly 9,000 redundancies proposed (2nd highest annual total on record) it is clear that the Northern Ireland economy is facing a crisis. Universal Credit is not fit for purpose to provide the levels of social security and financial well-being required to ensure basic needs are met and that households have the consumer confidence required to spend in order to kickstart the required economic recovery.

Council further notes:

- During the last global recession, the group hardest hit were young people with youth unemployment rising over 1 million people in the age-group 16-24. This trend is likely to be repeated amidst the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic as a study in March from the Institute of Student Employers 27% stated that at the time that they would be recruiting less graduates in the near future. In addition, the imminent recession may well, as suggested by the Institute of Fiscal Studies, result not only in graduates finding it less difficult to find work but under such circumstances, having to settle for lower paid non-graduate level occupations.

Council believes that:

- This Council recognises the need for a reformed, fairer welfare system that protects everyone in society. It recognises the need to provide economic security for all and invest in people to protect livelihoods and kickstart the economy.
- Therefore, this Council calls on the Departments of Communities and Finance and the UK Treasury to design and deliver a recovery Universal Basic Income (UBI) for Northern Ireland.
- Additionally, this Council supports in principle the investigation of a full, permanent UBI for Northern Ireland, recognising the need for a radical overhaul of the welfare state and the positive impact this would have on poverty alleviation, inequality and mental health in particular.

Council resolves that:

- Council to write a letter to both the Minister for Communities and Finance expressing its support for Universal Basic Income (UBI) and calls on their departments to design a recovery UBI for Northern Ireland.
- Council to request that the University financially supports efforts to produce a feasibility study for how a pilot of a full UBI would be implemented and formally expresses its support for said pilot.
- Council to request that the University will contact academics working in this research at Queen's to support delivery of this study.

Date of Approval: 16 Nov 2020
Lapse Date: Apr 2025
Officer responsible: Union President

3.05. Period Poverty

Policy Title:	Period Poverty		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2021/3/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- Period poverty is the lack of access to sanitary products due to financial constraints. (1)
- In the UK, 1 in 10 people who menstruate can't afford to buy menstrual products, while 1 in 7 have struggled to afford them. (2)
- Almost a third of people who menstruate aged 14-21 have had issues either affording or accessing period products during COVID-19 lockdowns. (3)
- Scotland recently became the first government in the world to legally require the provision of free period products to anyone who requires them. (4)
- Period products will be introduced free in schools in NI from 2021-22 (5)

Council further notes:

- Lack of access to period products can have a significant detrimental impact on students' university attendance, therefore potentially impacting academic attainment.

Council believes:

- That people who menstruate should be able to access period products for free, as they are an essential healthcare item.

Council mandates:

- QUBSU to work with other Students' Unions to collaborate on lobbying efforts to combat period poverty nationally.
- QUBSU to identify means of ensuring free period products are available to any student who may need them.

Date of Approval: 27 January 2021

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

Footnotes:

1. Royal College of Nursing, <https://www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/womens-health/promoting-menstrual-wellbeing/period-poverty>

2. Plan International UK, <https://plan-uk.org/media-centre/plan-international-uks-research-on-period-poverty-and-stigma>

3. Plan International UK - <https://plan-uk.org/period-poverty-in-lockdown>

4. BBC - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-51629880>

5. BBC - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-55339850>

3.06. The SU and Council to Declare Gender-Based violence an Emergency

Policy Title:	The SU and Council to Declare Gender-Based violence an Emergency		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2022/3/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

TW: discusses sexual violence and gender-based violence more broadly.

The UNCHR defines gender-based violence as “harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender” . We know that women and girls experience this disproportionately. The World Bank suggests that GBV affects 1 in 3 women - although it is important to note that this unfairly affects minority genders too. GBV describes a myriad of behaviours including those that impose physical, mental, sexual or economic harm.

We are calling on you to vote for the SU to declare gender-based violence an emergency. According to Revolt Sexual Assault, 62% of students across UK universities have experienced sexual violence. Within this NUS found that 70% of female students and 61% of non-binary students had experienced sexual assault. Furthering this research in October by the University of Kent found that in a group of 554 male students interviewed 63 admitted that they had committed a total of 251 instances of sexual assault, rape and other coercive or unwanted behaviour in the last 2 years.

To make this more specific, we know from data collected in 2018 SCORE found that 170 students had victims of sexual assault at QUB and a further 246 were victims of attempted sexual assault. Last year research also found that there has been an 750% increase in human trafficking across NI in the last 8 years. This also constitutes gender-based violence.

The recent murders of Ashling Murphy, Sarah Everard and Sabina Nessa have brought GBV to the forefront of media coverage and the public eye. Yet it goes without saying that it always has been at the forefront for women and minority genders.

Therefore, we believe it is time for the SU and Council to take responsibility and take a stand to declare this as an emergency. To ensure that the safety of students is being made a priority for everyone until it is no longer an issue. The members of the Feminist & Equality Society feel incredibly strongly that the safety of women and minority genders should not be up for discussion, and we feel that by declaring an emergency and taking subsequent action the SU and Council will make victims of GBV feel heard, seen and taken seriously. As well as preventing this altogether for students moving forward.

Date of Approval: Mar 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.07. Support for Student Parents and Carers

Policy Title:	Support for Student Parents and Carers		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2022/3/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- QUB currently has no formal process for student parents and carers to receive an ISA (individual support agreement). This means there is no formal process for Student parents and carers to request reasonable adjustment such as 48hr extensions on assignments etc.
- Currently disability services operate the exceptional circumstances procedure under a disability framework which includes legal obligation to mitigate barriers to education which arise from disability.
- This results in student parents and carers being neglected in terms of the support they can access from the university and no specific mitigation is given to student parents and carers to help them balance their parental/caring responsibilities and academic progression.

Council Believes:

- Parental/Caring responsibilities should not prevent students from achieving their academic potential and the university should provide mitigations to ensure this.
- Flexibility embedded in a formal process of specific exceptional circumstances process for student parents and carers would provide significant mitigation against these barriers.
- Achieving formal ISA (Individual Support agreements) for student parents and carers would promote gender equality within university structures. As well as encourage more applications and academic progression for parents and carers fostering heightened accessibility of university level education at QUB.

Council Mandates:

- The Students' Union formally acknowledges the disproportionate impact of academic disruption such as COVID-19 pandemic and industrial action by UCU on student parents and carers.
- The Students' Union continue to lobby the university on establishing a formal process for students who are parents and carers to achieve an

ISA which allows for academic mitigations such as 48 hour extensions on assignments.

- Student Officers to engage with university management and student stakeholders to ensure that appropriate consultation on the needs of parents and carers is undertaken.

Date of Approval: Mar 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.08. Support for the Campaign to Ban Conversion Therapy

Policy Title:	Support for the Campaign to Ban Conversion Therapy		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2022/3/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- Conversion Therapy is classified as “degrading, inhuman and cruel” by the United Nations.
- The assembly called for the Minister for Communities to bring forth legislation before the end of the assembly mandate, which unfortunately did not occur.
- The UK Government have stated that they will ban conversion therapy but have excluded therapy targeted at Trans people.
- It was revealed in 2019, that conversion therapy had been practiced on students at QUB including electro-shock therapy, a university spokesperson expressed ‘regret’ but refused to answer key questions posed by the Rainbow project around what had happened, the time period, number of people affected etc.

Council Believes:

- QUBSU should stand against the practice of conversion therapy and join the coalition to support calls for legislation.
- Any legislation banning the practice should be inclusive of trans people and their experiences of this practice and we should advocate for this inclusion whenever possible.

Council Mandates:

- QUBSU will engage in the campaign against conversion therapy, join the coalition and sign any public letters of support for the campaign
- QUBSU will lobby the university to investigate its role in conversion therapy and provide LGBTQ+ community with answers. QUBSU will lobby for Queens to issue an apology for their role in conversion therapy and a clear statement offering support and guidance to their LGBTQ+ students should they need it.

Date of Approval: Mar 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.09. Period Inclusion Policy Across All Aspects of University Life

Policy Title:	Period Inclusion Policy Across All Aspects of University Life		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2022/3/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Students who menstruate are routinely overlooked in regard to how period pain impacts their education but also how the Cost of Living Crisis is distinctly impacting them in how regards to the price of menstrual products.

The University should introduce severe period pain as a standard exceptional circumstance for assessments:

- Currently, there is no clear way for students to apply for exceptional circumstances if they are suffering with debilitating period pain. Does it constitute a short-term illness such as a migraine? Is it a serious illness?
- For those students with diagnosis' of menstrual issues such as Endometriosis or Polycystic Ovaries, they can only apply for exceptional circumstances for pain but this does not cover fatigue or mental strain caused by such illnesses.
- Any support provided by the Student Wellbeing Service or Disability Services is not immediate if an assessment deadline is imminent, and such support cannot be provided to those awaiting a medical diagnosis.
- Exceptional circumstance should be granted for severe pain, fatigue, and mental impacts of severe period pain.
- A formal diagnosis of a menstrual issue should not be required to qualify for exceptional circumstances.

Period products should be freely available across all University buildings and student accommodation to alleviate not just monetary issues, but also for use in emergencies:

- Although the SU already provides free period products in the Union building, there is so much more lobbying that could and should be being done to ensure that there is further support in place across the wider University.
- Periods are not necessarily always regular and occurrence cannot always be planned in advance.
- These are not luxury items; they are hygiene items and as necessary as toilet paper. Students should have access to these items in all toilets, to ensure they can go about their period in dignity.

Date of Approval: Oct 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.10. Period Inclusion Policy Across All Aspects of University Life

Policy Title:	Period Inclusion Policy Across All Aspects of University Life		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2022/3/	Policy Status:	Not Closed

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Date of Approval: Oct 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.11. Parity Between Queen's Accommodation Campuses

Policy Title:	Parity Between Queen's Accommodation Campuses		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2021/3/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- That Queen's Accommodation has allowed residents in Elms BT1 and BT2 to sign in guests after 8 PM on a trial basis;
- And that residents have responded favourably to the long-awaited trial policy, particularly as the cost-of-living crisis and stagnant student financing and career prospects continue to impact residents while accommodation fees continue to rise.

Council Further Notes:

- That the same condition has not been extended to BT9, despite Queen's Accommodation advertising BT9 to postgraduate and non-traditional learning students.

Council Therefore:

- Mandates the Union to lobby for parity between all Queen's Accommodation campuses on the matter of guest sign-ins.

Council Further Mandates:

- That the Union requests information relating to any issues and successes of the guest sign-in trial as found by the Accommodation offices, to ensure a coherent policy relating to student accommodation at Queens.

Date of Approval: Jan 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.12. Drug Harm Reduction

Policy Title:	Drug Harm Reduction		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2023/3/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- Drug harm reduction is an approach to drug use that moves away from preventative measures and towards reducing the harm drug users inflict on themselves.
- There have been growing calls for the decriminalisation of drug use in recent years and the treatment of drug use and addiction as health issues rather than criminal issues.
- Research has shown that two of the most common counterarguments to the decriminalisation of drug use – a lowering of the age of onset of drug use, and a lowering of the price of drugs – are invalid and have not been substantially evidenced.

Vicknasingam B, Narayanan S, Singh D, Chawarski M. (2018) “Decriminalization of drug use”, *Curr Opin Psychiatry*, 31(4), pp. 300-305.

- UK-based organisations such as Release and Drug Science work on educating people about the reality of drug use and advocating for those unfairly convicted for drug use, with work founded in research.
- MPs have previously advocated for the decriminalisation of drugs as a method of reducing the number of drug-related deaths.
- There is a complete lack of drug harm reduction education in Northern Ireland, and guidance released by the Department of Education focuses solely on preventing drug use and criminalising students who may be using drugs.
- Examples of drug decriminalisation in countries such as Canada and Portugal have shown a wealth of positive benefits, including a decrease in drug users and increases in funding for rehab programs.
- Queen’s University Belfast’s Student Policy on Alcohol And Drugs stipulates under point 6.4: “*Where possible the University will take a supportive approach, however there may be circumstances where action will be taken under other University regulations such as those relating to conduct, discipline, fitness to study and fitness to practise. Such circumstances may include when the behaviour or action is considered to be serious, causing danger or major concern to others, the individual fails to comply with suggested treatment or the alcohol and/or drug misuse is repeated. For students on professional programmes, this could mean a referral to Fitness to Practise and potentially being suspended or excluded from the University*”.

- Queen’s Accommodation’s Conditions of Occupancy 2022-23 states “*any action which breaches drugs-related legislation will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and will be dealt with accordingly.*”
- The University of Bristol is a good example of a University to adopt a harm reduction policy for drugs and alcohol and focus on reducing barriers to accessing support – “*The University of Bristol understands that students use alcohol and other drugs. We also understand that a zero-tolerance stance is harmful and damaging as it prevents students reaching out as they may fear being punished.*”

Council Believes:

- Drug use in Northern Ireland should be decriminalised.
- Instances of drug use should be treated as health and wellbeing issues rather than criminal issues.
- Drug use education should take a harm reduction approach.
- No student should receive disciplinary action as a result of alcohol or drug use.
- Students are entitled to receive educational support from the university or partner organisations relating to: safe alcohol and drug use, responding to health issues arising from alcohol and drug use, and recovering from addiction.

Council Mandates:

- The SU to form connections with any local or national organisations working on drug harm reduction where it is relevant.
- The SU to, where relevant, advocate on a political level for the decriminalisation of drug use.
- QUB to remove any stipulations regarding disciplinary action from the Student Policy on Alcohol and Drugs.
- QUB to remove any stipulations regarding disciplinary action relating to alcohol or drug use from the Queen’s Accommodation Conditions of Occupancy.
- Where disciplinary action would be enacted based on alcohol or drug use, QUB to instead develop methods of ensuring student wellbeing relating to drug and alcohol use and helping students to receive the support they are entitled to.
- QUB to seek avenues for drug harm reduction work to be delivered to the student body.

- QUB to cease any ongoing disciplinary action relating to drug or alcohol use and to instead focus on supporting the health and wellbeing of the students in question.

Date of Approval: Jan 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.13. Abortion Pills in the Students Union Sexual Health Clinic

Policy Title:	Abortion Pills in the Students Union Sexual Health Clinic		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2023/3/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

In addition to the current Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Sexual Health Clinic in the Students' Union, the Union should introduce Reproductive Healthcare Services, to make Early Medical Abortions (EMA) available through the use of abortion pills, for up to week ten of pregnancy.

