

**Durham Students' Union
Assembly Agenda**

Thursday, 9 March 2017– 19:00, ER201

Time	Subject	Who	Paper
19:00-19:01	A. Welcome	Chair	
19:01-19:03	B. Apologies for absence and Conflicts of interest	Chair	
19:03-19:05	C. Minutes of the meeting on 7 February	Chair	UA/1617/034
Routine Business			
19:05-19:20	D. Update on Officer Work	Student Officers	UA/1617/036
19:20-19:30	E. Update from Committees	Committee Chairs	UA/1617/037
Items for Discussion			
19:30-19:45	F. New Society Ratification	Societies Committee Chair	UA/1617/038
19:45-20:15	G. Policy Paper: Rent Guarantor Scheme	Weiling Tay	UA/1617/039
20:15-20:45	H. Strengthening NUS Democracy	President	UA/1617/040
Any Other Business			
20:45-21:00	I. Questions to Officers		

Next meeting will be 9 May 2017, ER201

Agenda closes (so papers must be in) 30 April 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 dsu.president@durham.ac.uk at least 2 days in advance to make arrangements.

**Durham Students' Union
Assembly Minutes**

Tuesday, 7 February 2017– 19:00, ER201

Chair: Andy Corkhill

Observing: Christine Stretesky (Director of Governance and Compliance), Gary Hughes (Chief Executive), Georgina Lambert (Marketing Manager), Mike Potter (Campaigns Coordinator), and Shelley McCormack (Director of Engagement).

Apologies: No apologies.

Welcome

Andy Corkhill welcomed Assembly members to the meeting.

Apologies for absence and conflicts of interest

There were no apologies for the meeting.

Minutes of the last meetings

Harry Cross stated that the previous minutes implied that he asked who could vote for Welfare and Liberation Officer but in fact he asked who could stand. The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016 were approved.

Update on Officer Work

Alice Dee discussed the progress of her objectives. Accommodation fee discussions are happening next week. Elections nominations have closed, student officers are not directly involved in the administration of the elections this year but she has been told that candidate numbers are good. Alice then gave a further update on the sexual violence town halls meetings which came about as a result of the media coverage. Town hall meetings were held yesterday at Durham City and at Queens on Thursday. James Creer stated he believed that Alice's objective around Queens's transition to be revised to encompass better engagement with Queens. James stated that union emails are very Durham-centric. Alice agreed that the SU still needed to have an atmosphere at QC for the next 18 months during the transition period to Durham City.

Harry Cross asked about the facilities for the new Mount Oswald colleges. Alice has explained that so far the procurement process is simply finding the tenders and that planning is not that far along yet.

Chris Waters commended the work of the President in regard to sexual violence and asked for her support in condemning the University's previous work on this. Alice agreed that it had been poor but had created a springboard to start a positive dialogue regarding sexual violence.

Jo Gower explained that she had been absent from work due to illness and discussed her future plans.

Lisa Whiting explained the progress of her objectives. Lisa explained that a PGR forum will be held tomorrow (08 February) supporting the work that she is doing regarding PGR contracts with the PGR faculty reps. Lisa also discussed a study space strategy with the library. Lisa gave a further update regarding proposed exam timetable changes and stated 5800 responses had been received to the survey. Johan Seidenfeden asked for a brief overview of the review. Lisa stated that students had said all four aspects had been stated as important. Thom Addinall-Biddulph asked why the survey had been only targeted to undergraduate students when it still applied to PGT students and had implications for PGR students. Lisa explained that there would be consultation prior before submission to senate. Chris Waters asked about the University's reasoning for the proposed changes. Lisa explained that it was related to a large variety of module choices and for disabled students to avoid multiple exams in one day. Courtney Cliffe asked whether there was an intention to consult directly with Students with Disabilities Association. Lisa stated she would meet with the association to discuss.

Adam Jarvis gave an update on the progress of his objectives. Adam explained that after Media Forum last night, he was investigating more support for people who wanted a career in the media sector. Adam explains the Take the Lead programme which is a more accessible version of the Leadership Development Scheme is getting lots of interest from prospective applicants. Adam also stated that he'll be attending the Maiden Castle steering group on Thursday. Courtney Cliffe asked whether he had considered designing training to get disabled students into work.

Harriet Barsham asked whether the Leadership Development Programmes will still run when the Development Officer role does not exist. Adam said staff would run the LDP from next year. Megan Croll asked how the employability work would filter down through the JCRs in regards to the new Durham award. Adam said it would not be directly related but they would feed into it.

Kara-Jane Senior gave an update on the progress of her objectives. Kara explained that some early insights into the participation survey that 90% of the 1100 respondents had identified a barrier and a report would be released soon. Kieran Laurie asked about the later motion and whether Wednesday afternoons came up high but Kara said it did not explicitly ask but this may come out in the impact survey. Harriet asked for some examples of barriers – Kara listed time, financial, distance, part-time students and students who have caring responsibilities and students not feeling like they fit in.

Update: Champagne Society

Alice Dee stated that Champagne Society had passed the probation that Assembly had placed them under. Alice stated that the Union had worked really closely with the staff team and the police during the planning of their winter ball. Alice stated that the society had passed their probation. James said although they had been removed from probation could the Union provide best practice for student groups who had planned good largescale events. Alice said this would be a part of Kara's objective regarding society governance.

Union Strategy – Presentation

Alice Dee gave an update on the upcoming Union strategy explaining the reason for why the Union was rewriting their strategy. Alice explained the draft vision, mission and values. Alice stated that she would circulate these by email. Alice stated that students would be consulted through forums and subcommittees.

Luke Hollander asked what the strategy would practically translate into. Alice stated that the strategy would form outcomes, the mission, vision and values would underpin the ethos of the organisation. Nicola Tweedy asked how wider students would be consulted. Alice said that any students would have an opportunity to comment but they also wanted to ensure that key student stakeholders that are involved. Alice said that innovative ways to get wider engagement would be welcomed.

New Societies Ratification

Katie Jelpke stated that Societies Committee was proposing to ratify the following four societies:

- Pakistan Society
- Friends of Fiji
- Bangra Society
- Mixed Martial Arts

Kieran Laurie asked about the distinction between DUCK and Friends of Fiji. Katie explained that Friends of Fiji was not explicitly a fundraising group.

Tom Harwood asked about the progress of Port Society, Katie explained that as there is currently a wine society it would be debated at the next meeting.

Vote for: 35

Vote against: 0

Vote to abstain: 0

These four societies officially became societies of Durham Students' Union.

Motion: Policy on Reading Week

Krish Mehta outlined his motion. Tom Harwood asked what type of research the motion is calling to do. Krish Mehta said about asking students about the viability of reading weeks. Harry Cross stated that as there had been lots of concern regarding lengthening terms of exams and the costs associated with this. Krish stated that reading weeks would prevent mental health. When asked about who would conduct the research, Krish stated that research would be done by the Academic Affairs Officer and the Course Reps. Rosa Tallack asked Krish whether research had been done at other Universities that showed that reading weeks improved mental health. Krish stated that Cambridge had done some work on this work. Gina Cuomo stated that there was concern regarding reading weeks would not prevent mental health as it would mean longer terms and that more consultation should be done with disabled students first. Krish stated that the policy would mandate the research. Courtney Cliffe stated that if disabled students are unable to work during reading weeks, it may increase mental health issues because of the expectations to do more reading.

Megan Croll asked whether it not be an appropriate time discusses lengthening the term as that would have knock on effects which is important due to the discussion around exam periods. Krish Mehta stated that the work and research around the motion had begun in November so the research should still be conducted. Dominic Robson stated that he believed that the research should be conducted now to avoid having to change the academic timeframe again in such a short period of time, if reading weeks were to be adopted. Harriet Barsham asked what the action would be after the research is done. Krish stated that if the research stated that reading weeks would be a positive thing – another motion would mandate the Academic Affairs Officer to lobby for reading weeks. Nicola Tweedy asked if departments could have discretion as whether to have reading weeks. Krish stated that he did not believe this would work in practice and it would have to be a blanket policy.

Gina Cuomo asked whether an amendment could be added to specifically to consult with welfare, equality and diversity committee, staff and students. Krish agreed and this was amended in the meeting.

Megan Croll opposed the motion because of the reasons that had been discussed before. Megan stated about the implications regarding mental health and while research was done at Cambridge, Reading Weeks were not implemented.

Ted Coward stated that they did not believe that departmental reading weeks would be useful because Durham is a collegiate university. Johan Seidenfeden stated that reading weeks would be beneficial for all courses.

Harry Cross stated that this research may stretch the work of the Academic Affairs Officer. Harry stated that a reading week and a work week are very different things and the motion is not clear enough regarding what it would be. Thom Addinall-Biddulph stated that the research would be useful to have and reaffirmed that if the academic timeframe was changing – this should be a key consideration now to avoid it being changed soon.

Vote for motion as amended: 17

Vote against motion as amended: 14

Abstentions: 4

The motion passed and therefore became policy of Durham Students' Union.

Motion: Policy for NUS National Conference HE Bill & Widening Participation

Andy Corkhill stated that NUS rules meant that policies submitted to NUS National Conference had to be submitted through the Union's democratic structures. Kate McIntosh outlined the proposals within the motion. Chris Waters asked whether the motion would make NUS have a specific reason to fight the HE bill. Kate explained that students from lower-income backgrounds would be impacted more so the motion aimed to address this. Kate explained that at the moment, NUS opposed the bill outright but this should be at the forefront.

