



Oxford SU Policy

2018/19

This contains policy passed by Oxford SU's Student Council up to and including MT18, which remains valid during the 2018/19 academic year.

Policy Book 2018/19 (updated end MT18)

Policy may be set either by Oxford SU's Student Council, or by all student members by referendum. Policy commits the Oxford SU to taking a stance on an issue.

Policy remains valid during the academic year in which it was passed, and for the subsequent three academic years.

Table of Contents

Academic Affairs	4
Education Vision (TT15; updated TT16) (Appendix A).....	4
Access & Admissions	4
Access Vision (TT16; updated MT18).....	4
Community	4
Campsfield, Yarl's Wood and other Immigration Removal Centres (TT14; Updated MT16).....	4
Oxford Living Wage Campaign (TT11; Renewed and Updated TT14, Renewed and Updated TT17)	4
Role of Students in Communities (HT15).....	5
Cycling.....	5
Supporting the Zero Emission Zone	5
Environment & Ethics	5
OUSU Council Divestment Campaign (TT13; updated and renewed TT16).....	5
Fairtrade Policy (TT14, Renewed and Updated TT17).....	5
Vegetarian Default at OUSU Events (HT15)	6
Paper-free Council (MT15).....	6
Electronics Watch (TT16).....	6
Unpaid Internships (HT10: Updated TT13; Updated and Renewed TT16).....	7
Air Pollution (MT17)	7
Equal Opportunities	7
Liberation Groups (HT15; updated TT16).....	7
NUS Trans Full Time Officer (TT15).....	7
Accessibility of Online Media for Disabled Students (TT15).....	8
Providing easy access to accessibility information for OUSU events (TT15)	8
Condemning harassment-discrimination (MT17)	9
Graduates	9
Graduate Vision (TT16) (Appendix C).....	9
Grads who Work Work Work Work Work (TT17)	9
Health & Welfare	10
Bop and Entz Themes (TT11; Renewed and Updated TT14, Renewed and Updated TT17).....	10
Sex and Relationship Education (MT14).....	11
Sexual Consent Workshops (HT15).....	11
The National Health Service (HT15)	12
Access to College Nurses (HT15)	12

Welfare Vision (TT16) (Appendix D).....	12
Higher Education Funding	12
Supporting Free Education Demonstration in November (MT14)	12
Higher Education Bill (MT16).....	12
International Students.....	12
European Union (TT15; Amended HT18; Amended MT18).....	12
International Freshers (TT16)	13
International students and visas (TT16)	13
Oxford Student Services Ltd (OSSL)	14
OSSL/OUSU Ethical Code of Conduct (TT06: Renewed TT09: Amended & Renewed TT12: Amended and Renewed TT15).....	14
OUSU Governance	15
Timing of Student Council (TT09: renewed HT12: renewed TT15).....	15
Election of Divisional Board representatives (TT16) (Appendix F).....	15
Rent & Accommodation	15
Early Letting (HT12: Amended and Renewed TT15).....	15
Reproductive Justice.....	16
Pro-Choice (TT05: Renewed TT09: Updated TT12: Updated and Renewed TT15).....	16
Advertising Ban on LIFE (TT11; Updated and Renewed TT14, Updated and Renewed TT17).....	16
University Representation.....	17
University Committees (MT14)	17
Miscellaneous.....	17
Policy Guidelines (TT13: Amended and renewed TT15)	17
New Policy (HT15).....	17
Training for Elected Representatives (HT15)	17
Suspended Status Students (HT15).....	18
Underrepresented Students (HT15)	18
Council Discretionary Campaigns Budget (HT15)	18
Acronyms and Jargon (HT15)	18
Accessibility (HT15) (Appendix H).....	18
Sub fusc (TT15)	19
Free our Wednesday afternoons (TT15)	19
UCU Strikes (HT18).....	19
Appendices	21
Appendix A – Education Vision (TT15; updated TT16)	21
Appendix C – Graduate Vision (TT16).....	28
Appendix D – Welfare Vision (TT16).....	33
Appendix F – Election of Divisional Board representatives (TT16).....	44
Appendix H – Relating to Accessibility (HT15).....	45

Academic Affairs

Education Vision (TT15; updated TT16) (Appendix A)

OUSU approves the Education Vision (Appendix A).

Access & Admissions

Access Vision (TT16; updated MT18)

Access and widening participation are a key priority for the SU. We will support student efforts on outreach. We will push the university to support outreach work, and to reform its admissions system so that Oxford becomes a representative national university. We hold diversity to be a form of excellence in itself.

Community

Campsfield, Yarl's Wood and other Immigration Removal Centres (TT14; Updated MT16)

OUSU believes that the law needs to be amended and government policy changed in order for the UK to be able to better carry out its obligations under international convention and the demands of natural justice. That Campsfield Immigration Removal Centre, Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre and all other detention centres should be closed as part of a programme to drastically reduce and ultimately end immigration detention in the UK. That OUSU should seek to support and lobby for motions that are in line with the above beliefs within the NUS. That OUSU should mandate the Vice-President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities) and the Vice-President (Women) to work with the appropriate OUSU Campaigns to support the on-going work with the Campaign to Close Campsfield, the shutdown Yarl's Wood campaign, and similar campaigns against detention centres.

Oxford Living Wage Campaign (TT11; Renewed and Updated TT14, Renewed and Updated TT17)

OUSU believes that people should be paid enough to live decently, and the best way to ensure this is to support a Living Wage. That employees of the University and its Colleges should be paid the real Living Wage.

OUSU resolves to mandate the OUSU Executive to assist, where possible, in terms of mobilising students, providing publicity and liaising with University and College officials who have the power to make changes and implement the Living Wage.