Council Notes:

- Abortion became legal in NI in 2020 after the repeal of section 58 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, and implementation of the Abortion Regulations (NI) 2020. In late 2022 the Secretary for State announced the full commissioning of abortion services to be complete by summer 2023.
- Abortion is a human right as defined by various CEDAW reports.
- Under Section 8 (b) of the Abortion Regulations (NI) 2020, it states that any treatment for the termination of pregnancy must be carried out at a clinic provided by an HSC trust for the purpose of carrying out terminations (whether or not the clinic also provides other services).
- 1 in 3 women will have an abortion in their lifetime.
- If your pregnancy is less than 10 weeks you can access early abortion services in Northern Ireland, within one of the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts (Belfast, Northern, South Eastern, Southern and Western).
- World Health Organisation has said that Early Medical Abortion (EMA) medication is safe, even when taken outside a clinical setting.
- An EMA involves taking two pills, Mifepristone, and the Misoprostol. An EMA is safer than both penicillin and Viagra.
- The continual posts about abortion advice on QUB Love, mean that there is a clear need for access to clear access for services for students.
- The inaccessibility of primary care services to students who are not from Northern Ireland adds additional stress and highlights the need for accessible student services.
- NI students are placed at a disadvantage compared to students in England and Scotland, where primary care and clinics that terminate pregnancy are easy and accessible, for example Chalmers Sexual Health Clinic in Edinburgh.

Council Believes:

- Students are disproportionately disadvantaged by unclear access to abortions.
- Abortion is a healthcare procedure.
- The benefits of them being able to make decisions about their own bodily autonomy in a kind and understanding environment will increase mental wellbeing.
- Students should be given all appropriate and scientific knowledge and opportunities to make informed choices that are right for them.
- Students should not have to seek information about their human rights on anonymous forums where they are flooded with scientifically inaccurate anti-choice propaganda.

Council Mandates:

- The SU to lobby for the implementation and access of EMA's in the Students' Union.
- The SU continues to uphold a prochoice stance and push for decriminalisation of abortion across the entirety of the UK and Ireland.
- The SU to advertise the current advice and support in the Sexual Health Clinic for individuals seeking abortion.

Date of Approval: Feb 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.14. Support for Students with Eating Disorders

Policy Title:	Support for Students with Eating Disorders		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2023/3/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

CW // discussion of eating disorders throughout

Council Notes:

- Eating disorders are psychological problems that have a substantial impact upon quality of life.
- Eating Disorders tend to have a chronic course with less than 50% of individuals making a full recovery. This makes it vital to intervene and provide support as early as possible.
- Incidence rates for Anorexia Nervosa are highest for females in the 15 – 19 age group. This age group constitutes approximately 40% of all identified cases.
- The incident rate for Bulimia Nervosa is highest for 20 to 24 year olds.
- Due to the strict requirements necessary to obtain a formal diagnosis for an eating disorder (BMI, loss of period, blood test results etc), many people who struggle with disordered eating go undiagnosed and therefore cannot avail of the services offered by the NHS.
- Of those who do meet the stringent diagnostic criteria for an eating disorder, only a minority receive mental health care, meaning that the majority of persons with a severe eating disorder lack adequate treatment.
- One in five services on average take over 2 months to arrange an initial assessment for specialist eating disorder support. Following this there is a further average waiting time of over two months between the initial assessment and accessing treatment for eating disorders.
- Only 15% of respondents to the 2008 Eating Disorders Association “Choice or Chance” survey felt that their GP understood eating disorders and how to help.
- 42% felt that early intervention by GP’s for eating disorders is unsatisfactory.

Council Believes:

- Going to university is a time of significant change and new additional pressures. Under these circumstances vulnerable students may find they develop an eating disorder or their preexisting one is exacerbated.
- The inclusion of calorie information on food signage on campus (for example, on the Junction display boards/menus) is unavoidable, dangerous and triggering for those who struggle or have struggled with an eating disorder.

- Displaying calorie information has also been shown to potentially encourage individuals to engage in what would be considered disordered eating.
- The current guidance for QUB for students with an eating disorder is inadequate and outdated.
- Some of the information provided could be potentially harmful, for example encouraging individuals with an eating disorder to engage in exercise in order to promote ‘wellbeing’.
- In the guidance, individuals who may struggle with Anorexia Nervosa are limited to those who are visibly extremely underweight while those with Binge Eating Disorder are labelled as overweight/obese. All eating disorders are now widely accepted to occur in individuals of any size. It is important to note that an Eating Disorder cannot be diagnosed by weight or BMI alone.
- Other harmful information includes the limitation of types of eating disorders to Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa and Binge Eating Disorder, therefore failing to present a full and nuanced spectrum representative of the ways in which disordered eating can present - for example, Orthorexia, Other specified feeding or eating disorder (OSFED), Avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID). These are all left out, despite OSFED being the most common eating disorder.
- There is currently no guidance provided by QUB on how to support someone going through an Eating Disorder.

Council Mandates:

- The Student’s Union Full Time Officers to lobby for the ban of calorie information displayed on signage and menus in eateries on campus. If required by legislation, calorie information could be provided by a QR code so that information can only be viewed intentionally.
- The Student’s Union to lobby Disability Services to update materials providing education on eating disorders in addition to information on how to find and access support if an individual is struggling with disordered eating, as well as how to support someone else.
- If these demands aren’t met, then an active campaign should be launched and is to be supported by the Campaigns and Engagement Officer, Welfare Officer, Equality and Diversity Officer and the Disabled Students’ Association Chairperson.

Date of Approval: Apr 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.15. Investigate the Potential Implementation of Drug Testing Kits in the Students' Union

Policy Title:	Investigate the Potential Implementation of Drug Testing Kits in the Students' Union		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2023/3/5	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- The Students' Union recently adopted a harm reduction approach to drug use
- An important element of harm reduction is ensuring that people are only taking the drugs which they intend to take.
- It is not uncommon for drugs to be sold as one substance while actually containing another, often more harmful, substance.
- Drug testing kits and services allow people to check whether the drugs they intend to take are actually what they believe they will be taking.
- Drug testing is successfully provided by a number of organisations including The Loop and Dancesafe.
- There are multiple kinds of drug testing. Many are fast-acting and cheap. All have the potential to save lives.

Council Believes:

- Access to drug testing kits through the Students' Union would have a positive impact on students, potentially saving lives.
- Access to drug testing kits must be confidential and discreet.
- There are multiple forms of drug testing which offer different benefits and drawbacks.
- Implementation of drug testing kits within the Students Union would be complicated due to the illegality of the drugs which would be tested and it is therefore essential that implementation is carefully considered and approached in the right way.

Council Mandates:

- The Students' Union to investigate the possibility of implementing drug testing kits within the Students' Union.
- The Student Officer Welfare to engage with the student body, the wider Students' Union, the University and external organisations to determine the best approach to implementing drug testing kits.

Date of Approval: Apr 2023
Lapse Date: Apr 2026
Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.16. Introduction of Mandatory Consent Training for Students at QUB

Policy Title:	Introduction of Mandatory Consent Training for Students at QUB		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2023/3/6	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- Students are more likely than other groups to be sexually assaulted (OfS Insight 15)
- Being subjected to sexual misconduct can have a significant negative effect on students' wellbeing, health and impact their studies (OfS Insight 15)
- Consent training which has previously been offered at QUB has been optional
- An increasing number of universities across the UK and Ireland are introducing compulsory consent training for incoming students including Cambridge and LSE
- Consent training conducted at these universities has proven to be effective at increasing students knowledge of consent (Thode & Mobbs)

Council Believes:

- Optional consent training is ineffective because those who would most benefit from the training are unlikely to attend it.
- Therefore the Students' Union should provide mandatory consent training
- Consent training should be inclusive, comprehensive and age-appropriate

Council Mandates:

- The Students' Union should work with external organisations with expertise in this area to develop comprehensive, inclusive and relevant consent training.
- Consent training should be an opt out system for all incoming students.
- This should be provided through an in-person session and complemented by an online training module.

Date of Approval: Apr 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.17. Provisions for Pregnant Students & Parents

Policy Title:	Provisions for Pregnant Students & Parents		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2023/3/7	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- There is no Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA) like structure for pregnant students, this means they need to apply multiple times for extensions for the same underlying cause (pregnancy and all it entails.)
- There is no specific breastfeeding room in the Students' Union, and whilst we recognise that breastfeeding is welcome all throughout the SU, the option of a private comfortable room is not one that a student can currently avail of.
- There are no nappies/baby food/baby wipes available currently in the Pantry.

Council believes that:

- The lack of the ISSA like structure and the subsequent need to constantly apply for an extension for the same situation causes unnecessary hassle and stress for pregnant students.
- The lack of a breastfeeding room can cause hassle for a student who wishes to avail of such a room. There are breastfeeding rooms across campus, however a student should not be made to leave the SU to avail of one of these when one could be opened within the SU. This motion does not seek to undermine those who choose to breastfeed publicly throughout the SU, but simply offers more choice to parents.
- The cost-of-living crisis is hitting students hard, and in particular those with dependents. The Pantry was opened to ease financial stress on students; however, the lack of nappies/baby food/ baby wipes, for some, furthers this stress.

Council resolves that:

- Pregnant students should only have to apply once for an extension package which will apply for the remainder of the academic year. SU will look into this, and push for this to be implemented. This will ease stress and enable students to be treated holistically.
- A private comfortable feeding room for babies will be looked into by the SU to be created from an existing room in the SU. This will allow for the comfortability of students, to use the SU with more ease as they know they can avail of this room, if necessary, rather than move across campus with their dependant.

- SU will push for the Pantry to provide nappies, baby food, and baby wipes. This will ease the cost-of-living crisis effect on students with dependants and allows parents to know in an emergency that their child will not go without toiletries.

Date of Approval: Nov 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2027

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.18. Consent, Bystander, Handling Disclosure Training for QSU and QUB Staff

Policy Title:	Consent, Bystander, Handling Disclosure Training for QSU and QUB Staff		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2023/3/8	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- There is a significant lack of training for QSU and QUB staff in regard to Consent, Bystander, and Handling Disclosures.

Council Believes That:

- This lack of training is not acceptable. Anyone who has contact with students on such regular basis must have training. This will allow staff to be confident in handling any disclosures appropriately, in intervening in safe and appropriate ways if necessary, and being educated in consent is for the benefit of both staff and student especially as either can be the victims of harassment.
- Also, gender-based violence was noted as an emergency by this Students' Union and as such, this is a necessary and crucial next step for us to take.
- Importantly, this will ensure that topics such as consent are being normalised and implemented throughout our entire University community.

Council Resolves That:

- The SU Council will push for training on Consent to be made 'mandatory with opt out', and then training on Bystander / Handling Disclosure is to be made mandatory for staff. The latter topics will be mandatory with no opt out as they should be deemed necessary for anyone in a role of responsibility.
- This training will be delivered virtually for accessibility and feasibility reasons. A quiz will be held at the end of any/all online training to ensure active participation. Training will be delivered by a chosen organisation to be agreed upon in the near future.
- Ideally, this training will be rolled out firstly to staff in student facing roles within QSU and QUB, such as professors, tutors, full time Students' Union staff, accommodation RA's, and Students' Union officers. The training would, if possible, then be rolled out to all staff such as part-time and temporary Q-Workers.

Date of Approval: Dec 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2027

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

3.19. Consent, Bystander and Disclosure Training for All Students' Union Positions

Policy Title:	Consent, Bystander and Disclosure Training for All Students' Union Positions		
Policy Reference:	WEL/2023/3/9	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- There is currently no mandatory consent, bystander or disclosure training for any Students' Union positions.

Council Believes:

- That any Students' Union position involves dealing with other students. As such, being trained in bystander and handling disclosures is incredibly important to minimise potential further harm done to a student in a vulnerable moment if opening up about a situation.
- Furthermore, gender-based violence is an emergency and has declared to be such. Thus, to implement this training, particularly regarding consent, is a natural next step that we must do.
- Council mandates that the SU must implement mandatory consent (with opt-out) training and bystander / handling disclosure training for all Students' Union positions (course representatives, faculty representatives, student association chairs, school representatives, etc.). Following the framework of SU Council meetings, this training will be delivered in-person.
- Although SU representatives will not be required to sit the training twice in the same academic year, this motion will ensure that all SU representatives will receive mandatory (with opt-out) consent training whether from the SU or the University. However, the mandatory bystander and handling disclosure training will remain in place regardless of the university consent training roll out.

Date of Approval: Dec 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2027

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

SECTION 4: DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE (LOCAL AND NATIONAL) AND REPRESENTATION

4.10. An Open and Transparent Students' Union

Policy Title:	An Open and Transparent Student' s Union		
Policy Reference:	DGR/2023/4/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- There is a proven correlation between information and education about governance of a democratic system and the levels of engagement, the inclusiveness of the decisions, the accountability of the body and the quality of decisions made.
- The last time the QSU website was updated with the minutes of council was from 14.01.2020.
- The last time the QSU website was updated with Full Time Officer Reports was during the 2019/2020 term.

Council Believes:

- Students should be updated and informed on the decisions made at Student Council.
- For a Union to be in its strongest position it must operate with full transparency, allow a space for members to hold elected representatives accountable and to promote diversity in discussion and unity in action when forming policy.
- When members are left less informed, the Union fails to uphold its democratic process.
- The lack of visibility for ongoing discussions in legislative bodies creates a lack of transparency within the Student's Union, leading students instead to have to use unreliable forums such as QUBLove to find information.
- Students should have information on what Student Council is, when it takes place, how they can submit a motion, the agenda in advance and the updated minutes of each meeting of council.
- Students should also know how they can submit questions for Student Officers in advance of council, as well as get updates through their officer reports.

Council Mandates:

- The QSU Marketing Team to provide at least 24 hours notice via QSU social media informing students of the time, date and location for all meetings of council.
- The Student's Union to provide updated minutes of council and officer reports to the QSU website no later than 5 working days after the meeting of council.

- The SU to provide updates via social media as to when the minutes of council and officer reports are available to view online.
- The QSU Marketing Team to give 5 working days' notice via social media for the deadline for submitting motions to council and questions to officers.
- The Scrutiny Committee to organise an open forum where all full-time officers must engage with students once per semester.
- For QUB contact information of elected representatives for council and the various committees to be provided on the QSU Website.

Date of Approval: Apr 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

SECTION 5: CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

5.01. Consent Training for Clubs and Societies

Policy Title:	Consent Training for Clubs and Societies		
Policy Reference:	CSD/2023/5/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- That Gender Violence has been recognised previously by this Council as an emergency.
- Clubs and Societies are one of the largest avenues in which students engage with the Students' Union.
- Local experienced charities have provided efficient training in the past to various organisations and have expressed enthusiastic interest in implementing levels of consent training as well as bystander and disclosure training to students alongside the Students' Union.

