

## Durham Students' Union Assembly Agenda

Thursday 7 November 2019, 18:30, PCL054

Time	Subject	Who	Paper
18:30 18:30	A. Welcome	Chair	
18:31 18:33	B. Minutes of the meeting on June 20	Chair	UA/1920/02
18:33 18:35	C. Apologies for absence and conflicts of interest	Chair	
<b>Routine Business</b>			
18:35 18:40	D. Introduction to Assembly	Chair	
18:40 18:55	E. Election of Chair	Chair	UA/1920/03
18:55 19:10	F. Election of Governance and Grants and Assembly Open Positions	Chair	UA/1920/04
19:10 19:30	G. Officer Priority Update	Chair	UA/1920/05
<b>**Access Break**</b>			
19:40 19:45	H. Board Report	Kate McIntosh	UA/1920/06
<b>Items for Discussion</b>			
19:45 20:05	I. Election Rules - Election Rules Revision - Association Elections that work for all	Kate McIntosh Frank Simpson	UA/1920/07
20:05 20:15	J. The Environment ( <i>SU Core Position</i> )	Tom Pymer	UA/1920/08
20:15 20:25	K. Declaration of Climate Emergency and Transform The University's Environmental Identity	Tom Pymer	UA/1920/09
20:25 20:30	L. Lobby Landlords to accept International guarantors	Matteo Lai	UA/1920/10

***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 SU governance account: [dsu.governance@durham.ac.uk](mailto:dsu.governance@durham.ac.uk) at least 2 days in advance of the meeting to make arrangements.***

## **Durham Students' Union Assembly Minutes**

Thursday 20 June 2019 – 18:30, PCL048

### **A. Welcome**

Ted opens meeting, explains procedural motions and that name and college need to be stated.

### **B. Minutes of the meeting on March 12**

Jess had question for clarification about point J.

GW clarified that there were tight timings on elections and situation was not ideal but planning to work with associations over summer to create unique set of rules. Acknowledge current rules are not ideal.

Minutes are accepted as submitted.

### **C. Apologies for absence and conflicts of interest**

Apologies from St Johns College Union rep, Josephine Butler, Chair of Governance & Grants Committee and the Duck Chair.

No conflicts of interest declared.

## **Officer Updates**

### **D. Officer Updates**

GW, President, gave update on matters of Senate, the operations and catering reviews.

MH, Welfare and Liberation Officer, gives update on welfare and association training, the SU is going to become a hate crime reporting centre, the housing report and that the rent guarantor scheme.

SC, UG Academic Officer, gave update on the access and participation plan to be passed for the next 5 years, the revise wise study space map, the faculty review and the timetabling app.

DE, PG Academic Officer, updated on work on PG pay and conditions, part-time & distance learners survey, PGR printing will be free from next academic year

CW, Opportunities Officer, updated on work with experience Durham, on value for money core position, project awesome report and annual awards.

Questions:

Steven – asked why the opportunities officer gave up on following the timetable with regard to the student group governance documents.

CW responded that he didn't.

## **Governance Matters**

### **E. Officers members of UEC**

GW explained what UEC does and why it was important that students were represented on this particular board and the University agreed. Assembly is asked to agree the student positions appointed to sit on UEC.

TP, trevs, asked whether they will be full voting members of these boards.

GW explained yes. And that we've successfully asked the University to fund an additional staff post to support officers which has been agreed. And that this is sector leading representation.

Approved.

### **F. Trustees Update**

GW explained that there are proposed changes to the board committees to create a more effective working process. Explained we are also tidying up a conflict of interest between our standing orders and our articles of associations. Suggesting we remove the standing order to make clear the relationship between Assembly and the board. Asked to vote to delete standing order K.

AM, how would we ensure a wide range of representative student voices to the board?

GW explained that the board is a majority student board and if there is anything more we could do to ensure students on the board are held accountable we are open to that.

TP, confirm has the board agreed they are happy with these changes.

Approved.

### **G. Course Representatives Reform Proposal**

SC explained that these changes will ensure a better and more efficient course representative system.

Steven, do existing reps stay on?

SC they will be asked if they wish to do so

Approved.

### **H. Durham SU Election Rules**

GW explained that deputy returning officer and chief returning officer at NUS who made recommendations to clear up rules to make it clearer who has authority. These are the basic rules, and that on top of this there would be published additional guidance etc. but that it would be good governance for all rules to be present in one place.

Amendment submitted

LC, Collingwood SU Rep, proposing that SU officers and trustees to remain neutral in cross-campus elections due to numerous conversations with members of university community.

Jess, if people wanted private help could that happen as long as it wasn't public.

LC, would be difficult for standing orders to dictate how someone would happen in their private life so as long as not public should be fine.

SJA what would penalty be if an officer did

LC not sure what would be but if it was passed we could work on it

Nat would work same way as any breach of any other election rules

DE speaks against amendment saying it focuses on college coordinators needing to remain neutral, rather than officers or SU representatives. In standing orders, can't use positions you hold to promote your ability in an election. We're a democratic student body and even elected representatives should be able to have a voice in what they believe.

Who is that?

Query on why amendment is part of GW motion.

Chair clarifies they are to be debated separately.

LC summarises that having discussed with other people there is a wide range of support and that the election process would be made even more inclusive.

Amendment passes.

GW summarises that this is a standardisation process and it would be beneficial to have all the rules in once place.

TP asked what exactly would happen if someone breaks election rules.

GW responded that that is the role of the deputy returning officer and that it out of his remit.

Who is that?

Is this to replace standing order C and exactly what is being deleted.

GW clarifies these are just the rules for all cross campus ballots.

Motion as amended has passed.

## I. Elections of Assembly & Committee positions

Chair explained that ballots are to be filled in the meeting and results will be announced via email soon.

Phoebe, Mary's, hust.

TP asked what exactly she had in mind about support for student group exec

Phoebe responded she didn't have specifics in mind but that in her experience it would be nice for exec members to have more support

## Motions

### J. Value for Money (*Core SU Position*)

GW introduces position on recognising what value for money means – should be the way that students feel about their university experience and shouldn't be decided upon by the University

Approved.

### K. Access to a Durham Education (*Core SU Position*)

SC introduced position on access that we should strive to be sector leading and not settle for being average. It's an issue in Durham and the position is creating a culture tackling issues from the grass routes up. Outline of our values and provides the core basis for how we view these issues in future.

Approved.

L. Student Workers in Teaching and Assessment (*Core SU Position*)

DE introduced core position on ensuring PGs are treated fairly as workers, continuing improvement to PG workers.

Approved.

