

**Durham Students' Union
Assembly Agenda**

Tuesday, 24 October 2017– 19:00, CG93 (Scarborough lecture theatre, Chemistry department)

Time	Subject	Who	Paper
19:00-19:01	A. Welcome	President	
19:01-19:03	B. Apologies for absence and Conflicts of interest	President	
19:03-19:05	C. Minutes of the meeting on 16 June 2017 including ratification of old business	President	UA/1617/063
Routine Business			
19:05-19:15	D. Election of Chair	President	UA/1718/002
19:15-19:20	E. Election of Vice Chair	Chair	
19:20-19:40	F. Election of Assembly/Committee Members	Chair	UA/1718/003
19:40-19:55	G. Sharing of Officer Objectives	Sabbatical Officers	UA/1718/004
Items for Discussion			
19:55-20:15	H. Motion: Free Education	PG and UG Academic Officers	UA/1718/005
20:15-20:25	I. Policy: Dunelm House	President	UA/1718/006
20:25-20:35	J. Policy: Naming the 17 th College	Sabbatical Officers	UA/1718/007
20:35-20:45	K. Open Discussion	Chair	
Other Business			
20:45-20:55	L. Questions to Officers		
For Your Information			
20:55-21:00	M. Update on Voter Registration Policy	Opportunities Officer	UA/1718/008

Next meeting will be 7 December 2017, ER142
Agenda closes (so papers must be in) 27 November 2017 at 17:00.

Assembly is committed to making its meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. If you consider yourself to have any access or reasonable adjustment needs, please contact the Union President at su.president@durham.ac.uk at least 2 days in advance to make arrangements.

Durham Students' Union Assembly - Minutes

Friday, 16 June 2017– 19:00, ER201

UA/1617/063

Welcome

Andy Corkhill welcomed members to the meeting.

Apologies for absence and Conflicts of interest

Andy Corkhill announced apologies received from Megan Croll, George Peat, George Stanbury, Tom Henderson, Harry Cross and Dominic Robson.

Courtney Cliffe declared a conflict of interest for He for She Society and Ted Lavis Coward outlined a conflict for the trans policy.

Minutes of the meeting on 09 May

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as an accurate record.

Update on Officer Work

Alice Dee updated on her work. Alice explained that she is drafting a paper to go to UEC regarding a consultation framework. The SU strategy has been approved by the Board of Trustees. The #RippedOff campaign is going well and has three successes so far - the three wins of the #RippedOff campaign were a review of the cost, an option of differential pricing and reviews of bursary provision. Highlights of the year were working on access, officer restructure, sexual violence lobbying and working with NUS. James Creer asked about what sort of opportunities will be available for Stockton students, Alice had suggested talking to Teesside SU about providing activities to Durham students in order to keep the campus vibrant. In regards to the university hardship fund, the criteria had been altered in order to support Queens's students in the transition.

Lisa Whiting updated on her work including celebrating course reps achievements. Postgraduate representation guidelines have passed through the University and working on postgraduate pay issues. Other issues have been working against the closure of social work programmes, the decisions have been delayed following more consultation. Lisa explained that she had investigated that when international fixed fees was introduced to clarify why some students fees had gone up. The eating space pilot in the library has been completed and has been moved to a larger space from next academic year. Highlights for the year included focussing on postgraduates, HE bill and TEF, student response to the academic year changes and course rep elections. James Creer asked about the changes to the academic year are now. First term will be the same; second term may increase by a week and third term the same with a potential reduction in one week of Easter.

Kara-Jane Senior updated on her work on her student activities participation and impact report which has been taken to the student experience subcommittee and an action plan is in development to take forward the recommendations. In terms of recognition and celebration of student activities Kara spoke about the annual awards, supporting groups to win national awards and creating a society accreditation scheme. Relating to making student groups easier was changing processes and support structures, creating guidance and resources. There we no questions.

Jo Gower updated on her work on supporting underrepresented groups regarding getting more diversity in university staff, working with associations, development of training for college identity reps and creating consistent rep descriptions for colleges. Jo explained the #RespectMeans campaign is live now and Active Bystander training has been ran. In regards to disability support, Jo has focussed on medical notes. James Creer asked about Pincident and what the official response would be letting people know where the areas have happened. Darcy Van Erten said that there was wording issues regarding sexual violence posters. Jo explained that the word 'here' had been used because it was a community response and to put the impetus on people within the Durham community.

Adam Jarvis updated on his work regarding the work insights programme, learning and development hub, duck development day, take the lead, active bystander and a positive relationship with the careers service. In regards to supporting common rooms, training has been delivered at one college as other colleges wanted it in Michaelmas term. There we no questions.

Andy thanked the officers for all of their work this year.

Update from Committees

Beth Fleming updated on the work of DUCK stating between £200,000 and £300,000 has been raised this year. There has been a match funding agreement established for the local charities fund. The relationships with the SU have greatly improved.

Matthew Kirk updated on the work of MCR Pres Comm such as making lives easier for PGs and MCR Presidents.

Charlie Walker gave how much money had been awarded in grants throughout the various grants processes and stated there were no appeals from any elections. He also updated that a system to monitor the diversity of candidates in elections is now in place.

New Society Ratification

Thea Burton explained that societies committee has recommended to ratify the following societies:

- HeForShe
- Impulse
- DU Blood Society
- Days for Girls
- Independent Magazine Society
- Home Brewing Society
- Durham Film Review
- Dodgeball Society
- Glitter Society
- Quaker Society
- Turkish Society
- Vinyl Record Society
- Game of Thrones Society
- Applied Social Science Society
- Think Tank

Thea stated that Societies Committee were recommending to reject European Law Students Association. George Walker asked about why HeForShe were now being ratified to be recommended, Thea stated that Fem Soc no longer object. Jo Gower asked about whether Days for Girls could lobby the umbrella organisation to be more inclusive to people who menstruate.

Andy Corkhill asked Assembly to vote to support Societies Committee recommendation to ratify the proposed societies:

For – 21
Against – 0
Abstain – 0

The above societies were ratified as official societies of Durham Students' Union.

Thea Burton explained that European Law Students Association was being rejected because of similarities with Enhanced Legal Sector Access. The President of the European Law Students Association said that the name was an international name and that the objectives were different.

The President of the Enhanced Legal Sector Access stated that they support the objectives of the proposed society but it will be confusing to have two legal societies called ELSA. She stated that they are willing to support the new group's objectives in their activities. Ed Nathan said that it would be confusing as they are very similar and have the same acronym.

Andy Corkhill asked Assembly to approve Societies Committee's recommendation to reject ratification:

For - 12
Against - 3
Abstain - 5

The European Law Students Association was rejected and therefore did not become a society of Durham Students' Union.

Changes to Standing Orders

Andy Corkhill explained the process by which the recommended changes would be presented and voted on.

Lisa Whiting explained the standing order changes that consisted of cleaning up and taking account for changes ie: officer roles.

Andy asked if there were any questions, or objections. There were none.
Andy called for a vote on general changes:

For - 21
Against - 0
Abstain – 0

Those changes passed.

Lisa explained the changes around academic representation and outlined the amendment which had been submitted.

Assembly voted on the amendment:

For - 21
Against - 0
Abstain – 0

The amendment passed.

Assembly voted on the motion as amended:

For - 21
Against – 0
Abstain – 0

The changes to the Standing Order regarding Academic Representation were approved.