Council Believes:

- The Students' Union should be using its resources to tackle gender-based violence as it a predominant welfare issue facing the student body.
- Clubs and Societies are an effective way to provide training that would empower students to handle situations relating to gender violence appropriately.
- Consent training, bystander training and disclosure training have proven to be effective when incorporated into widespread communities.
- Previous consent training that has been voluntary has only attracted people 'in the bubble' and hasn't had a lasting effect.

Council Resolves:

- As part of the mandatory training for clubs and societies, it should be expected that clubs and societies should have a member of the committee who has undergone some level of consent, bystander or disclosure training in the first semester.

Date of Approval: Apr 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

SECTION 6: COMMUNITY ISSUES

6.01. Xenophobia

Policy Title:	Xenophobia		
Policy Reference:	COM/2017/6/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

The Council notes that:

- The current political conversation in the light of Brexit, and the recently called snap General Election has been marked with deeply toxic debate around immigration and racial minorities.
- The current British government and establishment is institutionally racist in its policies and campaigns, by targeting and blaming people of colour (PoC) and immigrants for the economic crises and austerity- and this is despite xenophobia being illegal in UK.
- These policies and campaigns not only adopt a racist rhetoric, but also legitimise and normalise it, creating a climate that has made outward racism acceptable.
- By blaming immigrants and PoC for the failures and shortcoming of the government, alongside running Brexit campaigns fuelled with bigotry and racist rhetoric, the government is directly responsible for encouraging the resurgence of facism and white extremism terrorising PoC.

The Council recognises that:

- This ‘normalisation’ of being openly casually racist has spread even amongst young adults and has made university campuses unsafe around the UK.
- There have been several instances - that have been raised - of international and/or ethnic minority students in QUB who have had racial slurs thrown at them in and outside the classroom, leaving students feeling unsafe in even academic spaces.
- Reports of racist hate crimes around the University area, especially in the Holylands, have been constantly increasing over the past few years, especially in view of the growing Romanian community in the area.

The Council mandates:

- That the Students’ Union adopt a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to racism, discrimination and hate crime.
- To actively campaign to mobilise and educate the student body against racism and xenophobia.
- That the Executive Management Committee, including but not limited to the VP Student Activities, VP Equality & Diversity and the BAME Officer - ensure all students, but especially ethnic minorities, have equal access to all aspects of university life in an environment free of discrimination, harassment and intimidation.

Date of Approval: 2 May 2017

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

6.02. Education for Disadvantaged Communities

Policy Title:	Education for Disadvantaged Communities		
Policy Reference:	COM/2018/6/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council recognises that the educational underachievement disparately affects those from particular disadvantaged communities in Northern Ireland. Council recognises that the single biggest factor leading to educational underachievement is socioeconomic status; that through no fault of their own, children from disadvantaged communities are much less likely to achieve even basic qualifications, never mind gaining access to University.

Council further recognises that issues around mental health also play a significant factor in terms of underachievement. Council contends that our institutions are not doing enough to address underachievement, and that this must be addressed if we are to build a truly fair and inclusive society. Council recognises that having a diverse population of students is beneficial to all students, not just those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Council mandates the Student Officer team to campaign and lobby our institutions to address these disparities. Council further mandates the Officer team to campaign and lobby both our institutions and the University itself to make more places available to those from disadvantaged communities who may not have the required grades through no fault of their own.

Council further mandates the Officer team to campaign and lobby both the institutions and the University itself to create more access routes, and better funding for these access routes, to allow those who are disadvantaged a fair chance to access a university education. Council finally mandates the Officer team to campaign and lobby the University to provide increased support funding to support those who need it the most, no matter what their background.

Date of Approval: 15 May 2018

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

6.03. Establishing a Campaign to Make QUB a University of Sanctuary

Policy Title:	Establishing a Campaign to Make QUB a University of Sanctuary		
Policy Reference:	COM/2018/6/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Sanctuary provides refuge or safety from pursuit, persecution, or other danger. The sanctuary message of welcome is vital in all spheres of society and must be visible in our public spaces including the University.

The University should strive to be a place of sanctuary for all people seeking refugee from, war, violence, political persecution, poverty, discrimination, and marginalisation. The three principles of the university of sanctuary are; learn, embed, share.

We are asking council to support our campaign to make QUB a university of sanctuary, canvassing staff, fellow students, departments, and senior management to make the message of sanctuary part of the ethos of our institution.

We are also asking council to recognise the ability of the students and the Students' Union to implement these three principles and make QUB a university of sanctuary. To engage with ourselves and other grassroots community groups to ensure the message of sanctuary is effective, engaging, and sustainable.

Finally, we are asking Council to extend their support to other higher education institutions fighting to make their universities places of sanctuary recognising that there is strength in unity.

Date of Approval: 4 December 2018

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

6.04. Student-Led Campaign for the Improvement of Sustainable Transport in Belfast

Policy Title:	Student-Led Campaign for the Improvement of Sustainable Transport in Belfast		
Policy Reference:	COM/2018/6/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This council recognises:

The role of accessible, affordable and sustainable modes of transport in better enabling students to pursue their education and access services, and, in particular, the importance of cycling in reducing carbon emissions and tackling obesity.

This council calls for:

NUS-USI to establish a student-led campaign for the improvement of sustainable transport in Belfast, with involvement from Queen's University and its constituent colleges; Ulster University; and Belfast Metropolitan College;

for this campaign to have specific aims including, but not limited to:

The expansion of the Belfast Bikes scheme, in particular to areas with a high student population such as the Holylands and Lower Ormeau, and to areas with services and amenities which students could benefit from greater access to#

The extension of Belfast Rapid Transit (Glider buses) to the main Queen's campus, and beyond to the Stranmillis campus and Elms Village, and the improvement of Translink's bus and rail services more generally

The improvement of cycling infrastructure and services in the city, including segregated cycle paths and greenways, more bike parking spaces, and greater availability of cycle training for students, university staff and others

Campaigning for the University, university suppliers based in Belfast, businesses, and employers to become more cycle friendly by encouraging their employees and other relevant stakeholders to cycle, in order to increase the numbers of cyclists on the roads and thereby improve safety

To lobby the University, Belfast City Council, Northern Ireland Executive and other relevant stakeholders in order to achieve these goals

Date of Approval: 4 December 2018

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

6.05. Off Campus Discipline

Policy Title:	Off Campus Discipline		
Policy Reference:	COM/2019/6/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes that:

1. Students of QUB are regularly punished by the University for incidents that take place off campus.
2. Punishment can range from advice and warning, alcohol awareness programme, fines, suspension and at the worst expulsion.
3. Students of QUB have been punished under these regulations for many reasons including, taking part in peaceful protests.

Council believes that:

1. The University has no jurisdiction over the regulation of students' activities outside of University.
2. That the application of the off-campus discipline regulations is inconsistent, as it tends to only focus on students surrounding the University, therefore it is not applied equally to all students.
3. By punishing students for taking part in legitimate, peaceful protest that the University is setting a dangerous precedent on the ability of student activists to fight for change.

Council therefore instructs the SU Executive:

1. To lobby the University to reopen the Off-Campus discipline review group with the view that students' private lives must be respected as codified in article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998).
2. To support efforts to oppose off campus discipline through the Courts."

Date of Approval: 5 February 2019

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

6.06. Anti-Fascism & Anti-Racism

Policy Title:	Anti-Fascism & Anti-Racism		
Policy Reference:	COM/2019/6/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

There has been a widespread resurgence and emboldening of fascism globally, presenting an existential threat to communities of colour, migrants, minoritised faiths, and LGBT+ people.

1. Ruling governments have pandered to fascist populism through xenophobic/racist scapegoating.
2. Westminster and Stormont governments cannot be relied upon to 'deal' with the threat of fascism, as the policies of austerity and privatisation create the conditions in which fascism grows.
3. Anti-fascism must be driven by grassroots organisations, which can both respond to the threat of far-right mobilisations and proactively build mutual aid and solidarity in communities, to outmaneuver fascist populism.
4. Throughout 2018, a number of far-right groups rallied in Belfast on multiple occasions around various issues; from calling for the Islamophobic, racist-Tommy Robinson's release, to pedalling Islamophobic, anti-migrant, fascist & racist rhetoric.
5. Many far-right fascist groups- including Generation Sparta, a group linked to European neo-nazi Generation Identity- have been organising actively in NI, an example being the anti-islam leaflets that were distributed in Ravenhill Rd.
6. In October 2018, a group of people dressed in KKK costumes gathered outside an Islamic centre in Newtownards; just a year before a pig's head was left outside the very same Islamic centre.
7. The border between the North & South of Ireland, has always been a 'hard' border for people of colour- these are the harsh realities of Stop-and-Search laws used to target and police the movement of people of colour through the border.
8. Asylum Seekers- who are by an overwhelming majority, people of colour- under the direct provision centers in ROI, have to often make long difficult journeys for various official documentation appointments as well as to access healthcare. Many of these centres are situated in areas where public transport options involve crossing the border into NI illegally en route- hence making accessing legal help/services & healthcare close to impossible.
9. An outrage about 'Free Speech' in universities has been manufactured by the government/press.
10. This often relies on crude, false connotations between diverse direct-action tactics/campaigns with 'No Platforming'/ 'Safe Spaces'.
11. Jo Johnson announced that the Office for Students would take a more aggressive role in securing 'freedom of speech' in universities. It's unclear exactly what this new 'duty' would add to existing law in practice, but in context

it's likely that student direct action will be targeted - including anti-racist protesting.

Council further believes:

1. 'Anti-racist' state laws, such as bans of far-right groups are inevitably utilised to target progressive organising that the state disapproves of – example being the Public Order Act.
2. No Platforming is an important tactic developed by antifascists to counter fascist organising. It has been widely adopted in SU's across the country, as well as being a core of NUS UK's organising.
3. The success of No Platforming, as a tactic, hinges on robust grassroots organising, not just as a 'policy'.
4. No Platforming should never seek to emulate state control or draw legitimacy from their laws – we should support bottom-up and democratic antifascism, not top-down policing.
5. Furthermore, No Platform should apply only to fascism/far-right organising, in specific response to the methodology of fascism.
6. Free Speech is one of a number of rights to hold power to account, and is inseparable from the right to organise and the right to protest. Therefore, it must be defended and exercised 'from below'.
7. There is indeed an attack on Free Speech in universities – it comes from the state & institutions cracking down on student political organising.
8. Direct action has a proud tradition that we must defend. Universities should not be made to police students' action, nor should SUs ever be complicit in doing so.

Council resolves:

1. To mandate the SU executive to work with trade unions and our national unions- NUS, NUS-USI & USI- to provide anti-fascist training days open to students and communities covering: self-defence training, direct action training, know-your-rights legal training.
2. To affirm QUBSU's support for No Platforming, as a bottom-up tactic.
3. To stand in solidarity with our siblings in direct provision in the Republic of Ireland and to call for its abolition.
4. Robustly oppose any new repressive state laws that stifle our right to organise, protest and/or oppose the far-right and campaign against any future laws or policies that stifle or criminalise direct and disruptive action.
5. To actively use No Platforming in the political organising of the SU, to actively oppose any and all fascist and racist organising.

Date of Approval: 5 February 2019

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

6.07. Irish Language Residential Scheme

Policy Title:	Irish Language Residential Scheme		
Policy Reference:	COM/2022/6/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes: -

- Cumann Gaelach QUB have been engaged in ongoing lobbying work for the university to introduce an Irish Language Residential Scheme.
- A group named Dearcan, comprised of members of An Cumann Gaelach, members of staff and SU Officers, developed a proposal for the scheme which was presented to the University in 2021.
- Existing policy on Irish language promotion includes an Irish Language Rights policy (REF: OTH/2020/8/5) outlining the SU's mandate to support Irish language activism on campus - The University's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy (2020) section 6.5 specifies that the university must "proactively seek opportunities... to promote the importance of linguistic diversity through outreach events, education, campus and off-site activities, and through supporting staff and student access to language courses, networks, information and resources."
- Irish Language Residential Schemes exist in universities all over the island of Ireland. An Irish Language Residential Scheme was established in Ulster University Magee campus in 2021.
- Language Residential Schemes also exist in universities in Scotland and Wales to promote minority languages.

Council believes:

- The introduction of an Irish Language Residential Scheme would be a positive step forward in securing language rights for Irish language speakers in Queen's.
- An Irish Language Residential Scheme would prove to be academically beneficial for students who speak Irish to continue to develop their skills and proficiency.
- An Irish Language Residential Scheme would help promote the language, increase visibility, and therefore normalise the language.

Council mandates:

- The Students' Union formally supports the campaign of An Cumann Gaelach in lobbying for an Irish Language Residential Scheme
- Student Officers to engage with University management to ensure the Scheme proposal is implemented as soon as possible
- Student Officers to engage with An Cumann Gaelach QUB and Irish language speakers on campus to ensure their needs are met within the creation of the Irish language residential scheme.

Date of Approval: Mar 2022
Lapse Date: Apr 2025
Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

6.08. An Antifascist and Antiracist Students' Union

Policy Title:	An Antifascist and Antiracist Students' Union		
Policy Reference:	COM/2022/6/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council Notes:

- That there have been numerous attacks against asylum seekers in student areas by extremist and fascist militant groups
- That this was partly enabled due to the inappropriate living conditions that MEARS, a state housing department specifically to handle asylum seekers.
- There has been an increase in hate crimes over the course of the pandemic and 2021 saw a record number of hate crimes.
- There has been an increase in fascist activity, in Ireland and the rest of Europe.

This Council also notes:

- This Students' Union has an anti-fascist policy.
- The Students' Union has a policy of trying to achieve QUB as a University of Sanctuary.
- This Students' Union has not been involved in any antifascist activity since 2018.
- Students Together for Asylum Seekers and Refugees has been lapsed during this academic year.

This Council Believes:

- The increase in hate crimes is a threat to many students at Queens.
- The Students' Union is an institution that is committed to equality and the safety of all.

Therefore, this Council affirms:

- The Students' Union should make an active attempt to revive STAR.
- The Students' Union should engage with any antifascist activity.
- The Students' Union should reach out to any movement that is supporting refugees in the local area and engage with them.

Date of Approval: Mar 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

SECTION 7: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

7.01. Supporting and Valuing International Students

Policy Title:	Supporting and Valuing International Students		
Policy Reference:	INT/2016/7/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council notes QUB's internationalisation strategy as laid out in Vision 2020. Council recognises the fact that this core document impacts the entire strategy for the University in the years ahead, while also noting that this 'vision' had absolutely no input from students.

Council believes that the current internationalisation strategy at Queen's is based on an exploitative drive to increase cash flow from the higher tuition fees that international students can be charged. Considering the stance of this Union on tuition fees, especially at the time of an Assembly Election campaign in which we are insisting that the fee cap should not be lifted, we believe that international students should not be charged extortionate tuition. International students are important in our drive to become a diverse place of learning, and should be treated with the utmost respect which is currently lacking at an institutional level. Council condemns the current internationalisation strategy at QUB and across the Higher Education sector as not only exploitative, but inherently bigoted.