Gina Cuomo clarified which NUS Officers would be mandated; Kate stated that it would be the Vice President Higher Education but Andy Corkhill explained that this could not be amended in the meeting. Gina stated that another Union could amend this to reflect it after submission to NUS Conference. Will Waters asked whether if this motion passed, would NUS still oppose the HE Bill? Kate stated that it would.

Vote for motion to be submitted to NUS National Conference: 31

Vote against motion to be submitted to NUS National Conference: 0

Abstentions: 2

The motion passed and will be submitted to NUS National Conference on behalf of Durham Students' Union.

Motion: Keep Wednesday Afternoon Free

Harry Cross explained the motion and the reasoning why it is required at Durham due to the estate masterplan proposals. Harry stated that this would be proactive as the University may be forced to have lectures later due to capacity reasons.

Vote for motion to be approved: 32

Vote against motion to be approved: 0

Abstentions: 1

The motion passed and became policy of Durham Students' Union.

Motion: Fossil Fuels

Alice Dee explained that the policy had been referred to her for review by Governance and Grants Committee. Alice has reviewed the policy and recommended renewing the policy.

There was a minor amendment from the Chair of Governance and Grants Committee to change 'Ethical and Environmental Committee' and 'Environmental and Citizenship Committee'.

There was no opposition

Vote to approve policy as amended: 32

Vote to reject policy: 0

Abstentions: 0

The motion passed and the policy continues to be policy for Durham Students' Union.

Motion: Principles of Student Engagement

Alice Dee explained that the policy had been referred to her for review by Governance and Grants Committee. Alice is recommending renewing the policy while work is done regarding operationalising the principles.

There were no questions or opposition.

Vote to approve policy: 32

Vote to reject policy: 0

Abstentions: 0

Questions to Officers

There were no questions.

Board of Trustees – minutes

The minutes of the trustee board dated 27 October 2016 were circulated for information.

	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	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	Abi Stead	MCR PresComm	
16	Charles Walker	Governance and Grants	
17	Dewi Erwan	Environmental & Citizenship	
18	Rosa Tallack	WEDComm	
19	Craig Bateman	Media Rep	
20	Mitchell Langcaster-James	St. Cuthberts	
21	Thomas Addinall-Biddulph	Ustinov	
22	Will Waters	St John's	
23	Gina Cuomo	Van Mildert	
24	Tom Harwood	St Mary's	
25	Harriet Barsham	St. Chad's	
26	Nicola Tweedy	Grey	
27	Meghan Hosch	Hatfield	
28	Jazz Beard for Kennedy Round	John Snow	
29	Luke Hollander	St Aidan's	
30	Chris Waters	Collingwood	
31	Kieran Laurie	St Hild & St Bede	
32	Laura Doherty	University College	
33	James Creer	Stephenson	
34	Stella Elena Alexandrova	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	
Attended	Sent Apologies	No Attendance or Apologies	Not in post

President, Alice Dee

Plan of Work update

Priority One: *I will make sure College Students' Union Reps play a key role in shaping Durham SU because I understand the importance of Colleges in our time at Durham and it's so important that we work better with your reps.*

Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
Developing the definition of role 'College Union Rep'	Embedding comments and edits to the role description and developing a motion for changes to go to Common Rooms.	Assisting College reps to change their role through common room governance procedures.
Working with College Reps as key College representatives on Accommodation fee-setting	Along with MCR and JCR Presidents and a wider student focus group, College reps have been key stakeholders in gathering research and developing proposals for the process of setting accommodation fees.	Continuing work on accommodation fees and mirroring the process of involvement for future projects, like developing the SU strategy.
Organising Student Leaders Conference	The SU will be holding sessions for key College representatives to discuss our strategy and training, and how to better their role and engagement.	Continue to develop event. Work on handover for College Reps too.

Priority Two: *I will insure as many students as possible are involving in making decisions about things that affect them. We're entering a big time of change in Durham and it's vital that we, as a student body, help shape what's going on around us.*

Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
Embedding comments and feedback to the framework	Based on feedback from student focus group and key University representation changes have been made to improve the proposed framework	See below.
Operationalising a trial for the framework	Working with the library to implement a feedback process for the 'eating space trial' allowing potential flaws in the framework to be highlighted	Rolling out the consultation and feedback process and review.
Pass the framework through the relevant University governance structures and communicate the changes.	After the trial this should be possible.	Working with the relevant bodies to adopt the framework.

Priority Three: *I will make sure Queen's Campus students keep benefiting from the best student experience possible. Because in the lead up to and during the move of Queen's up to Durham, we*

need to make sure that student priorities are the focus of decisions and that Queen's students are welcomed to Durham.

Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
Supporting Queens Common Rooms through transitional period	Financial stability is a priority for these common rooms, given the fluctuation of student numbers. Working with JCR Presidents on budgeting for the next two years	Finalise budget and lobby for compensation in reduced income.
Student representation for Howlands and Mount Oswald building developments	Working on maintaining student priorities and experience during discussions about new building projects.	Continue to do so. Important to balance needs of current Durham city students (like JB) with incoming QC students
Assessing and developing SU membership offer at Queens	Working so establish the current provision of resources allocated to Queens by the SU and compare to resources in Durham city.	Further extend this analysis to transitional plans for academic year 17/18.
Supporting students in the School of Medicine Pharmacy and Health transition	Students on courses within SMPH are moving to Newcastle from September, so working with Newcastle SU and students affected to make sure students are aware of their rights, support and options.	Continue to support students and lobby for change on issues affected.
College Drop-ins at Snow and Stevenson	Held as part of College Drop-in sessions, spoke to students about concerns of Queens move.	Feed concerns back to relevant areas of University/SU
QC Transition group membership	Meetings ongoing	Raise specific student concerns.

Other actions and meetings		
Activity	Officer comment	Change made for students
University strategy meetings	Still ongoing and taking up time...	Keeping student views a priority during development and implementation of new strategy.
SU strategy development	Draft Vision, Mission and Values. Held staff and student discussions gathering opinion on main areas of potential work.	Confirm Vision, Mission and values. Then establish priority areas of work.
Accommodation fees	Establish a process to engage key student leaders to discuss and present options to the University.	Maintaining pressure on the University to make College accommodation more accessible.
Elections cycle	As you're probably all aware, this happened and was a great success. Well done to all	Increased numbers of candidates running and 17.3% increase in voter turnout,

	candidates.	strengthening democratic voice for students.
Divestment Commission	I sit as a panel member of the commission in an ongoing review of University's investment in companies involved in Fossil Fuel extraction. The most recent meeting discussed feedback from the open consultation.	Implementing changes mandated by the student body.
Attending UUK 'Access Agreement' Conference	Gathered ideas from across the sector about increasing access to Durham.	Ensuring the brightest minds are able to access Durham and HE, irrelevant of background.
Worked with and lobbied University on current Access Provision to Durham	Inputting in developing new access strategy to Durham. Really exciting opportunity to try new approaches to access in Durham.	As above.
Interviewing and inducting new Trustee.	As Vice-Chair of SU Board of Trustees and member of HR committee, I was involved in interviewing and selecting our new external Trustee, Beth Watling (St Mary's alumna, previously worked at National Youth Theatre)	Ensuring Durham SU has the best trustee leadership to maximise its' impact for members.
Durham SU HR and Finance Meetings	Attending as member of committees.	Ensuring Durham SU board of trustees is effective in maximising its' impact for members.
Training and induction things	Working with Adam, following election of new Officers and starting to think about Common room induction and training	Ensure that the SU is providing the best support for its members and incoming Officers.
Women's Forum	Co-hosting our first Women's Forum to discuss women's issues in Durham and also policy proposed to NUS Women's conference. Election of delegates to Women's conference.	Providing a space for Women's liberation in Durham and trialling a new format for engagement in NUS politics.
Community relations	Attended Durham University Residents' Forum (DURF) and discussed student-related issues with representatives from residents' forums.	Maintaining relations with local communities and working to tackle issues facing all residents of the city.
Continuing Sexual violence work	Working with Jo to secure commitments to tackling sexual violence in Durham.	Making University a safer place for our members

Academic Affairs Officer: Lisa Whiting

Priority One: Develop, implement and review the new undergraduate course rep system		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey about the support we can give course reps is going out soon Looking at other Students' Union and what they do well in course rep support Academic Forum workshop planned for Durham City and Queen's Introducing more opportunities for course reps to be involved in non-SSCC related things Working on sorting out a few issues that have been raised by course reps about their departments 	<p>I feel confident that by the end of the year we will have a stronger course rep system. Now the election system is fully reviewed we can work on the day-to-day experiences of course reps. The survey will really help with this and shape our support. I'm also working to ensure that academic representation is a key feature of the Students' Union strategy so this work will be carried forward in the coming years. This is even more important given the creation of question 26 in the NSS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run Academic Forums Distribute survey, collect responses and analyse results Develop plan to implement changes for the next academic year
Priority Two: Research and develop a new system for postgraduate representation		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Met with Deputy Heads of Faculty to review proposals Took proposals to Social Sciences and Health and Arts and Humanities Faculty Education Committee meetings for consultation 	<p>I'm very glad the Deputy Heads of Faculty were positive about the proposals. Only minor changes are needed and then it will go to Education Committee for formal approval. Once approved we can get started on the other areas of PG representation, like better training for PG reps.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend proposals in light of FEC feedback Take to Education Committee Work with Faculty Reps to draw up what is needed to support PG academic reps properly
Priority Three: Reinforce and promote the rights of PGR students		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held "Postgraduates who Teach" forum which was really insightful We have now built our evidence base with notes from the forum as well as data from the paper questionnaires In every meeting I'm in where it's even remotely relevant I bring up the poor pay conditions of PGRs who teach so I think the message is beginning to get through 	<p>The progress on this project would not be possible without the amazing work of the PGR Faculty Reps. I'm feeling positive that once we have the report together we'll have a very strong case for changing PGR contracts, pay and support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan out and conduct case study interviews Write up report with recommendations Meet with Sam Nolan to discuss PG training and support Present investigation to the University, publish/campaign based on response
Other actions and meetings		
Activity	Officer comment	Change made for students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic year report and negotiations Meeting of School of Medicine, Pharmacy and Health Student Experience Committee to look at transition arrangements Organised and attended focus groups on digital learning and 	<p>Academic Year: Negotiations over the Academic Year have been difficult. A remarkably large amount of progress has been made since the original proposals but I'm still not happy with the structure that is being proposed. I'll continue to fight in line with what students said in the survey and update Assembly accordingly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We finally have eating space in the library! WOO please let them know if you like it and want it to continue Academic Year Structure is better,