Kara explained the proposed standing order changes regarding student groups. Molly Smith asked whether Societies Committee would be the body who ratify student groups, Kara said it would be Soc Comm. George Walker asked whether there would be an ability to refer a society to Assembly – Kara said that is something to look at in the process. Ted Lavis Coward said previously Assembly has had to vote against Soc Comm's recommendations.

Andy Corkhill asked if anybody wanted to oppose the amendment and no one came forward. Andy called for a vote on the amendment:

For - 18
Against - 1
Abstain – 1

Courtney Cliffe asked whether Associations are invited to sit on Societies Committee. Kara said no and Courtney officially opposed the motion by saying that Associations have levels of expertise which may be missed if the decision is made by Societies Committee alone. Alice said that the main rationale for this change was that Assembly has spent a lot of time talking about small process issues, as Societies Committee can pass policy they should be allowed to ratify societies. Ted suggested in future proposing an amendment to add Association representation to Societies Committee and pass.

Andy called for a vote on the changes regarding student groups as amended:

For - 20
Against - 0
Abstain – 1

The motion passed and the standing orders were amended.

Student Group Regulations

Kara explained that the student group agreement would replace the student group regulations. There were no questions.

For – 20
Against – 0
Abstain – 1

The Student Group Agreement was approved and replaces the Student Group Regulations.

Motion: Mitie PLC Resolution

Pippa Cameron presented her motion. George Cowley asked about how realistic the Union were going to be able to change this. Pippa said that the campaigns group had been in touch with the Vice Chancellor and as this is the time for renewal it could be possible. Ted Lavis Coward said that it was positive to have the motion, regardless of outcome of the campaign. No members of Assembly wished to speak against the motion.

Andy called for a vote to adopt the motion.

For – 20
Against - 0
Abstain - 0

The motion passed.

Policy: Postgraduate Paying Conditions

Lisa presented her motion. There were no questions.

For – 20
Against – 0
Abstain - 0

Policy: A Students' Union that Cares

J Smith outlined their motion. George Cowley said that the content is very inaccessible because of the length of the motion. J explained that it was so long because of how much needed to be done. Jo Gower thanked J for taking on so much work for carers for the year. There was no opposition to the motion.

Andy called for a vote to adopt the motion.

For – 20
Against – 0
Abstain – 0

The motion passed.

Policy: 'Transforming' Durham Students' Union

Luke Armitage outlined their motion. Ed Nathan asked if the President of Trans Comm would sit on Assembly as opposed to just the President of LGBT+ Association. Luke said this is to ensure that trans students have representation if the President is cisgendered. Molly explained that NUS also have an autonomous trans campaign. Ted explained that while lots of work had been done for trans issues this year and should not lose momentum.

There was no opposition so Andy called for a vote to adopt the motion:

For - 20
Against - 0
Abstain – 0

The policy passed.

Policy: Employability & Skills

Adam Jarvis outlined his policy. Adam asked for email feedback on the motion.

SU Strategy

There was no update.

Questions to Officers/NUS Delegate.

George Walker asked Alice, Kate and Ted would be willing to say who they voted for the national full time officer positions

Alice voted for Shakira, Robbie, Amatey, Izzy and Matt. Kate voted for Shakira, Robbie, Amatey, Izzy and Matt. Ted voted for Malia, Danny, Ana, Jenny and Ali.

James Creer asked whether it is possible to get Tom Harwood's voting record.

George asked said why he voted for Ali Milani when his manifesto wanted to tackle anti-Semitic who tweeted some comments in 2013. Ted stated that as LGBT+ President they had to vote for Ali because of comments by Matt Grange.

Charlie Walker asked how the delegates voted in the democratic reforms. Alice voted for them. Kate voted for too. Ted said that they voted against it because the amendment to keep the VP Welfare Officer was voted down.

J asked Jo about the structure of WED Comm whether there would be a review of the structure. Jo said that looking at other universities is problematic because of the structure. Jo said that she wanted to set up and MCR WED Comm but did not get any engagement.

Any Other Business

Andy Corkhill thanked Assembly members. Alice Dee thanked Andy for being Chair.

#	Andy Corkhill	Chair	
1	Alice Dee	President	
2	Kara-Jane Senior	Activities	
3	Lisa Whiting	Academic Affairs	
4	Adam Jarvis	Development	
5	Jo Gower	Community	
6	Trisvette Loh for Adeline Chow	ISA	
7	Ted Coward	LGBT+a	
8	Courtney Cliffe	SwDA	
9	James Colville	Mature Students Association	
10	Iris Lang	People of Colour Association	
11	Anna Greenall	Academic Affairs Committee	
12	Thea Burton	Societies Committee	
13	Megan Croll	JCR PresComm	
14	Bethany Fleming	DUCK Exec	
15	Matthew Kirk	MCR PresComm	
16	Charlie Walker	Governance and Grants	
17	Dewi Erwan Humphries	Environmental & Citizenship	
18	Molly Smith (sub)	WEDComm	
19	Craig Bateman	Media Rep	
20	Mitchell Langcaster-James	St. Cuthberts	
21	Alex Hampton	Ustinov	
22	George Cowley	St John's	
23	George Walker	Van Mildert	
24	Tom Harwood	St Mary's	
25	George Peat	St. Chad's	
26	George Stanbury	Grey	
27	Meghan Hosch	Hatfield	
28	Jazz Beard	John Snow	
29	Clara Gallay	St Aidan's	
30	Gabriella Linning (sub)	Collingwood	
31	Tom Henderson	St Hild & St Bede	
32	Laura Doherty	University College	
33	James Creer	Stephenson	
34	Darcy Van Eerten	Trevelyan	
35	Rachel Meyer	Josephine Butler	
36	Harry Cross	Open Position	
37	Johan Seidenfaden	Open Position	
38	Dominic Birch	Open Position	
39	VACANT	Open Position (freshers)	
40	Dominic Robson	UG Academic Rep	
41	Hannah Britt	PGR Academic Rep	
42	VACANT	PGT Academic Rep	

TO: Assembly
FROM: Megan Croll, President
RE: Election of Chair

We have four candidates for Chair. Below are their names and profiles:

Eden Watkins

I am running for Chair of Assembly because I believe I have the skills and experience required and would like to contribute to the work of the Student Union. In my final year at Hills Road Sixth Form College I was elected chair of the Student Council and one of my responsibilities was chairing termly general committee meetings. These meetings were open to any students and were on a similar scale to the SU Assembly, motions submitted by students were reviewed by the council's executive committee which I also chaired. Furthermore, at Hills Road I co-founded and chaired two student societies and I am passionate about the role societies play in activism and engagement, for this reason I would welcome the opportunity to sit on the Governance and Grants subcommittee. Before beginning my studies in Durham I was a member of Cambridge Student Liberal Democrats and the Cambridge Green Students Committee and spoke at the Liberal Democrat party conference on LGBT+ rights representing the Liberal Youth. I have since left the Liberal Democrat party, but remain passionate about student activism and representation. I believe I have the necessary skills for the role and would be committed to it if elected.

Ka Wong Fung

Chair of assembly listen to issues from the university and shape the ideas of all the assembly members smoothly. This role gives me the chance to perform talks, discussion, and attend a variety of meetings which provide great opportunities for me to interact with students and staffs in the university. Working for Durham University not only can help to make my study area better, but it also gives me the chance to improve Durham University's environment.

As a previous student co-chair for the accounting and finance group in Durham University Student and Staff consultative committee (SSCC), there are meeting and discussion in my group. First of all, I am responsible to work together with the staff and the members of the SSCC to agree on the agendas in the meeting. Moreover, I have the experience of chairing meetings of SSCC and ensuring that the action arises from the minutes is monitors and report back to the SSCC. Eventually, the board of studies receives regular reports from SSCC meeting.