The Students' Union resolves to challenge the University's current attempt to "recruit" international students in order to increase funding, while putting in place no additional support for these students who often face different needs and issues. This Union values our international students and staff, and affirms to ensure that they are considered not as 'cash cows', but as integral to diversification, learning, research, and societal change.

This Council instructs the Vice President Equality & Diversity, alongside the International Students' Officer, to lobby the University on the impact of their current strategy, to demand that support services are increased across the University to reflect the changing needs of our student population, and to ensure that the University commits further staff and monetary support to international Welcome programmes and integration efforts. While this Council also instructs all members of the Executive Management Committee to ensure that in their day-to-day work of representation, committees, and campaigns, that the issues of supporting our international students is to the forefront.

Date of Approval: 8 Feb 2016
Lapse Date: Apr 2025
Officer responsible: Vice President Equality & Diversity

7.02. Guarantor Support for International Students

Policy Title:	Guarantor Support for international Students		
Policy Reference:	INT/2016/7/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes that:

- Returning International Students prefer living in privately owned accommodation for the following reasons:
- Economical Value (cost-effective)
- Accessibility to frequently used services and places of personal interests (for e.g. School of study, 24hr Shops, PEC, Pubs etc.)
- Communal living with friends of mutual endeavours
- General freedom (for example: last check-in time for friends 11:00 pm, Elms)
- Normally leasing a private accommodation requires a UK based Guarantor, which most international students find difficult to arrange.
- This immediately reduces the number of choices of agencies\landlord and locations available to students.
- Moreover, many landlords and agencies exploit this opportunity and demand at least six-month's (if not full) rent plus the deposit payable upfront.
- Some demand payment of double deposit etc.
- Many students end up paying more than usual to these landlord and letting agencies to secure accommodation.
- While this is convenient to some students others find it difficult to arrange. However, the main limitation is that it puts students at a financial threat allowing the landlords an upper-hand in dealing with queries.
- Some landlords/agencies do not respond to or even completely ignore queries or issues raised by the tenants. This raises unnecessary worry and welfare issues amongst students.

Council resolves that:

- The University should act as a guarantor for international students or to install such a scheme for internationals students.
- This provides financial freedom to students who otherwise find it difficult to arrange upfront payment. This ensures financial safety, security and wellbeing of our international student
- In return, all students must pay their rent promptly as per the contract demands.
- This is a common practise by many Universities in the UK.

Date of Approval: 10 May 2016

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Vice President Equality & Diversity

7.03. Financial Support for International Students

Policy Title:	Financial Support for International Students		
Policy Reference:	INT/2017/7/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council recognises:

- That there is a lack of financial support for International students, regardless of students coming from less fortunate backgrounds or in the case of any unexpected circumstance,
- That the DfE Support Fund, a discretionary fund for students with financial difficulties is only available for NI and GB students,
- That the UKCISA (UK Council for International Student Affairs) specifies that only International students whom are classified as ‘Home Students’ might be able to receive support funding from the Government; leaving other International students with no alternatives for funding except for the University’s Hardship Fund which constitutes of a much smaller pot of money as compared to the DfE Support Fund,
- That there is no clear explanation as to how candidates are selected as recipients of the Vice-Chancellor’s International Attainment Scholarship for Undergraduates,
- That the International Office Undergraduate Scholarships offered by the university are significantly incomparable to the rest of tuition fees to be paid.

Council believes:

- That this is unfair because not all International students come from financially strong backgrounds and a provision should be available for support funding if necessary,
- That as a result of increasing tuition fees and the inability of some of these students to support the expenditure of tuition and living costs, the amount of prospective International students enrolling in the future might reduce significantly.

Council mandates:

- That there should be a fund which provides a capped amount of financial support to International students provided that there is a legitimate reason,
- That the award process for students whom applied for the Vice-Chancellor’s International Attainment Scholarship should be transparent and the results of the award process should be publicised so as to raise awareness on how such recipients were awarded and allow future applicants a guideline to the award process,
- That if a fund which provides a capped amount of financial support to International students is not feasible, a mechanism should be put in place for international students to obtain loans from the University in case of financial hardship and emergencies which would be repaid once the international student starts work,
- That the International scholarships should be further divided into merit-based scholarships and needs-based scholarships,

- That the SU Executive including but not limited to VP Equality and Diversity, the International Officer and the BAME Officer, look into the above and help alleviate these issues.

Date of Approval: 6 April 2017

Lapse Date: Mar 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

7.04. Visa Issues for International Students

Policy Title:	Visa Issues for International Students		
Policy Reference:	INT/2017/7/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council recognises:

- That there are cases where international students have had to pay additional fees for their UK Tier 4 visa for various circumstances, through no fault of their own.
- That these additional fees and expenditure can be burdensome for international students and their families.
- That some Study-Abroad students have to apply and pay for their UK Visa application twice due to miscommunication or even false advertising, between QUB and their Home University.

Council has concerns:

- Although QUB is a recognised sponsor and issues CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies) to international students and has the responsibility of “...doing all it can to ensure that prospective students are genuine students who can comply with their Immigration Rules, and that students enrol, comply with their conditions of leave, and see their course through to completion” (Tier 4 of the Points Based System: Guidance for Sponsors; 2.3), the University management does not seem to reflect such behaviour.
- That due to miscommunication between international Study-Abroad students and the University management, such students are misinformed about their Student Visa until after they have received it, and have to incur significant costs to rectify it

Council instructs:

- The incoming Vice President of Equality and Diversity, International Officer and BAME Officer (2017-18) to organize a confidential survey aimed for international students on the subject of student visa issues, with the overarching aim of finding the number of international students whom have had issues with their student visa during their study in QUB.
- The incoming Vice President of Equality and Diversity (2017-18) to discuss and resolve the issue on the lack of communication between University Management and other partner universities whom send students for Study Abroad with regards to their Student Visas
- The Students’ Union to work with other organisations and the national union to highlight the injustices imposed by the Home Office and call for reform.

Date of Approval: April 2017

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Vice President Equality & Diversity

7.05. Enable International Students to Sit August Examinations in Their Home Countries

Policy Title:	Enable International Students to Sit August Examinations in Their Home Countries		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2017/7/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council recognises:

- That international students at QUB who have examinations during the August period can only sit these papers by travelling back to Belfast during August.
- That this requirement for international students to travel all the way back to Belfast earlier, just to sit for their papers in August, can be a huge disruption to them and their family in terms of costs and convenience.
- That the lack of an alternative for international students at QUB to sit for their August papers outside the UK will not only put the current international students at QUB in a highly difficult position, but also poses a significant deterrent for potential international students to apply to study at QUB in the future.

This Council notes:

- That there is no specific reason as to why international students at QUB cannot have the alternative of taking their resit papers in their respective home countries.
- That other Russell Group universities across the UK have provisions for making arrangements with the British Council and/or the British Embassy for international students to sit for their examinations in August outside the UK, simultaneously with the exams held in the main campus in the UK. Examples of these institutions include, amongst others, the University of Leeds, the University of Liverpool, and the University of Sheffield.
- That international students at QUB should also have the alternative of being able to sit for their August papers at a relevant British Council Office or the British Embassy outside the UK.

This Council mandates:

- That the University should make arrangements with the relevant bodies such as the British Council to enable the international students at QUB to sit for their written examinations during the August period overseas, to relieve the difficulties currently faced by the international students at QUB by having to travel all the way back to Belfast to do so.
- That the QUBSU Executive Management Committee, including but not limited to: The SU VP Education and the International Officer, assist in addressing these issues.

Date of Approval: 2 May 2017
Lapse Date: Apr 2025
Officer responsible: VP Education

7.06. Supporting the campaign to bring back the post-study work visa

Policy Title:	Supporting the campaign to bring back the post-study work visa		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2019/7/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

1. There are 442,375 international students in the UK, including 312,660 non-EU international students- about 3000 of these international students are enrolled in institutions across Northern Ireland.
2. The post-study work visa scheme was introduced for international students to
3. International students pay staggering amounts of money in tuition fees, visa costs, and NHS bills – they are being treated like cash cows.
4. The international student community in Northern Ireland contribute about £170 million to the economy fiscally- let alone the cultural diversity, global outlook, and internationally relevant skills they bring to our campuses.
5. The current hostile environment policy makes international students feel unwelcome in the UK, and 19% of non-EU students would not recommend the UK as a place to study for a friend or relative (this is as high as 34%, 36% and 38% for students from India, Nigeria, and Pakistan respectively).
6. The number of non-EU international students finding employment after graduation has fallen by seven and a half times since the UK government scrapped post-study work visas in 2012.
7. During International Student Day 2018, a PostStudyWorkVisaNow campaign was launched in Scotland at the University of Edinburgh with various politicians and students.

Council further believes:

1. International students are now being forced to go home unjustly despite having built their lives in their city of study, and despite making the UK culturally, socially, intellectually and financially stronger. It is a disgrace that international graduates are being deported or otherwise forced to leave.
2. International students are fed up with the long wait and empty promises that have constituted the conversation about re-establishing the post-study work visa in the UK –the sad reality being that it has become a buzzword or unfulfilled manifesto pledge.
3. The PostStudyWorkVisaNow is an independent campaign that focuses on collective direct action from international student voices from SU's across the UK, to our national unions- presenting our elected representatives in Westminster that there is a demand for the post-study work visa; and that international students deserve the ability to be able to secure a future or career in the UK.

Council resolves:

1. To support and campaign to bring back the Post-Study work visa for international students in the UK.

2. To mandate the SU executive to jointly campaign with NUS-USI & NUS UK in supporting a secure future for international students in NI, and lobbying representatives in Westminster.
3. Endorse the PostStudyWorkVisaNow campaign and join an alliance of international students from across the UK actively campaigning for this cause.

The campaign demands:

- i) That the government to reintroduce a post-study work visa that allows graduates to work in the UK for at least two years after graduation.
- ii) A lower, regional salary threshold.
- iii) No restrictions; a post-study work visa should be offered to anyone who graduates from an FE or HE programme that lasts for 11 + months in the UK.
- iv) A healthy ecosystem- the government must support FE and HE institutions in offering opportunities to enhance employability, build capacity and engage with the job market while in education.
- v) FE & HE institutions to include employability and local as well as overseas job opportunities in their internationalization strategy.
- vi) That international students be removed from net migration targets.

Date of Approval: 5 February 2019

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

7.07. International Student VISA Waiver Scheme

Policy Title:	International Student VISA Waiver Scheme		
Policy Reference:	ACA/2022/7/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- The number of international students studying on the island of Ireland continues to increase.
- International students contribute enormously to student life and should not experience any undue or unfair restrictions on their lives while studying.
- The Common Travel Area (CTA) does not apply to international students who do not hold UK or Irish citizenship.
- Many international students studying in NI institutions face visa-based restrictions on travel within the Irish state.
- The current immigration system requires many international students to apply for short-term visas to attend events / activities within the Irish state, which is onerous, overly bureaucratic, time consuming, and limits participation in student life.

Council believes:

- International students should not face additional barriers to travel or to participation in opportunities on the island of Ireland.
- International students studying in NI institutions should be able to travel without restriction on the island to participate in educational, social and student experience activities.

Council therefore mandates:

Queen's Students' Union to work with other students' unions and other organisations to secure the implementation of a travel visa waiver - or visa exemption - system within the Irish state for all international students registered as studying in a further or higher education institution in NI.

Date of Approval: Mar 2022

Lapse Date: Mar 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

7.08. Multilingual Wellbeing Support Information

Policy Title:	Multilingual Wellbeing Support Information		
Policy Reference:	INT/2022/7/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council resolves that:

- The University should provide key student wellbeing information translated into the languages spoken by the most populous groups of international students at Queen's, as it is vitally important that students have easy access to this information during times of crisis.
- The Students' Union should organise or support a volunteering programme, through which multilingual students can support international students who struggle to speak and understand English.

Date of Approval: Oct 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

SECTION 8: OTHER POLICIES

8.01. Constitutional position on Northern Ireland

Policy Title:	Constitutional position on Northern Ireland		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2014/8/1	Policy Status:	N/A

“This Students’ Union is a shared space that is inclusive for all students and should therefore have a neutral stance on the constitutional position of Northern Ireland.”

This policy remains in effect until amended or overturned by a mandatory decision, by means of referendum, of the student membership of the Union.

Date of Approval: 27 Oct 2014 (Referendum)

Lapse Date: N/A

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.02. Paying the Living Wage in the Students' Union

Policy Title:	Paying the Living Wage in the Students' Union		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2014/8/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council believes that the current UK minimum wage is insufficient for people with or without dependants to survive upon and that, in grim recent economic times and with increasing student poverty, it is unacceptable that Queen's University Belfast Students' Union pays their staff a salary that fails to support a basic standard of living.

This Council therefore instructs the Students' Union to pay all staff, and to ensure that all outsourced staff are paid, the UK Living Wage which is currently £7.85 per hour, in order to become an accredited Living Wage Employer with the Living Wage Foundation. This Council wishes this recommendation to be effective immediately and to be implemented in advance of the next Statutory Meeting of Council.

Date of Approval: 04 Dec 2014

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.03. Gender Identification and Sexual Identity on Forms

Policy Title:	Gender Identification and Sexual Identity on Forms		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2014/8/3	Policy Status:	Continuing Campaign

This Council recognises the continued discrimination and problems that are faced by the Trans* community here at Queen's and within wider society. The Trans* community face many barriers in the quest for recognition of their gender identities, and often face difficulties in meeting their basic needs as human beings. In that light, Council regrets that gender identity questions on Students' Union and University forms have been alienating and counter to the inclusive environment that students should feel a part of.

Council recognises Union of Students in Ireland (USI) policy that states that, if gender is not a necessary requirement, then questions of gender or sex should not be included on forms that students or staff are asked to complete.

Council instructs that the Vice President Equality and Diversity acts to ensure that all Students' Union forms are amended to remove gender or sexual identity questions. Furthermore, where the question is indeed necessary - such as on an Equality Monitoring Form - that the current question be amended to be entirely inclusive, and brought back to Council for approval.

Council also instructs that the Sabbatical Officers do all within their power to ensure that the University adheres to the same principle.

Date of Approval: 04 Dec 2014

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.04. Disclosure of University Investments

Policy Title:	Disclosure of University Investments		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2015/8/1	Policy Status:	Continuing Campaign

This Council calls upon Queen's University Belfast to publically disclose information concerning the details of the investments made using QUB's endowment funds. In particular, we call for the public disclosure of:

1. A list of the companies which Queen's is currently invested in;
2. The amount currently invested in each company; and
3. The annual returns being made on each investment.