<p>widening participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Student Systems Advisory Group • Recruiting UG Academic candidates • Spoke on the Durham Women in Politics Forum panel • Participated in Students' Union strategy workshops • Attended Quality and Standards Sub-Committee • Had first meeting of the Re-validation of Computer Science • Education Committee • Workshop and research on Access Agreement • University Strategy Town Halls on Internationalisation and Education • Teaching and Learning Building saga • Women's Forum • Attended Senate Agenda Setting Committee • Library Eating Space 	<p>Access: Since the beginning of the year Alice and I have been pushing for more work to be done on access and widening participation to Durham and finally we have seen some of the fruits of this. The access agreement is being drafted and the University is looking to introduce more radical approaches to contextualising offers and exploring a fairer bursary support system after we lobbied for a joint workshop with the University's Access team.</p> <p>Sexism in Durham: I really enjoyed speaking on the Durham Women in Politics forum and it made me realise how much more work there is to do to make women at Durham feel listened to and valued in both our academic and wider University communities. If I have time this is something I want to do some further research on.</p> <p>SSAG: Student Systems Advisory Group was frustrating because there is a massive backlog of IT development work that is at a standstill and means student-facing projects like lecture capture are being delayed.</p> <p>Teaching & Learning Building: I'm very frustrated over the lack of student consultation on the new Teaching and Learning facility and have made my thoughts on this known.</p> <p>SMPH Transition: I really enjoyed going to Queen's Campus and attending the SMPH Student Experience meeting and witnessing how well the department is handling preparations for the transition.</p> <p>QSSC: I expressed my concern within Quality and Standards Sub-Committee around the External Examiners reports. There was a lot of inconsistencies within a faculty for marking and use of SAC forms which I felt needed reviewing. Also I was not happy with one follow-up to a recommendation within the Physics departmental review which I'll continue to monitor.</p>	<p>but still not good enough</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalised timetables are back on the agenda after being pushed off by server upgrades • A review is now going to be done into the use of discretion in marking and in the application of Serious Adverse Circumstances forms during examinations. Hopefully this will lead to a fairer and more consistent approach across departments • *Hopefully* lots of candidates for UG Academic!
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Activities Officer - Kara-Jane Senior

Plan of Work update

Priority One: I will show how participation in student activities benefits and improves students' experience at Durham, because this research will enable students, employers and wider society to understand the importance of our work.

Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report being written for the participation survey data. Infographics have been created too! We've created two separate surveys for the Impact research: one for individual impact and another for group impact on the wider community. 	<p>This project will consist of two student surveys; the first looking at participation in student groups, and the second on the impact of participation in student groups. The data from these surveys will enable us to better understand students' habits and interests outside academia, and could be used as evidence in campaigning for more support (including financially) for student activities. This piece of work will be very useful for the Opportunities Officer next year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual impact survey is out now for students to complete. Group impact survey will go out very soon. Both will close in the Easter term. A report with all findings from the project will be compiled.

Priority Two: I will make Durham SU processes easier for student groups, because our most dedicated volunteers deserve our best efforts to make their work hassle-free, and rewarding.

Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New society application process tweaked a bit more – developing more guidance for students. Currently planning re-registration for this year, to ensure it is straightforward for all. Student group finance survey is out to get feedback on a few specific things. We are currently looking for an external consultant to look at all our student group processes. 	<p>This project will focus on making student group processes more efficient and easier for students.</p> <p>Major student group processes will be reviewed and a Student Group 'Business Cycle' created for clarity internally and externally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act on the feedback provided in the finance survey (with Societies Committee). Ensure student group training is ready for June. Consultant will look at the governance and delivery of our student groups and make recommendations to improve.

Priority Three: I will make sure Durham SU supports all student groups to provide outstanding experiences for their members, because we need to assure basic standards and celebrate outstanding achievements in one, simple, process.

Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drafting up a 'Student Group & SU agreement' (name TBC) to replace the Student Group Regulations 	<p>This project seeks to implement a quality societies scheme, to support execs and ensure a minimum standard experience for students regardless of group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tidy up the first draft and present to Societies Forum/Societies Committee for further

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Societies Forum looked at schemes from other SUs and fed back what they liked/didn't like. ▪ Drafted up a scheme based on student feedback. 		<p>feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get feedback on the new 'Student Group Agreement'.
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Other actions and meetings		
Activity	Officer comment	Change made for students
Supporting student media	I've been meeting with our main media groups to determine what they want media to look at Durham SU. Media groups have different needs to other student groups, and the 'society' model doesn't seem to suit them. I want the SU to support media in the ways needed and ensure the importance of student media is recognised.	Student media has the potential to be part of the life of every student either as a contributor or as an audience member. It's important that it is accessible to students of varying experiences, and provides a space for a diverse range of interests and views to be explored, for which a good support structure is integral.
Developing our new strategy	I have been in a lot of conversations discussing things for our new strategy, which has been very exciting. Just sad I won't be here to see our ideas play out!	A strong students' union with a clear plan is essential to ensuring students current interests and needs are always at the heart of what we do, even in this time of such change in HE.
Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free policy #KWAF	Since Assembly passed the KWAF motion at the last meeting I have confirmed our support of the national campaign with NUS, and Lisa and I have investigated the issue. As you will have seen in my update on the website the University doesn't have any plans to do away with Wednesday afternoons, but we are looking at a reported case where this is not being followed.	Time assigned to extracurricular activity is very important for several reasons including extra skill development, personal wellbeing, and meeting new people (and even finding a spouse as is the case with some societies I know of!).
Student groups and their activities	I'm always meeting with different student groups to discuss ways we can support the specific needs of their group. I also love to attend student group events to both try something new and to understand student interests better.	Understanding the diversity of student groups is essential in being able to represent them all.
Summer Opportunities Fair with DUCK [28 Feb]	We've been working with DUCK for several months to provide students the opportunity of finding out about volunteering opportunities, and alternative internships etc. for over the summer.	Students often say there is not enough focus on alternative opportunities with University careers, so we wanted to help fulfil this need.
Been in a show [4-5 Mar]	Danced in my sixth and last ever Instep dance show!	Unfortunately, a negative change this time (or positive depending on what you think of my dancing), because I will probably never grace the stage with Instep again...

You can keep up with what I'm doing day-today by following me on Twitter ([@durhamSUact](https://twitter.com/durhamSUact)) or adding me on Facebook (www.facebook.com/DurhamSUact).

Priority One: Representation for Underrepresented Groups		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<p>Have secured a place for a representative of People of Colour, LGBT+, and Students with Disabilities on the Diversity and Equality Advisory Group.</p> <p>DEAG also forming a 'Dignity and Respect' stream.</p> <p>Have instigated initial planning of college minority rep training.</p> <p>Have been in discussions about the Estates Development regarding inclusive building designs including prayer spaces and GN toilets.</p> <p>Have been invited to the Athena Swan Group and Stonewall Equality Group.</p> <p>Have added Durham Student Theatre to the Intersex and Trans Inclusion Policy.</p> <p>Writing policy around SU staff & execs E&D training.</p> <p>Durham has submitted motions to national conferences!</p>	<p>It has been a busy term with regards to E&D, but getting three Association reps on DEAG is a big deal when initially it was only going to be one student officer to 15 staff members!</p> <p>The building design meeting was positive, with the University keen to go 'above and beyond' legal equality requirements.</p> <p>University is pursuing Stonewall employer accreditation, and Athena Swan now includes trans and non-binary individuals. Ruth Hunt (CEO of Stonewall) is coming in to talk about gender equality on March 7th – be there.</p> <p>I am super proud of the Associations who have submitted policy to NUS conferences!</p>	<p>Meet with E&D team and Association representatives – E&D are keen but very busy.</p> <p>Meet with Association WOs and WEDComm reps to develop rep training further.</p> <p>Wait for I&TI policy to come back from legal and make sure it passes!</p> <p>Collate information to measure Association representation at Assembly.</p>