That the Oxford Living Wage Campaign shall be responsible for:

- a. Campaigning for a Living Wage for all staff in Colleges, Departments and the central administration of Oxford University
- b. Encouraging Colleges and Departments of Oxford University who currently pay a Living Wage to become accredited Living Wage employers

- c. Working with the wider community to achieve a city-wide Living Wage in Oxford.

Role of Students in Communities (HT15)

OUSU actively encourages and supports student understanding of their role in and responsibilities to their Oxford and wider communities.

Cycling

Cycling constitutes part of the beating heart of Oxford. Any attempt to make cycling safer in Oxford and to raise awareness of the benefits of cycling should be encouraged.

Supporting the Zero Emission Zone

Oxford SU will seek, monitor and (where reasonable) support any initiatives aiming to lower air pollution levels locally and more widely.

Environment & Ethics

OUSU Council Divestment Campaign (TT13; updated and renewed TT16)

OUSU believes that the University of Oxford should not invest in or accept money from sources of which its student body has repeatedly expressed its disapproval. That the University should not, on a matter of principle, accept money from sources which may have a significant financial interest in the way a course is taught or how a controversial topic (such as climate change) is presented to students. That the financial affairs of the University, in particular its record of investment and accepting donations, should be as transparent as possible, so that the student body can be sure that it abides by the above points.

OUSU resolves to make known to the University its support for greater transparency with respect to financial transactions involving organisations in the fossil fuel industry, and to lobby for the University to cooperate with divulging, on request, information relating to previous transactions.

Fairtrade Policy (TT14, Renewed and Updated TT17)

a) Preamble

Oxford University Student Union recognises that it has a duty to support the Fairtrade campaign. Whilst it does not buy a lot of food OUSU affirms to lead by example in buying ethically and encouraging others- both institutions and individuals- to do likewise. Once agreed, changes to this policy must be agreed to by OUSU Council.

OUSU Fairtrade policy

OUSU commits to supplying Fairtrade products, where reasonably possible, at all its events and functions. This includes events run by OUSU campaigns, student publications and other OUSU initiatives. OUSU will advertise itself as a 'Fairtrade student union'. At a minimum, this

will be done through mentioning the Fairtrade campaign on the OUSU website as well as promoting Fairtrade when introducing OUSU to first years and others.

b) Fairtrade and OUSU

The Vice President for Charities and Community will campaign for increased Fairtrade consumption within the university departments and colleges. These campaigns will include but not be limited to:

- Informing staff and students within the University as to OUSU's support for Fairtrade and the purposes and reasoning behind our adoption of Fairtrade policy. Articles and other appropriate material will be included in publications and websites managed by OUSU.
- Raising awareness of the Fairtrade mark.
- Holding events to make Fairtrade part of the Oxford "culture". Running an annual Fairtrade event for Fairtrade fortnight, and endorsing - and where possible - publicising other Fairtrade events.
- Meeting regularly with university authorities to campaign for Fairtrade on a university level.

More specifically, OUSU will campaign for:

- The University to have an official Fairtrade policy, reviewed annually
- The University to look into supplying Fairtrade products in all its cafes and shops, and at all university events.
- The central University to advise departments on how to source Fairtrade products
- The University to promote the sale and use of Fairtrade products through educating University staff, use of social media, working with the student union and through endorsing Fairtrade events
- The University to assign someone as a Fairtrade officer to oversee Fairtrade at Oxford and campaign for accreditation, working with the student union.

Vegetarian Default at OUSU Events (HT15)

Where OUSU provides food, it will be vegetarian by default (having meat or fish will be considered a dietary requirement).

Paper-free Council (MT15)

OUSU resolves to only print necessary papers for meetings of Council, including ballot papers, nomination booklets, voting cards, sign-in sheets and meeting agendas. To mandate the Chair of council to include in an email to voting members, that students may request printed copies of papers, prior to each meeting of council. To mandate the Chair of council to improve the efficiency of the layout of necessary papers, in order to minimise the amount of paper required. To supply printed copies for students who request them.

Electronics Watch (TT16)

OUSU resolves to support the Electronics Watch Oxford Campaign in its aim to work with the university in order to establish more ethical practices in the procurement of electronics hardware, through Electronics Watch membership.

Unpaid Internships (HT10: Updated TT13; Updated and Renewed TT16)

OUSU believes that unpaid internships exploit young people who are trying to build up experience in their chosen career, and that unpaid work is essentially inaccessible for those from lower income backgrounds.

OUSU resolves to never advertise or promote unpaid internships, with the exception of internships shorter than 4 weeks, and to take appropriate action to stop any other part of the University doing so, with the exception of internships shorter than 4 weeks.

Air Pollution (MT17)

Oxford SU will seek, monitor and (where reasonable) support any initiatives aiming to lower air pollution levels locally and more widely.

Equal Opportunities

Liberation Groups (HT15; updated TT16)

OUSU recognises four liberation groups, who experience oppression, are frequently underrepresented, and require particular support. These are: women students; LGBTQ students; black and minority ethnic students; disabled students. OUSU believes that campaigning for liberation groups should be led by people who self-identify as members of that liberation group. OUSU believes that oppression is intersectional, and campaigning for liberation must also be intersectional.

OUSU notes that the Executive has a duty as a collective body to implement OUSU Policy. OUSU believes it is important to protect the autonomy of liberation campaigns (the Campaigns listed in Bye-Law 15.3(a)), and of officers representing those campaigns, when the Executive changes in 2017. OUSU resolves that, from Hilary Term 2017, a member of the Executive representing a liberation campaign may disassociate themselves from the collective responsibility of the Executive to implement OUSU Policy where:

- a. the Campaign they represent disagrees with a certain decision of the Executive or a certain Policy, and;
- b. that member of the Executive (or their Campaign) states their objection to the decision or Policy at the time that it passes.