Date of Approval: 27 Apr 2015

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

Note: The Students' Union secured access to this information in 2016 via a Freedom of Information Request and subsequent appeal to the Information Commissioner for the University to reveal the information. The University has yet to publicly disclose this information or include it in its Freedom of Information publication scheme.

8.05. Fossil Fuel Divestment

Policy Title:	Fossil Fuel Divestment		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2015/8/2	Policy Status:	Continuing Campaign

Queen's University Belfast should divest from fossil fuels.

This Council demands that Queen's University Belfast immediately freeze any investments and commits to the complete withdrawal of any existing investments, in:

1. Companies whose main business is the extraction and / or production of fossil fuels; and
2. Any co-mingled or mutual funds that contain fossil fuel holdings.

Date of Approval: 27 Apr 2015 (Referendum)

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

Note: Queen's University Senate agreed, in April 2017, to disinvest from indirect investments in fossil fuels, subject to this not materially impacting on expected investment returns. The Students' Union shall keep the progress of this commitment under review.

8.06. Organise Mental Health Training for Students

Policy Title:	Organise Mental Health Training for Students		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2015/8/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council notes that the number of students registered with disability services due to mental health problems is rising every year.

This Council proposes that the student officers look into the feasibility of providing Mental Health First Aid training for students, in partnership with Aware Defeat Depression or a similar organisation.

This Council requests that the Vice President Welfare provides a verbal report on progress at the next Statutory Meeting of Council.

Date of Approval: 6 May 2015

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Student Officer Welfare

8.07. Integrated Education

Policy Title:	Integrated Education		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2016/8/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes with concern that nearly 20 years since the Good Friday Agreement, 93% of young people are still being educated in a system of segregation in Northern Ireland.

Council believes that Northern Ireland's politicians have failed in their responsibility to "facilitate and encourage integrated education"; a responsibility they signed up to in the Good Friday Agreement and one that was ratified by the vast majority of people both North and South.

Council notes that the Assembly appears to be substituting its legislative requirement to work towards integration with a "separate but equal" approach through so-called shared education. Council believes that this model sustains division and is unacceptable in a society where we should be pushing towards equality, inclusivity and mutual understanding.

Council believes that while young people remain segregated and contentious issues remain unresolved; tensions will continue to simmer and ultimately the peace process itself could be at risk contributed to by segregated education. Council maintains that this situation cannot be allowed to continue.

Council instructs the Students Union President, VP Equality and Diversity, and VP Campaigns and Communications to campaign and lobby the Assembly resolutely to move away from this "shared education" approach towards a genuinely shared future through a singly publically funded integrated education system in NI.

Date of Approval: 8 Feb 2016

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Students Union President, VP Equality and Diversity

8.08. A Breastfeeding Friendly Union

Policy Title:	A Breastfeeding Friendly Union		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2016/8/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council aims to provide an open and inclusive environment for all. This includes those with children. This Council therefore instructs the Students' Union to adopt a breastfeeding friendly policy.

Date of Approval: 8 Feb 2016

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Students Union President, VP Equality and Diversity

8.09. Save our Schools – Size and Shape Review 2016

Policy Title:	Save our Schools – Size and Shape Review 2016		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2016/8/4	Policy Status:	N/A

Queen’s University Belfast should reverse course closures, cuts to student places and the arbitrary increase of A-level entry tariffs, as outlined in the Size and Shape Review.”

This policy remains in effect until amended or overturned by a mandatory decision, by means of referendum, of the student membership of the Union.

Date of Approval: 12 May 2016 (Referendum)

Lapse Date: N/A

Officer responsible: Student Union President

8.10. Student Staff Alliance

Policy Title:	Student Staff Alliance		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2016/8/5	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council notes the major campaign victories achieved recently by students and staff campaigning together on the issues of course closures and other measures of marketisation.

This Council believes that the interests of students and staff are invariably aligned, and that a University workforce which is healthy, respected, afforded academic freedom, adequately paid and empowered to have an input in the institutional direction of Queen's University, will provide the highest quality education and student experience to our members.

This Council also believes that the rights of students and the student experience will be best protected and enhanced when Queen's Students' Union is supported by staff members at Queen's University and their trade union representatives.

Many University staff are also students, and we therefore have a duty to campaign in the interests of our members.

This Council, therefore, supports that Queen's Students' Union will enter into a campaign alliance with trade unions representing University staff, and with the wider trade union movement, in order to:

- Campaign for a democratic, public university
- Oppose any increases in tuition fees
- Oppose marketisation of higher education
- Promote trade union membership
- Build links to ensure greater protections of student workers

Date of Approval: 5 December 2016

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Students Union President, VP Equality and Diversity

8.11. 'Take Back Queen's' Program of Reforms

Policy Title:	'Take Back Queen's' Program of Reforms		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2016/8/6	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council supports the 'Take Back Queen's' Program of Reforms, adopted as the campaign platform for the alliance between the Students' Union and staff unions. *The Programme of Reforms is detailed in paper SUC/P/17/9.*

Programme of Reforms: This Program of Reforms is a campaign platform supported by 'Take Back Queen's', an alliance of Queen's Students' Union and UCU.

Issues – Marketisation

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), which will marketise and cause reputation damage to universities, has been introduced to Northern Ireland.

A consensus has emerged from Universities, business and political representatives to increase tuition fees.

Increasingly teachers lack autonomy as education and the dissemination of knowledge have been turned into exercises in customer service provision.

Academic freedom has been curtailed to pursue research funding.

Issues – Equality

Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) are used to take decisions regarding staff probation and promotion, despite inherent biases that amount to an indirect form of discrimination.

A gender pay gap and unequal opportunities for promotion discriminate against female academics.

Issues – Democracy

In recent years, Senate has repeatedly blocked the decisions of elected Students' Union councillors. This is a gross infringement on SU democracy.

Key decision-making at Queen's University is made through an undemocratic and centralised corporate governance structure. This disempowers staff and students and leads to unpopular and unrepresentative decision-making.

Issues – Working Conditions

The lack of definition of job duties following restructuring has led to staff taking on additional responsibilities without being evaluated or risk assessed.

There is a large degree of casualization with many employees working on precarious contracts with inadequate pay.

Unrealistic Academic Standards and conditions for confirmation in post have been imposed which have had a huge impact on staff morale, retention and recruitment.

PhD students do not receive adequate pay across the institution for teaching assistance.

Solutions – Marketisation

We seek a commitment from Senior Management not to enter into the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and to lobby for a system of quality assessment that actually measures teaching quality.

Protect academic freedom by acknowledging and encouraging different ways in which research can generate impact and be beneficial to society. Safeguard teachers' autonomy by valuing teaching quality over 'customer satisfaction'. Ensure a diverse university education portfolio by resisting trends to only offer courses that sell well.

Publicly commit to oppose, and lobby against, a rise in tuition fees.

Solutions – Equality

Put an end to the integration of Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) into staff assessment procedures and personnel decisions. Instead, a new system of peer-review should be used to assess teaching quality.

End the Gender Pay Gap, taking loss of lifetime earnings into consideration, and modify promotion procedures so that they become equality proofed.

Solutions – Democracy

We seek a commitment from the University Senate to end interference in SU democracy and to endorse changes to the SU Constitution to make our democratic procedures sovereign.

We seek a review of governance mechanisms and culture in the University carried out by a new Democratisation & Decentralisation Committee. This should be followed by the creation of an agreed charter of democratic and inclusive principles and reforms, to be approved by an all-staff and all-student referendum.

Solutions – Working Conditions

Academic standards have to be reviewed across the university in full collaboration with the concerned members of staff. Expected aims and norms for good performance at Queen's must be set out, which allow for a fair degree of flexibility for taking disciplinary specifics and particular individual circumstances into account.

End widespread casualisation and improve the working conditions of those working on an hourly-paid basis by eliminating for service contracts and offering fair pay.

Date of Approval: 5 December 2016

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Students Union President, VP Equality and Diversity

8.12. Irish Language Act

Policy Title:	Irish Language Act		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2016/8/8	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council recognises that an Irish Language Act was promised within Annex B of the 2006 St. Andrew's Agreement but that it has still not been passed within the Assembly.

This Council calls for the passage of an Irish Language Act in the Assembly as soon as possible.

Date of Approval: 5 December 2016
Lapse Date: Apr 2025
Officer responsible: VP Equality and Diversity

8.13. Justice and Human Rights for Palestine

Policy Title:	Justice and Human Rights for Palestine		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2016/8/10	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Student Council notes:

- That the state of Israel is involved in a brutal military occupation of the Palestinian territories.
- The occupation is responsible for systematic, widespread and ongoing human rights abuses against the local Palestinian population, including destruction of homes, theft of land and water resources, imprisonment without trial, torture of prisoners, and construction of Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian land.
- That the State of Israel is in violation of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations. The settlements have also been declared illegal by the International Court of Justice and the UK government with Amnesty International stating that “Israel’s settlement policy is inherently discriminatory and has resulted in grave human rights violations including destruction of homes, forced evictions, unlawful killings, arbitrary detentions and collective punishment”.

Student Council believes:

- That Israel should end its occupation of the Palestinian territories and allow the return of Palestinian refugees in accordance with international law.
- That the Palestinian people are entitled to the same human rights, dignity of person, self-determination, security and parity of esteem as all other peoples in the world today.
- That a boycott of Israel’s entire regime of oppression, including all of the Israeli companies and institutions that are involved in its violations of international law, is a reasonable non-violent activity that can be taken to register opposition to such crimes.
- That the Palestinian led BDS campaign does not target anyone or anything based on identity, but rather based solely on complicity in denying Palestinian rights and that BDS is a strategy for effective solidarity, not a dogma or ideology and certainly not an attack upon Jewish communities or individuals.

Student Council resolves:

- To inform our members of the background to the situation in Israel/Palestine and to commemorate Palestine Solidarity Day, working with any relevant groups such as student societies and civil society organisations local to each of our campuses.
- To support an Academic Boycott of Israeli Higher Education institutions complicit in normalising, providing intellectual cover for, and supporting settler-colonialism. This includes policies that amount to Apartheid, encouraging recruitment to the Israeli Defence Forces, and providing support to the militarist occupation of Palestine.

- To lobby our university to divest itself from and terminate any contracts with companies that are complicit in the occupation of the Palestinian territories and violation of Palestinian human rights more widely.
- To join the global movement for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel until it ends the occupation and complies with international law.

Date of Approval: 5 December 2016

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: VP Equality and Diversity

8.14. Trade Union Alliance

Policy Title:	Trade Union Alliance		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2017/8/1	Policy Status:	N/A

Queen's Students' Union should enter into a campaign alliance with trade unions representing Queen's University staff and the wider trade union movement in order to:

- Campaign for a democratic, public university
- Oppose any increases in tuition fees
- Oppose marketisation of higher education
- Promote trade union membership
- Build links to ensure greater protections of student workers

This policy remains in effect until amended or overturned by a mandatory decision, by means of referendum, of the student membership of the Union.

Date of Approval: 7 February 2017 (Referendum)

Lapse Date: N/A

Officer responsible: Student Union President

8.15. Bilingual Signage on Campus

Policy Title:	Bilingual Signage on Campus		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2018/8/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council acknowledges:

- That bilingual English-Irish signage was erected around Queen's University Belfast in 1987 and removed ten years later in 1997.

This Council recognises:

- That an Irish Language Act was included in the St. Andrew's Agreement in 2007, and this Council voted to support calls for this Act only last year.

This Council also recognises:

- That bilingual signage follows the international best-practice set out in the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages that was ratified by the UK Government in 2001. The Charter states the need for bilingual signage to increase awareness of minority languages and to help increase the visibility of the language to normalise it within the community, and society as a whole.

This Council notes:

- That An Cumann Gaelach have written an open letter to the Vice-Chancellor in order to plan a meeting to discuss the possibility of returning bilingual signage to the QUB campus. This letter was co-signed with the French Society, Spanish Society, English Society, Amnesty International, Sinn Féin, QUB Alliance, QUB SDLP, An Cumann Gaelach at St Mary's College, QUB GAA, and activist group An Dream Dearg.

This Council mandates:

- That the VP Equality and Diversity and Students' Union President work closely with An Cumann Gaelach to ensure that the bilingual signage is returned across campus at Queen's University Belfast and Queen's University Students' Union.

Date of Approval: 13 March 2018

Lapse Date: Apr 2024

Officer responsible: Student Union President

8.16. Support The Campaign To Decriminalise Sex Work

Policy Title:	Support The Campaign To Decriminalise Sex Work		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2018/8/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes the following:

1. Sex work refers to escorting, lap dancing, stripping, pole dancing, pornography, webcamming, adult modelling, phone sex, and selling sex (on and off the street).
2. At present in Northern Ireland, the exchange of sexual services for money is not illegal for the seller, but associated activities (soliciting in a public place, kerb crawling, operating a brothel) are illegal.
3. The purchase of sexual services is illegal in Northern Ireland, criminalising the buyer.
4. The 2015 NUS Student Sex Work project report showed that significant numbers of students are turning to sex work in order to avoid debt and cover basic living expenses.
5. In 2012 the World Health Organisation produced guidelines recommending the decriminalisation of sex work.
6. In 2014 Department of Justice research found that 98% of sex workers surveyed believed that criminalising the purchase of sexual services in Northern Ireland would put them in danger.
7. In August 2015, Amnesty International voted to adopt policy to protect human rights of sex workers. The resolution recommended that they develop a policy that supports the full decriminalisation of all aspects of consensual sex work. The policy also calls on states to ensure that sex workers enjoy full and equal legal protection from exploitation, trafficking and violence.
8. There is an ongoing judicial review of the criminalisation of purchase of sexual services in Northern Ireland.
9. Decriminalisation is the legal model preferred by many sex-worker led organisations, including Sex Workers Alliance Ireland.

Council believes that:

1. Sex work is work: it is the exchange of money for labour.
2. With the rise in living costs, the increase in tuition fees, the attack on maintenance grants and the slashing of benefits for disabled people, it is highly likely that some students will do sex work alongside their studies. Some Queen's students have already disclosed via survey that they have done sex-work[1].
3. The criminalisation of sex workers' clients has been proven to lead to further distrust of the police amongst sex workers and a willingness of sex workers to cease using client screening and security procedures out of desperation.
4. Decriminalisation of sex work would ensure that sex workers feel able to report unsafe clients or violence at work without the worry of criminal repercussions. It would also allow sex workers to work together for safety and ensure that those who wish to leave the sex industry are not left with criminal records as a result of their job.