M. Support access to free, safe and legal abortions

CL introduces pro-choice stance, only mandate SU and not SU groups, just a position for the SU. Not a pro-abortion motion, pro-choice to ensure women can make their own decisions. Support NI students in Durham who might want to seek. SU provides full range for options for

AL, hild bede, clarify how SU as a charity campaigning

CL, SU wouldn't be campaigning, SU would just be taking a stance

Steven, can you reiterate limits on when student groups can campaign

GH, clarifies he is providing legal guidance, charities are allowed to campaign and adopt stances relevant to their missions,

Kate, lots of SUs across the country have stances like this

HL, Ustinov, main concern is that the motion precludes pro-life groups to form if the SU takes this stance. Feels deeply inappropriate for the SU to move to close down certain perspectives. Pro-life groups don't take actions to exclude views of pro-choice groups. Freedom for all groups to have the same ability to assemble and if a stance is taken on one side, this would impact on the ability of...democracy doesn't do this but tyranny does. A community of young people gathered around learning. If you block groups wanting to form as a student group this is a form of silencing and this goes against librarl democracy.

NAME Collingwood, SU should take a strong pro-choice stance, the body and uterus should be a personal choice. Physical and wellbeing of students. Especially with the political upheaval in the US. We should make sure the choice that students and staff make should be respected.

Katie, Ustinov, opposed because SU is not mandated to take position of this sort, support the, opens up extremism, support is vague and would like clarification before voting. Pro-life and pro-choice should not be identified as two sides, people can support both sides of this argument. Vast majority of students do not lie on the extremes of this debate so by labelling one stance over the other not representative of student views.

Summation by opposition

JL, St Johns, to summarise we believe that durham is a university and is not a political organisation and there needs to be space for all opinions. This would explain one view is more important than the other and that is not acceptable.

Emphasis that this motion is not trying to silence any one or make students take size its to encourage students to be empowered to make their own decisions about their bodies.

Motion passes.

N. Academic Student Representation (*Core SU Position*)

DE introduces concept of academic representation should be improved and continue to be worked on and support provided to students need to take initiative and make representations to academics but academics also need to proactively work with students.

Approved

O. Good Quality Student Housing (*Core SU Position*)

MH presents stance on quality of accommodation in Durham, additional issues such as experience with landlord/agent are important to be considered in addition to basis housing quality.

Approved

P. Durham Green New Deal

TP introduces that there is an environmental emergency across the world. Involved with student think tank and pulled together a report that outlines the University does not do enough. We've got technology and resources to make change, so let's lobby the university to do that. Proposing we set up positions within university that they should have to ensure environmental change is at the forefront

Steven, does motion centre around the getting the university to do something? Campaigning to the university rather to the main public,

TP change the environmental policy within the University and within the wider community, mainly focusing on the student community and the university

Ustinov, what concrete action are you talking about?

TP, clarified that positions would be created such as representative from the student body

JM, Josephine Butler, not opposed to motion in principle but it's too much in one. It would be really difficult to see if goals had been achieved. SU taking core stance and SU lobbying the university should be separate issues. When things get rushed through like this. Should go away over summer and do more work to assess how it will impact students with multiple policies and a clear idea of who within the SU would carry out actions.

Procedural motion 5 – to not vote on the question

JM suggests we take it away and split it up to ensure it's done efficiently. Not a policy that's well meaning but one with a budget and one that ensures no student is disadvantaged by it.

TP yes this is a lot but there is a lot and this is an emergency. It hasn't been rushed – missed his dinner for 7 months on a Wednesday (! LOL). Discussed with opportunities officer.

Procedural motion passes.

Q. Mo Mowla

TP proposes that we officially take the stance that our 17<sup>th</sup> college should be named after Mo Mowla. If we rally behind a single name more influential with the university as opposed to their donor plan which none of us really like.

DE would this policy surpass the previous policy?

TP yes

Approved.



TO: Assembly

FROM: Kate McIntosh, President

RE: Election of Chair

DATE: 7 November 2019

---

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

**Kate Hilton Balfe**

I am final year physics student and this year I am determined to make a positive difference to the student experience in Durham. In my first two years, I didn't feel like I could get involved within the wider Durham University community due to a variety of reasons. However, this year I am determined to change the aspects of Durham which I feel held me back (such as the lack of representation of minorities across the university and the ridiculously high cost of living, especially for an area in North East) and hopefully improve the student experience across the university.

I am currently working with my college (St Mary's) to review the way frepping works, to improve the wellbeing of the freps, provide better representation for the freshers and to improve the sense of community in college. I am also undergraduate VP of the LGBT+ Association and I aim to improve inclusivity and promote awareness of LGBT+ events and issues across the community, as well as helping out with socials and campaigns across the university.

Being Chair of Assembly would allow me to make even more of a difference in the university. I believe the SU does some of the most important work for students. From its campaigns and associations to its events and societies; the SU is always working for its students and making a positive difference to many students' lives. This is something which aligns closely with my ambitions and beliefs, so I would be honoured to get involved in this system as the Chair of Assembly.

**Jonny McCausland**

I would like to be the Chair of Assembly because I feel it is one of the best ways to help directly contribute to the democratic process of bringing about positive change at Durham, both at the level of the university as an institution and as a community of students.

I believe that structures such as Assembly provide an essential platform for students to be able to bring important policies into the open and present ideas that make genuine differences to the lives of people at this university.

My personal values align very closely with the core values of the SU, particularly with regards to the importance of accessibility, inclusivity, and diversity of representation, and one of my key objectives as Chair would be to try and encourage students from all backgrounds to engage with the workings of Assembly in a constructive and meaningful way. The work that Assembly does in holding the university to account and turning mere discussion into tangible reality through implementing policy is invaluable and it would be an honour to be a part of facilitating that process, particularly at a time when there is so much to be working on – notably with regards to the #RippedOff movement, action on mental health, and the environment crisis.

As Chair, I would prioritise ensuring a wide diversity of representation at Assembly and maintaining a position of neutrality within debates such as to allow all those who wish to have input the ability to do so.

I have significant experience of chairing large groups, both from DU society exec teams and from school, where I frequently chaired meetings of up to 40 attendees.

I have an unwavering commitment to equality and inclusivity, and a profound admiration for the impact that Assembly can have in the betterment of student's lives.

## **RON**

Re-open Nominations

TO: Assembly

FROM: Kate McIntosh, President

RE: Election of Governance and Grants committee and Assembly Open Places

DATE: 7 November 2019

---

What follows are the candidate names for the open Assembly positions.

**Assembly Open Place (one space available)**

Candidates:

1. Joshua Maurice
2. Re-Open Nominations

**Joshua Maurice**

I would love to become an active member of the student assembly that has made me feel so welcome, supported and excited to be here within the first few weeks of my arrival. Participating in the assembly would allow me to support the union that has so far supported me. Plus, Democracy rules.

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

Candidates:

1. Emily Glynn
2. Rowan Morris
3. Re-Open Nominations

**Emily Glynn**

After being at the university for a year now, I feel it is important that I get involved as a student representative for the Assembly. For me, focusing on diversity and equality within the university is of great interest and personal relevance. I want the university to be a welcoming place for all!