NUS Trans Full Time Officer (TT15)

OUSU believes that the actions of cis delegates blocking trans people from having a voice should be condemned, and that it is up to trans students to decide what our liberation looks like, not majority cis delegations. OUSU resolves to bind future NUS delegates to vote in favour of a Full Time Trans officer and to advocate for the Full Time Trans Officer motion to be as high on the agenda as embodied in the spirit of OUSU Council.

Accessibility of Online Media for Disabled Students (TT15)

OUSU believes that disabled people deserve the same access to all aspects of society as the non-disabled. That one of the first steps to advocating for disabled students to the University is to be as inclusive ourselves as possible. OUSU resolves to mandate each OUSU exec member and OUSU campaign to caption and provide an easily accessible text transcript for any OUSU-related video they help create.

Providing easy access to accessibility information for OUSU events (TT15)

OUSU believes that disabled people deserve the same access to all aspects of society as the non-disabled. That one of the first steps to advocating for disabled students to the University is to be as inclusive ourselves as possible. OUSU resolves to mandate each OUSU exec member and OUSU campaign to include for all events two points of contact (e.g. email and telephone) to request accessibility information or adjustments.

#PledgeDecrim (TT17)

Council Believes:

1. Sex work is work: it is the exchange of money for a form of labour. The difference between sex work and other forms of labour is the degree to which its workers are criminalised and stigmatised.
2. Though undergraduate students at Oxford University are not permitted employment during term time, the flexible nature of sex work means that it can be taken up during the vacations as a form of income. It is highly probable that there are students OUSU seeks to represent who are sex workers: they deserve full support and protection.
3. People should be free to choose a profession and exercise autonomy with regard to their labour and bodies. Restricting the choices of individuals only perpetuates existing violent structures, and encourages further criminalisation.
4. Violence against sex workers is symptomatic of workers' vulnerability: if the law does not protect sex workers or allow them the freedom to operate without fear of arrest, violence that sex workers face will continue to go unchecked. Decriminalisation would ensure that sex workers feel able to report unsafe clients or workplace violence without the worry of criminal repercussions, that several sex workers can ally and work together for safety, and that those who leave the sex industry can do so without criminal records.
5. Stigma and risk of prosecution or police violence means that sex workers are less likely to seek out help and support if and when they need it.
6. Whether one's impetus to enter the sex industry is by choice, circumstance, or coercion, all sex workers deserve protection of human rights. This includes sex workers who do not find their work "empowering": whether or not one enjoys a job ought to have no bearing on the rights one has while doing it.
7. Former New Zealand MP Tim Barnett was correct in asserting that "prostitution is inevitable, and no country has succeeded in legislating it out of existence."¹

¹ <<http://prostitutescollective.net/2009/02/04/letter-from-tim-barnett-former-new-zealandmp-on-the-policing-and-crime-bill-2/>>

8. This evidence combined with opposition to all forms of trafficking and forced labour require the government to recognise that the only effective way to tackle these abuses when they occur in the sex industry is to apply the measures which are known to improve the situation of migrant workers in other industries. Trafficked persons are not found in sectors where workers are organised and where labour standards are monitored and enforced.

Council Resolves

1. To support and campaign for the full decriminalisation of sex work.
2. To campaign against any attempt to introduce the Nordic model into the UK.
3. To campaign particularly for the rights of student sex workers, including mandating Sabbatical Officers to advocate on behalf of sex workers' interests to the University.
4. To support any student that comes out privately as a sex worker to any member of Exec, including supporting health, safety, and legal needs.
5. To support and be led by sex-worker led organisations, such as the English Collective of Prostitutes, Sex Worker Open University, and SCOT-PEP, who work to improve the lives of sex workers across the UK.

Condemning harassment-discrimination (MT17)

Oxford SU condemns discrimination and/or harassment, on the basis of class and/or any of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.

Oxford SU also condemns discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of protections not included in The Equality Act 2010: paternity or non-binary parenting, gender expression, sexualities other than hetero/homo/bi-sexuality, wealth, income or class.

Graduates

Graduate Vision (TT16) (Appendix C)

OUSU approves the Graduate Vision (Appendix C).

Grads who Work Work Work Work Work (TT17)

OUSU Believes

1. That opportunities to work are extremely valuable to students, as they provide the chance to gain experience, receive training, and build skills that are necessary for career progression.
2. That students deserve certain minimum standards in any work they undertake within the collegiate University.
3. That the increasing casualisation of the Higher Education sector adversely affects early career academics and graduate students, and also has equality implications.

4. That students should not be seen as cheap labour.
5. That work opportunities should be clearly and fairly advertised and allocated.
6. That relevant training should be part of the work undertaken (and in particular for those in student-facing roles, training in unconscious bias cultural awareness, and welfare).
7. That anyone who undertakes work for the collegiate University should receive clear guidance in advance of commencing, particularly around expected responsibilities, working conditions and hours, and pay (including logistics of payment).
8. That OUSU should be in close contact with the Universities & Colleges Union (UCU) about this stream of work.