Priority Two: Changing attitudes toward sexual violence and harassment		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
<p>'Consent Matters' is now on DUO.</p> <p>Have written a student-facing document about disclosure procedure.</p> <p>Engaged in discussions with SVMOG about what should be included in any compulsory training.</p> <p>Writing policy around SU staff & execs consent and ABI training.</p> <p>Train-the-trainer ABI sessions with Welfare Officers and JCR+MCR execs.</p> <p>Planning for "Sexual Violence: What's Next?" forum on Friday (please come).</p>	<p>Progress is still incredibly slow.</p> <p>We need to look at how the 'Consent Matters' module is presented on DUO to ensure that it is not triggering for those with PTSD to see it on their screens, and we have found some people are skipping to the quizzes instead of doing the whole module and are working with CIS to tackle that.</p> <p>Internal training for SU staff and execs is important – we have to practice what we preach.</p>	<p>Push through the campaign and make it a priority for the Uni Comms and Legal teams.</p> <p>Continue training JCR+MCR execs to deliver ABI training within their own colleges to increase overall number of students trained.</p> <p>Use feedback gained from Friday's forum to inform what training should be compulsory, and where students want the University to go next.</p>

Priority Three: Improving the experience of students with disabilities		
Project progress	Officer comment	Next steps
Meetings about Mary's field plans. Audit of hearing loops around teaching spaces. Accessibility survey has been completed and results analysed. Medical evidence prices being worked in to the plan for the Advice Service – have contacted other SUs about how they have achieved this. Met with E&B around disabled students paying more for accessible rooms.	<p>Again, the building design meeting was positive, with the University keen to go 'above and beyond' legal equality requirements, including more parking spaces, larger lifts, height adjustable tables, etc.</p> <p>The accessibility survey results were interesting; many students are confused about the difference between DUSSD and SwDA.</p> <p>The HL audit is only of teaching spaces, the University should be having these in reception areas and social spaces, e.g. cafes at the tills, too.</p>	<p>Demand further consultation with SwDA so that other disabilities are considered in design plans and not just wheelchair access.</p> <p>Publicise differences between SU Associations and University services and utilise survey feedback in meetings with SwDA to develop their services even more.</p> <p>Contact University Medical Centre to arrange a meeting about the price of medical notes.</p> <p>Encourage the Law Department to allow SwD to hire out their rooms (because they actually have hearing loops and accessibility!).</p>




Extra stuff:

- Work with the environment reps – we're hoping to make an Environment Forum for all interested parties to join up the Colleges and the SU.
- Alcohol Impact groups – meetings have started with the subcommittees focussed around alcohol impact, including student experience, welfare, campaigns and publicity, and education.
- Met with Durham University Residents' Forum to discuss growth in student numbers and student representation on Residents Fora across the City.
- Trustee duties!



Adam Jarvis - Development Officer

Objectives 2016 – 2017



Priority 1: #WorkInsights

	Project Progress	Officer Comment	Next Steps
	The campaign plan is complete and currently developing branding materials to go out.	The campaign will focus on “more than just a piece of paper” and will focus on desirable skills and support available to students.	Working out a realistic timeline for the launch of the webpage and readjusting the campaign to tie-in with this timeline.
	Full list of potential employers has been identified and I am currently writing outlines (based on research of similar schemes) to give to employers and students.	The placements are hopefully going to take place during the summer holidays, with sign up hopefully to open before the start of Easter Term.	Once materials have been finalised, I will approach the employers with the outlines to get placements available.
	The History Careers Insight event happened on Wednesday 22 February with 28 students attending from a range of subjects.	The event was fabulous and I’m really pleased with how much people engaged with the event.	Meeting with the Town Hall to discuss placements opportunities. Reviewing the event to see what else we can do / what works well.

Priority 2: #SupportingDUCK

	Project Progress	Officer Comment	Next Steps
	The funding agreement has been taken to Audit and Risk Committee and been approved.	I’m really pleased this has been approved and I’m looking forward to seeing where the extra money goes.	DUCK has more money available for the Local Charities Fund and the charity have agreed to help them with the allocations process.
	Work underway to review the current support we can and do offer to DUCK and where resources are best placed.	The new Campaigns Coordinator role is able to provide DUCK with more support, and we are looking at what else the SU offers them.	Once this review is underway, we can work out the right support framework within the Union to help DUCK moving forward.

Priority 3: #SupportingCommonRooms

	Project Progress	Officer Comment	Next Steps
	We have now held Drop-Ins (or other sessions to make officers available) in nearly every college.	It’s been really useful going out to the colleges to talk to students and I’m hopeful go to the remaining colleges / repeat ones we’ve already been to.	The drop-ins are to be included in the evaluation of general “raise your voice” activities.
	Reviewing both the training programmes, using feedback from common room execs, to work out what programmes are the best to offer.	I am currently looking at the best way to deliver this training so that it is easier and more beneficial to common rooms.	Finalising the training we are going to offer and developing the necessary materials in advance of June.

Other Projects

Leadership Development Programmes	Behaviour and Wellbeing Trainings	Maiden Castle Sports Park Development	SU Strategy Discussions	(Slightly Unsuccessful) Officer Election
				

REPORT

TO: Assembly

SUBJECT: Committee Updates

DATE: 01 March 2017

Academic Affairs Committee Update

Policy Updates:

Academic Skills Policy – not renewed, because it is already within the remit of the Academic Affairs Officer's duties.

International Attainment Gap Policy - The policy is to be renewed. Instead, the committee supported the Academic Officer's suggestion that the policy should be actioned by commissioning a student researcher to develop researched policy for BME and International student grade disparity.

Subgroup Updates:

Postgraduate pay and representation - PG contracts have been donated and collated across the three faculties, with the goal of collecting two contracts per department. The next step is analysing these contracts and highlighting examples of best practice. Formulating a plan to ensure departments treat PGs equally and fairly, especially regarding pay.

Exam Feedback subgroup – AT (lead) will contact the Academic support office.

Teaching Quality Feedback – New MEQ (Module Evaluation Questionnaire) software was discussed as mid-term channel for anonymous feedback, but nothing was resolved.

Other Updates:

Elected Harry Cross as Postgraduate Conference Delegate

Discussed attendance monitoring

Discussed, and launched an investigation into, student ownership of intellectual property

Discussed anonymous marking

WEDComm Update

Two policies were passed through Welfare, Equality and Diversity Committee on the 3rd February, in order to be submitted to NUS National Conference. The policies are entitled:

- 'Make NUS events Accessible to Disabled Students' (written by Gina Cuomo)
- 'Make university sports inclusive for trans and intersex students' (written by Ted Lavis Coward)

These motions have now been submitted to NUS National Conference on behalf of Durham Students' Union. As delegates, Ted and Gina will speak on these at Conference.

Sex and Consent subgroup

- In the process of writing up a policy to ensure that all Durham SU bar staff receive active bystander intervention training and to encourage all members of WEDcomm become trained in delivering this training
- Aim is to enable it to be easily dispersed into colleges to promote a cultural change in the attitudes towards sexual violence and misconduct within the student population.

Minority Representation subgroup

- Have been reviewing the university access agreement 2017/2018 to evaluate how effective it is in supporting students from marginalised and minority groups.
- In the process of working towards developing Common Room Accreditation Schemes in joint partnership with JCRs and MCR. It is called EQUALS (Equality, Accessibility and welfare schemes) and focuses on promoting and developing greater intersectionality and encouraging exec engagement in supporting minority and marginalised groups within common rooms and colleges. There will be 4 categories including “not accredited” and 3 award levels: bronze, silver and gold, with 4 sections for each award: events, welfare, facilities and governance.
- Currently in the process of organising a campaign for FREE proDucts for Accessible Menstruation campaign (FREEDAM). As well as developing an awareness campaign, Minority Representation subgroup are working to draw up a motion.
- Currently in the process of organising a survey for I’m Every Woman Intersectional History Month celebration around engaging students on whether we should move towards creating a Marginalised Genders Association. This is in joint collaboration and with the support of the LGBT+ and Durham University Feminism Society.

Welfare Services and Mental Health subgroup

- Meeting to discuss writing a policy for delivering mental health first aid training. The scope and direction of this are still in discussion.

JCR PresComm Update

Subgroups:

- **Minorities report**

The minorities report group have been working to increase minority representation in Durham. Most recently they have worked to improve the representation of People of Colour within Common Rooms and as a result a number of People of Colour Association reps have been elected around the University. Some concern has been expressed as to where these reps should sit within Common Rooms as there is uncertainty as to whether the role should sit under Welfare branches of each Common Room.

- **College sport**

The college sport group have been very involved in how sport will develop at Durham as student numbers increase.

The group expressed concern to Team Durham over a £150 “College Sport Charge” for each member of the University who wished to play sport. It was subsequently decided that this charge was not to be implemented which PresComm feel is a success as the charge would have been detrimental to the student experience.

Representatives from the college sport group have reported on developing plans for Maiden Castle to keep PresComm informed on plans. They have expressed the committee's views on various aspects of these plans, particularly the poor state of many college boathouses. Despite this, boathouses apparently remain low on the University's list of priorities. Consultation on the Maiden Castle development is taking place at Collingwood very soon and has been advertised to all students by each JCR President in the hope that many will attend and we can give valuable feedback to the University.

- **Strategic plan**

The strategic plan group are yet to begin producing a report but are constructing a plan of what this report will look like as University plans become more solidified. The report will advise potential aims for PresComm over the next five years with the hope of providing efficient continuity. Seemingly some main focusses of the report will be accommodation fees, TEF, the independent/DSO status of the JCRs/SJCRs/SRCs, student number growth, the Queen's campus move, the building of new colleges and their impact and teaching space availability.

Other focusses:

- **Accommodation fees**

Very recently it was decided that PresComm were to begin looking into differentiated pricing for college accommodation. However, it was found that there is no simple solution to how this should be done so research is underway in order to discover the best option for differentiated pricing to present to the University.