**Rowan Morris**

I'm Rowan, a 2nd year Natural Scientist at Cuth's, and I enjoy SU assembly so much that last year I used to come along for fun. The most exciting and important conversations in Durham happen at SU assembly, and it's the best opportunity anyone in Durham has to actually shape policy and hold our institutions to account, which is why I would like to get involved. As LGBT+ representative at Cuth's,

I sit on Cuth's SU committee, and while it's fantastic to see some people engaging with the SU and its policies, plenty of people don't get involved and have things communicated to

them. I would make it my aim to have those conversations about the SU with people in my college, via my role as LGBT+ rep. Aside from my general interest in SU policy, my involvement with the SU is mostly through the LGBT+ association and student groups. As an executive member for DU Women in STEM, I know how valuable the support given to student groups is, but also recognise that improvements can be made. Student groups are vital to the Durham student experience, and I would consult with student groups on any changes to their governance and structures. Durham can be quite a challenging and alienating place for many students, from high accommodation fees to elitist cultures. I know this first hand as a student from a low income background who has to work to support my studies. I'm proud to have an SU that challenges the university and seeks to make life better for every student. I would love the opportunity to feed into that vital work.

### **Assembly Open Place- Postgraduate (one space available)**

Candidates:

1. Yunrui Zhou
2. Re-Open Nominations

#### **Yunrui Zhou**

I want to be a part of the Assembly as I want my voice about perfecting our university life can be heard and I can enrich my university life and experience here. I also want try my best to help all the durham students gather a lot of energy to do well and be good in their university day.

### **Assembly Open Place- First year undergraduate (one space available)**

Candidates:

1. Hala Heenan
2. Govind Nair
3. Silas Welsh
4. Re-Open Nominations

#### **Hala Heenan**

Being from Northern Ireland it's hard not to want to be engaged in student politics and it would be nice for once to be part of an Assembly that is actually functioning and having a positive impact! I believe my outgoing and approachable personality traits would make me suitable for this role.

#### **Govind Nair**

I'd like this position as I have prior experience in a similar-style assembly at school, and I want to properly represent the interests of First Years and the implications that various ideas and policies would have on them, by voting on behalf of the general consensus and interests of First Years.

## **Silas Welsh**

I genuinely want to see improvements across the Uni. This includes everything from bringing down high accommodation fees and rent, to further social inclusion, streamlining/updating the Uni's website/social medias and increasing the Uni's sustainability and commitment to tackling climate change.

What follows are the candidate names for Governance and Grants Committee positions.

### **Governance and Grants Committee positions (3 spaces available)**

Candidates:

1. Muhammas Ansari
2. Guiseppe Delia
3. Jenny Teoh
4. Re-Open Nominations

#### **Muhammad Ansari:**

To introduce myself briefly, I am Muhammad; a second year Economics Student from Cuths'. I have been very involved with the DSU since my early days in Durham; I established the Pakistan Society last year with the immense help of our DSU Officers and I don't think any other place could give me the kind of experience and exposure I got from the DSU. I wish to join the Governance and Grants committee as I firmly believe the DSU plays an important part in the student experience at Durham. Working with DSU on this committee will help me have a greater impact on the wider student experience and hence the goal of ensuring every society's and thus every student's needs are well taken care of while they are at Durham!

#### **Guiseppe Delia:**

Hello everyone, I'm Giuseppe. I'm doing a PhD in Egyptology while being Vice-president of the Latin Social Dance Society (LatinSoda) and Treasurer of the Argentine Tango Society. I have applied to be part of the Governance and Grants committee to understand better how the mechanism works and help to make it better if necessary. Thank you.

#### **Jenny Teoh**

I am Jenny Teoh, a second-year Economics student. This is my application for 1 of the 3 positions in the Governance and Grants Committee for student group members.

I am actively involved in my community, but would love to participate more in Durham's student democracy. As a member of the DSU Governance and Grants Committee, I would help to contribute towards the betterment of our many student groups through making fair and accountable allocations of grants.

I believe I am a responsible and suitable candidate who manages my commitments well. I have taken Accounting and Finance courses, and am proficient at maths. I currently serve as the Year 2 Economics Course Rep, the Secretary of the Consulting Society, the Co-Chief Journal Editor of the Economics Society, and more. These various leadership roles have deepened my understanding of the diverse nature and needs of different student groups in Durham.

In all, becoming a member of the Governance and Grants Committee would be an invaluable opportunity to help improve our student groups and enrich student life for all at Durham. Thank you very much for considering my application.

TO: Assembly  
FROM: Kate McIntosh, President  
RE: President Priorities  
DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019

---

## Priorities:

### **Affordable accommodation for all**

#### Better bursaries

The current Durham Grant scheme is flawed. For students living in college the Durham Grant works as an accommodation fee reduction. Given the university has failed to accurately account for where accommodation fee income is spent, the grant should be a cash payment to all eligible students. Moreover, if accommodation fees rise the Durham grant should rise at the same rate.

#### Cheaper rooms

We know the cost of accommodation fees places a financial burden on students, puts off people from applying to Durham, and impacts local private rents. This year, I am refocussing the aims of the RippedOff campaign to find a solution to high rent prices.

#### Transparency around costs

As yet, the University is not able to show us exactly what it costs to give a student a room in College for a year. We deserve to know what our money's being spent on. Work is underway in the office of the Chief Financial Officer to improve transparency, and I have presented our Value for Money Core Position, which details our request for transparency, to the University's Value for Money Committee.

### **Platforming international students**

#### International students' core position based on research

As the University looks to increase the proportion of International students in Durham, we need to make sure we are doing the most we can as an SU to support international students. I want to carry out research in order to produce a Core Position that embodies international student experience and academic life, and how we change Durham for the better. That position will inform all of our work going forward.

#### Support international student communities

We have some thriving international groups, and I want to improve our support for pre-existing schemes and initiatives that facilitate cohesion between home and international

students. I also want to look at reforming our internal structures, and the way we communicate what we do, to facilitate improved engagement by international students.

University consultation method for internationals

As the university pursues internationalisation, it needs a student consultation mechanism which reflects and respects the range of international student experiences' and ensures that decisions are understood in that context.

### **Combatting harassment and violence in Durham City**

Training and accreditation scheme for external organisations

Data from the first full year of Pincident, our harassment and discrimination mapping tool, shows us there's an ongoing problem with sexual harassment in Durham City centre. To combat this and to improve the city for the whole community we can be active in educating and supporting best practise by external organisations – bars, clubs, the Bus Station – in preventing and responding to these incidents. I am going to develop and roll out a training and accreditation scheme aimed at equipping external organisations with the knowledge and expertise necessary to keep students and the wider community safe.

Rolling out Pincident to the wider community

We have got a sector-leading tool for mapping harassment and discrimination. I think it can be improved by encouraging other people in the community to use it, to improve our picture of what's going wrong and how the SU can respond to it.