Health & Welfare

Bop and Entz Themes (TT11; Renewed and Updated TT14, Renewed and Updated TT17)

OUSU Believes

1. That welfare concerns should influence the choice of entz themes.
2. That the role of a bop is to bring a college together and for its members to enjoy themselves in a safe environment.
3. That entz with themes that have large scope for offence, or which intentionally cause offence, such as Bad Taste Bops, are a welfare issue because:
 - a. The publicity and the event itself can be highly offensive or upsetting to students;
 - b. Highly sexualised themes can have distressing impacts on marginalised communities
4. That Entz with highly gendered themes are a welfare issue because:
 - a. There is usually an implicit or explicit gender divide, and for anyone who does not identify with traditional binary gender roles this may be problematic.
 - b. Often such themes give a role usually seen as superior or more powerful to men, and a submissive, inferior role is given to women.
 - c. Often such themes will stereotype men and women in a highly objectified and/ or sexualised role (e.g. vicars and tarts, pimps and hoes, 'fox hunts').
 - d. Entz events which mock or encourage the mocking of gender presentation (e.g. when cis men are encouraged to dress as women for the sole purpose of entertainment) can be upsetting to trans students and students who do not identify with traditional binary gender roles, but may have the potential also to be a friendly environment if dealt with sensitively.
5. That Bops or Entz with culturally appropriative themes (such as 'Cowboys and Indians', 'Arabian Nights') or that are otherwise racially or culturally insensitive can cause BME and international students to feel excluded, mocked or distressed in JCR and MCR spaces.
6. Cultural appropriation is defined as an act by which a member of a dominant culture uses the clothing, traditions, aesthetic customs or other cultural markers of a marginalised culture to their own benefit, ignoring the history and context of these cultural markers and failing to give credit to their origins and proper use.

7. That cultural sharing and celebration is different from cultural appropriation, in that it contains no element of mockery or costume, and is carried out with the equal participation of BME, international, or other relevant group of students.
8. That the above problems might cause many people to be uncomfortable attending bops, which should be as inclusive as possible.
9. That many bop themes are possible and do exist that do not run into these problems.
10. That JCRs and MCRs can choose their own Bop and Entz themes.

OUSU Resolves

1. To regularly contact JCR/MCR/SU Welfare Officers, Equal Opportunities Officers, Women's Officers, LGBTQ officers and Entz Officers raising the above concerns.
2. To encourage the reporting to common room or college welfare teams of bop themes which have been considered to be in bad taste or which have left any individual offended, upset or otherwise made to feel uncomfortable in attending.
3. To mandate the VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) to include in Freshers' Week training information and advice on inclusive Entz themes.

Sex and Relationship Education (MT14)

Council believes that comprehensive Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) is more important than ever with high levels of domestic and sexual violence in Britain, with two women a week being killed by a former or current male partner and one in three women experiencing sexual violence in their lifetime, and many men also being victims of domestic abuse; that current SRE in schools is wholly inadequate, with a quarter of pupils receiving none, and this problem is compounded by government cuts to citizenship and PSHE education funding; that reports of ideologically-driven organisations delivering inaccurate presentations in schools are worrying, and that all SRE education should be impartial and promote tolerance of all sexualities; that the problem is often exacerbated in free schools and academies which receive even greater freedom on what to teach; and that it should be compulsory for schools to provide SRE which emphasises a zero-tolerance approach to violence and abuse in relationships, as well as the need for safe sex and SRE that covers all types of relationships including same sex relationships.

Council resolves to support the on-going campaign by MPs to pass legislation to make SRE education compulsory in schools, and mandate the Vice President (Women) and Health & Welfare Officer to pressure the Government to implement the measure in full should it pass Parliament.

Sexual Consent Workshops (HT15)

OUSU supports Sexual Consent Workshops for all freshers. OUSU recognises that Sexual Consent Workshops may not be accessible to all students (e.g. because the materials are triggering, or because of a disability), and should seek to provide alternatives.

The National Health Service (HT15)

OUSU believes that the NHS is a vital public service that the government should continue to ensure remains free at the point of use for all citizens for generations to come and never introduces charges for front-line services. That it is of vital importance that NHS services cease to be privatised and that the open marketing of front-line services ends. That any move by any government to introduce an insurance-based system of healthcare provision should be opposed. That the ban on groups (such as LGBTQ men and those who sleep with them) unfairly excluded from giving blood, unless they abstain from having sex with another man for 12 months is misleading, unfair, discriminatory, and the government should conduct more research immediately with a view to repealing it.

Access to College Nurses (HT15)

OUSU believes that college nurses are beneficial to the health, welfare and well-being of students in Oxford. That it is unfair that students at colleges and PPH's that cannot afford a nurse are unable to access this service. That all students no matter what college or PPH they belong to should have access to a college nurse.

Welfare Vision (TT16) (Appendix D)

OUSU approves the Welfare Vision (Appendix D).

Higher Education Funding

Supporting Free Education Demonstration in November (MT14)

OUSU resolves to support free education as a policy and the NUS campaign against fees and debt, and that this does not affect the negotiating stances of OUSU's executive in deliberations with the university on funding, bursaries or grants, but rather reflects our intervention in national policy-making.

Higher Education Bill (MT16)

OUSU resolves to oppose and condemn the linking of fee increases to the assessment of Teaching Quality, and the introduction of differentiated fees across the Higher Education sector.

International Students

European Union (TT15; Amended HT18; Amended MT18)

1. Oxford's status and ranking as a world-leading university is at risk from the effects of Brexit.

2. The University benefits enormously from the easy presence of students from other member states of the European Union at Oxford.
3. The potential impact of Brexit on students from the European Union on issues such as funding, fees, immigration status, accommodation and access to health care is having a detrimental impact on the student experience for these students.
4. Students and young people will be hit particularly hard by the negative impact of Brexit.
5. Brexit has the potential to negatively impact a number of areas that the SU campaigns on, such as supporting the NHS, fighting for environmental justice, and supporting educational opportunities at Oxford.
6. As such, there should be a referendum on the terms of the Brexit deal with an option to remain in the EU on the ballot paper, and Oxford SU should support the People's Vote campaign
7. The University should ensure that students are well-informed about the likely impacts of Brexit.
8. The University should ensure that students are made aware of the ways the University is trying to influence the outcomes of the Brexit negotiations.
9. The University should work with the student body to ensure that it understands students' concerns about Brexit.
10. Support and advice should be available for students affected by Brexit.