- **Drug use**

Over the past few months it is apparent that the drug problem around the University has either worsened or become more visible. This has reached PresComm very recently and we are now considering options to tackle this such as a campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of controlled substances.

- **Post Offer Visit Days (POVDs)**

PresComm met with University staff involved in the planning of the recent POVD. PresComm were asked what the University could do to make this day easier as this was a pilot year. The committee feels that our suggestions were not taken on board as they should have been and will be feeding back to staff very shortly.

Next steps:

- Contact the SU People of Colour Association to discuss with them where they feel the PoC reps should sit within Common Room structures.
- Maiden Castle development consultation.
- Continue to remind the University of the importance of improving college boathouses.
- Draft strategic plan by end of April 2017.
- Continue research into options for differentiated pricing.
- Feed back to the University about the recent Post Offer Visit Day on 22nd February.

MCR PresComm Update

MCR PresComm continues to meet monthly. Owen Adams came to our last meeting on Monday 27th February and issues were raised with him about plans for the Howlands/Josephine Butler site, and the disparity of PG catering costs compared with UG costs, both of which he said he would investigate. We will be sending two representatives to the accommodation fee consultation this month, and we have been using the PG Planning Workshops to raise issues over proposed reductions in numbers of PG rooms in many colleges, and push for the increase in numbers at Ustinov for one year to be made up of MA students.

TO: Assembly
FROM: Societies Committee
RE: New Society Ratification
DATE: 09 March 2017

The Union has received several applications for new societies. Societies Committee has met and makes the following recommendations:

When reviewing new society applications for approval Assembly should consider the following factors:

- How sustainable the group would be e.g. in maintaining membership levels and providing regular events throughout the academic year;
- Whether the aims of the group are too similar to a group(s) already in existence, which would negatively impact on engagement with said group(s);
- If the aims and objectives of the society are in line with those of the Students' Union;
- Whether the group would contravene Students' Union policies and procedures, or circumvent the law.

Assembly may determine other conditions on which to approve applications for factors such as student wellbeing and upholding Students' Union values. However, Assembly should also ensure that a diverse range of opportunities are available to students of varying interests, beliefs and experiences.

Societies Committee review society applications thoroughly in advance of Assembly meetings and make recommendations for Assembly based on the above. This process includes carefully assessing the aims of applicant groups, and seeking out further information from applicants and current groups where needed.

Society	Aims	Recommendation from Societies Committee
Guinness Society	Our aims are to promote Guinness and our shared passion for the delightful stout. We believe Guinness is unique as a drink. From brewery to serving style (4/7 inches of head), drinking Guinness is an art. We want to create a friendly, responsible environment in which likeminded people can share their enthusiasm for Guinness.	Ratify - Ale Appreciation Society was contacted and they didn't see any conflicts.
Quiz society	We hope to host regular quizzes for people who enjoy general knowledge to improve their skills and socialise and maybe coach future University Challenge teams.	Ratify
Durham Dutchies	- To provide an environment in which Dutch, Frisian and Afrikaans can be spoken in and support Dutch-speaking students - To celebrate Dutch culture	Ratify

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To enjoy Dutch food and drink - To support Dutch-speaking international students 	
Durham society for Economic Pluralism	<p>By organizing open lectures, debates and other events, welcoming economic as well as non-economic students, and having dialogues with staff members and Durham University Business School, we aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote awareness of economic pluralism among students at Durham - Promote pluralism in Economics teaching at Durham University - Provide a space for critical discussion and academic progress on the subject of economics - Make economics more accessible to the public - Contribute to global reform of the Economics subject 	Ratify
Saudi Student Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To promote connection between the Saudis and Non-Saudi students at Durham University. 2. To engage the Saudi students in Durham University activities including: cultural, academic and sports. 3. To introduce the Saudi culture at Durham University in events such as Arabic language day, Saudi National day, Eid Alfater, and Eid Aladha. 4. To help new students to overcome settlement obstacles. 	Ratify
Primato-logical Society	<p>The purpose of Primatological Society is to provide up-to-date and relevant information regarding the worldwide conservation of primates. This may include links to petitions, news articles, or links to sponsorship pages and volunteering opportunities. The main goal is to increase understanding of the issues surrounding these endangered animals, and to make a difference, even if it is tiny! Getting some speakers in to talk about conservation issues is one of the key tenets of the society, as education is central to conservation success.</p> <p>We would like to hold some fundraisers, and donate the proceeds to a pre-agreed charity of the society's choice. It may be UK based or external.</p>	Ratify

These societies have current societies which object to them existing.

Society	Aims	Recommendations and objecting societies
Bar society	Our society aims to develop understandings of the bar and legal careers. We aim to allow opportunities for discussions and talks with renowned judges, barristers and Durham alumni about the career possibilities at the Bar and in similar professions. We hope that when the society becomes established, we will be able to arrange visits to chambers, Inns of Courts and courtrooms. On a smaller	Ratify - Mooting Society and Law Society object to this society existing because they think that their aims conflict. Societies Committee didn't

	scale, we wish to organise workshops for pupillage and mini-pupillage applications, as well as applying to the BPTC. We also intend to stage mock trials for both lawyers and non-lawyers to provide an insight into the practical skills required of the law. Finally, we hope to engage in networking events, such as socials and informal dinners.	see any conflicting issues and think that Bar Society are different from Mooting and Law therefore should exist as a separate society.
HeForShe Society	<p>The HeForShe Durham society is an action-based student society promoting the campaign launched by UN Women in 2014. Its aims and objectives are to raise awareness with regards to the movement and spread their word around Durham University to strengthen its commitment.</p> <p>HeForShe publically states in its website commitment page that the movement believe gender isn't binary and aspire to bring all genders to take positive actions to create a gender equal world. HeForShe is an inclusive and pioneer movement in bringing in men and boys to the conversation and action to promote gender equality and in doing such we are not limiting it to only men and boys but to everyone regardless of their gender or lack of gender identity.</p> <p>What we do today will change the world. We CAN and we WILL achieve gender equality this 21st century. Let us inspire men to get involved in gender equality issues and get people of all genders to communicate together to go forward!</p>	<p>Ratify - Societies Committee wanted more information on the new society and asked them to change the wording of their aims so that they focus on all genders so they have updated their aims which are what these are. Feminist society object to the society existing because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The erasure of non-binary gender identities. 2. The similarity of the work they are proposing to do with the work we already do. We work towards promoting gender equality on campus and have a sister society called YessAllMen who work to promote men's role in feminism. We host similar events that dispel stereotypes and explore issues like they are proposing such as the inclusion of women in the work place. We feel the proposed society's constitution is too similar to our own and therefore are concerned about its ratification.
Enhancing Legal Sector Access (ELSA)	<p>ELSA aims to enhance the employability of all those interested in legal careers. We organise forums, office visits, buddy schemes and intimate events to enable students to personally connect with law firm representatives, academics and other legal professionals.</p> <p>By working with regional and national law firms located in and outside of London, we are striving to increase access to companies not typically promoted at Durham. Through our events, members will be able to better understand their work and more Durham graduates will be exposed to employers.</p> <p>ELSA also wants to highlight to students who are interested in Law but do not want to become commercial solicitors or barristers, that</p>	<p>Ratify – Societies committee met with two representatives from both Law and ELSA on 23 February and both the societies discussed their aims. ELSA stated how they can both exist whereas Law believe that their society covers everything that ELSA wants to achieve.</p>

	there are many other careers in the legal sector that value legal skills. Our Alternative Legal Careers Forum will allow members to network with such professionals, enhancing their graduate prospects.	
<p>Statement from Societies Committee about ELSA & Law after meeting with them:</p> <p><i>Societies Committee met with representatives from Law Society and Enhancing Legal Sector Access (ELSA) on 23 February to discuss the aims and activities of both societies and the feasibility of both groups coexisting without negatively impacting on each other. The Committee determined that the societies have a different enough focus for both to sustain good membership numbers. Law Society has a primary focus on promoting career opportunities within the major employers for Law graduates, whereas ELSA primarily provides a platform for students to explore regional opportunities, and alternative careers for those with legal skills. Some overlaps between the groups were identified, as there are with many Students' Union societies; but each group is likely to appeal to students with different interests, providing a greater range of opportunities than one society alone may be able to offer. Both societies have coexisted previously for a number of years and the Committee found no reason to believe that this could not continue to be the case.</i></p>		

TO: Assembly
FROM: Jo Gower, Community Officer
RE: Rent Guarantor Scheme
DATE: 27 February 2017

Background

On the 1st December 2016, Weiling Tay (a Durham University student) proposed her idea of an International Student Guarantor Scheme via the 'Student Voice' module on the SU website. Weiling's idea quickly reached over 50 likes (81 in total) and the SU Policy Manager began working with her to develop a policy discussion paper.

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 policy development process. Before the Officers become politically accountable for this work, we want to give Assembly the opportunity to evaluate and oppose/approve/improve the idea(s) through discussion.

The policy discussion paper will set out:

1. What the 'guarantor problem' is and how it affects students
2. How the 'guarantor problem' relates to the University's new strategy
3. Student views on and experiences of the 'guarantor problem'
4. Recommendations to put to the University

The policy discussion paper recommends:

1. The University should commission a piece of work taking a deeper look at the needs of students in Durham in relation to guarantors and reflecting on best practice in the sector.
2. The University should consider the need for a rent guarantor scheme in the context of the 'wider student experience' and 'internationalisation' streams of the 2017-2020 Strategy.
3. The University should outline what a Durham scheme could look like– taking into account culture, strategic objectives and student need. The University should consider: who would be eligible; which properties would be eligible; defining a threshold for rent level; verification procedures; and a policy and procedure for debt-collection.
4. The University should set up a pilot guarantor scheme – working with a small number of students – to scope out the costs of benefits in a low-risk environment.