The Durham Student Union must be looking at a person with excellent communication and interpersonal skills. What I can do is to give a positive attitude and show a confidence behavior in my work.

Matthew Gibson

I'm Matthew, a fourth year Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Year Abroad) student and running to be Chair of Assembly. I have previously acted as a voting member of Assembly during the 2015/16 academic year as the Senior Student's Union Representative for Grey. I have also sat on the Grey College Council, which fulfils a similar role to Assembly, for two years. Between these two roles, I have gained a solid experience of how meetings like Assembly should be run. At best, I would hope Assembly would both efficiently cover the essential content of the meeting while still having till time to properly cover more open parts of the meeting such as questions for Students' Unions Officers.

These experiences will also have prepared me for sitting on the Governance and Grants Committee, where I would be dealing with similar issues to in my role with the College Council.

As chair, I would to run an Assembly that was accessible to members. This means that it would be a space in which members felt comfortable to fully engage and freely debate policy proposals, the ratification of new societies and holding Students' Union Officer to account.

RON

Re-open Nominations

Husting/Voting

Each candidate will have 60 seconds to provide an overview of why they will make a good chair. After, you will have a couple of minutes to ask questions. Voting will be by paper ballot: please tick one box for the candidate of your choice. The ballots will be counted on the night with the successful candidate taking over as Chair once the votes are counted and announced.

TO: Assembly
FROM: Megan Croll, President
RE: Election of Assembly and Committee Members

What follows are the candidate names for the open Assembly and committee positions. Candidates will answer one or two questions on the night and voting will be done by paper ballot.

Assembly Members

The changes made last academic year to the Standing Orders provide for four positions on Assembly: one first year, one postgraduate, one woman or carer and one open position. The candidates for the positions are:

Assembly Open Place (one space available)

Candidates:

1. John Alexander-Edwards
2. James Creer
3. Harry Cross
4. Anne Josephine Strobel
5. Re-Open Nominations

John Alexander-Edwards

Hi i'm John. I love feminism, and socially progressive politics which is why I want to be a part of the Students' Union. I think I would be a great member of Assembly because I want Durham to be for the many, not the few. I also think the Union has a duty to tackle contentious issues such as student drinking and alcohol abuse which is prevalent amongst the student body.

James Creer

Hi, I'm James. A 3rd Year Applied Psychologist from Stephenson College. I have been working with the Student's Union on student representation since my 1st year, consistently being a strong voice, contact and champion for student issues. Particularly on issues for students based on Queen's Campus. I have been my college's Union Rep for a year, a course rep for 2 years and now am also a Union Student Trustee. Through all these positions and the knowledge and experience I have gained from them, I would be a very effective, strong, and experienced student representative to sit on Assembly.

In a time when the University is making momentous changes and the Union is beginning promising work and conversations with the university over differential accommodation pricing, it is the job of Assembly to make sure that the right position is being taken and requests being made on these important issues. As a highly experienced student representative across numerous different components of the university, I have and would continue to hold all Officers to account for students as is the role of Assembly. To ensure that the work of the Student's Union reflects the beliefs and wishes of its members

Harry Cross

I am sorry me overseas research prevents me from being at Assembly tonight.

I have fought for students both a representative and an activist throughout my time in Durham. I want to be a voice in Assembly championing mental health, access and affordability, and postgraduate pay & conditions. I wish to do this by linking debates within Assembly with national debates and campaigns on these topics (notably within NUS) as well as the latest academic research regarding higher education, including much that is currently undertaken in Durham itself.

I want to increase postgraduate engagement with the DSU and I am critical of the reduction in postgraduate representation on Assembly in recent years. I am opposed to the University Estates Master Plan and favour strong DSU opposition to spiralling student numbers and the damaging effects this will have on the social fabric of Durham City.

There has been an exciting increase in student campaigns and activism in Durham in recent years. I want the DSU to give a platform to these causes within University structures by continuing to challenge establishment views and constantly redefining the agenda within the University.

Please cross Cross for SU Assembly Open position.

Anne Josephine Strobel

Recent years have seen massive cuts to public services. These cuts have affected, among other things, the mental health support that the NHS provides to students and the financial support that they receive while at university. These factors have greatly contributed to the mental health crisis students are facing today. Having personally dealt with the university support services, I can say that they are completely unfit for purpose.

Students approaching these services are faced with a system that is more worried about protecting its reputation, by forcing students to leave university so they are no longer their problem, than helping students facing difficulties. The recent fitness to study policy is a very clear example of that. I believe that being on assembly will put me in a good position to help change that.

Assembly Open Place- Women's/Carers Place (one space available)

Candidates:

1. J Smith
2. Megan Haskins
3. Re-Open Nominations

J Smith

If elected I will work:

- To actively represent both student carers and women on campus including running regular drop in sessions both at city and Queens Campuses.
- To lobby for the creation of a carers note system to ensure students carers have allocated support on their course throughout their studies.
- To continue to build an active student carers community and campaign in order to engage and ensure carers voices are being heard both within the SU and University.
- To raise awareness on carers issues including the difference between carers, parents and care leavers.

- To work with the Free Products for Accessible Menstruation Campaign as well as College Welfare officers in working collectively to ensure students are able to access free sanitary products on campus as well as donation drive to support the Homeless Period Campaign.
- To restart our I, Too, Am Durham Campaign to help raise awareness and challenge macroaggressions towards women and other underrepresented groups on campus.
- To continue to work in organising a Northern Feminism Festival focused around raising awareness of how we can challenge sexual violence on our campus and fundraise to support Rape Crisis Centre.

Megan Haskins

Whilst at Durham I have been an active member of my college JCR as both Secretary and Female Welfare Officer, as well as also contributing to the wider Durham community as Director of Durham Nightline. In the latter roles I have been privileged to sit on the Welfare, Equality and Diversity Committee and therefore have first hand experience of working to shape productive discussions and policies that best represent student interests and needs. Furthermore, through these roles I have established a tangible understanding of the issues that matter to women students and the barriers that face these students in particular. I have worked with various committees to proactively develop solutions regarding women's issues whilst also consistently understanding the value of listening to others in an open forum without allowing my personal views dictate what is best for the wider student community: a community where women often lack meaningful representation.

Consequently, I would love the opportunity to ensure that women's interests are guaranteed and protected at Assembly, and I think that my background in student welfare, alongside my work within a college JCR and hearing what students really want, puts me really well placed to take on this seat at Assembly

Assembly Open Place – Postgraduate place (one space available)

Candidates:

1. Nicola Tweedy
2. Mengyao Xing
3. Re-Open Nominations

Nicola Tweedy

My name is Nicola Tweedy, a PGCE student from Grey. As a recent Durham graduate, I was very active in the SU as the Senior Students' Union Representative for Grey. This means I have a pretty good idea how assembly works!

During my involvement in the union, I have been very active in the fight to reduce accommodation fees. I remain a supporter for this movement, and aim to vote in assembly with the view of equality for all students within the university. I am also aware of the flaws of Durham, and how we need to move forward as a university.

Additionally, as someone who has just made the leap from undergraduate to postgraduate study, I'm now completely aware of the issues facing the postgraduate population of the university. I aim to vote in favour for postgraduates, and making sure our voice is heard when often it is ignored.