International Freshers (TT16)

OUSU believes it makes the overall process of settling in at Oxford much more difficult if international students arrive at the same time as UK students, rather than having several days to get used to the UK. That the busy schedule of Freshers' Week often does not build in time for issues like culture shock, and jet lag, and so international students need additional days to settle in. That colleges should prioritise the welfare of students, but particularly international freshers, over other potential uses of accommodation in 0th week and the week before this.

OUSU resolves to support a campaign to allow international freshers at all colleges to arrive several days before UK freshers (and several days before Sunday 0th week) if they want or need to; for colleges to be more flexible in departure and arrival dates before/after vacations; and for the collegiate University to provide more storage for particularly international students.

International students and visas (TT16)

OUSU believes international students play a crucial role in the student community, and should be supported during their time at the University. That the Government should remove unfair restrictions on international students, including overly restrictive and expensive visas, and unfair additional charges such as for NHS use. That the Government should make it easier for international students to remain in the UK after studying if they wish to work or continue their studies. That the University should work to ensure that international offer-holders and students are assisted as much as possible, especially with respect to visas.

OUSU resolves to mandate OUSU officers, in particular the Vice-President (Graduates) to ensure the University continues to offer international students with the advice and assistance they need, both when applying and when on-course. To mandate OUSU officers to lobby the Government (including by working with other bodies) to remove excessive visa restrictions and charges for international students, and to make it easier for international students to stay in the UK to work or study after their course.

Condemning UKVI's Email Charge #FreeEmails (TT17)

1. That international students and staff are integral to the continued prosperity of the University of Oxford, and are valued members of our community.
2. That immigrants are vital to the UK economy, as they bring valuable skills and expertise, and contribute hugely to our society.
3. That the UK Higher Education sector and Oxford in particular should remain as outward-looking and welcoming as possible to people from all over the world, whether they come to the UK to study or work in our Higher Education institutions.
4. That in the current climate of Brexit and rising levels of xenophobia and racism around the world, it is imperative that international students are properly supported.
5. That the reasons given for these changes are disingenuous and that those who benefit directly from the UK immigration system already make a considerable and appropriate contribution, not only through the extortionate visa fees they pay but also in less tangible forms.
6. That any increases in visa application and related charges are more likely to adversely affect those from low-income backgrounds and from countries of lower socio-economic status.

Oxford Student Services Ltd (OSSL)

OSSL/OUSU Ethical Code of Conduct (TT06: Renewed TT09: Amended & Renewed TT12: Amended and Renewed TT15)

OUSU believes that by selling advertising space to companies, we risk endorsing their practices. That attempts to make the University invest ethically are undermined if OUSU's own investments are not ethical, and if it relies financially upon advertising revenue from unethical companies. OUSU resolves that OSSL/OUSU, under the advice of OUSU Council, will adhere to the following code of conduct:

1. Advertising Space

- a. OSSL/OUSU will not sell advertising space to companies or organizations that have been proven to take away the rights of the individual, or to manufacturers of torture equipment or other equipment that is used in the violation of human rights.
- b. OSSL/OUSU will not sell advertising space to businesses that derive more than 10% of their profits from the manufacture, sale, licensed production, or brokerage of armaments
- c. OSSL/OUSU will preference businesses that take a pro-active stance on the environmental

impact of their own activities

2. Investments

a. In the event that OUSU/OSSL needs to invest money, OUSU/OSSL will take into account OUSU Council policy applying to University investments, and, when appropriate, consult with OUSU campaigns.

3. Miscellaneous decisions

a. On occasion, OSSL/OUSU will make decisions with regard to specific companies involving ethical issues not explicitly included in this ethical policy. These decisions should be taken with the involvement of the relevant member(s) of the Sab team, and OSSL/OUSU staff input.

OUSU Governance

Timing of Student Council (TT09: renewed HT12: renewed TT15)

OUSU believes that OUSU Council should be as accessible as possible to the students of our University. That every student has a right to have their voice heard at OUSU Council. That the honourable quest to understand how life evolved should not prevent a student from saving a good piece of policy from lapsing.

OUSU resolves to retain the policy passed in 3rd Week Trinity Term 2009, and in Hilary 2012. To not hold OUSU Council between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday – Friday.

Election of Divisional Board representatives (TT16) (Appendix F)

OUSU resolves to establish a Divisional Board Nominations Panel in accordance with Appendix 7, who shall appoint Divisional Board Representatives from Trinity Term 2016 onwards (subject to ratification in Council) in accordance with the guidelines in Appendix F.

OUSU resolves to mandate the Vice-Presidents (Access & Academic Affairs) and (Graduates) to review this elections process in Trinity Term 2017.

Rent & Accommodation

Early Letting (HT12: Amended and Renewed TT15)

OUSU believes that it is better for students if student rented accommodation lists are released later and more gradually so that housing remains available later in the year. That OUSU should consider supporting students who live out in private rented accommodation to be as big a priority as supporting students who live in college accommodation (as it does currently through help with rent negotiation).

Reproductive Justice

Pro-Choice (TT05: Renewed TT09: Updated TT12: Updated and Renewed TT15)

OUSU is an organisation dedicated to representing the interests of Oxford students. OUSU believes that as such, OUSU as an organisation should affirm the rights of all students to choose what happens in their lives and what happens with their bodies, including the choice of whether or not to continue with a pregnancy, and should campaign accordingly. OUSU believes that abortion can be a difficult moral choice, and we should trust students to make it for themselves. That OUSU can and should do more to support both students who choose to have children during their time at Oxford, and students who arrive in Oxford as parents. That OUSU should, through the Student Advice Service, continue to make available impartial and non-directional welfare support to those students who are pregnant and in need of advice.