Action to be taken/Recommendations

Discuss and debate, suggest changes/additions to the recommendations, and approve the recommendations.

Should Durham University Pilot a Rent-Guarantor Scheme?

This discussion paper intends to start a conversation between student representatives, the SU and the University about the benefits and feasibilities of Durham University piloting a rent-guarantor scheme, in which the University acts as a guarantor to students who move into private accommodation. Under such a scheme, the University effectively guarantee the payment of rent and would in the event of non-payment, become liable for any debts incurred.

This paper will:

1. Set out what the 'guarantor problem' is and which students are most affected
2. Set out the policy context in which this issue sits, namely, the University's strategy
3. Highlight some student experiences and views on the 'guarantor problem'
4. Make recommendations to the University based on case-studies from comparator institutions that have a guarantor scheme

The 'Guarantor Problem'

Most landlords, and some private accommodation providers, that rent properties to students require a third person to act as a 'guarantor' before they sign a tenancy agreement. A guarantor is a third party, for example a family member, who agrees to pay the rent if the tenant cannot. In some cases a guarantor is also liable for other costs that might be incurred – e.g. damage to a property.

What problems do students encounter?

Many students do not encounter any problems – they simply ask their parents and everything moves forward seamlessly. However certain groups of students are faced with barriers when seeking to obtain a guarantor and move into private rented accommodation:

1. International students

- International students are particularly impacted as most landlords/agents require guarantors to be based in the UK to make it easier for the landlord to pursue unpaid rent through the UK legal system.
- For international students this poses a substantial challenge, as they may not be able to provide a guarantor that is resident in the UK.
- NUS research, Homes Fit for Study, found that **66% of international students surveyed** were asked to provide a UK based guarantor when they were looking rent privately. The same research found that **37% were unable to do**.
- **Over 90% of these students** were asked for rent up front to compensate for this – with 1-6 months' worth of rent generally requested.
- In many cases these upfront payments can amount to thousands of pounds at the start of the tenancy, which simply isn't viable for many international students.
- Upfront payments of rent make student renters vulnerable to unscrupulous landlords, as once the rent is paid the tenant will struggle to have their money reimbursed if they vacate their property for any reason. Paying landlords upfront may also

disincentivise them from maintaining the property to an appropriate level.

- International students may also be at risk of breaching their Tier 4 visa requirements if they have to pay large sums of money upfront to landlords. Hence, 'continuing students' on a Tier 4 visa must show they have enough money to pay for their course fees to the end of the current academic year. Tier 4 students also have to demonstrate they have enough money to support themselves (and any dependents) whilst studying in the UK for each month of their course, up to a maximum of 9 months. Students studying on a course for more than 12 months have to show maintenance of £1,015 per month (£9,135 for 9 months).
- The 'Guarantor Problem' can be a barrier to international students integrating with home students. Being unable to rent with friends who are home students can further segregate international students, since students 'living out' tend to spend the most social time with their housemates.

2. Care Leavers

- Students who are care leavers, or estranged from their parents may not have relationships with their families.
- As such they may not have anyone to act as a guarantor for a rented property

3. Students from low-income backgrounds

- Guarantors must have enough income to cover the rent payments of a student should they come into difficulties
- For students from low income backgrounds or who have parents

that are out of work, it can be a real challenge to find a guarantor that the landlord will accept

How does the 'guarantor problem' impact student experience?

Students who are unable to provide a guarantor are often asked to pay up to six months' rent in advance. On top of the costs of living and all other costs related to being a student, this can hit students extremely hard – especially international students who are already paying huge amounts in tuition fees and students from poorer backgrounds. If students can't afford to pay rent upfront, they risk being excluded from the private sector altogether, leaving few accommodation options. Although Durham students are lucky in the sense that they always have the option of College accommodation, students should always have the choice to explore alternative housing options and may want to live out in private accommodation which is cheaper than Colleges. Students excluded from the private rented sector may be unable to live with friends, which can leave them feeling isolated.

Many students are forced to find commercial guarantor schemes that offer to act as a guarantor for a fixed fee. Private guarantor companies require students to pay up front and in many cases charge up to one months' rent – on average around £290. Additionally many of these schemes require a UK-based 'co-signer' before they will approve the application, so they are often unsuitable for international students.

The Durham Policy Context

Durham University is in a state of profound flux and between 2017 and 2027 the size and shape of the University can be expected to change rapidly. These changes will be extremely impactful and it is vital that student

experiences are at the heart of the University's strategic plans.

Durham University's Vision 2027

The University's Strategy was developed under the leadership of the Vice Chancellor and was approved by the University's governing body, Council, in December 2016. Pertinently it includes strategies for 'Wider Student Experience' and 'Internationalisation' – both of which could be supported by a rent guarantor scheme.

Overall the University will be expanding its presence in Durham City and the plan is to grow student numbers by about 6000 over the next ten years. This 6000 will consist of around 4000 new students and 2000 students from Queens Campus, who will be transitioning to Durham City over the next couple of years. Although the University plans to invest in Colleges and work in partnership with a number of Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) providers to meet student growth needs, the University will have a growing responsibility/duty to support increasing numbers of students to access housing which is affordable, where they are awarded full legal rights as tenants, and are able to live in accommodation of their choosing.

Internationalisation

Like many other leading universities in the UK, Durham recognises the need to have 'globalised student populations'. The University's plan is to increase the proportion of international students recruited from 21% to 29%. Within this context the University needs to consider how best to support the accommodation needs of a burgeoning international student population – many of whom will be unable to secure a UK guarantor and therefore choose to live within the private rented sector.

With international student fees at exorbitant levels – with the likelihood that the University will increase them in order to maximise fee income from increasing numbers of students – and the UK visa system putting lots of international students off, the University must think of ways to enhance the international student experience and compete with other national and global competitors. Whilst the College-based student experience may give Durham an advantage in terms of the recruitment and wellbeing of some international students, the University must accommodate a diversity of international students and a rent guarantor scheme may act as a pull factor for students who want to 'live out' – e.g. doctoral students, students looking for cheaper accommodation and/or those who prefer more of an independent experience.

Views from Current International Students

The idea for this discussion paper came from an international student, Weiling Tay, who shared her idea for an International Student Guarantor Scheme through the Students' Union's 'Raise Your Voice' page. Eighty students then told us they agreed/liked this idea and Weiling has subsequently gathered testimonies from international students about their experiences and views on the proposed scheme. Here are some highlights:

"College living is quite expensive for me, but it may be the only viable option if I have to pay 6-months' rent in advance to live out – my parents are not very rich even by Polish standards and so I am on a grant"

"Acorn Properties wanted 6 months' rent if we couldn't secure a guarantor. I didn't have to pay it because I have a family friend who lives in London, but even sorting that was a little chaotic. The guarantor

scheme you talked about seems like a great idea”!

“J.W.Wood refused to let us pay in installments, requiring us to pay all of the rent upfront because the owner of the property had previous 'bad experiences' with international students. All 12 months of rent, paid this November”.

“I’m renting with Reeds Rains and they asked for 100% of the rent, to be paid a month before the lease starts”.

“The first house we wanted to sign had asked us to pay 6 months' rent up front if we did not have a guarantor; and the nature of the contract was that either the entire house had to either have a guarantor or pay up front, which may have led to issues if we had decided to sign for that house. Overall, I believe that international students certainly have additional challenges to contend with and that the University generally has a policy of supporting them very well. Assisting them by providing a Guarantor Scheme would be a very big help; it would also make it easier for UK and international students to share houses, and it would help avoid issues created by international students being unable to find housing - especially since college accommodation can be very limited”.

“Landlords often request up to 6 months rent in advance for international students who don't have a UK guarantor. This is obviously a lot of money, and despite international students being able to pay international fees and other expenses, this doesn't mean that they can afford to pay such a large amount of money in an extremely short period of time. I strongly believe that this is an unreasonable request, and as mentioned before, limits the choices of housing international students can access”.

Key Arguments and Recommendations

A University-backed guarantor scheme could be a low cost and low risk way for the University to support current and prospective students to live independently. A guarantor scheme may enable the University to:

1. Deliver against growing student demand;
2. Improve the student experience and choices for students who are unable to provide a UK guarantor e.g. international students, care leavers and students from low-income families;
3. Attract and retain more international students
4. Enhance its’ reputation

A guarantor scheme would support students to access housing and choose where they want to live. This would undoubtedly have a positive impact on the wider student experience. Moreover, providing a guarantor scheme that specifically helps care leaving students, students from low-income families as well as international students would support the University’s widening participation and internationalisation objectives.

The testimonies from international students reveal there is a need in Durham as major letting agents such as Acorn, JW Wood and Reeds Rains are charging between 6-12 months’ rent upfront. The testimonies also speak to the fact that not all international students can afford to pay such large amounts of money upfront.

Weiling’s research suggests that certain University’s within the Russell Group have responded to the ‘guarantor problem’ by developing University-backed schemes.

Case studies from the RG and beyond

Good examples of Guarantor schemes include: SOAS, University of Edinburgh, University of York, LSE and Queen Mary University of London.