Mengyao Xing

I am concerned with student welfare and have a high degree attention to details. In decision-making, I can monitor fairness of policies and make sure they are on behalf of students. If I am elected, I will try my best

to enable every student to get most out of the activities and let more and more students get involved. As an international student, I understand the difficulties international students may have and can represent them as their voices. I am also able to offer different perspectives from British students. As a result, the policies we make can be more creative and work better. As a translation major, I have a better understanding of both cultures. Therefore, I can see clearly their advantages and disadvantages so as to make them complementary. In this way, the policies made can be considerate and its practicability can be improved.

Assembly Open Place – First Year Undergraduate place (one space available)

Candidates:

1. Antonia Barber
2. Ekaterina Kosheleva
3. Andrew Bergheim
4. Re-Open Nominations

Antonia Barber

I believe I would be suitable as a member of the Assembly as in my previous school as Deputy Head Girl I was part of a small team who listened to the student body and acted on concerns as to how the Sixth Form was run, a role which bears similarities to the one I am applying for. In this role I helped discuss and change rules which students were unhappy with such as uniform regulations. I was also personally responsible for changing arrangements on A Level Results Day in order to benefit the student body. The school, for example, granted my request for it to be opened earlier than the year before, in order for students to have more time to make important decisions once their results were opened. I was also a school counsellor from Year 8-13 which I believe shows I am an approachable and friendly person who students would feel comfortable expressing their opinions and issues about the University to. These roles, I believe, have given me the skills to successfully discuss issues which are important to the students of Durham, therefore, please consider me for the role of First Year member of the Assembly.

Ekaterina Kosheleva

I strongly believe that if one wants to see a change anywhere, then he or she should actively be that change and I will achieve this if you elect me. I wish to contribute to the University as much as I can and as the Student Union is at the heart of this learning institute, this is the best way to do so. I will Kreate a change.

I have considered ways in which university facilities can be improved concerning security, library resources and social events. New ideas will be provided.

My suggestions will be for the benefit of everyone and I will be more than interested to listen to other students' propositions, and most importantly, criticisms of my points of view. I will Engage with others.

I have previously participated in many public speaking and debating events and been a member of my school's Student Committee. Therefore, I can defend issues I am passionate about but also arrive at a compromise when necessary.

I am a hardworking, reliable and organised student who will represent all freshers and their concerns at the Student Union.

ENK- Ekaterina Nikolayevna Kosheleva and

E- Engage with others

N- New ideas provided

K- Kreate a change

Andrew Bergheim

I am an international student and activist who wants to make sure that the Student Union fulfills its intended purpose and works to further the interests of students and prospective students, especially those from less wealthy backgrounds. Recent tuition hikes and the rising cost of accommodation out of step with inflation and cost of living have driven working class and lower middle class people, including a disproportionate percentage of black people, away from university. Even if these individuals can clear that initial hurdle, they are often put off by a culture that doesn't seem to have a place for them, and further exorbitant costs like the hundreds of pounds it can cost to get an assessment for undiagnosed disabilities.

Durham is an incredible place and has given me so many opportunities in my brief time here so far, and I want to ensure that as many people as possible, regardless of their background, can be given the same chances. If elected to the Assembly, I will do everything in my power to block measures harmful to working class students and to ensure that proposals that make the university less expensive, less byzantine, and more welcoming will be adopted.

Governance and Grants Committee

Governance and Grants Committee (open place) – two spaces available

Candidates:

1. Weiling Tay
2. Will Waters
3. Wan Bin Azmi
4. Re-Open Nominations

Weiling Tay

Last academic year I proposed a motion for the university to act as guarantor for students in accommodation contracts. With the help of the Students' Union, this developed into a real, detailed policy looking into the design, potential costs, and feasibility of the proposal.

This proposal is and was very important to a large number of students, and to me personally. And this is true of most proposals that come to Assembly - they mean to fill a gap or solve a primary concern for a lot of students.

I want to help students to address their concerns, and make their ideas a reality.

I know myself to be an accountable, conscientious person who is passionate about good governance. For this I have been awarded a full scholarship by my home government with a contract to work for them upon graduation. I have also worked in economic policy research, in third sector advocacy, and on various student committees. I am easy to work with and have a can-do attitude.

If elected, I will apply my experience and my commitment to principled, informed democracy to my role in the committee.

Will Waters

I think I've done quite a bit over the past couple of years to encourage students to engage with the Students' Union (one of the aims of this committee), first by writing articles about the SU as News Editor at The Bubble, and then as a College Students' Union Representative. Being a College Election Coordinator also gave me plenty of experience of elections and referendums, another thing which Governance and Grants Committee is responsible for.

But, perhaps the biggest thing being a SU Rep. taught me about is assembly. A lot of the things this committee is tasked with have to do with assembly, and I think that it's really important that there are people on it who've been members before and know what works well and what could be improved. Having been to about a year and half's worth of meetings already, I think I'd be well placed to look after that side of things.

Wan Bin Azmi

My experience to run for this committee is admittedly limited. I have served on the Trevelyan College Steering Committee 2016/2017 which gave me the experience in serving in a supervisory role. My experience in this role drove me to apply for this position, which allows me to help in the running of the wider University. As an international student, I find that my unique position places me well in sharing my international perspective in the running of the Students Union as well as giving representation to a large percentage of the student population.

Governance and Grants Committee (societies place) – three spaces available

Candidates:

1. Maciej Matuszewski
2. Esther Green
3. George Peat
4. Sophia Rashid
5. Re-Open Nominations

Maciej Matuszewski

I am currently a PhD student in the department of Mathematical Sciences and I believe that my financial and administrative experience makes me a very good candidate for this position. I sat on this committee last year, and was previously also a member of the separate Governance Committee (2010-2011) and Grants Committee (2011-2012) before they merged. Last year, I was also Treasurer of Grey College MCR.

During my undergraduate degree at Imperial College I was Media Management Group Chair, with financial and administrative oversight over all student media groups. Outside of university, I was Head of Events for the 2017 World Science Fiction Convention, responsible for a personal discretionary budget of €13,000. I currently hold seats on the committees of the North East Branch of the Institute of Physics and the Early Career Mathematicians Group of the Institute of Mathematics and Its Applications.

The Governance and Grants Committee makes difficult decisions about how to distribute the Union's limited resources. I want to make sure that these decisions are made as fairly and transparently as possible – listening to people's feedback on how the Union works and making them feel empowered to engage with the its democratic processes.

Esther Green

Governance and Grants Committee might not sound like the coolest thing in the world, but trust me it is, so I'd really love to be elected to it.

I've been involved in the SU for a while now, having sat on a few committees during my first few years as an undergrad. I was then one of the sabbatical officers and trustees for the 15-16 year, and continue to work as part of the commercial team while I finish off that whole degree thing. I know how important firstly having a transparent and fair grants process is for our many wonderful student groups, but also having an effective G&G committee is for the smooth running of Assembly, and for the drafting of efficient, workable policy that best benefits students. It's vital that as many students as possible get involved with the Union's democratic processes, and that this process is a clear (dare I say fun?) one. I think that the SU has some improvements to make regarding its governance, and my experience as an officer, as well as having sat on NUS NEC drafting and refining motions and overseeing accountability processes, lends itself to helping identify and implement changes.

George Peat

Having worked with the Students union as senior DSU representative for Chads I became very interested in how the union works and what opportunities it can offer students. Having assisted promoting the student trustee elections, encouraging students to run for course rep and promoting involvement in national level elections I feel I would be well suited to the governance side of the role. I was also on the exec committee for the newly rebounded Chemistry society last year so have seen the benefits that a grant can have for a

new society and how it can directly benefit students. I believe that this experience makes me well suited for a role on the Governance and Grants committee.