OUSU resolves to support the right of all pregnant people to choose, and to campaign in support of this right being legally established. To oppose measures to make it more difficult for students to choose either to terminate a pregnancy or to carry it to term and to work to ensure that no additional restrictions are imposed at any level so that Oxford students have a real choice. To campaign to extend students' right of practical access to an abortion, and to extend their rights of choice over their own pregnancies. To campaign for the University and the colleges to provide greater support for students who choose to carry their pregnancy through to term. To work with other groups campaigning for the above objectives. To reaffirm the importance of the VP (Women) and the Student Parents and Carers Officer in representing and supporting student parents, in order to further the provision for student parents by OUSU and the University. To clearly affirm our support for a non-directive, impartial and supportive Student Advice Service, as laid down in the OUSU Bye-Laws.

Advertising Ban on LIFE (TT11; Updated and Renewed TT14, Updated and Renewed TT17)

Council Believes:

1. That pregnant people deserve impartial and non-directional information and advice and the best person to make decisions around pregnancy is the pregnant person themselves.
2. That LIFE's counselling and publicity is directive; specifically it intentionally directs people away from accessing abortion because of its own ideological stance on abortion.
3. That it is inconsistent and irresponsible for LIFE to claim to be "here to help you take the time to think about all of your options" whilst still being against abortion in all circumstances, stating "there can never be a good enough reason to intentionally take the life of an unborn child".
4. That organisations that give misleading advice can be actively harmful.
5. That anti-choice messages can be triggering and harmful for people that have chosen to terminate or are considering terminating a pregnancy.

Council Resolves:

1. To instigate and maintain an advertising ban on LIFE and other organisations which provide directional abortion advice and to provide students with information about impartial, non-directional pregnancy and abortion advice providers.

University Representation

University Committees (MT14)

OUSU resolves to delegate the decision of who should represent students on University Council and the Museums Board to the sabbatical officers.

Miscellaneous

Policy Guidelines (TT13: Amended and renewed TT15)

OUSU believes that Policy Guidelines should codify the Student Union's long-term policies, rather than short-term actions. That a streamlined Policy Book enables OUSU officers to follow policy more easily. OUSU resolves to record only explicit Policy Guidelines in the Policy Book. To require future motions enacting Policy Guidelines to state this clearly in the "Council Resolves" section of the motion. To only enact Policy Guidelines that have some long-term bearing on OUSU's work. To mandate the Chair of Council to inform any person proposing a motion of this process so that all students have the opportunity to pass, amend or overturn Policy Guidelines.

New Policy (HT15)

OUSU believes that it is important for the Policy Book to contain any Guidelines that students consider relevant, in order to guide OUSU's Officers in how best to represent students. That OUSU's Policy Guidelines should accurately reflect all (small 'p') policy that is in fact guiding the work of OUSU's Officers.

OUSU resolves to recommend that future Sabbatical Officer teams review Policy Guidelines in a timely fashion and submit motions to Council to cover any important omissions.

Training for Elected Representatives (HT15)

OUSU believes that all Sabbatical Officers, Part-Time Executive Officers and Divisional Representatives must receive appropriate training. Some examples of training that may be appropriate are: participating in an OUSU Sexual Consent Workshop; negotiation training; listening training.

Suspended Status Students (HT15)

Suspended status students should normally be allowed to access University and college facilities and services.

Underrepresented Students (HT15)

OUSU recognises different groups of students who are frequently underrepresented and require particular support. These include: international students; mature students; part-time students; suspended status students; student parents and students with other caring responsibilities.

Council Discretionary Campaigns Budget (HT15)

OUSU Council will not allocate more than half of the total OUSU Council Discretionary Campaigns Budget to one project. Bids that are eligible for allocations from the budget include student-led activities, events, campaigns and projects. Any group that is or could register with the Proctors as a student club or society, and consequently receive funding through Clubs Committee, will not normally be eligible for allocations from the budget.

Acronyms and Jargon (HT15)

OUSU should be as accessible as possible, and this includes avoiding the use of acronyms and jargon wherever possible.

Accessibility (HT15) (Appendix H)

All OUSU events should consider trigger warnings, content notes, and pronoun circles to be regular practice, including those held by permanent/issue campaigns, and also for it to be regular practice to specify one's pronouns when one speaks at an event. For clarity, trigger warnings and content notes are information on the upcoming content of an event, a talk, a paper, a Council motion, or any other OUSU contribution (written or as part of an event), which serve to allow students to avoid topics they are uncomfortable with (in the case of content notes), and to avoid topics they find triggering (in the case of trigger warnings). Pronoun circles are an aspect of the beginning of any meeting or event in which people will be referencing what other people have said (which includes almost all meetings of OUSU campaigns), where each person states the name and the third-person pronoun (he, she, they, etc.) as which they wish to be referred.

Those who are organising OUSU events should consider the timings of other OUSU events when scheduling their events. This is particularly pertinent for those students in multiple liberation groups, who should be able to access all relevant events as much as possible. However, where OUSU staff are involved in the event, the working hours of the staff must also be considered.

OUSU should be as accessible as possible, and consequently OUSU Council should always be

held in a wheelchair accessible venue, and should accommodate as far as possible any accessibility requests made by students who wish to attend.

As postgraduate colleges make up eight out of the thirty-eight colleges of the university, OUSU should endeavour where possible to hold OUSU Council at a postgraduate college at least one in every five times when Council is held in a college. At an absolute minimum, OUSU should hold Council in a postgraduate college at least once in an academic year (assuming that colleges are willing to provide and that they have accessible venues).

To incorporate the Family Friendly Checklist (**Appendix H**) as common practice to be followed as much as possible at OUSU events.