TO: Assembly

FROM: Sam Johnson-Audini, Undergraduate Academic Officer

RE: Undergraduate Academic Officer Priorities

DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019

---

## Priorities:

### Decolonisation

- Our courses, their material and the way they are taught reinforce colonial power dynamics and history which we need to tackle in order for all to have an enriched, challenging education at Durham. Many subjects have history of racism and their teaching often overlooks this fact. Consistently, students of colour are awarded lower degree classifications than their white counterparts.<sup>1</sup>
- The university has an increasing focus on internationalisation; we need to ensure this does not reinforce colonial dynamics and that the relationship between international students and the university is not exploitative. Moreover, moves to make the university more 'diverse' need to take place within a decolonized framework so that students of colour are able to fully engage with their education.
- A key part of this work is creating an understanding of what decolonisation means and looks like in the Durham context through a manifesto and assembly core position- providing students with the necessary resources to understand and contribute to decolonisation and a cross-campus campaign highlighting issues surrounding the structures of power, institutionalised racism and manifestations of colonial values in Durham.
- Work with Durham People of Colour Association, the National Union of Students and other relevant groups to develop resources and training for students wishing to participate in decolonisation activity. Utilise the course rep and faculty rep system to create departmental leads on decolonisation.
- Provide the university with a frame of reference to understand decolonisation and enact changes, safeguarding against co-option by diversity narratives. Work with individual departments and academics to improve their courses and content, as well as identify best practice where it is already occurring.

### Academic Support

- Academic support across Durham is inconsistent and not reflective of student experiences and needs. Often students find themselves lost between colleges and departments unsure who to talk to. Extension requests and extenuating circumstances differ greatly across the university, are hard to access and often penalise students with difficulties.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/news/Pages/tackling-gaps-in-bme-students-achievements.aspx>

- Work to create a clear framework of academic and student support and what falls into which category- gathering student experiences of their interactions with academic support within their department in order to develop a clear view of what good academic and student support looks like. In addition to this running a campaign informing students of their rights with regards to academic support and extenuating circumstances.
- Lobby the university to provide Mental Health First Aid training for all frontline student support staff in departments and resist any attempts to reduce departmental student support provision.
- The lack of diagnostic support by disability services, the cost of diagnostic testing and long NHS waiting lists means it is difficult for students with learning difficulties or other disabilities to access the necessary support they need during their degree, making their academic studies more difficult without reasonable adjustments. Therefore, I will lobby the university to provide monetary support when students need a private assessment due to long waiting lists and investigate the standard across the sector with regards to disability support.

### Reforming Pedagogy

- The way we interact with the world has changed drastically over the past 40 years and yet at Durham teaching, learning and assessment methods have remained broadly the same.
- Push for more inclusive and innovative teaching methods and work with the Durham Centre for Academic Development to do so. Identify module leaders within Durham that are embracing inclusive and innovative teaching methods, working with course reps and faculty reps to do so.
- Advocate for accessible course materials, all core books should be available online and module leaders should be looking to diversify the kinds of learning materials available, for example, podcasts and documentaries.
- Encourage and facilitate dialogue between students and the university about the realities of student life and how academia can adapt.

TO: Assembly

FROM: David Evans, Postgraduate Academic Officer

RE: Postgraduate Academic Officer priorities

DATE: 7 November 2019

---

## Priorities:

### **“Year of the PGT”**

In recent years there has been a growth in the number of Sus across the country that have a Postgraduate Officer position, and quite often students on a Postgraduate Taught programme have stepped up to the role. Unusually, for the three years we’ve had a Postgraduate Academic Officer at Durham, no PGT student has gone on to hold this position, and the Officer’s work has tended towards a focus on PG Research students. This year, I’m changing that.

We know there are specific challenges in helping PGTs to get the most out of Durham – the vast majority of students are only here for one year, and have come after studying an undergraduate degree at other, non-collegiate Universities. Durham’s student experience is very much geared toward supporting undergraduates – allowing people to become acquainted with its systems over the course of a year living in college, before being able to make the most of them in subsequent years. PGTs have no such luxury.

We need to understand in greater detail how PGT students perceive Durham, and what can be done to make sure Durham meets their reasonable expectations. We’ll convene a group of students from diverse backgrounds to tell us about their experience, make recommendations, and implement them. We’ll cover all aspects of the Year of the PGT student, from inductions, through to study, wider student experience, dissertation support and graduation. We’ll make this the Year of the PGT.

### **Postgraduate Access and Participation**

Routes into postgraduate study are manifold and complex, and can require a great deal of support to understand and access. But this support is piecemeal, and often left to individual academics who have a passion to see their students succeed. If we want to see the society we live in reflected in our educators, individual piecemeal efforts are not enough. A coherent strategy, well-understood across the institution in question, is needed for this to be delivered.

These ideas are already common currency at the undergraduate level, and government regulation has set ambitious targets to be met for improving the experiences of under-represented groups in undergraduate higher education. Access to, and the experiences of students in, postgraduate education simply does not get the same level of national or institutional attention, despite c. 24% of all students in HE studying for a postgraduate degree [1]. I am putting these issues on the agenda, and Durham University will take notice.

We will draw on the ideas of undergraduate 'Access and Participation Plans,' combined with our own knowledge of postgraduate-specific issues, to produce an institution-wide plan for improving access to postgraduate study. We will research the experiences and outcomes of postgraduate students from under-represented background, and work with the University to identify how it can improve the student experience. By working with us, Durham University will be a sector leader in postgraduate access and participation, and commit to delivering solutions rather than simply identifying the problems.

### **(Hidden) Academic Costs**

Three things that drive my work are equity, honesty and affordability. And an issue that lies in between these is that of hidden academic costs, where students are charged for things on top of their fees that they were not expecting to have to pay. Last year, I secured wins in this area of free printing for PGR students and free inter-library loans for all PG students. But there are likely many more costs I'm simply not yet aware of that may need to be challenged.

Many costs will simply be paid, albeit grudgingly, with anyone outside the course none the wiser. We need to make sure all students, both postgraduate and undergraduate, are aware of the costs they can or cannot be expected to pay, and have the confidence to oppose them. And where costs are justified, the University needs to make these clear in advance, and ensure support is in place for less well-off students to be able to afford them, rather than them missing out on the learning opportunities available to other students.

We will provide an avenue for students to notify the SU of the costs they face, and support students in challenging them as appropriate. We will ensure students are aware of their rights, and have the tools to identify what is and isn't a fair cost. We will make the costs of a Durham education fairer and more equitable, and work towards ensuring that no student misses out on educational experiences as a result of a lack of financial means.

[1] <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/whos-in-he>

TO: Assembly

FROM: Amelia McLoughlan, Welfare & Liberation Officer

RE: Welfare & Liberation Officer Priorities

DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019

---

## Priorities:

1. **AN INCLUSIVE DURHAM: Breaking down institutional barriers**

I'll achieve this by opening a conversation with the student body on what it means to be a Durham student and working with the university to ensure that institutional barriers are identified. I will address these through strategic engagement with emerging and refreshed policy, such as tackling sexual misconduct and violence (with a focus on investigation), and ensuring that issues affecting working class students in Durham are highlighted for redress. I will push forward the discussion on professional, peer and faith led welfare support, giving particular attention to training and needs of marginalised students who are often disproportionately affected.