Sophia Rashid

My name is Sophia and I am a third year Law student. I should be elected as a member of the Grants and Governance Committee as I have experience of leading a Committee; having chaired Grey Fashion Show last year. We raised the most ever by GCCFS at over £6,200 which highlights my innovative nature. The role involved limiting expenses in order to maximise profit while liaising with companies to secure financial support and the use of their brand.

Furthermore, I have held numerous jobs in various industries which have developed my skills of communication. Through the pro bono society, I have held a position as a telephone advisor at the Citizen's Advice Bureau which has allowed me to converse in a professional capacity. I also work as a Care Worker at Active Social Care which has developed my skills in leadership. Furthermore, I have had numerous jobs in catering which have contributed towards my efficiency in working in a team.

Further to this, I am heavily involved in college life and would relish the opportunity to be involved in governance at a higher level, namely through the SU.

Environmental and Citizenship Committee

Environmental and Citizenship Committee (open place) – three spaces available

Candidates:

1. Dewi Humpries
2. Chloe Scaling
3. Estia Ryan
4. Re-Open Nominations

Dewi Humpries

I was elected on the committee last year but we haven't had the opportunity to get the ball rolling. I would like to start this year by ridding Durham College Bars of their regular usage of disposable pint cups and ensuring that reusable polycarbonate cups are used, to reduce plastic waste. I've implemented this in Chad's already and it's going very well.

Chloe Scaling

I am a dedicated member of Durham Student life, a third year Theology and Religion student at Trevs. As a the founding president of Quaker Society I have become more and more involved with the University as a whole. As a member of Trevs I am the secretary of Fem Soc and president of A Cappella. I am a committed member of SU committee in college as well and feel I have a range of experience to draw on as a future member of these committees.

Estia Ryan

Ethical affairs are of huge importance to me. Being part of the university and college feminist society, I adore discussing feminist issues with different year groups. Listening to other peoples' experiences is extremely important when improving college welfare and ultimately university welfare. My background is not only limited to feminism.

I am currently setting up the Students for Sensible Drug Policy initiative in Durham. This Society aims to run campaigns educating students about the harm of drugs, including study drugs. While I personally may advocate for something more extreme (eg. decriminalisation), I agree that this isn't the view of Durham students and as such adjust the campaigns to suit the community at large. Our initial campaign aims to be educational - where does the law stand with regards to substances and how does university policy differ from that?

The two previous examples illustrate some extra-curricular interest in ethics. But as a PPE student, I also have theoretical grounding in moral issues. I am so lucky to be studying Moral Theory - it's a great module where we start thinking about morality in practical terms. For example, looking at biotechnology or the war on drugs. Relating that to university life, it's very useful to have an academic grounding in ethics before applying it to real life events.

Environmental and Citizenship Committee (political and causes society place) – three spaces available

Candidates:

1. Pippa Cameron
2. Re-Open Nominations

Pippa Cameron

In my past 3 years of being a student here, I have put a lot of time and effort into environmental campaigning. Last year I was the environment rep for my college, which entailed running a small committee, organising meetings and events, and collaborating with other colleges and staff members. This experience has given me even greater motivation to change policy and get students interested in university strategy. This year I am president of Durham People & Planet, part of a national organisation running environmental and human rights campaigns, and have been part of the Fossil Free (divestment) campaign for the past few years. I am also a national Student Trustee for P&P, which has given me the opportunity to see the workings of the organisation and how things are run – I would love to have the experience of sitting on an SU committee, and see the structure and workings of a different system. I have experience facilitating meetings, organising campaigns and reaching out to students. I am also co-founder of Cuth's gardening society, and am part of the non-student environmental group, Transition Durham.

Welfare, Equality and Diversity Committee (open place) – three spaces available

Candidates:

1. Chloe Scaling
2. Tasnim Hassan
3. Re-Open Nominations

Chloe Scaling

I am a dedicated member of Durham Student life, a third year Theology and Religion student at Trevs. As a the founding president of Quaker Society I have become more and more involved with the University as a whole. As a member of Trevs I am the secretary of Fem Soc and president of A Cappella. I am a committed member of SU committee in college as well and feel I have a range of experience to draw on as a future member of these committees.

Tasnim Hassan

Throughout the past four years representing the student body, campaigning and supporting welfare issues has always been at the heart of everything I do.

Last year, I was elected as the Vice President Welfare & Community at Lincoln Students' Union where I represented 14,000 students. I planned, coordinated and led a number of campaigns focusing on wellbeing issues, supporting underrepresented groups of students and leading community-based projects.

Some of my highlights are:

- O Organising Lincoln's first 'Reclaim The Night' peaceful march against sexual harassment and violence
- O Launching the #NeverOK campaign to challenge everyday attitudes against bullying, harassment and discrimination, reaching over 7,000 views within a week of the video launch
- O Engaging over 1,500 students through a strong variety of de-stress activities, such as petting dogs, bouncy castles and free-ice cream

On top of all that, I have also been proactive in many other aspects of welfare, such as:

- Volunteering at the Citizen's Advice Bureau
- Being Students' Union Helper (essentially the same as a Frep)
- Attending my local hospital as an Eye Clinic Volunteer
- Being a Scout Leader for a local children's summer camp
- Fundraising for Scope
- Dedicating two years of being retail Volunteer at St. Barnabas Hospice

Welfare, Equality and Diversity Committee (carers place) – one space available

Candidates:

1. J Smith
2. Re-Open Nominations

J Smith

I've been a carer for 5 years, and over that time from being at different universities having carer focused support can really help ensure students don't feel that they have been left behind or should drop out.

From a previous university I was at, I was blamed for not disclosing I was carer sooner after looking after someone with a terminal illness and was then told there was nothing the department could do to help. For anyone who has been in this situation can hopefully understand the difficulty of discussing this kind of

personal issues. Coming to Durham I was on WEDComm last year when we reviewed the University Access Agreement and found there was no provisions or support for carers.

I brought in a motion to help ensure the SU worked with the university to address this including providing representation to ensure carers voices were being heard both in Student Assembly and in WEDComm.

If elected my focus will be:

- Raise awareness of cares including support available
- Build links with carers organisations both locally and nationally
- Lobby for the creation of a carers note
- Continue to build an active Carers Campaign and student community
- Accessible carers support

TO: Assembly
FROM: Officer Team
RE: Officer Objectives

Elected Officers are accountable to Assembly for the delivery of their mandate. Assembly is the principal way that students hold their elected representatives to account against stated priorities. Officers share progress on achieving their priorities with Assembly, and for information with the Durham SU Trustee Board.

This paper outlines the Officer Priorities for delivery in the 2017/2018 academic year. Assembly is asked to:

- Comment on the strategic direction of the Officer Priorities.
- Offer thoughts on how the Officers can usefully share their progress against the priorities with Assembly, and with students.
- Volunteer, if any members are excited and want to be part of working to achieve the Officer Priorities.

President

1. I will build upon the work done on accommodation fees last year and fight to make the costs of attending Durham fairer because the Durham experience is not an equitable one and it should be.
2. I will work for Common Rooms to ensure they have the support and resources necessary to navigate through the massive changes the University is planning through its strategy because future students deserve to have the amazing college community experience we have enjoyed.
3. I will work to get the Student Consultation Framework agreed to last year is appropriately implemented because decisions about our academic interests, our communities, and our student experience shouldn't be made without input from those of us can see what that impact will be on the ground.