Sub fusc (TT15)

OUSU notes that the regulations on academic dress, which provide for a range of options and the power of the Proctors to grant dispensation upon “reasonable grounds”. That students granted dispensation have to take examinations in their Colleges instead, and that space limitations probably prevent mass dispensation. OUSU believes that the results of the referenda (to maintain compulsory academic dress) should be respected as the majority view of the students. That whether individual students support it or not, it is important to reduce any negative effects of compulsory academic address as much as possible. OUSU resolves to mandate the President to communicate to all students early in every Michaelmas Term (or, if possible, before term begins), the range of clothing permitted by the Regulations and the Proctors’ power of dispensation.

Free our Wednesday afternoons (TT15)

OUSU resolves to campaign for Wednesday afternoons to be free from course commitments for all students so that time can be used for extra-curricular activities.

UCU Strikes (HT18)

For future potential strikes with UCU, Oxford SU will take the following as the default policy and action of solidarity:

1. To call on the University to oppose the pension reforms and meet with UCU representatives to determine the best way forward
2. To mandate Oxford SU sabbatical officers to release a statement in full support of the UCU strike action
3. To mandate Oxford SU sabbatical officers to support organisation for the strike
4. To mandate the VP Graduates to email all graduate students to encourage membership of UCU
5. To, by all means possible, encourage students to respect the strike by not crossing the picket lines and not attending classes over this period except in the case of compulsory assessments. This could include, but is not limited to, producing materials including

posters and leaflets to help explain to students what is happening and why our staff needs support.

6. To encourage students to participate in solidarity action as requested by UCU's Oxford branch including standing on picket lines and excluding non-attendance at compulsory assessment.

Appendix A – Education Vision (TT15; updated TT16)

Education Vision



The student view for the future of an Oxford
Education

Post- Student Written Submission Edition

Approved by OUSU Council in Trinity Term 2016

Cat Jones, Vice President (Access and Academic Affairs 15-16)

Nick Cooper, Vice President (Graduates 15-16)

James Blythe, Vice President (Access and Academic Affairs 14-15)

Jack Matthews, Vice President (Graduates HT15-TT15)

Introduction

We believe in Oxford education and are passionate about ensuring that it continues to represent a truly world-class opportunity for students to learn, grow and develop as thoughtful and compassionate global citizens. We also believe in an Oxford education that is genuinely accessible and inclusive to the brightest and best students – and this document should be read in conjunction with our Access Vision, which contains our campaigning priorities for access.

Teaching and Learning

We believe in an Oxford education that is informed by the research of, and delivered by, world-leading researchers. Those researchers should be from diverse backgrounds and experiences, and be able to speak to and engage students from non-traditional backgrounds. We believe that the tutorial system is the cornerstone of Oxford education, and that teaching at all levels must be modelled on intensive interaction between student and active researcher.

Campaigning Priorities

- *We will campaign for further opportunities for graduate students to teach, as long as those opportunities are accompanied by training, a fair selection process and mechanisms for undergraduates to give feedback on that teaching.*
- *We will engage constructively in the University's work on setting and reaching targets on the numbers of women and BME people in academic posts.*
- *We will campaign for all involved in academic recruitment and student admissions processes to receive training on unconscious bias.*
- *We will campaign to ensure that the University provides clear information to all students about the expectations of them and the academic staff on their course in the appropriate handbook and at the beginning of the programme.*
- *We will campaign for all courses to include diverse, challenging and interactive modes of teaching developed and reviewed in partnership with students.*
- *We will oppose the holding of any compulsory or core classes (or other teaching) in evenings (especially after 7pm) or at weekends, unless students specifically, and unanimously, request this.*
- *We will work to ensure that Graduate students have a productive and professional relationship with their supervisor and college advisor, and that structures are put in place to provide adequate support for those students whose supervisors are absent for extended periods.*
- *We will lobby for departments and divisions to monitor both quantity of, and satisfaction with, supervision more closely – and ensure that students and supervisors set clear expectations within the first four weeks of starting a DPhil.*
- *We will explore the potential for every graduate student to have access to a second supervisor or if not possible, a departmental academic advisor.*

Learning Support

We believe in an Oxford education that develops students as independent, reflective learners, and gives students the skills to achieve their full individual potential after graduation. We believe that part-time students have the same rights as full-time students, and the right to a comparable educational experience.

Campaigning Priorities

- *We will campaign for the University to include support for internships in the bursary package.*
- *We will work to defend the learning resources of the collegiate University, including fighting for 24/7 library opening in colleges and extended opening hours in Bodleian libraries.*
- *We will campaign for skills development to be included in every course curriculum.*
- *We will campaign for all colleges to give suspended students the same rights as other students, as the University already does.*
- *We will campaign for the collegiate University to enhance its support for disabled students' access to learning, beyond assessment.*
- *We will campaign to ensure that as the shape and size of the University evolves, this is matched by an expansion in teaching, learning, and support resources.*
- *We will encourage divisions to prioritise departments with poor laboratory satisfaction in student surveys for capital building projects.*
- *We will continue to push for the University to continue work on the gender gap, especially in how it can improve employment advice to women. We will encourage the University to explore concrete changes, even if unsuccessful, rather than the current sense of discussion without action.*

Curriculum

We believe that departments and faculties should set the curriculum, and organise teaching and learning, in partnership with their students. We want our education to include a curriculum that is diverse and reflects a broad spectrum of human experiences, and which speaks to students from all countries, genders, races and ages. We support joint schools and interdisciplinary courses, provided departments and faculties work together to support students on those courses.

Campaigning Priorities

- *We will campaign for departments and faculties to set curricula in partnership with their students.*
- *We will continue our efforts to promote greater diversity of voices on reading lists in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and seek to extend that work in an appropriate way to the science divisions.*
- *We will seek to extend the work on racial diversity to include curriculum diversity that speaks more clearly to the experiences of women, disabled students, and LGBTQ students, particularly the inclusion of trans experiences in the medical curriculum.*
- *We will investigate the specific support needed for students on joint honours courses, in partnership with student representatives in those departments and faculties.*

Assessment & Feedback

We want our education to include assessment processes that are testing and effective, that develop us as learners, and that enable all students to achieve their potential. We believe that all students' academic work, from tutorial essays to University exams, should be assessed according to clearly identified and fair criteria and followed by clear, timely and constructive feedback through processes agreed between tutors and students in partnership.