5. Following the criminalisation of purchase of sexual services sex workers in Northern Ireland have been subject to increased violence, both from clients and vigilante groups.
6. Human trafficking, coercion, sexual assault and rape are already illegal in Northern Ireland, regardless of the law on sex work. These issues are in no way exclusive to the sex industry.
7. NUS-USI currently has a policy on supporting the decriminalisation of sex work, and as members of NUS-USI we are mandated to support this, therefore this policy would enable QUBSU to support QUB students on this matter and campaign for them specifically.

Council resolves:

1. To support and publicly campaign for the full decriminalisation of sex work.
2. To support the ongoing judicial review on the criminalisation of purchase of sexual services in Northern Ireland.
3. To resist any future introduction of the criminalisation of purchase of sexual services in the United Kingdom.
4. To support efforts to decriminalise sex work in Ireland.
5. To support and be led by sex worker led organisations, such as the Sex Workers Alliance Ireland and the English Collective of Prostitutes.
6. To support QUB students who work in consensual sex work and advocate for the rights of these students to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Date of Approval: 15 May 2018

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.17. Reform of Gender Recognition Act (2004)

Policy Title:	Reform of Gender Recognition Act (2004)		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2018/8/6	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council recognises:

- The importance of legal gender recognition for transgender people enabling them to obtain a birth certificate that reflects their true gender.
- The current process to obtain legal recognition under the Gender Recognition Act (2004) is bureaucratic, expensive and intrusive and not accessible to most trans people.
- Gender recognition is a devolved power but trans people in NI use currently use the Gender Recognition Panel in England.
- Consultations on the Act have taken place in Scotland and England/Wales but none is planned for Northern Ireland.
- The Irish Gender Recognition Act is more progressive self-declarative system that is fast and non-intrusive but is not available to those born in Northern Ireland. This is currently under review.
- Non-binary people are unable to have their gender identity legally recognised.

This Council is concerned that:

- Current processes pathologise being transgender despite all trans related diagnoses been removed from the World Health Organisations mental health chapter of the International Classification of Diseases.
- Current processes do not meet the requirements of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 2048(2015)7, which states that gender recognition procedures should be quick, accessible, transparent and based on self-determination.
- Changes to the legislation in Scotland, England and Wales could leave Northern Irish Trans people with no pathway to legal recognition.

This Council therefore supports the rights2recognition campaign for Gender recognition reform in Northern Ireland that provides:

- A gender recognition system that's based on Ireland's model of self-declaration, not on psychiatric assessment
- A gender recognition system that's available to trans people at any age
- A gender recognition system that provides for the recognition of non-binary people

Date of Approval: 13 November 2018

Lapse Date: Apr 2024

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.18. Opposition to the Far Right

Policy Title:	Opposition to the Far Right		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2018/8/8	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

1. There has been a disturbing increase in the presence of the far right across Europe in recent years. This has also been true in Belfast and across the UK and Ireland.
2. July 2018 saw hundreds of far right followers take to the streets of Belfast, outside City Hall, for a 'Free Tommy Robinson' rally and a 'UK Freedom March.' Some of the attendees were pictured giving Nazi salutes.
3. During the Freshers' period a man was standing outside the front of QUB's Lanyon gates handing out Islamophobic flyers with cartoons of the prophet Mohammed in front of the Twin Towers.
4. On June 16th 2016, Jo Cox, MP for Batley and Spen was murdered outside her constituency surgery by a man who had links to a US based Neo-Nazi group and shouted 'Britain First.' She was the first MP to be assassinated since 1990.
5. In June 2017, a van was driven into pedestrians in Finsbury Park, London, killing one person and injuring 9. This was a deliberate attempt to inflict pain and suffering of the Muslim community of the area and further afield.
6. In July 2018, the Senior Assistant General Secretary of the RMT (National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers), Steve Hedley, was attacked after speaking at a 'Free Tommy Robinson' by far-right activists.
7. These are just some of the more extreme examples of the threat of the far right, but on a daily basis people of colour, particularly visibly Muslim people, are intimidated and feel unsafe in their homes and communities.

Council believes:

1. That the growth of the far right is a concern for Student Unions who have a duty of care for all students.
2. That the far right have no place within our society and must be opposed at every opportunity.
3. That some of the media legitimise the far right through their scapegoating of immigrants, normalisation of Islamophobia and misinformation on asylum seekers and refugees and many other areas.

Council therefore resolves:

1. To oppose the far right in whatever way necessary, this includes but is not limited to, protests and rallies.
2. To join forces with other organizations such as trade unions and civil society groups to oppose the far right."

Date of Approval: 13 November 2018

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.19. Opposition to the University's new Chancellor Appointee

Policy Title:	Opposition to the University's new Chancellor Appointee		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2020/8/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council notes:

- The appointment of Hillary Rodham Clinton as the new Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast
- Rodham Clinton in 2018 received an honorary degree from the university for her "outstanding contribution to peace and reconciliation."

This Council recognises its live policies:

- Policy 1.03 "Asylum Seekers and Access to Education" through which council agreed to support the needs of those seeking asylum in Belfast, particularly higher education.
- Policy 1.14 "Decolonising Education" that seeks to challenge the marketisation of higher education that disproportionately affects students of colour, fights for free education and the democratisation of higher education.
- Policy 6.05 "Establishing a campaign to make QUB a University of Sanctuary" which works to create a safe environment for those fleeing war, violence, political persecution, poverty, discrimination and marginalisation.
- Policy 8.22 "Justice and Human Rights for Palestine" where council supported "That the Palestinian people are entitled to the same human rights, dignity of person, self-determination, security and parity of esteem as other peoples in the world today" and the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign.
- Policy 8.29 "Support the Campaign to Decriminalise Sex Work" that supports students engaged in sex work, decriminalisation and challenges the practice of criminalising those engaged in this work.

This Council also recognises:

- Student protests against Rodham Clinton's honorary degree in 2018.

This Council understands:

- That Rodham Clinton "conflated sex work with human trafficking and failed to acknowledge that anti-trafficking efforts often criminalize the most vulnerable populations in America: women of colour, undocumented people, trans people, and single parents." (<https://www.redumbrellafund.org/feminism-supports-sex-workers-rights/>)
- Rodham Clinton had implemented inherently racist and inhumane policies regarding South Americans seeking asylum and migrating to the US. As a Senator voting in favour of the Secure Fences Act 2006 to build more walls across the US's southern borders, while also discussing further barriers during primaries in her latest presidential run.

- Rodham Clinton, as Secretary of State in the Obama registration, is known to have used drone strikes to attack its foreign “enemies”, killing many civilians. The White House released a figure of 116 civilians, while human rights organisations have rightly challenged this.
- Rodham Clinton, in her run for President, also fell short when it came to her policies on higher education funding as she does not support free education for all.
- In 2015, Rodham Clinton wrote a letter, with her Presidential campaign logo as its heading, to billionaire Haim Saban stating that “we need to make countering BDS a priority. (<https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/2158218-hillary-clintons-letter-to-haim-saban-against-bds.html>)

This Council believes:

- In her actions as a Senator, Secretary of State, First Lady and a Presidential candidate, Hillary Rodham Clinton has indicated that her values and the values of this Union are not the same.

Therefore, this Council:

- Opposes the appointment of Hillary Rodham Clinton as Chancellor of Queen’s University Belfast.
- Mandates the Union President to write to the Vice-Chancellor stating the Students’ Union’s official opposition to Rodham Clinton’s appointment.
- Mandates the Officer Board of this Students’ Union to boycott meetings, receptions and other events with Rodham Clinton – with the exception of Graduations – and support student-led demonstrations against her appointment and presence at university events.
- Calls for the Officer Board to lobby the University to provide a student-wide referendum on those taking up the Chancellorship in future.

Date of Approval: Jan 2020

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.20. Solidarity with Indian Students protesting against Hindutva

Policy Title:	Solidarity with Indian Students Protesting against Hindutva		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2020/8/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- India’s ruling majority headed by the right wing nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) & Prime Minister Modi adheres to the ideology of Hindutva which states that India belongs to only Hindu’s and anyone else is an ‘infiltrator’ in the country.
- Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is a bill which amends the Indian Citizenship law to provide citizenship to religious minorities but excludes Muslims and Sri Lankan Tamils from the process.
- The bill violates the secular principles of the Indian constitution as faith cannot be made a condition of citizenship and technically makes Indian Muslims as second-class citizens.
- The government has further proposed to implement National Register for Citizens (NRC) which is very closely interlinked to the CAA. This is a citizen’s register, the government first plans to offer citizenships to persecuted minorities apart from Muslims. Anyone not in the list shall be put into detention centres.

Council Further Notes:

- In Aug 2019, the BJP majority government voted to revoke Article 370 which gave autonomy to Kashmir, a Muslim-majority state, between Pakistan and India. Since then, the state-sponsored Hindutva regime has seen police brutality against innocent civilians, an internet shut down and house arrests of key Kashmiri leaders.
- Kashmir’s internet blackout has now lasted more than 150 days, the longest ever in a democracy, and has severely impacted people’s lives, jobs and the local economy.
- Students have been at the forefront of fighting this across India, their voices have been stifled and are facing violence as a result.
- Police brutality carried out at protests in December and against the students of public universities (Jawaharlal Nehru University, Aligarh Muslim University & Jamia University).
- Most recent one, being JNU where students & teachers were attacked by masked Nationalist mobs by an outfit related to the BJP/Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) combined under the lens of the State Police.

Council mandates:

- The Students' Union to stand in solidarity with Indian students, Indian citizens & members of the diaspora fighting the BJP's Hindutva agenda and the implementation of CAA & NRC.
- To reaffirm the SU's anti- fascist stance through standing against the state-sponsored violence against Kashmiri Muslims and the unconstitutional implementation of CAA & NRC to create a Hindu State.
- For the VP Equality & Diversity and the International Officer to engage in actions of solidarity to support anti-CAA/NRC action.

Date of Approval: Jan 2020

Lapse Date: Apr 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.21. Queen’s University Belfast’s ‘Green New Deal’

Policy Title:	Queen’s University Belfast’s ‘Green New Deal’		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2020/8/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

We demand:

- Queen’s University Belfast to declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency.
- QUB to act upon this declaration by agreeing to the below ‘QUB Green New Deal’ which will aim to make Queen’s net carbon neutral by 2025, with a commitment to become net carbon neutral by 2030.

We propose:

- Changes across campus to cancel out the University’s carbon footprint, combined with essential changes to our education system to prepare our students for the future of work, alongside educating them to become ecologically conscious and active citizens:

1. Educational and curriculum reform:
 - a. Changes to our current education system at Queen’s will be shaped through the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals.
 - b. Introduction of mandatory online module that students & staff must take upon registering for the year, based on the SDG’s. Ensuring this is critical and transformative to the way we teach at Queen’s.
 - c. Introducing incentivised (Degree Plus, extra credits etc.) extra module for students of any discipline to take – focusing on moving forward to a sustainable future as future workers and citizens.
 - d. Introducing new degree pathways i.e. offering ‘Sustainability’ as a Minor with various degrees.
 - e. Introducing elements of sustainability into different subjects and faculties – embedding this as a core aspect of the University’s teachings across the board. E.g. introducing elements of environmental law into mandatory law modules, introducing elements of SDG’s teaching into Medicine modules, recognising that the climate emergency poses a massive threat to healthcare.
 - f. Reviewing how Queen’s currently teach certain subjects e.g. management school currently focus on neo-liberal economic teachings which are entirely incompatible with the post-growth economy we’ll need to tackle a climate emergency. Environmental economic teachings currently barely exist in the management school.
2. Queen’s will produce and follow a new procurement policy, to apply to every department at Queen’s & across campus. This will ensure that any procurement of goods or services, will be environmentally, sustainably & ethically sourced.
3. Switching to a green energy provider – consultation to review departing from current energy contract as soon as possible. Wherever possible, Queen’s should provide its own energy through solar panels & other methods.

4. At last count in 2015, the University invested £6 million in companies involved in the production of fossil fuels. After the Fossil Free QUB campaign, an agreement was made that Queen's would divest from these companies over a period of 10 years. This has not happened. The University needs to divest this money rapidly, with a clear and transparent plan on this process.
5. Queen's commercial services will review their menus to become more sustainable & ensure food is ethically sourced. The current culture of food waste will also be ended.
6. Every new Queen's student will receive a reusable plastic water bottle, and a reusable coffee cup upon registering with the University. The majority of current reusable water bottles are made in China & are non-recyclable. Queen's will ensure these bottles & cups are ethically sourced & recyclable in line with their updated procurement policies.
7. Single-use plastics will be completely phased out across campus and commercial services by 2022.
8. Increased funding will go into the University's current 'Green Fund', to fund student efforts on environmental initiatives and campaigns.
9. A number of solar panels will be installed across the University's buildings wherever possible, to decrease use of electricity across the board.
10. Moving to complete organic, chemical-free gardening across campus, and identifying more green spaces on land that Queen's owns to be set aside for natural carbon absorption.
11. Investment in a number of new water fountains across campus ensuring students can effectively use their reusable water bottles.
12. Introduction of more recycling bins across campus.
13. A review of how offices within the University operate e.g. reviewing office printers, use of paper, ensuring sensor lights are in every office etc.
14. Introducing a travel policy aimed towards University staff & review the University's current role in paying for long-hall flights for staff.
15. The University should take a leading role in lobbying government, local organisations, and secondary schools into following their lead in cutting their carbon footprint entirely.
16. Queen's is a key partner in the 'Belfast Region City Deal', which Belfast City Council has stated aims at 'creating up to 20,000 new and better jobs alongside delivering a 10-year programme of inclusive economic growth'. Queen's will play a leading role in shaping this deal to ensure this money is invested sustainably & creation of new jobs are focused towards a 'just transition' of workers in a post-growth, sustainable economy.
17. Queen's will adapt a strategy in dealing with climate resilience. Whilst we aim to be a leader in becoming net-carbon neutral, many effects of climate change cannot be reverse & a strategy to support areas and people affected already is essential.

Accountability and Overview:

- We require a cross-University working group, with SU and student representation, to devise and monitor progress on an action plan to deliver our aim to be carbon neutral by 2025, with a commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Date of Approval: 30 Jan 2020 (Referendum)
Lapse Date: Apr 2025
Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.22. Irish Language Rights

Policy Title:	Irish Language Rights		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2020/8/5	Policy Status:	Not Closed

This Council notes:

- The advances made in the New Decade New Approach agreement reached by the Stormont executive regarding the Irish language; including the creation of an Irish language commissioner and the repeal of the final penal laws.

This Council also notes:

- The radical and brilliant activism carried out by An Dream Dearg and student activists in the six counties in achieving these provisions.

This Council recognises:

- The support of Irish language rights by this Council in previous years, through support for bilingual signage and a standalone Irish Language Act.