Opportunities Officer

1. I will mobilise student knowledge and passion to strategically tackle problems, like homelessness, housing and lifelong education, because Durham students should go out into the world having experienced changing it for the better.
2. I will increase access to amazing opportunities for students by streamlining processes for student groups and common rooms, because student leaders should agree that governance and processes aren't holding them back.
3. I will increase the transparency and fairness of Durham's extra-curricular fees, while also reducing the cost, because costs shouldn't be a barrier to getting involved.

Postgraduate Academic Officer

1. I will make sure that postgraduates at Durham have the power to shape their education through representation and effective organising because we need postgraduates to have a louder voice within our University community.
2. I will improve induction, communication and supervision for postgraduate research students by collaboratively building a best practice model because our research students are supported to very different standards across the University and we want to bring all support up to the highest standards.
3. I will raise awareness and fight for best practices surrounding postgraduate mental health support because postgraduates deserve to be supported through their studies and/or research.

Undergraduate Academic Officer

1. I will fight to establish scholarships for asylum seekers to access education at Durham because values are fundamental to education and asylum seekers should be granted equal access to education.
2. I will campaign for more study space and sustainability for our education resources in Durham because the quality of our education should not be a casualty of the University's plans to increase student numbers.
3. I will improve communication between departments and students, especially for those on joint and combined honours programmes because without good communication students can't fully trust in and engage with their education.

Welfare and Liberation Officer

1. Durham has the potential to offer outstanding support, and it should. I will champion student-led support and student-centred student services to improve student wellbeing.
2. I will make student housing fairer by improving the protection and advocacy available to student tenants, because all students – regardless of their background – deserve equal access to quality, private housing. I will fight for the University to create a rent guarantor scheme, and scope the creation of a Tenants' Union.
3. Women's voices on issues that affect them need to be amplified, so this year, I will establish a Women's Association at the Students' Union, so we can champion equality and women's issues across the University.

TO: Assembly

FROM: Sabrina Seel, PG Academic Officer
Laura Tidd, UG Academic Officer

RE: Free Education

DATE: 16 October 2017

Background

Free Education is once again on the forefront of discussion and consideration. As we recognise there are many differing opinions on the issue, rather than having the Sabbatical Officers take a position on behalf of the Union, we wanted to consult you.

Thus, this policy discussion paper represents a small departure from the policy/motion process Assembly is used to. This change is intended to provide Assembly with more information, more scope for discussion and more involvement in the process for determining the Union's position on Free Education.

This agenda item sets out to:

1. Provide information regarding and providing the identified pros and cons to Free Education;
2. Pose the question to which you will vote on regarding National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts demonstration; and
3. Pose the question on whether a referendum should be called to determine the Union's position on Free Education.

The Demo

The National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC) is planning a demonstration in London on 15 November. The demonstration, promoted as 'Free Education NOW – Tax The Rich' is a reaction to Labour's pledge during the snap general election to tax the rich and fund free education. The organisation are calling on people to 'March with us on 15th November: for an end to tuition fees, for living grants, and for an education system that serves people not profit.'

You are asked to consider whether the Union should support its Officers and members to attend the demonstration through the organising and hiring a coach.

The Referendum

Assembly has the authority to call a referendum on any political/campaign policy. A quorum of 5% of members must vote, with a simple majority necessary for approval. In the past, the Union has held referendum to determine, what, if any, the Union's position should be on Brexit and whether the Union should remain affiliated with the NUS.

The issue of what, if any, position the Union should take on Free Education, we think, is a big enough issue warranting a vote of the full membership. If a referendum were called, we would suggest it be held, at the earliest, contemporaneously with the NUS Delegate elections scheduled for voting

during the 8 – 11 of December. The question to be asked could be similar to the Brexit question posed to members, offering three options: 1. For, 2. Against, and 3. Union should hold no position. However, this can be determined at a later date in consultation with campaigners on both sides.

Action to be taken/Recommendations

You are asked to discuss and debate the following two questions:

1. Should the Union support Officers and members to attend the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts demonstration on 15 November by organising and hiring a coach?
2. Should the Union call a referendum to determine its position on Free Education?

Broader Context

Previous Systems and Current Legislation

British Higher Education has gone through a myriad of different changes in the post-1945 period, with rapid expansions and sudden regulatory shifts. Some institutions have survived – and thrived – in all of the systems, others have struggled with particular changes, but one thing which has remained constant is that the costs of education have continued to rise. In brief, a tour of the important legal points which got us to where we are today:

- Education Act, 1962:
 - Through duties on local authorities, the 1962 act effectively ended the “postcode lottery”, enabling students from any area to get grants to study anywhere in the country – rather than at specific institutions their region specified.
- Science and Technology Act, 1965:
 - In a major step for research and postgraduate funding, the 1965 act set up procedures to establish Research Councils, beginning with Medical, Science and Natural Environment.
- Education Reform Act, 1988:
 - By setting up the University Funding Council (UFC), as well as the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC), laid the groundwork for a truly centralised funding system.
- Further and Higher Education Act, 1992:
 - Through merging the UFC and PCFC, created the Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE) and created the funding system as we know it up to 2017. HEFCE was given more duties in the process, particular around monitoring quality in those universities it funded.
- Teaching and Higher Education Act, 1998:
 - Raft of changes to the price of university, including bringing in £1000 fees for full-time undergraduate home students. Theoretically, this was a truly fixed fee.
 - In the process, also made created the basis for income-contingent loans, and made the repayment system simpler.
- Higher Education Act, 2004:
 - As long as the university in question made appropriate steps to improve access to individuals from non-traditional backgrounds an minority groups, allowed the raising of fees from £1000 to as high as £3000 in 2006.
 - Was designed to create a market with a variety of variable fees in the region of £1000 to £3000, however in reality, most universities went straight to the top.

- This was amended by the Coalition Government of 2010 to bring in a £9000 fee ceiling, with no need for new legislation.
- Higher Education and Research Act (HERA), 2017:
 - Created a new fee ceiling, which would be tied to the performance of HEIs in the new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), with those achieving Gold being able to charge more than others, from 2020-21.
 - By also allowing for inflationary rises until that point, it means that universities would be able to charge as much as £10,444 by 2020-21.
 - Also created the mechanisms for two-year 'accelerated degrees' which would have higher fees, as well as creating new regulatory and research bodies which will better fit the changes to the system.

Free Education – Pros

Long Term Costs

The current loans system is not sustainable. Given the 30-year write-off of loans is likely to cost future governments an enormous sum of money unless graduate incomes rise hugely – and soon – loans are saddling future generations with fiscal problems, as well as creating debt for the current generation of students; a lose-lose situation that no one can really afford.

The shift to loans is one which was designed in part to make the nation's finances look better on paper, as grants count towards the deficit – but loans don't¹, and yet still represent a significant financial risk which is borne by students twice; once as student debt, once as general taxation. Under the current system, loans amount to an upfront cost of around £17bn², considerably more than the projected cost of abolishing loans and directly funding institutions – projected at £11.2bn in the last Labour Manifesto³.

In recent months, there was a rumour that fees would fall to £7,500. This is not far enough. Not only does this not remedy the brewing debt crisis of current and future students – let's be honest, £22,500 in debt before maintenance and interest is still a lot for most – it would also place universities in a financially precarious position, with some losing as much as £25m in income⁴. This would have an undoubted effect on not only the quality of those universities' education but also on their sustainability⁵. A plan such as the National Education Service, proposed by Labour at the last election, would provide central funding to universities to maintain their quality, and encourage them to focus on the quality of their teaching, rather than endlessly exploring and exploiting other funding streams.