2. **POSTGRADUATE WELFARE: Identifying key issues and developing welfare and support through policy**

This work will include developing focussed support for Postgraduates alongside the Postgraduate Officer, David Evans and tackling welfare issues relating to the Postgraduates such as student parents and inclusion in the wider student community.

3. **LIBERATION: Initiate a framework and environment that supports marginalised groups of students to campaign for changes that will improve life and wider society for them.**

This will involve working on the governance of the SU Associations to ensure that they are administratively aligned with student group processes, but are also politically independent. I will also develop year-round training and support for student leaders involved with welfare and liberation, with a meaningful peer support network. I'll also work to influence changes in University processes and policies to empower student representatives from marginalised groups to confidently behave as critical friends.

TO: Assembly  
FROM: Jess Dunning, Opportunities Officer  
RE: Opportunities Officer priorities  
DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019

---

## Priorities:

### **Priority 1: Improving sustainability within the University**

- UN Sustainability goals campaign
- Making sure the University becomes more environmentally friendly and sustainable
- Ensuring that the university is doing their bit to reach the UN Sustainability Development goals

### **Priority 2: Lobbying the university to become an Accredited Real Living Wage employer**

- Campaign run over a week in November (11 - 17 November)
- Work with Citizens UK
- Ensure that the university pays all students and staff that work for them the Real Living Wage

### **Priority 3: Funding Gap for students**

- Setting up a pot of money for extracurricular activities that students can access to help them
- Media group funding

TO: Assembly

FROM: Kate McIntosh

RE: Board Report

DATE: 7 November 2019

---

## Board of Trustees business

The Durham SU Board of Trustees has met twice since the last meeting of Assembly; on 26 June 2019 and on 25 September 2019.

The final meeting of the previous year thanked the Officer and Student Trustees who had served in the year, and welcomed Chris Nash to his first meeting. The trustees then considered:

- The Chief Executive's Report, which shared details about Durham SU's Quality Students' Union award, and confirmed that the new Durham SU Complaints Procedure had been approved by Durham University.
- The Finance Report which confirmed that Durham SU is broadly meeting budget expectations and will end the year roughly as expected.
- The Report from Assembly, which considered two policies: on Equal Marriage in Northern Ireland, and on Rent Strikes. The Board agreed that the policies were acceptable but that Durham SU would need to undertake a further risk analysis before supporting rent strikes.
- An Annual Plan, including a delivery Budget, which describes how Durham SU will work towards achieving the strategy in 2019/2020.
- The Community Strategy, as previously shared to Assembly by the President.
- The current difficulties facing the effective support for Common Rooms.

The first meeting of the current year welcomed new lay trustee candidates to observe the meeting, and all new student members to their first meeting. The trustees then considered:

- Appointment to Board Committees, appointment of Peter Robertson as Senior Returning Officer and Gareth Hughes as Deputy Returning Officer, and appointment of Caragh Aylett as a lay trustee.
- The Chief Executive's Report, including the success of student group registration over summer 2019, initial thoughts on a general election campaign and its impact on student groups in particular, and investment in the Kingsgate venue.
- The Finance Report, which showed that 2018/2019 was broadly on budget at year end.
- The Delegation of Authority Framework which confirmed the trustees' agreement for the use of their powers by Committees and by the Chief Executive.
- A Strategic Risk discussion paper, to ensure that Durham SU is addressing the most important things which could affect the delivery of strategy and the success of the organisation.
- The recognition of the GMB trade union to represent Durham SU's student staff team, further to Assembly policy.

## APPOINTMENTS

<b>AUTHOR</b>	Gareth Hughes, Chief Executive <a href="mailto:gareth.j.hughes@durham.ac.uk">gareth.j.hughes@durham.ac.uk</a>
<b>MEETING</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>DATE</b>	25 September 2019
<b>PUBLICATION</b>	Open
<b>STRATEGIC THEME</b>	None
<b>PROGRAMME</b>	None
<b>CORPORATE PROCESS</b>	The Board may appoint lay trustees under Article 51, subject to ratification by Assembly.
<b>SUMMARY</b>	Governance and Nominations Committee met in June 2019 and recommend that Caragh Aylett be appointed to the remainder of Martin Parker's term of office, expiring July 2020. Governance and Nominations Committee also recommended that Chris Nash be appointed to the board, with his term expiring July 2020, taking over from Beth Watling.
<b>BUDGET IMPLICATIONS</b>	None
<b>RISK</b>	The Board will secure the good governance of Durham SU by ensuring that qualified trustees are appointed to the Board, and to its Committees. This reduces the risk of poor performance across the organisation.
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	Assembly is asked to <b>RATIFY</b> Caragh Aylett on the Board. Assembly is asked to <b>RATIFY</b> Chris Nash on the Board.

### APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

Governance and Nominations Committee met in June 2019 and agreed that Caragh Aylett should be appointed to the Board. Caragh Aylett has been a trustee of St John's College, Durham and St John's College SJCR. The Committee were also of the view that the diversity of the Board would be improved with the addition of a new member with significant experience of Durham University and Durham's Common Rooms. The students' union would also benefit from the support of a professional work in a commercial management role. The previously stated commitment for the Board to further positively diversify its demographic profile was also a consideration.

### CONCLUSION

Assembly is asked to **RATIFY** Caragh Aylett and Chris Nash on the Board.



TO: Assembly

FROM: Kate McIntosh  
Frank Simpson and Jessica Madden

RE: Election Rules Discusison  
- Election Rules Revision  
- Association Elections that work for all

DATE: 7 November 2019

## ELECTIONS RULES REVISION

<b>AUTHOR</b>	Kate McIntosh, President <a href="mailto:su.president@durham.ac.uk">su.president@durham.ac.uk</a>
<b>MEETING</b>	Assembly
<b>DATE</b>	7/10/2019
<b>PUBLICATION</b>	Open
<b>STRATEGIC THEME</b>	Owned by students
<b>PROGRAMME</b>	High democratic participation with strengthen student leaders
<b>CORPORATE PROCESS</b>	<p>The Education Act (1994) requires students' unions to demonstrate their democratic credentials and provides for University governing bodies to regulate their students' union to that end. Durham University has published a Code of Practice which requires Durham SU to provide assurance as to the quality of its elections.</p> <p>The Board and by Assembly may create Standing Orders using powers under Article 57 and have set elections regulations in Standing Order C and Appendix C1.</p>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<p>Assembly approved a new set of elections regulations at its last meeting. An amendment to the substantive motion was carried which had the effect of requiring Officers and student trustees to be "remain neutral for the duration of the elections period". The analysis of the implications of that amendment are shown in this paper, and demonstrate a broad belief that such a requirement is a) contrary to the Articles and Standing Orders, and therefore unenforceable and b) likely to produce significantly detrimental effects to the effectiveness of Durham SU and student representation at Durham University.</p>
<b>BUDGET IMPLICATIONS</b>	None.
<b>RISK</b>	<p>Assembly has approved an amendment to the Standing Orders, and these will be considered by the trustees at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>The trustees will have to consider whether to interpret New Rules 18 to 20 in light of the other Durham SU regulations, and the current advice provided to the trustees is that it will not be possible to apply the new rules. The Officers and trustees have rights under other regulations which will take priority over the new Standing Order. The risk of having ineffectual rules is further confusion in each year as students question why rules have not been applied, needless use of limited resources spent in explaining the incongruity, and alienation as students question why things they have voted on aren't happening.</p>

<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<p>Assembly is asked to <b>RESOLVE</b> that New Rules 18 to 20 are deleted from the proposal for new elections regulations, due to be considered by the Durham SU trustees.</p> <p>Unmarked text will then form the substantive part of the proposal for new elections regulations.</p>
-------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## BACKGROUND

Resolutions of Assembly are routinely analysed before presentation to the Board, to support the trustees with professional advice which helps them to exercise their responsibilities under the law, and Article 1 of the Durham SU Articles of Association.