Other Universities such as Kent, Kings College, Brunel and Essex operate schemes through YourGuarantor (YG) – a third party that provides financial reassurance for universities who wish to act as a UK rent guarantor for students. Students buy the guarantor from YG for a nominal fee, the university acts as the guarantor and YG provides the university with an insurance policy protecting them in the event the student defaults on their rent.

Let's take a closer look at two case studies:

1. York

- Single students in shared accommodation are eligible
- Mostly supports international students, but UK students considered in extenuating circumstances
- Continuing students (not first and final years) only.
- Eligible students cannot have any debt
- Students are charged a £50 admin fee
- Students apply by completing an application form, providing two months' worth of bank statements, proof of income and an accommodation reference.
- Students are required to take a copy of the tenancy agreement to the Student Financial Support Unit. The University then draws up a rent guarantee agreement which is signed by the landlord, the University and the student.

2. Edinburgh

- Mostly supports international students, but UK students considered in extenuating circumstances
- Continuing students (not first and final years) only
- Only students studying full-time are eligible
- Students have to be of satisfactory academic and financial standing – as defined by the University.
- The University will only consider those paying up to a maximum rent of £125 per week/£500 per month
- Students apply by completing an application form, providing the last three months' worth of bank statements (for all accounts), evidence of future funding to cover rent for the coming year and an accommodation reference – either from the University's Accommodation Services or the landlord with whom they rented during the previous year.

Recommendations

The Students' Union Officers (primarily the Community Officer) – supported by SU staff – will take the following recommendations forward to the University:

1. The University should commission a piece of work taking a deeper look at the needs of students in Durham in relation to guarantors and reflecting on best practice in the sector.
2. The University should consider the need for a rent guarantor scheme in the context of the 'wider student experience' and 'internationalisation' streams of the 2017-2020 Strategy.
3. The University should outline what a Durham scheme could look like – taking into account culture, strategic objectives and student need. The

University should consider: who would be eligible; which properties would be eligible; defining a threshold for rent level; verification procedures; and a policy and procedure for debt-collection.

4. The University should set up a pilot guarantor scheme – working with a small number of students – to scope out the costs of benefits in a low-risk environment.

TO: Assembly
FROM: Alice Dee (President)
RE: Strengthening NUS Democracy
DATE: 28 February 2017

The NUS National Conference 2016 voted for 12 principles for a more inclusive, transparent democracy that gives NUS' members real power to make informed decisions. All of the outgoing and incoming elected NUS full-time officers (FTOs) promised to work with the membership to return to National Conference 2017 with ideas for what this democracy could look like in practice. The attached policy contains those ideas, aiming to adhere to the 12 principles for a more inclusive, transparent democracy.

As a member of the NUS, Durham SU (via its' 5 delegates) will be voting on the policy 'Strengthening NUS Democracy' at National Conference 2017. This is Assembly's chance to see the policy and understand the proposals better.

Strengthening NUS Democracy

Proposed by: Democratic Procedures Committee

Believes

1. National Conference 2016 voted for 12 principles for a more inclusive, transparent democracy that gives NUS' members real power to make informed decisions. (Appendix A)
2. All of the outgoing and incoming elected NUS full-time officers (FTOs) promised to work with the membership to return to National Conference 2017 with ideas for what this democracy could look like in practice. This motion contains those ideas.
3. Overseen by a Task Group of students, NUS officers, trustees and committee members (Appendix B), these ideas have been informed by a vast quantity of research, consultation and analysis, including but not limited to:
 - a) An evaluation of NUS' democracy using the Quality Students' Union criteria informed by surveys of NUS UK conference delegates, NEC members, students and interviews with NUS and students' union officers.
 - b) Desk-based research into processes used by democratic membership organisations and countries.
 - c) A survey of 2839 students asking how they'd like to make democratic decisions.
 - d) Two rounds of consultation with students' unions and a survey of 1430 students seeking their views on the ideas in this motion.
 - e) A breakdown of motions debated at NUS UK conference in 2015 and 2016 to establish the extent to which they are relevant to members from the different nations of the UK.
 - f) Support and advice from the Centre for the Study of Democracy at Westminster, and public participation experts Involve.
4. During the consultation and analysis, the following problems with NUS' democracy were consistently identified:
 - a) FE students' unions are underrepresented in NUS' decision-making and face major financial and other barriers to participation.
 - b) A hostile culture around NUS' decision-making puts people off from getting involved and speaking at democratic events.
 - c) HE delegates and NUS FTOs, NEC and/or committee members deliver a disproportionate number of speeches at conference and men feel more comfortable speaking on stage than women¹.
 - d) Turnout in delegate elections is low, as is delegates' accountability to students and students' unions.
 - e) NUS has a lot of officers, too much policy and no way for members to prioritise policy effectively or hold officers to account.
 - f) There often isn't enough time in the agenda at conferences to properly debate complex issues.
 - g) There's not enough technical information to inform those debates.
 - h) The democratic processes and language NUS uses are too complex.
 - i) The vast majority of Education and Welfare policy debated at NUS UK events are specific to England and not applicable to members in devolved Nations (Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland).
 - j) NUS is yet to follow the lead of many students' unions who have moved online their democratic processes, increasing engagement.
5. These type of concerns about NUS' democracy have been consistently echoed by students at the 23 unions which have held NUS affiliation referendums since National Conference 2016.

¹ 58% of men feel comfortable compared to 31% of women

Further Believes

1. That any behavioural change consistently called for within NUS' democratic culture cannot be achieved without structural change, because we adapt to fit the 'rules of the game' as they are at the moment.
2. As NUS celebrates its 95th birthday, it's vital that we consider whether practices and procedures that were relevant in 1923 - many of which we still use today - have a place in a modern democracy that needs to be responsive and relevant to our members.
3. The student movement is ahead of the curve on so many things but right now democracy is not one of them. Doing nothing is not an option. We must act to create a more inclusive, robust and transparent democracy. We have to change, and this is our opportunity to do it.
4. The ideas in this motion are arranged into four sections: A, B, C and D. Each section aligns with the four principles for a good democracy:
 - (i) Inclusiveness
 - (ii) Considered judgement
 - (iii) Popular control
 - (iv) Transparency

Graham Smith from the Centre for the Study of Democracy developed these principles which are central to the principles voted for by National Conference in April 2016. (Appendix A)


5. This part of the motion sets out the benefits of making these changes. The resolutions of the motion set out what we need to do to make them happen. A table aligning each of the resolves to the principles and the problems they are designed to address can be found in Appendix E.

Section A. Ensuring members have access to and power over decisions affecting them

6. Holding meetings on a more regional basis would reduce the time and cost of taking part - making it more inclusive to less well-off FE and small HE students' unions. It would also help to build a sense of community and foster a culture of local collaboration between students' unions.
7. We will be a more powerful movement if there are clear roles specified for NUS, students' unions and students in achieving a policy demand and a network for coordinating this activity across the UK.
8. To ensure NUS UK policy proposals are always relevant to those debating them, NUS needs a means of debating and agreeing policy demands specific to England.
9. It is necessary to be clear which officers are responsible for leading on these policies in England. This would also help clarify which officers are accountable to all members, UK wide.
10. A more decentralised and federated structure that gives members the power to make decisions at the lowest level possible would help futureproof our democracy in the context of increasing devolution. NUS UK would be reframed as a joint endeavour between Nations and Regions which support (rather than undermine) each other in more stable, harmonious union.

Section B. Using inclusive, high quality debate to inform considered decisions

11. A lot of the policy proposals at conferences are generally agreed with by everyone. If these sort of policy proposals were agreed in advance, more time at conferences would be available for debating more complex and/or controversial issues.
12. If the style and language of the debate were more straightforward and simple to understand then it would be easier for those with less experience to engage fully in the process.
13. Giving more people the opportunity to have the time and opportunity to speak at conferences would broaden the range of views that inform the debate.
14. Requiring the policy proposers to include technical information in motions would expand the information used to inform the debate beyond the political arguments.

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15. Good facilitation is crucial to ensuring a high quality debate and that a range of views are heard. If the person choosing who speaks has perceived factional allegiances, then it will lessen trust in the process.

Section C. Modernising our democracy to increase engagement

16. The 'plan of work' in the Nations has helped to democratically align the priorities of NUS Scotland, Wales and NUS-USI with their membership. A ballot of NUS' membership would help steer which NUS UK policies should be prioritised.
17. Enabling more members to vote online in NUS elections would increase the legitimacy of the elected NUS officers. Placing election speeches and manifestos online to enable members to vote after the event better reflects the financial and time demands placed on NUS' modern membership who may be at work (particularly in the case of apprentices) and/or in compulsory lessons (particularly in the case of FE students) during conferences.

Section D. Increasing the transparency and accountability of elected representatives


18. The only time members can directly hold FTOs to account is at conferences, which limits accountability those events, and those who have the resources to attend conferences. Greater accountability to members needs to be provided throughout the year.
19. The voting record of students' unions' delegates must be made public to increase transparency and the ability of students to hold them to account for decisions made in their name.


Resolves

Section A. Ensuring members have access to and power over decisions affecting them

1. Bring students' unions in England together on a regional basis instead of Zones to debate ideas and agree local actions. See Appendix C for a list of these regions. Similar gatherings would continue to be held by the Nations through NUS Scotland, NUS Wales and NUS-USI.
2. To establish an organising network for each Region and Nation. The purpose of this network is to co-ordinate action on regional and national policy decisions. The network will be democratically controlled, through students' unions, and include both HE and FE members in order to maximise activity across as many institutions as possible.
3. To introduce a conference for students' unions in these Regions to come together and agree policy that is specific to England. This conference will elect a Welfare Officer, FE and HE Officer to be accountable for leading on and delivering policy demands.
4. To establish a clear criteria based on the devolved powers of governments in the UK (for DPC to interpret) about which policy proposals are decided at which level; *i.e.* Region, Nation or UK-wide.
5. To bring the National Society of Apprentices into the membership of NUS so Apprentices can access the democracy and representation of NUS. For the purposes of delegate entitlement, each apprentice would be counted as 0.4 of a FT student as some apprentices are already counted as 0.6 of a FT student at an FE college already in NUS membership.