While the headline cost to Free Education may seem large, the social responsibility of such an action in terms of putting the country on a sounder footing for future generations is so great that the costs are worth it.

Fees as Social Engineering

Individuals from certain backgrounds are found⁶ to be, on average, more debt-averse than those from other backgrounds. As a result, the very idea of fees – never mind the fact that they have been climbing for the last 13 years – has had an impact on who goes to university.

Every time there has been a change in the fees system since 1998, there has been an impact on the number of students enrolling⁷ and although these numbers have mostly recovered, it has often

¹ *Higher Education Funding in England: Past, Present and Options for the Future*, p8-16 Institute for Fiscal Studies, July 2017 <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/bns/BN211.pdf>

² Ibid, p11

³ *Funding Britain's Future*, p4 Labour Party, 2017 <http://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Funding-Britains-Future.pdf>

⁴ *English universities 'could lose £1.4 billion' from fee-cut plan*, Times Higher Education, 28-9-2017 <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/english-universities-could-lose-14-billion-pounds-fee-cut-plan>

⁵ *Higher Education Funding in England: Past, Present and Options for the Future*, p28-30 Institute for Fiscal Studies, July 2017 <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/publications/bns/BN211.pdf>

⁶ *Does student loan debt deter higher education participation? New evidence from England*, p7-9 Callendar and Mason, Centre for Learning and Life Chances in Knowledge Economies and Societies, LSE, 2017

taken some time for this to occur, with the largest falls typically being in those groups with the smallest financial resources, and mature students.

As a result, this creates what was termed in the 1990s a “middle class subsidy”⁸ whereby students who, by and large already have the financial resources to attend university regardless of the fees system present at the time, are most likely to go, while those who feel they cannot afford the debt – and who may also not be from a background where university education is the ‘norm’ – tend to shy away.

The overall result of all this is that those with the resources also end up with the qualifications, which gives them a better chance of gaining higher-paid jobs ... and sending their children into the same system, perpetuating the cycle.

The Marketization of Higher Education

Fees have, taken together with existing consumer culture, produced a demand – not unreasonably – for value for money from the huge sums exchanged for a university education. As a result of the drive for value for money, government legislation has been aimed at universities, bringing in ever more detailed methods of regulating and evaluating universities, such as the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

While it is good that universities have been taken to task over the quality of their educational offerings, they also risk being at the whim of the market; removing courses because of financial, rather than academic, performance, and concentrating on elements which are enjoyable rather than necessary for solid academic reasons⁹. Feedback is important, but it needs to be constructive, appropriate and in context – feedback for the sake of feedback can all too easily be detrimental¹⁰.

Marketization also brings with it baggage in the form of consumer rights which – while by no means bad - cause universities not only to become distracted from their educational goals, but also places them under significant financial stress trying to meet those obligations. With students constructed and treated as consumers, higher education becomes transactional rather than transformative. Treating students as consumers threatens the quality of higher education, because it extinguishes the opportunity for both students and academics (teachers) to form trusting and mutually respectful relationships required for HE to be a public good with a moral duty¹¹.

⁷ *Patterns and Trends in UK Higher Education 2017*, P10 Universities UK, 2017

⁸ *Framing higher education: questions and responses in the British Social Attitudes*, Mountford-Zimdars, Jones, Sullivan and Heath in *Education and Social Mobility*, Brown, Reay and Vincent (eds) (Routledge, 2016)

⁹ *Her majesty the student: marketised higher education and the narcissistic (dis)satisfactions of the student-consumer*, Nixon, Scullion and Hearn in *Studies in Higher Education*, 2016

¹⁰ *Little White Lies*, Zak Liddell, WonkHE, 2-10-17

¹¹ *Her majesty the student: marketised higher education and the narcissistic (dis)satisfactions of the student-consumer*, Nixon, Scullion and Hearn in *Studies in Higher Education*, 2016, P15

Free Education – Cons

Cost and Quality – the Scottish example

The simple fact is that university costs. From lecturers to lecture theatres and insurance to labs, almost everything is expensive to run at a university. All this has to be paid for by someone and it is surely unfair to pay from the public purse for something which only a relatively small percentage of the population will ever actually use; students should contribute at least something towards their education financially. The key argument here is that students benefit greatly from HE and once they actually leave universities – on the basis of their ability to pay – they should give something back towards the cost of their education. Fees in this sense should be seen as a ‘graduate tax’.

Under the current system of loans (looking only at tuition fee loans), universities can (and do) charge up to £9,250 per home student in England; however in Scotland, where tuition is nominally free for Scottish students, universities receive £6,999 per home (in this case Scottish and EU, but not English) student. Directly funding universities in England would not only be incredibly expensive – coming in at £9bn per year¹² – but also hugely detrimental to the quality of education and research at universities in England.

By and large, Scottish universities underperform in teaching compared to their English counterparts, and only two Scottish universities have any financial surpluses¹³; placing the sector as a whole in potential peril, and raising the very serious risk of further deeply detrimental cuts within Scottish universities, further harming students’ education and experience

Student numbers

An obvious potential consequence of free education would be the return to student number caps in order to more easily regulate the sums of money being paid by the government in direct funding to universities, based on the number of students attending.

Access has become a key issue in Higher Education in recent years, and it seems counter-intuitive to suggest something which is likely to directly limit access to education by having a hard limit on the number of places, almost unchanging year-on-year.

While it isn’t long since we last saw student numbers caps at English universities¹⁴, the recent de-restriction of student numbers has led to explosive growth in universities across the country, and a sudden (or even gradual) reintroduction of such a cap would likely have a catastrophic effect on university finances, especially if combined with per-head funding which is unlikely to match that of the current £9,250.

¹² *Neither Conservatives nor Labour are properly spelling out consequences of their policy proposals*, Emmerson, Johnson, Joyce and Crawford, Institute for Fiscal Studies, 26-5-17
<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/9259>

¹³ *Can Scotland carry on with its free-tuition policy?* Havergal, C, Times Higher Education, 15-12-16
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/can-scottish-higher-education-carry-on-with-its-free-tuition-policy>

¹⁴ *Removing the cap on student numbers – six questions answered*, Shaw, C, The Guardian, 18-9-14
<https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2014/sep/18/removing-cap-student-numbers-six-questions-hepi-report>

Further to this, university expansion, and the attendant rise in the quality of the student experience that such spending sprees from universities are likely to bring, would be sharply curtailed and a number of major universities would likely face imminent difficulties.

International fees

International fees here in Durham are already in the region of double the fees for home students on some courses¹⁵; if government funding stepped in and drastically cut the amount which was paid to universities per home student, it is likely universities would transfer some of the costs of running programmes onto international students.

Given the already fairly hostile legislative environment in which international students find themselves in Britain today, such fee rises – especially in light of already astronomical costs – simply are not fair to inflict upon students, whatever their origin or ability to pay.

¹⁵ Example course in 2018-19 was N509 Marketing and Management BA; £9,250 Home fees, £18,300 International
<https://www.dur.ac.uk/courses/info/?id=16652&title=Marketing+and+Management&code=N509&type=BA&year=2018#feesfunding>

TO: Assembly
FROM: President and Opportunities Officer
RE: Policies
DATE: 16 October 2017

The following policies have been submitted to Assembly for consideration and debate:

- Policy on Dunelm House – President
- Naming the 17th College – Sabbatical Officers

Each policy will be taken in turn for consideration and debate. Debates shall normally follow this order:

- member proposing the motion;
- requests for clarification from members of Assembly;
- member opposing the motion;
- alternating members of Assembly proposing and opposing the motion;
- members with general comments on the motion;
- summation by the opposition;
- summation by the proposer.