The provisional advice available to the trustees is that a proposal to amend the Elections Regulations has some text which is problematic. The New Rules are clearly better than the old (existing) elections regulations, but an amendment was carried at the last Assembly which had received insufficient scrutiny at Governance and Grants Committee.

Assembly is advised of the difficulties, in order to support a new motion to remove the problematic text.

## ARTICLE 15

New Rules 18 to 20 are not limited in effect to preventing Officers and trustees from publicly expressing a policy preference in elections, endorsing a candidate, preferring a particular outcome in a referendum and/or prevent campaigning. It is a broadly written regulation and does not limit 'neutral' to a publication of views. It could reasonably be interpreted as requiring 'active non-participation' [sic] in democratic events.

Article 15 provides that all Student Members, including Officers and student trustees, are entitled to the benefits set out in the Code of Practice. The Code of Practice clarifies (at section d) that the Education Act requires all major union office holders to be elected in a secret ballot in which all members are entitled to vote and (at section e) that the elections are fairly and properly conducted.

The trustees will be advised that their responsibilities under the Education Act/Code of Practice and Article 15 mean that they may not enforce any rule which limits participation in elections. 'Participation' must be full and may not be parsed by a Standing Order; members must be free to participate as they wish with the same rights as every other member.

## CHARITY COMMISSION GUIDANCE CC3: THE ESSENTIAL TRUSTEE, WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW, WHAT YOU NEED TO DO.

The Charity Commission is clear that trustees, including Officers, have a legal responsibility to act in the best interests of Durham SU. Articles 54 and 55 further provide in Durham SU's own regulatory document that trustees are, collectively, responsible for the good governance of Durham SU. The Standing Orders can't limit or proscribe this legal duty. New Rules 18 to 20 create a blanket ban on trustees, including Officers, offering guidance or support or encouragement or critique to those who would be interested in standing for election, and prevents questioning of those who would seek to replace them.

The trustees will be advised that the effect of New Rules 18 to 20 would prevent trustees, including Officers, from asking candidates 'Do you have any views on the strategy?' or 'Why would you make a good trustee?' or 'Do you realise that implementing your manifesto would be unlawful?'. It would also prevent trustees, including Officers, from raising concerns about the legality or other good governance of elections. The trustees will be further advised that they may not enforce any Standing Order which limits the ability of trustees to ask questions or act in any which may be consequential in the good governance of Durham SU.

## OTHER REGULATORY CONCERNS IN THE STANDING ORDERS

There are other Standing Orders which make clear that Officers, in particular, are expected to vocally advocate for students and New Rules 18 to 20 would mean that they were under a duty to not take a position on important student issues for roughly 45% of their time in office, presuming that 'neutral' requires them to not align to issues being debated by candidates in an election, and that an election period in each term (NUS delegates in Michaelmas, Officer and trustee in Epiphany, and Association/NUS Liberation in Easter). No allowance has been made for Course Rep or Student Group elections, but a literal interpretation of New Rules 18 to 20 would also require neutrality during these elections, held under Standing Orders G and H. Officers and trustees would be required to answer "I have no view on that" to any question asked at Assembly during an election period, for example.

New Rules 18 to 20 would prevent incumbent Officers, for example, from advocating their own manifesto positions if Candidate A were in favour and candidate B were against, for fear of a complaint that the actions were in support of Candidate A.

There are other relevant Standing Orders which are in tension with new Rules 18 to 20. Standing Order F5 provides for Officer to "promote and defend the rights of members and act in the best interest of the Union" and "uphold policy" *"at all times"* (italics added). The requirement to do nothing that could influence a democratic event is in tension with New Rules 18 to 20. Standing Order F5.14 also requires the Officers to "[work] within the democratic structures to debate and discuss policies and issues and to implement policies". New Rules 18 to 20 is in clear contradiction.

The trustees will be advised that the weight of the Standing Orders is clear that Officers are principally elected to actively not be neutral, and to campaign throughout their year in office to further the interests of Durham students. A new Standing Order is proposed which contradicts these Officer responsibilities, and if the trustees chose to approve the New Rules inclusive of New Rules 18 to 20, they will be asked to make an interpretation under Article 4 as to the correct way to apply the Standing Orders. The trustees will be advised to interpret that New Rules 18 to 20 are unenforceable and ought not to be applied by the Returning Officer.

## PROPOSAL

Assembly is asked to consider the principal points made as to New Rules 18 to 20, and agree that they are incompatible with the Articles, the Code of Practice, and with statutory and regulatory guidance.

Assembly is also asked to consider the potential interpretation of New Rules 18 to 20, in light of the text in Standing Order F, and agree that the New Rules contradict existing Standing Orders.

Assembly is in conclusion asked to **RESOLVE** that New Rules 18 to 20 are deleted from the proposal for new elections regulations, due to be considered by the Durham SU trustees.

TO: Assembly

FROM: Frank Simpson and Jessica Madden

RE: Association elections that work for all

DATE: 7 November 2019

---

Assembly notes:

1. At its March 2019 meeting, Assembly passed a motion mandating that “Each Association shall elect an executive committee on an annual basis, including a President or equivalent, by a cross-campus ballot of all self-defining members.”
2. ‘Cross-campus ballot’ is currently strictly defined within the Standing Orders (Appendix C1).
3. At its June 2019 meeting, Assembly passed a motion overhauling the rules for cross-campus ballots, allowing for greater flexibility in procedures (e.g. nomination process, campaigning guidelines etc.) for each cross-campus ballot held.
4. The June 2019 elections motion envisaged that cross-campus ballots would “be held for Officers, student trustees, and delegates to the National Union of Students UK Conference” only.
5. No provision was made in the aforementioned motion of March 2019 for elections to vacant positions on Association executive committees beyond the cross-campus ballot on an annual basis.
6. Several executive committee positions across the Associations are currently vacant, having had no candidates for the cross-campus elections held June 2019.
7. There are very few examples of entire executive committees for Liberation groups being elected by cross-campus ballot at other UK student unions

Assembly believes:

1. A narrow interpretation of ‘annual basis’ has resulted in several Associations being prevented from holding elections to their current vacant executive committee positions, despite interest in holding these positions amongst Association members.
2. The requirements placed on elections for Associations are significantly more prescriptive than for any other type of SU student group, which by and large can arrange their own elections within broad parameters.
3. There is good reason to hold elections for some Association positions at the end of each academic year to ensure a committee is in place to prepare for the new academic year; the timing of these annual elections is unlikely to change.
4. However, holding elections at this time is a barrier to participation for first-year students of the University, whether undergraduate or postgraduate.
5. First-year students with an interest in Association work are potentially key members of Association executive committees, contributing time and energy toward

Association activities, and thereby supporting potentially marginalised students across Durham and reducing the burden of work on other executive committee members.