Section B. Using inclusive, high quality debate to inform considered decisions

6. Introduce a pre-conference ballot to agree more consensual policy proposals in advance.. This ballot would be designed to identify proposals that have a broad consensus, and so would require a significant majority (calculated including abstentions) to be passed without debate. Because not everyone will necessarily understand specific issues that students from liberation groups might face, the Liberation campaigns can force a debate on any proposals agreed using this ballot.
 7. Add a section to motions for the policy proposer to include any financial, legal or other relevant technical information.
 8. Add a section to motions for the policy proposer to specify what action NUS will take and what action students' unions could take in achieving the goal.
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9. To replace the use of acronyms and jargon in our democracy with more accessible language wherever possible e.g. calling 'motions' 'proposals'.
 10. Introduce a debating style for the controversial proposals that allows more time for small group discussion, for people to seek clarification and ask questions as well as comment on the proposal.
 11. Replace the conference chair with a neutral student who is recruited by DPC and trained to facilitate the debate in an inclusive and impartial manner. Decisions regarding the democratic process (e.g. a count) will be made by DPC and will remain subject to democratic challenge.

Section C. Modernising our democracy to increase engagement

12. Introduce a post-conference ballot for members to prioritise the policy passed at conferences.
13. Increase the number of students' unions who can vote in NUS officer elections by streaming election speeches online and making candidates' manifestos available digitally for those who are unable or can't afford to attend conferences. These speeches will also be recorded so that those who are unable to watch them live can do so after the event. The ballot will be open in order to accommodate this.
14. To count the elections and priority ballots using the *inclusive Borda* count method (see Appendix D for an explanation of this process). In order to cast their online ballot, each students' union will receive a unique login password and be directed to NUS' website.

Section D. Increasing the transparency and accountability of elected representatives


15. Introduce monthly online accountability surgeries for NUS FTOs. Appointments can be booked in advance by members so that questions and concerns can be raised with officers using a videoconferencing platform (for example Skype).
16. Introduce an online process for students' unions to register dissatisfaction with a NUS FTO. A member can request a petition to be placed on NUS' website with an explanation of their concern. If a substantial number of students' unions sign the petition (e.g. more than 10%) it will force a vote of no confidence, if less than this number sign (more than 5%²), the officer has to prepare a formal report on their work.
17. Alongside sessions at events, as the accountability of officers will be conducted through the mechanisms above, it will no longer be necessary for the membership to elect a 'block of 15' onto NEC to do it on their behalf. However, vital engagement will be maintained by establishing an FE and HE network (including sections such as Postgraduates) with members from different regions feeding into the relevant NUS FTOs.
18. NEC will function primarily as a body made up of the elected leadership of NUS to make timely decisions outside of conferences.
19. Make students' unions' delegates' voting records public in order to increase the accountability of these representatives. This will be done after the event so that the relevant constituencies can hold their representatives to account for decisions made on their behalf.

Further Resolves

1. National Conference is the sovereign decision making body of NUS UK and is required to approve any changes to the Articles and Rules within its constitution including those that relate to NUS Wales, Scotland, NUS-USI and Liberation Campaigns.
2. Therefore if National Conference votes to approve the ideas in this motion then Democratic Procedures Committee (DPC) will work to write the specific changes that would need to be made to the Articles and Rules in the NUS UK constitution. These detailed changes will then be brought to an extraordinary National Conference to be scrutinised, amended and voted on.

² At the time of writing NUS has 543 members





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3. To inform the decision of the extraordinary National Conference, these Rules and Articles changes will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.
 4. If these Rules and Articles changes are approved by the extraordinary conference, then DPC will lead a formal review of the new system after a period of three years. This evaluation will be based on the principles outlined in appendix A and informed by feedback from students and students' unions.

Appendices

A – Principles voted for at NUS UK National Conference 2016

Vision: Democracy within NUS should take active steps to put the power in the hands of the members to make transparent decisions through informed and inclusive debate that ensures that diverse voices are heard.

1. Students' unions are the constituent members of NUS.
 2. Students are members of their students' union and therefore their association with NUS is dependent upon their students' unions' membership of NUS.
 3. Democratic decisions within NUS should be made by its constituent members
 4. These democratic decisions are about reflecting what is in the best interests of students.
 5. The membership should feel that decision-making processes are representative and inclusive. However once a decision is made representatives of NUS should remain conscious that not everyone will agree with the decision.
 6. NUS and their elected leaders should act in the interests of students. The membership should then hold the elected leaders to account for their actions using a clear process that enables them to first question officers, and then take further action, within the democratic structures of NUS, if they are not satisfied with the answer.
 7. The primary role of elected officers within NUS is to lead the movement and harness its collective power to achieve its goals. Their work should therefore focus on how to secure these demands.
 8. Democratic decisions should be conducted using processes that maximise the principles of inclusiveness, popular control, transparency, considered judgement and efficiency as defined above and in Quality Students' Unions.
 9. The complex and diverse decisions made during the policy cycle would be best made by a complex and diverse group of our members. NUS should therefore give guidance and assistance to students' unions to be more democratic and ensure that their representatives are diverse.
 10. The autonomy of the Liberation campaigns should be supported so that those who define as such can determine the means via which they challenge their oppression across national borders whilst operating more centrally to make the wider movement more progressive.
 11. The NUS Nations lead on and achieve the movement's goals within a specific national context. The scope of their autonomous policy setting focuses on how to respond to devolved policy.
 12. There should be total clarity over what decisions are made where, why and who is accountable for the decision being implemented. The language used within our decision-making should be accessible and free from jargon and this language should be able to be replicated across Nations and different students' unions.
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B – Stakeholder composition of the Task Group

- NUS UK National President*
- NUS UK Vice President Union Development*
- 2 members of NEC*
- 2 members of the Charity board
- 2 members of the Services board
- 2 members of the NUS UK board
- 2 Liberation officers*
- A Nations President *
- A member of Democratic Procedures Committee*
- A member of Elections Committee
- 2 Students' Union officers*
- 2 Students' Union staff
- Two officers from Scotland (to ensure coordination with the NUS Scotland Governance review)*

*Elected students or student officers

C – Regions

These regions are informed by a range of considerations including but not limited to major transports links, the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, Local Enterprise Partnerships and other third sector membership organisations. The proposal would be to start with these regions but leave sufficient flexibility in the Rules for us to try different configurations based on membership feedback:


- North West
- North East
- Yorkshire and The Humber
- West Midlands
- East Midlands
- East of England
- South East
- London
- South West

D – Inclusive Borda count

Inclusive Borda counting is more aligned with the values of the student movement as it moderates the risk of 'tyranny of the majority' by reducing the chances of a candidate being elected who is supported by majority of the electorate but strongly opposed by a large minority.

It is similar to single transferable vote (STV) in so far as voters number the options (candidates or ideas) in order of preference. But instead of having a quota, Borda simply adds up the number of points each option receives in order to identify a winner. The number of options dictates the number of points. So if there are 5 options then a first preference receives 5 points, a second preference receives 4 points and so on.

Without the quota, *inclusive Borda* counting affords greater value to voters' lower preferences than with STV as every preference counts. Therefore, it is possible for the majorities' first preference not to win if it is last preference of the minority.



E – Table of problems and solutions and principles

The table below seeks to clarify which problems (outlined in the Believes of this motion) the solutions (outlined in Resolves) aims to solve. Where relevant, it also outlines how each of these solutions satisfy the principles voted for by National Conference in 2016.

Problem (See Believes 4)	Solutions (See Resolves)	Relevant principles (See Appendix A)	Explanation
4A	1	8 (inclusiveness)	It reduces the cost and time of travelling to events, both of which are major barriers to FE engagement.
4A	12, 13 and 15	8 (inclusiveness and popular control) 3 and 6	If FE members continue to struggle to attend centralised events such as NUS UK conference, voting online ensures they still have a voice in elections and policy prioritisation. Online surgeries ensure they can question FTOs and hold them to account.
4B and 4C	10 and 11	8 (inclusiveness)	People are more likely to feel comfortable sharing their views and asking questions in small groups. Better facilitation will also help a more diverse range voices be heard.
4D	19	8 (transparency)	If delegates' voting records are made public then it will be easier for students to hold them to account for their actions.
4E	12, 13, 15	8 (popular control) and 6	These ideas will enable members to directly prioritise policy and hold officers to account.
4F	6	8 (considered judgement)	Agreeing some motions in advance will leave more time to debate more complex or confusing proposals.
4G	7	8 (considered judgement)	This will require those make policy proposals to provide technical information to inform the debate.
4H	9	8 (considered judgement and transparency) and 12	This will ensure that the language used within NUS' democracy isn't a barrier to engagement.
4I	3 and 4	7, 11 and 12	This will ensure that the debate is always relevant to everyone in the room. It will also make it clear which officers have the final say on devolved issues and make it clear who is responsible for which policies and accountable to which parts of the membership.
4J	6, 12, 13, 15, and 16	8	All these processes will be conducted online.