Additionally, amendments shall be debated after the first proposition speech and in the same order outlined above. The first proposition speech and the first opposition speech shall be of no more than three minutes' duration. Other speeches shall be of no more than two minutes duration. The Chair shall have the right to restrict the number of speeches in favour of or opposed to the motion if no new material is being introduced to the debate.

If the majority of Assembly vote in favour of a policy, it will become policy of Durham Students' Union.

Major amendments to any proposed policy must be submitted in writing to dsu.governance@durham.ac.uk no later than 17:00 on Thursday 19 October. Major amendments will be circulated via email before the meeting. Minor amendments can be made during Assembly at the discretion of the chair.

Assembly Notes:

1. Dunelm House was opened in 1966 and is one of the few examples of brutalist architecture in the North East.
2. Along with Durham Students' Union, Dunelm House is home to the English Language Centre.
3. The University has applied for a certificate of immunity from listing in an effort to prevent Dunelm House from being historically listed. In its application the University has noted that the building is in disrepair with it being too costly to make necessary repairs and due to its limited interior spaces, unable to adapt to current space needs.
4. The University's Estates Master Plan identifies Dunelm House as a building it wishes to demolish and acknowledges the construction of a new building, at a different site, for the Union.
4. The Twentieth Century Society has opposed the granting of the certificate and has asked that the building be listed.
5. The decision not to list, and award the University's request is presently under review.

Assembly Believes:

1. Dunelm House is unfit to house Durham Students' Union as its design and lack of reliable lifts make it inaccessible to all students.
2. Dunelm House's interior lacks the space, in term of number and variety, necessary for student groups to hold regular meetings, activities and events, causing our student groups to have to expend limited group funds on venue hire.
3. The building has numerous problems such as a leaky roof, damp and mould making it unsuitable for continued use.
4. The University's efforts to secure a certificate of immunity from listing should be supported.

Assembly resolves:

1. The Officers to draft and submit a letter on behalf of the students in support of the University's efforts to obtain a certificate of immunity from listing and the University's plans to demolish the building.

Assembly notes:

1. The University is in the planning stage for the 17th college anticipated to be open for the 2018/2019 academic year.
2. The University has announced it is presently considering the name and branding for this new college, with no names yet publicly proposed.
3. The University has not published publicly any guidelines or the process in which it will follow for the naming of the new college.
4. 13 of the 16 current colleges are named after men.
5. The last 'new' college was named for the Northumberland writer, feminist and pioneer of women's education Josephine Butler.

Assembly believes:

1. The University should follow the precedent set with the naming of Josephine Butler and name the new college after:
 - a. a notable, deceased woman,
 - b. with a connection to Durham University or the North East,
 - c. who had achievements in the sciences, humanities, arts or politics.
2. The University should embrace student participation in the naming of the new college by following a process that seeks student input from the very beginning to wit:
 - a. The creation of a committee made up of the Sabbatical Officers and any college Union Representative interested in being involved and willing to make the time commitment;
 - b. The committee's terms of reference to include the gathering and reviewing of nominations against the above listed criteria, to provide a short-list of five for consideration by the wider University community; and
 - c. A vote of the short-listed nominees to be administered by the University with all University staff and students eligible to vote.
3. The following list of notable women provides examples of the type of person that should be considered:
 - a. Ella Bryant: in 1892 Ella Bryant passed the BSc examination with second class honours in physics. In June 1893 she tried to pay the fee for the BSc degree, but was refused. The university applied for a supplemental charter "almost immediately" after this, allowing it to grant degrees to women in all subjects but divinity, and it

was granted in 1895. Bryant received her BSc on 24 June 1895, becoming the first woman to receive a degree from Durham.

- b. Dorothea Ruth Etchells: was an English poet and college principal who spent most of her working life in the University of Durham. From 1968, she taught in the English Department and soon became Vice Principal of Trevelyan College. In 1979 she was appointed Principal of St John's College, Durham, a notable appointment because this made her both the first lay person and the first woman to be principal of a Church of England college, Cranmer Hall (part of St. John's).
- c. Mo Mowlam: educated at Trevs, graduated in Sociology and Anthropology. PhD in Political Science from the University of Iowa. Ms Mowlam became MP for Redcar in 1987 and became first woman to be Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in 1997. She oversaw the signing of the Good Friday agreement in 1998, the basis of peace in Northern Ireland to this day.
- d. Elizabeth Barrett Browning: the Victorian poet was born in County Durham and campaigned against slavery and child labour.
- e. Margot Fonteyn: an English ballerina with the Royal Ballet, Dame Fonteyn acted as Chancellor to Durham University from 1981 to 1990.

Assembly resolves:

- 1. The Officers lobby the University team responsible for naming and branding the new college this policy to have:
 - a. the creation of the committee to gather, review and short-list nominees; and
 - b. the criteria for those to be considered to have the new college named in their honour to be notable woman in history, with a connection to Durham University or the North East who have made significant achievements in the sciences, humanities, arts or politics.

TO: Assembly
FROM: Opportunities Officer
RE: Voter Registration Policy
DATE: 16 October 2017

Last year's Assembly passed a policy concerning voter registration. An oral update will be presented, however, by way of background, please find the policy below:

Give Durham Students a Voice: Integrate Voter Registration and Student Enrolment

Assembly Notes:

1. Students register to vote in very low numbers compared to the rest of the UK population
2. When students do register to vote, they often do not register at their term-time address
3. In 2013, the government's introduction of individual voter registration led to many students falling off the electoral register
4. Low voter turnouts among young people and students has meant that governments have implemented policy that goes against the interests of Durham students, such as rising tuition fees
5. Voter registration has already been integrated with existing enrolment processes at other Universities, including the University of Sheffield and the University of Birmingham
6. Where voter registration has been integrated with existing enrolment processes, there has been a substantial rise in the number of students registering to vote, with 76% of students now registered to vote at the University of Sheffield
7. That the House of Lords recently passed an amendment to the Higher Education Bill that would make it mandatory for HE institutions to offer their students an opportunity to be put on the electoral register

Assembly Believes:

1. Durham Students' Union should encourage students to be active citizens and ensuring as many students as possible vote in local and national elections is a key part of this

2. That students need to vote in increased numbers so that we can have a say in our future. Students' influence is diminished when we vote in lower numbers, making governments less likely to act in the interests of students
3. Durham University integrating voter registration into the existing enrolment process could lead to a substantial increase in the number of Durham students who are registered to vote
4. That Durham students should encourage their local MPs to vote in favour of the amendment to the HE Bill that would make it compulsory for all HE institutions to give their students an opportunity to be put on the electoral register

Assembly Resolves:

1. To lobby the University to integrate voter registration and enrolment, so that students can choose to submit the information needed for voter registration via an online form during the enrolment process
2. To lobby the University to adopt the 'Sheffield Model' (details attached), where the University has an agreement with the Council that allows it to collect data for voter registration during the enrolment process
3. To encourage students to lobby their local MPs to support the amendment to the Higher Education Bill which would make it mandatory for all HE institutions to offer students the opportunity to be placed on the electoral roll
4. To mandate the Students' Union President to release a public statement of the Union's position as outlined above