6. Given these and other competing arguments, and the principle of autonomy that should be afforded to the Associations, Associations should be able to determine their own process for the election of their executive committees.

Assembly resolves:

1. Amend Standing Order G13: "Each Association shall elect an executive committee on an annual basis, including a President or equivalent, by a cross-campus ballot of all self-defining members." to "Each Association shall elect a President on an annual basis by a cross-campus ballot of all self-defining members. Any by-elections to elect to vacant Association President positions shall also be conducted by cross-campus ballot of all self-defining members."
2. To amend the SU Election Rules changes as approved at Assembly's June 2019 meeting to clarify that cross-campus ballots will be held for Association President positions.

TO: Assembly

FROM: Tom Pymer and Andrea Vismara

RE: The Environment: SU Core Position

DATE: 7 November 2019

---

### **The belief and its justifications**

The primary belief of this policy is that the threats to the environment is the central problem and threat to the world at the present moment. Human exploitation of natural resources has led to the warming of the world, the pollution of the land, water and air, and the severe threatening of many lives (both human and non-human). Durham should be striving to do its bit. As a University, it is centrally positioned to offer utilisation of brainpower and resources to develop answers to the problems at hand. As a major builder and landowner in the city of Durham, it is the responsibility of both Durham SU and the University to assist the County Council in achieving their target of a reduction in carbon emissions and in making Durham a greener city

### **The definition of a better future**

The ultimate purpose of this policy is to create a world in which this policy is no longer needed. The work of this policy shall aim to make Durham the greenest university in the country. Durham will become a university which relies on renewable resources of energy, recycles all available materials and buys new materials from renewable resources, cuts its food waste down to zero and ensures that all its buildings are sustainable and eco-friendly, along with numerous other projects which Durham SU or the University may adopt in time. This will involve an increase in funding for environmental projects and the provision of a team whose job it is to oversee the system. The same shall apply for the Students' Union, which will aim to make itself the most eco-friendly students' union there is. We shall also attempt to influence the National Union of Students to become more environmentally conscious in their activities, and adopt the same policies that we ourselves suggest.

### **The barriers**

Our chief obstruction is the amount of change this will take. We are facing, amongst other things, completely changing our energy suppliers, our suppliers of various other resources such as paper and the menus we serve. The current way in which the University is set up does not lend itself kindly to the transfers we are suggesting, neither do the current popular building materials, which will need to change.

Some of the changes required, such as fitting solar panels to every University building, are expensive. This will require persuasion to ensure that the environment remains a top financial priority rather than one which needs to scabble for money along with everything else.

Apathy remains an issue; that is, lack of action on both the major issues and the small things that an individual can do which nonetheless will have a major impact. This apathy extends to the highest level of the National Union of Students, which currently restricts certain activities such as the purchase of paper from recycled stocks, and thus has a negative impact on the possibility of students' unions working together to solve this problem. This must be a matter of urgency.

The current University expansion plan, the scope of which is intended to last for the next decade, shall need radical rethinking in several areas if it is to become more ecologically sustainable.

Persuading change in this area shall be difficult as it will involve changing plans which have already been made.

Coordination between colleges, the university and the Students' Union will be vital to campaign properly towards this work. There shall need to be greater measures and groups in place where groups from all of these areas can work together, whereas historically this has been an area in which ecological campaigns have been lacking.

### **Belief about the change and the responsibilities**

The belief of the Durham Students' Union is:

That it is absolutely vital to take all actions available to us to curb the impacts of climate change, in the academic, organisational and extracurricular spheres. Durham SU should exercise its influence through the relevant University decision-making bodies to embed the principles outlined in this paper and related motions passed in reference to it.

That discussion of environmental and ecological issues must form a key part of all discussions with the University hereafter, with every project being rigorously examined for its environmental impact and suggestions for improvement being made, whilst simultaneously making sure that no students are disadvantaged by the changes.

That supplies to the Durham SU should be, wherever possible, sourced from sustainable and eco-friendly resources, and got rid of through ecologically sustainable means such as recycling.

That the question of the environment must also form a key part of all future policies and projects adopted by the Durham SU, with the decisions being well-publicised and opportunities to work with other Students' Unions and organisations dedicated to fighting this problem being embraced.

TO: Assembly

FROM: Tom Pymer

RE: Declare a Climate emergency and Transform the University's Environmental Identity

DATE: 7 November 2019

---

Assembly notes:

That across the country and the world, local councils and national governments (including Durham County Council and the Parliament of the United Kingdom) have declared climate emergencies in reflection of their dedication to tackling the environmental crisis

- A statement of belief and a resolution to act by the Students' Union is important as it provides a framework for general action

Assembly believes:

There is no greater threat to our planet than climate change and its related environmental threats

- The SU and the University both have the responsibility and duty to help fight the problem
- Actions by the SU are important

Assembly resolves:

- To declare a state of climate emergency
- To endeavour to change the culture of the University by professing itself as green and environmentally-conscious as one of its main strands of identity.
- To support University-wide campaigns promoting sustainability undertaken by individual students.
- To demand that the University consider of vital importance the issues of sustainability and the environment in any and all new and ongoing University projects.
- That the SU shall itself consider of vital importance the issues of sustainability and the environment in any and all new and ongoing SU projects.
- To encourage students to "think globally, but act locally" - an awareness of University-wide issues whilst also acting within college.
- Change our culture by promoting environmental-awareness and environmental action, and doing what we can in our everyday individual choices.



- To campaign for the University to reinstate the Greenspace Group in full, as per the report created by the ECODU, as a fundamental part of their consultancy on the environment.
- That the SU shall in future publicise and improve on those areas where things are being done to protect the environment both within the SU and at a University level.
- To consult ECODU, who shall maintain their independence as a student think tank, on future matters pertaining to the environment.
- To adopt as a list of potential actions the attached list in the appendix of this motion, entitled 'List of Recommended Actions' as potential responses to the declaration of emergency, as suggestions off which the SU may base its future actions.

## LIST OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

These actions are a suggested list off which to base action: they do not seek to prescribe the total action that the SU should take nor to stifle any projects the SU may itself come up with. They are to be considered subject to change as to what would work best within the confines of SU policy or decision-making.