This Council believes:

- That while these achievements are positive, they fall far behind what activists, including our own students here at Queen's University Belfast (QUB), have been calling for in a standalone Irish Language Act, largely by not including any provisions for bilingual signage.

This Council mandates:

- Queen's University Belfast Students' Union (QUBSU) to support the continuing activism by An Dream Dearg and student Irish language activists at QUB.
- QUBSU to develop a campaign along with NUS-USI, USI and other Students' Unions to prevent cuts to Irish language courses, for the expansion of courses able to be studied jointly with Irish, increase funding to Irish faculties and to support the lobbying and activism of An Cumann Gaelach and the work of an Oifigeach Gaeilge.
- QUBSU to work with NUS-USI, USI, Conradh na Gaeilge, An Dream Dearg and the new Irish language Commissioner, once appointed, to create recommendations of best practice to present to universities in the north pertaining to Irish language visibility, promotion and protection.
- All members of the Executive Management Committee to liaise with the Oifigeach Gaeilge (Irish Language Officer) to ensure Irish speaking students who contact the SU in Irish, receive a response in Irish.

This Council encourages:

- The use of the Irish language by all Full- and Part-Time Student Officers in campaigns, lobbying efforts and within the media.

Date of Approval: May 2020
Lapse Date: Mar 2025
Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.23. Endorsement for the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Bill

Policy Title:	Endorsement for the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Bill		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2022/8/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Context and Introduction:

Employees and Trade Unions in Northern Ireland are currently protected under the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order (the 1996 Order) and the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (the 1995 Order). Actors across society see this as ineffective and outdated, resulting in People Before Profit bringing forward the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Bill for consideration by NI Government. This has gone through public consultation with relevant actors for fifteen weeks and has been shared with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

This Bill has six policy objectives for the improvement of current legislation to increase the rights and protections of workers and Trade Unions across Northern Ireland:

1. Remove the ban on 'solidarity' industrial action to permit those involved from potential civil prosecution
2. Remove the mandatory requirement of the postal ballot process when voting to determine whether to commence industrial action.
3. Simplify the type and amount of information required from trade unions to employers before undertaking industrial action;
4. Reduce the notice period before needed before any industrial action may be taken
5. Reduce the current mandatory requirement that specifies the minimum number of employees needed for an employer to recognise a trade union from 21 to 5; and
6. To mandate employers who recognize a trade union to negotiate on the basis of 'pay, terms and conditions' rather than 'pay, hours and holidays' "

This Council Believes that:

- Current labour legislation in Northern Ireland is restrictive and outdated, unable to provide effective enough provisions for the rights of Employees and their Trade Unions. This includes the ability to take effective strike action and the recognition of Trade Unions in smaller businesses.
- Strong workplace representation is crucial to tackling low pay and to creating a more equal society.
- Student Workers are often some of the most vulnerable and taken advantage workers across different employment sectors, and the introduction of this legislation will allow students increased legal protections in their workplaces.
- It is crucial that students have an awareness of their rights as workers, and easy access to information surrounding Trade Union Support.

Council Resolves:

- To fully endorse the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Bill

Council Instructs:

- The Executive Management Committee to campaign for the introduction of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Bill by the Northern Ireland Government
- The Executive Management Committee to increase awareness amongst the student body of their rights as workers and promote availability of relevant Trade Unions.

Date of Approval: May 2022

Lapse Date: Mar 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.24. Fossil Free Careers

Policy Title:	Fossil Free Careers		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2022/8/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

1. That the operations of the oil, gas and mining industries cause immense environmental harm, by accelerating the climate and ecological crisis, polluting the water and permanently destroying landscapes.
2. That these extractive operations also cause direct social harm, by displacing people from their homes and lands, destroying livelihoods, demolishing sacred indigenous sites, and leaving workers and communities with severe health problems.
3. That the presence of extractive industries in Northern Ireland represents urgent social and ecological concerns.
4. That graduates are increasingly turning away from the oil and gas sector. A 2017 study showed the number of graduates taking jobs in the industry had dropped by 60% in four years.
5. That young people see oil and gas as the most unappealing sector to work in. They associate it with responsibility for the climate crisis and believe there is no future for jobs in the industry.
6. The University Careers Service does not have a publicly accessible policy that excludes the promotion of careers in the oil, gas and mining industry through its website, careers fairs, emails to the student body and other recruitment events.
7. The University has made a public ethical and sustainability commitment, including commitments to “encourage all staff and students to become advocates for change to ensure a sustainable future for all,” as well as to “seek to disinvest from companies involved in the extraction and production of fossil fuels by 2025.”

Council Believes:

1. Inviting oil, gas, and mining companies to advertise with the careers service adds legitimacy to the idea that these companies are an acceptable part of our society and our future.

2. The University Careers Service should ensure that its recruitment activities and events are in line with the university's publicly stated ethical principles of sustainability.
3. The University's careers service has a responsibility to its students to promote jobs with a future.
4. Ending this University's complicity in career pipelines into the oil, gas, and mining industry is an effective method of showing solidarity with communities affected by these companies' operations.

Council Mandates:

To publicly support the Fossil Free Careers campaign, and demands that our University career's department:

1. Refuses all new relationships with oil, gas or mining companies.
2. Declines to renew any current relationships with oil, gas or mining companies after the contractually obligated period ends.
3. Adopts a publicly available Ethical Careers Policy that explicitly excludes oil, gas and mining companies from recruitment opportunities.
4. To mandate the relevant full-time and part-time officer(s) to help set up meetings relating to the Fossil Free Careers campaign with relevant university staff and include student campaigners where relevant.
5. To use relevant SU social media channels to amplify petitions, statements and other calls to action from the Fossil Free Careers campaign.
6. To send out a press release and website statement announcing the passing of this motion and the support of the union for this campaign.
7. To never allow oil, gas, or mining companies access to SU-organised events, or to lend the SU name, logo or endorsement to events which include these companies.
8. To refuse the presence of oil, gas and mining companies in any SU-controlled physical or digital space.

Date of Approval: May 2022

Lapse Date: Mar 2025

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.25. Supporting University and College Union (UCU) Industrial Action

Policy Title:	Supporting University and College Union (UCU) Industrial Action		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2022/8/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council notes:

- The University and College Union (UCU) have balloted for strike action on two separate legal disputes, one on pensions and one on pay and working conditions.
- In 2022, 85% of UCU members who voted backed strike action in relation to pensions, 74% supported strike action in relation to pay, equality, casualisation and workloads.
- Industrial action has been called for 24, 25 and 30 of November 2022.
- Locally, UCU at Queen’s have confirmed their intention to join with
- 150 universities across the UK in the industrial action with 79% of members who voted supporting this decision.
- This follows strike action taken in 2018 which was initiated by proposed reforms to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme, and new data released by the USS trustees has revealed that restoring benefit cuts forced through by Universities UK earlier this year would cost less than current contributions and still leave the scheme in surplus.
- These threats are likely to be most damaging to workers at the beginning of their careers, including PhD students, which will have devastating impact in future.

Council believes:

- Staff should receive fair pay, pensions and working conditions.
- Staff’s working conditions are inseparable from students’ learning conditions.
- Students and staff should stand in solidarity, including the struggle for fair pay, pensions and working conditions.
- Threats to staff pay, pensions and conditions are part of the same ideology of marketization that is to blame for rising tuition fees, rising costs of education and cuts to education.

Council mandates:

- Members of the Executive Management Team to give public support to UCU in their struggle.
- To join the picket line during the 3 days in November and to encourage students to do the same.
- To lobby the University to oppose the proposed reforms in the USS and to improve staff pay and conditions.
- To meet, on a regular basis, with the executive of UCU at Queen's to discuss a joint strategy both in relation to this industrial action and in the future in relation to the wider issue of marketization.
- To see that all possible provisions are made by the Union and the University to ensure that students face minimal adverse academic impact from the strike without compromising the principles of the strike, such as ensuring that students are not assessed on content covered during the three days of strike action as far as possible.

Date of Approval: Oct 2022

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.26. Supporting University and College Union (UCU) Industrial Action

Policy Title:	Supporting University and College Union (UCU) Industrial Action		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2023/8/1	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- The University and College Union (UCU) have balloted for strike action on two separate legal disputes, one on pensions and one on pay and working conditions.
- In 2022, 85% of UCU members who voted backed strike action in relation to pensions, 74% supported strike action in relation to pay, equality, casualisation and workloads.
- Industrial action has been called for a total of 18 days throughout February and March.
- Locally, UCU at Queen's have confirmed their intention to join with 150 universities across the UK in the industrial action with 79% of members who voted supporting this decision.
- This follows strike action taken in 2018 which was initiated by proposed reforms to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) pension scheme, and new data released by the USS trustees has revealed that restoring benefit cuts forced through by Universities UK earlier this year would cost less than current contributions and still leave the scheme in surplus.
- These threats are likely to be most damaging to workers at the beginning of their careers, including PhD students, which will have devastating impact in future.
- The UCU have stood in solidarity with students taking action against the rise in accommodation and post graduate tuition fees.

Council Believes:

- Staff should receive fair pay, pensions and working conditions.
- Staff's working conditions are inseparable from students' learning conditions.
- Students and staff should stand in solidarity, including the struggle for fair pay, pensions and working conditions.

- Threats to staff pay, pensions and conditions are part of the same ideology of marketization that is to blame for rising tuition fees, rising costs of education and cuts to education.

Council Mandates:

- Members of the Executive Management Team to give public support to UCU.
- Full Time Officers to stand in solidarity with the UCU when a picket line is called.
- The Students' Union to encourage students to vocalise concerns at management rather than the striking staff.

Date of Approval: Jan 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.27. QUB Should Invest its Substantial Financial Assets in Student-Owned Co-Operatives

Policy Title:	QUB Should Invest its Substantial Financial Assets in Student-Owned Co-Operatives		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2022/8/2	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Students are suffering in this cost-of-living crisis, exposed and vulnerable to exploitation from those profiting from the difficulties of others. Landlords can increase rent, energy companies can raise prices, food suppliers can charge more for basics necessities. Their profits increase while students suffer.

Energy, food, and housing resources are not controlled institutions that prioritise student welfare.

Students **demand:**

- That QUB use its substantial financial assets, investments, and estate (property) to help build resilience to student vulnerability by establishing assets that help provide energy, food, and housing to students.
- These assets should be democratically organised and run by students to ensure student welfare is prioritised.

QUB should **prioritise** the following actions:

- The University and partner with co-operative investors to buy properties off landlords in Belfast that have had their HMO licenses revoked and create student co-operatives from them.
- Use the land held by QUB to host democratically owned food production (greenhouses, gardens, etc.) for use by students.
- Use the buildings owned by QUB to host democratically owned food storage and distribution (food banks) run by students.
- Use its access to resources and institutional wealth to create democratically owned energy production facilities that can subsidise energy costs for students.
- The Students' Union to administrate and coordinate the democratic decision-making and administration of these co-operative resources.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

Date of Approval: 28 Jan 2023 (Referendum)

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.28. QUB Should Invest its Substantial Financial Assets in Student-Owned Co-Operatives

Policy Title:	Students’ Union to Boycott Feminism in Schools Conference on 11th March 2023		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2023/8/3	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- The 2023 Feminism in Schools Conference is due to take place on the 11th March at Queen’s University Belfast.
- Individuals involved in the event have, in the past, made transphobic comments in the public domain.
- Alliance for Choice Derry questioned whether the conference would exclude transphobic gender critical facilitators and were informed that they would not be excluded.
- Gender Critical individuals routinely make transphobic statements and refuse to acknowledge transgender identities.
- Gender Critical facilitators will prove harmful to any trans individuals attending.
- In 2022, the highest number of transphobic attacks were recorded in NI.
- There is currently no framework for schools to deal with trans students.
- The PSNI have also been invited to attend the conference to discuss tackling violence against women and girls.
- PSNI officers are currently suspended on suspicion of sexual misconduct as reported by the BBC on the 19th of January.
- Anti-choice, anti-lgbtq+ rights MLA Emma Little-Pengelly will be attending the Jobs4Girls panel at the conference.
- The Students Union has pro-choice, and pro-lgbtq+ policies.

Council Believes:

- Trans people deserve compassion, and the university should not be providing a space for attacks on the trans and non-binary community.
- Feminism must be trans inclusive and any conference directly aimed at teenagers should not be pushing or allowing transphobic rhetoric.

- The PSNI are not best placed to be discussing violence against women and girls given the current influx of cases against officers around the UK and NI.
- Anti-choice, anti-lgbtq+ rights MLAs should not be participating in feminist conferences aimed at school children due to the harms their views cause.
- The LGBTQ+ community of the student body must be protected, and this conference does not do that.
- Abortion is healthcare and should not be up for debate at feminist conferences.

Council Mandates:

- Student Officers and the Students' Union are to boycott the Feminism in Schools event.
- SU are to release a statement announcing the boycott for the above reasons.

Date of Approval: Feb 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.29. Formalising Logistical and Wellbeing Support for International and Ethnically Diverse Student Officers & Implementing Protocols for a More Inclusive Students' Union

Policy Title:	Formalising Logistical and Wellbeing Support for International and Ethnically Diverse Student Officers & Implementing Protocols for a More Inclusive Students' Union		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2022/8/4	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- Students' Union Officers past and present have expressed concern with respect to discrimination and racism.
- Ethnically diverse students have communicated their concerns regarding disproportionate representation, racism and discrimination on the grounds of their ethnicity and/or nation of origin.
- Localised community and data-driven cultural competency training is not provided to Student Officers, potentially jeopardising the emotional and mental wellbeing of non-UK/Ireland domiciled and ethnically or culturally diverse Student Officers and Student Officer group dynamics.
- The grievance escalation process for Student Officers is unclear, lacks transparency and does not have structured support contact points for affected parties.

This Council Further Notes:

- There are no formal designated HR roles in the Students' Union which provide neutral culturally competent embedded human resource functions to student officers who are the victims of all forms of implicit or explicit racial discrimination and violence.
- Student Officers are simultaneously classified as staff and student
- International students endure heightened acculturative stress (Student Minds, 2022)
- Culturally competent and localised formal support is not available at the Students' Union
- Studies show that poor mental health may be directly attributed to "[the] constant stress of being confronted with racism (including racial microaggressions), discrimination, and having to survive hostile racist environments at university" (Stoll, 2022)

- High level of marginalised students' participation does not mean that students feel emotionally or mentally supported during their studies (Stoll, 2022; Unite, 2022)

The Council Believes:

- The emotional, mental, and physical welfare of students and Student Officers are of utmost importance.
- Trained independent and neutral external parties with intervention powers or the ability to advise the University and the Union, and support affected Student Officer parties is essential.