The SU will commit to campaigning a doubling in funding in the next edition of the University development plan for clean energy research and development

The SU will promote and support those projects which already exist

Additional bursaries and funding priorities be given to postgraduate students who wish to undertake ecologically-focused projects

The SU shall push for the creation of a series of new cross-departmental project dedicated to selling Durham-developed clean, renewable, and emission-free energy technology, with ideas of projects including (but not limited to):

- The Effects of Climate Change in the World (Departments of Anthropology, Geography and Sociology)
- Protecting the World's Trees (Departments of Biology and Geography)
- Developing New Sources of Green Energy (Departments of Physics, Chemistry and Engineering)
- The Ethics of Climate Change (Departments of Philosophy, Biology and Theology)
- Building Green Cities (Departments of Biology, Engineering, Geography, Sociology and Anthropology)
- Biodiversity in Durham (Departments of Biology and Geography)
- Building Green Vehicles (Departments of Chemistry and Engineering)
- Preparing for Climate Change (Departments of Engineering and Geography)
- Changing Government Policy on Climate Change (Departments of Philosophy, Politics, International Relations and Economics)
- Saving Endangered Species (Department of Biology)
- Creating a Green Economy (Department of Economics, Politics and Chemistry)
- Green Energy in Transport (Departments of Chemistry and Engineering)
- Contact the SUs of other universities, especially those in the vicinity of Durham (Newcastle, Sunderland, York to be used as primary examples) to promote these projects cross-university and to encourage other universities to follow our example, maintaining Durham's status as truly world-leading
- Where these projects already exist in other universities, to follow their example and offer to participate in these projects
- All new buildings undertaken by the SU shall be carbon neutral and that the SU shall campaign to mirror this in the University
- To commit to making new constructions out of materials other than concrete, whilst ensuring that the materials remain fully accessible to all students
- The SU shall look into projects that make building materials out of recycled materials, such as the possibility of making roads out of plasphalt (a material made of grains of unsorted plastic waste used to replace sand and gravel in asphalt), bricks out of plastic bags, wood out of newspapers and so on
- Sign up to the Children's Rainforest programme which allows a tree to be replanted in Costa Rica for every tree felled elsewhere in the process of future building projects

- Increasing funding in the next edition of the University development plan for clean energy research and development
- Purchase clean, renewable, and emission-free energy products for general use
- Discuss a long-term view to creating a role for an SU Environmental and Fairtrade Officer
- All chemical usage in groundskeeping shall cease by the end of the academic year 2019-2020 where alternatives exist
- That all new buildings undertaken by the SU shall be carbon neutral and that the SU shall campaign to mirror this in the University
- The SU shall aim to have completely transferred its reliance across from fossil fuels to 100% renewable energy upon the elapse of the current contracts possessed with energy suppliers, with a particular emphasis on the usage of offshore wind farms
- In accordance with the targets set by Durham County Council, to decarbonise the University by 45% for 2030, and be carbon-neutral by 2050. Even herein, the SU shall set itself an aim of decarbonising entirely by 2025.
- To use proposals for decarbonisation such as the Buro Happold and Siemens Report as models to guide future policy on the issue (editions of which have been made available to the members of this Assembly and which are freely available from ECO DU).
- The SU will commit to campaigning a doubling in funding in the next edition of the University development plan for clean energy research and development, with reference to the motion presented alongside this one on academic research into the issue
- Every new building built by the SU shall be powered by solar panels
- The SU will encourage the University to undertake the same resolve as per solar panels, with the President taking the primary responsibility for mentioning this to the construction teams of all the new buildings, especially the new Business School
- To reduce the amount of beef sold on SU premises by 50% by the end of the academic year 2019-2020
- To lobby the university to reduce the amount of beef sold on university premises by 50% by the end of the academic year 2020-2021
- To encourage the University to buy from sources which are Fairtrade-certified or Rainforest Alliance-certified
- Lobby the National Union of Students to adopt a similar policies as here described
- The SU will discuss with the University the possibility of introducing “meat-free Mondays” on which no meat will be served in any college nor facility over which the University possesses control over catering
- To create and support campaigns promoting sustainability, such as Waste Awareness Week.
- The SU hereby commits to a 50% reduction in its usage of single-use plastics and shall encourage the University to do the same. This can be achieved by attempting to buy sandwiches in all-cardboard packaging with no plastic film, reducing the number of plastic cups, increasing the amount of reusable cups and decreasing the amount of black plastic
- To ask the University about the progress made on fulfilling the single use plastics pledge with The SU will provide recycling bins on all floors of the SU building to improve access and increase the amount of recycling presence
- The SU will campaign for the University to replace plastic bottles that are used in the meal deals with soda taps, of the kinds that are put in the bars, and reusable cups, thus reducing the amount of plastic produced
- Set up a regular meeting for the Environment Champions of the respective colleges on a monthly or bimonthly basis, which will improve the chain of communication between students, colleges, staff, Greenspace, and the University.

- To strive to create a role on the University Executive Committee based solely upon sustainability and environmental issues, specifically either the nomination of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Sustainability, or the raising of the Dean of Environmental Sustainability to the University Executive Committee
- In addition this, to push the University to reinstate the roles of Greenspace Sustainability Coordinator and Senior Energy and Sustainability Manager, and appoint people with the adequate time to fulfil the duties to the roles of the Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Strategic Planning Group and the Chair of the Carbon Management Team.
- To push the University so that the Greenspace Group contains the following positions:
  1. Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Sustainability/ Dean of Environmental Sustainability
  2. Greenspace Sustainability Coordinator
  3. Senior Energy and Sustainability Manager
  4. Chair of the Carbon Management Team
  5. Sustainability Manager (Travel and Biodiversity)
  6. Environmental Bursar
  7. A Representative of ECODU
- To empower the Environment Reps in colleges to further engage the student body in this through whatever means the individual Reps deem necessary.
- To campaign for the University to reinstate the Greenspace Group as a fundamental part of their consultancy on the environment
- To consult ECODU, who shall maintain their independence as a student think tank, on future matters pertaining to the environment

TO: Assembly  
FROM: Matteo Lai  
RE: The DSU should lobby landlords to accept international guarantors  
DATE: 7 November 2019

---

Assembly notes:

In Durham, most agencies do not accept guarantors not living in the UK, despite it being possible and done by some agencies (e.g.: Robinson's and Harrington's).

That results in:

- Students being forced to pay upfront up to half the value of the entire year rent by July
- Students having to use guarantor agencies, which cost £200 on average
- Students having to use the University guarantor scheme, which is very restrictive and still costs £50 and has only 50 places

Assembly believes:

Not accepting international guarantors is a discriminatory policy. It forces international students to incur in further costs and stress in the already expensive and stressful Durham students' housing market. It excludes international students from lower income backgrounds.

Assembly resolves:

The DSU will lobby landlords to accept international guarantors. The DSU will also lobby for an expansion of the University guarantors scheme and for it to be made free