Therefore, this Council Resolves:

- The Students' Union Management Board will undertake an externally led review of cultural awareness and competency training, cultural biases, racism, and discrimination within the Students' Union and approaches to managing issues around racism and discrimination and experiences within the Student Union's Executive Management Committee by January 2024.
- The Students' Union will retain an external advisory board of international and ethnically diverse community leaders and organisations to lead efforts on inclusion, support, and widening participation for international and ethnically diverse students.
- The Students' Union will publish findings of a review on inclusion and student representation on the Students' Union website. Annual findings on equality will be published.
- Emotional and mental wellbeing support will be formalised for student officers who are victims of the aforementioned items and workplace accommodations will be supported by external partners, such as University Wellbeing, external organisations and professionals, and student officers' designee(s).

References

Student Minds:

https://www.studentminds.org.uk/uploads/3/7/8/4/3784584/2022_international_students_report_final.pdf

Stoll (2022, BMJ): doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2021-050720

Unite:

https://www.unitegroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Living-Black-at-University-Report_FINAL.pdf

Date of Approval: Apr 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.30. Supporting Postgraduate Students and Postdoctoral LGBTQIA+ Researchers at Queen's

Policy Title:	Supporting Postgraduate Students and Postdoctoral LGBTQIA+ Researchers at Queen's		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2023/8/5	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- The Vice President Postgraduate co-founded the LGBTQIA+ group, Plus+, along with PhD candidates Kerry Campbell and Jasmine Ross, in 2022, in response to postgraduate students' demands for an inclusive group that engages the postgraduate and postdoctoral research queer community at Queen's
- Plus+ is exclusively open to postgraduate members and has organised nearly one dozen events since the start of semester 2 (2023) that have engaged local community organisations, mental health campaigners, LGBTQIA+ staff at Queen's, and
- Moving forward, Plus+ will be student-member-driven with support from PRISM (LGBTQIA+ Staff Network) staff, and The Thomas J. Moran Graduate School.

This Council Further Notes:

- Plus+ is not a society or a Students' Union entity; rather it is a community of social action and community-oriented postgraduate students and researchers who are committed to fostering much-needed community support amongst queer postgraduate students.
- LGBTQIA+ postgraduate students are likely more mature in age, share different life experiences, and reflect a rapidly internationalising group of career professionals who could benefit from a community-based approach.
- Postgraduate students are less likely to engage with University and Union activities, citing family, community, and social factors, such as inclusion and exclusion in activities targeted towards a younger demographic.
- Plus+ has been significantly supported by The Thomas J. Moran Graduate School in the 2022-2023 academic year.
- The membership system of Plus+ supports a welcoming and non-committal environment that attracts a significant number of LGBTQIA+ postgraduate students and researchers who do not otherwise engage with the Students' Union, though they are fees-paying students and should be entitled to benefit from non-precarious funding measures from the Students' Union, for which they are members.

- A growing number of postgraduate students are international students who do not have access to the same dedicated funding for their programs as a result of postgraduate student timetabling and programs which are shorter in duration.

The Council Believes:

- Postgraduate students are vital to the welfare of the Queen's student body
- LGBTQIA+ students and postdoctoral researchers face discrimination at higher rates than their non-queer/LGBTQIA+ peers and colleagues
- Plus+ can operate independently of the Students' Union with minimal financial support

Therefore, this Council Resolves:

- That the Executive Management Committee shall identify a range of financial and non-financial supports which can be provided to support the activities of the Plus+, which may be used by the group to support ongoing Graduate School hosted activities led by LGBTQIA+ postgraduate student members, for a period of not less than three years.

Date of Approval: Apr 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2026

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.31. The Students' Union to Include a Working Definition of Antisemitism

Policy Title:	The Students' Union to Include a Working Definition of Antisemitism		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2022/8/6	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- Antisemitism has seen a sharp increase and has had an effect on Jewish Students' mental health.
- Numerous cases of antisemitism where Jewish students felt intimidated purely on the basis that they are Jewish have occurred within the Students' Union and affiliated establishments.
- These cases are often handled by individuals who have no connection to Judaism or the Jewish people.
- There is no current definition of antisemitism that can be used by individuals who may not know what is and isn't antisemitic to appropriately handle these cases.

Council Believes:

- A working definition of antisemitism is vital for dealing with antisemitism. While antisemitism is accepted as a form of racism, the manner in which it is handled often suggests that it is not treated as such.

Therefore Council Mandates:

- The following proposition to be understood as the Students' Union's definition of antisemitism:
 1. It is racist to essentialize (treat a character trait as inherent) or to make sweeping negative generalizations about a given population. What is true of racism in general is true of antisemitism in particular.
 2. What is particular in classic antisemitism is the idea that Jews are linked to the forces of evil. This stands at the core of many anti-Jewish narratives, such as the idea of a Jewish conspiracy in which "the Jews" possess hidden power that they use to promote their own collective agenda at the expense of other people. This linkage between Jews and evil continues in the present: in the fantasy that "the Jews" control governments with a "hidden hand," that they own the banks, control the media, act as "a state within a state," and are responsible for spreading disease (such as Covid-19). All these features can be instrumentalized by different (and even antagonistic) political causes.
 3. Antisemitism can be manifested in words, visual images, and deeds. Examples of antisemitic words include utterances that all Jews are wealthy, inherently stingy, or unpatriotic. In antisemitic caricatures, Jews are often depicted as grotesque, with big noses and associated with wealth. Examples of antisemitic

deeds are: assaulting someone because she or he is Jewish, attacking a synagogue, daubing swastikas on Jewish graves, or refusing to hire or promote people because they are Jewish.

4. Antisemitism can be direct or indirect, explicit or coded. For example, “The Rothschilds control the world” is a coded statement about the alleged power of “the Jews” over banks and international finance. Similarly, portraying Israel as the ultimate evil or grossly exaggerating its actual influence can be a coded way of racializing and stigmatizing Jews. In many cases, identifying coded speech is a matter of context and judgement, taking account of these guidelines.
5. In the context of the Union: Implications that Jewish students, staff members or officers are working together to gain control over the Students’ Union or societies. Identifying words often include: ‘scheming’, ‘plotting’ with other Jewish individuals and if working with non-Jewish individuals, those individuals are referred to as ‘lackeys’ or ‘minions’.
6. Denying or minimizing the Holocaust by claiming that the deliberate Nazi genocide of the Jews did not take place, or that there were no extermination camps or gas chambers, or that the number of victims was exaggerated is antisemitic.
7. Making light of the Holocaust and the suffering of the Jewish people is antisemitic. This can be seen by either telling jokes that seem in support of the Holocaust or laughing (this can also be represented through the use of emojis on social media.)
8. Disregarding Jewish voices on matters of antisemitism or speaking over to assert that there is no antisemitism, is in itself antisemitic. Not giving fair attention and consideration to claims of antisemitism, can be considered antisemitic
9. Applying the symbols, images and negative stereotypes of classical antisemitism (see guidelines 2 and 3) to the State of Israel.
10. Holding Jews collectively responsible for Israel’s conduct or treating Jews, simply because they are Jewish, as agents of Israel.
11. Requiring people, because they are Jewish, publicly to condemn Israel or Zionism (for example, at a political meeting).
12. Assuming that non-Israeli Jews, simply because they are Jews, are necessarily more loyal to Israel than to their own countries.
13. Denying the right of Jews in the State of Israel to exist and flourish, collectively and individually, as Jews, in accordance with the principle of equality.
14. Assumptions that Jews have an inherent support for Unionism or Loyalism are antisemitic.

Date of Approval: Oct 2023
Lapse Date: Apr 2027
Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.32. Motion for Welfare for Students affected by the Israel/Palestine Situation

Policy Title:	Motion for Welfare for Students affected by the Israel/Palestine Situation		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2022/8/7	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Council Notes:

- There has been a rapid escalation in violence in the Middle East which has consisted of extreme racial violence and slaughter.
- On previous occasions where this conflict has escalated, there has been a noted increase in Antisemitic and Islamophobic behaviour.
- There are students who, through one avenue or another, have a connection to the conflict and may be directly or indirectly affected by the violence.

Council Believes:

- Antisemitism and Islamophobia have no place on campus and institutions should take steps to ensure that they are prevented as much as possible.
- No student should share collective responsibility for institutions claiming to represent them nor be forced to present an opinion on that institution.
- Academic staff must recognise that they have a position of authority and be mindful of the responsibility that comes with that to ensure that racial tensions must not be exacerbated on our campus.
- When talking about this conflict, Islamophobia and Antisemitism can accidentally be invoked due to a lack of knowledge over the complexities of the conflict and its relationship to various ethnic groups.
- Students affected by the conflict will need support and recognition from the relevant institutions.
- A more direct approach to this conflict should be had but there needs to be time to discuss this strategy.

Therefore, this Council mandates:

- To ensure adequate communication to students to the relevant wellbeing services available to them.

- To work with the relevant institutions to ensure that students affected by the conflict have this taken on board when reflecting judgement on them, whether through academic exceptional circumstances, disciplinary panels or issues revolving around accommodation.
- To work with the University to ensure that staff are aware of the details of Islamophobia and Antisemitism so that they can avoid them. Cultural awareness training should be more readily available to university staff and students.
- For the relevant institutions within the University and the Students' Union, to communicate to students and staff that Islamophobia and Antisemitism are not accepted within the University Charters and can face disciplinary action.

Date of Approval: Oct 2023

Lapse Date: Apr 2027

Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee

8.33. Decolonise, Demilitarise and Democratise QUB

Policy Title:	Decolonise, Demilitarise and Democratise QUB		
Policy Reference:	OTH/2024/8/8	Policy Status:	Not Closed

Full Proposal: Decolonise, Demilitarise and Democratise Queen’s University Belfast

Background:

- Queen’s University Belfast handles its investments through BlackRock, the largest investor into oil, gas and coal of any investment management company.
- Queen’s University Belfast, via BlackRock investment management fund, invests its money into companies such as Elbit Systems, which is an Israel based defence electronics company that creates spy-ware and military aircraft that are utilised in the illegal occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, contributing towards 85% of Israeli arms.
- Blackrock also invests in banks that use funding to prop up illegal settlements in the West Bank, in violation of International Law.
- Queen’s University Belfast also has strong academic and partnership ties to the Thales Group, an arms company which specialises in the development of missile systems. These are sold to governments which have a record of using these weapons to subjugate workers, attack refugee camps and destroy communities. Thales also jointly operates with Elbit Systems on the manufacture of Israeli drones. Queen’s works with Thales to provide placements for students.
- Queen’s University Belfast has a long-standing relationship with BAE Systems, which over the course of the Saudi-Yemeni War, sent £16.7 billion to the Saudi Arabia government. This conflict has directly killed nearly 20,000 Yemeni civilians. There were numerous allegations of bribery levelled at BAE Systems and their political involvement has been substantial in the UK and the US. It is also a major seller to Turkey which is operating a bombing campaign in Rojava/North and East Syria.
- Queen’s University Belfast’s Chancellor Hilary Clinton has been a strong supporter of colonialism and has openly supported the bombing campaign against Gaza which has led to over 10,000 dead including over 4,000 children.
- Many of the civilians of this war have been killed while in refugee camps.
- Due to the decentralised nature of Schools and Faculties, there are ties to the military and to fossil fuel industry that are yet unknown.

The Students’ Union Has the Following Related Policy Positions:

- *An Antifascist and Antiracist Students' Union* (Policy Ref: COM/2022/6/7) and *Anti-Fascism & Anti-Racism* (Policy Ref: COM/2019/6/2) which solidify QSU as an antifascist and antiracist union.
- *Establishing a Campaign to Make QUB a University of Sanctuary* (Policy Ref: COM/2018/6/2) which supports the University to become a University of Sanctuary.
- *Justice and Human Rights for Palestine* (Policy Ref: OTH/2016/8/10) that maintains the Union supporting human right and justice in Palestine and the Union's support for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions of the Israeli occupation.
- *Fossil Fuel Divestment* (Policy Ref: OTH/2015/8/2) Motion 8.05 which calls for the divestment of all fossil fuels by Queen's University Belfast, and *Amendments to the QUB Green New Deal* (Policy Ref: DGR/2021/4/1) which included a demand for fossil fuel divestment, which has been incorporated into the University's Strategy 2030 corporate plan.

Queen's Students' Union Believes that:

- A university should not act as a funnel for fossil fuel companies or the military industrial complex.
- Sheltering investments through BlackRock is a move taken to avoid accountability for unethical investment practices.
- BlackRock's large portfolio of fossil fuel companies, arms companies, unethical banking practices and more undermines the principles behind the great work done to reach Net-Zero carbon emissions and any attempts to become a University of Sanctuary.
- Queens should not invest in or collaborate with companies that trade arms to countries that violate international law.
- The military-industrial-academic-complex creates incentives to support the psychological, moral, and material interests of colonial markets and the destructive enterprise of war.
- University financial and academic ties should reflect the values of the students, staff and academics who make up the University.
- The University's decisions should not be based around the interests of profit but the interests of the staff and the students that make up the University.
- That, given the current model of university-for-profit, there should be democratic accountability for any and all partnerships, research and investments to ensure these are representative of the ethos and values of the constituents that make up the University.

- If the University wants to become more international, it should take an active and public stance on promoting peace and equality internationally and oppose colonisation and occupation.
- If the University wants to become a University of Sanctuary, it should not have a relationship with organisations which cause displacement and are used to target refugee camps.
- If the University wants to be seen as a symbol of peace, it cannot have Hilary Clinton representing it as Chancellor while she continues to make statements that condone and support war crimes and ethnic cleansing.
- The University cannot claim to have a neutral stance on the Israel-Palestine issue while it is financially, politically and culturally supporting a state which is committing atrocities.

Queen's Students' Union Agrees:

- That the Union put pressure on the Senate, the Planning and Finance Committee, the Investment Committee, and the respective Schools for the University to cut all contact with any organisations which supply arms to states or institutions which violate international law.
- That the Union put pressure on the Senate, the Planning and Finance Committee, and the Investment Committee to completely divest from Blackrock.
- For any replacement for Blackrock must be reviewed by a group involving democratic representation from all Unions on Campus.
- That the Union put pressure on the Senate and any 'Special Committee' (set up to appoint a Chancellor) to dismiss Hilary Clinton as Chancellor and to boycott and organise protests against any events she attends as Chancellor of this University.
- That the Union put pressure on governmental reform within the University to ensure that the Investment Committee, Planning and Finance Committee and Senate have at least 50% voting membership given to the Unions representing the students and workers on campus.
- That the Special Committee must include a 50% voting membership to the decision to appoint a Chancellor.
- That the decision of the Special Committee must be put to a referendum across all staff and students.

Date of Approval: 9 December 2023 (Referendum)
 Lapse Date: Apr 2027
 Officer responsible: Executive Management Committee