Campaigning Priorities

- *We will campaign for the principles of assessment to be set in partnership with students, and for all courses to include options for varied forms of assessment.*
- *We will work to ensure that all undergraduate students are able to take at least one collection a term, if appropriate, and receive the marks and constructive feedback on that exam within 4 weeks.*
- *We will lobby for diversification of methods and timing of taught Masters assessment, to avoid a focus on exams in the final term in any subject.*
- *We will campaign for constructive feedback to be provided on all University assessment completed before the end of a course, including prelims.*
- *We will continue to campaign to end the gender gap in performance in assessments at Oxford.*
- *We will campaign for transfer and confirmation of status to be processes that develop research students as learners and researchers, not simply paper processes.*
- *We will campaign for marking criteria to be better publicised to all students.*
- *We will lobby for subject-specific marking criteria to be included in all course handbooks, along with concrete examples to add clarity and assist students in understanding what examiners are looking for.*
- *We believe that students who return from suspension or retake examinations should be held to the same standard as their peers, and not to higher standards as is often the case at the moment.*
- *We will push for certain indicators in examiners' reports to always trigger internal quality processes that investigate, for example, large variations between the scores given by two markers.*

Complaints and Appeals

We believe that complaints and appeals should be handled by colleges and by the University in a fair, transparent and timely manner, and that processes for complaints and appeals should be set in partnership with students.

- *We will push for the collegiate University to continue to monitor college complaints and appeals processes - and how these are conveyed to students in handbooks - and promote best practice in these two areas.*
- *We will request that the University continue to review the role of the Proctors' Office especially with respect to complaints, and to whether the system should be reformed away from annually-changing academics. We welcome the recent introduction of a review stage if the Proctors have dismissed a complaint and the student is not happy, but question the perceived fairness if re-hearings of student complaints that were previously rejected by the Proctors' Office subsequently return to that Office.*

Digital

We believe in an Oxford education that makes the fullest possible use of digital technology, but also keeps at its heart the personal, face-to-face interaction between individual students and academics that is the core of our education.

Campaigning Priorities

- *We support innovative and effective use of modern technology to enhance an Oxford education: for example, lecture capture (provided centrally so departments*

do not have to decide whether to fund it), online submission of work, and better use of online learning support resources.

- We will not support a radical extension of the University's distance learning programmes, or its engagement in Massive Open Online Courses. We do, however, recognise that where such courses and programmes represent opportunities for outreach and public engagement, they have value for the University.*

Colleges & Halls

We believe in an Oxford education where colleges are at the heart of the education and support each student receives, but where the college or hall to which a student belongs makes no difference to the quality of their education. We believe that there should be no fewer than two students in each student's subject area per year in each college.

Campaigning Priorities

- We will push the University to ensure that no student is removed from the collegiate University (or faces significant discipline) in circumstances where, at a different college under different procedures, their academic results would not warrant intervention.*
- We will campaign for one central fee for especially graduate students (covering both college and University fees), and for the abolition of additional course costs for students; until that is achieved, we will campaign for fuller information for students at the point of application on such costs.*
- We will oppose the abolition of the requirement for a college place for any category of students.*
- We will campaign for departments to set contact hour norms for all taught courses to be followed in all colleges.*
- We will be constructive partners with the Conference of Colleges and ensure that the student voice is heard in its deliberations.*
- We will continue to actively support individual common room representatives in their campaigning and representation work.*
- We will continue to campaign for students at Permanent Private Halls to receive an equivalent experience to students in colleges.*

Student Engagement and Representation

We want an education where students are truly seen as partners by those responsible for their education: students should shape the curriculum and assessment together with academics, and be engaged and represented in the decision-making processes that affect every part of their education. Every student should have access to a well-supported and effective student rep in their college and their department or faculty. We support the ability of students to feed back on their whole Oxford experience through national and internal surveys.

Campaigning Priorities

- We will lobby for increased scrutiny of areas in which there is significant variation in the satisfaction scores of students with certain characteristics e.g. students with disabilities or international students' responses to the Student Barometer or the National Student Survey*
- We will represent students effectively and proactively on all relevant University committees and campaign for student representation on all relevant committees in the central University, divisions, departments, faculties and colleges.*
- We will publish an Annual Quality Report, commenting on the work of engaging students as partners in their teaching and learning.*

- *We will continue to prioritise training, resourcing and supporting student reps in departments and connecting them up to form networks of representation and communication. We will work to encourage departments to develop specific representatives for underrepresented groups and for key policy areas, such as access.*
- *We will review student representation in the four academic divisions, to ensure that it is as effective as possible and constructively connected to both University-level and department or faculty-level representative structures.*
- *We will work to facilitate partnerships for students and their representatives with the leadership of the University, its colleges, divisions, faculties and departments, and encourage the collegiate University to see representation not merely as a way for students to complain, but as a key element of how the University formulates its strategy and policies, as well as its courses, curricula and structures of assessment.*
- *We will continue to facilitate high completion rates of national and institutional surveys including the Student Barometer, but not including the National Student Survey (given its link to the Teaching Excellence Framework).*

Student Workload

We believe that an Oxford education must never come at the expense of a student's health, and want an education where the workload is thoughtfully designed and balanced, and where the student's welfare and wellbeing are a key concern of those responsible for their education. We believe that extracurricular activities like sport, drama or music are good complements to students' academic work and students should be enabled to participate in them alongside their studies.

Campaigning Priorities

- *We will build on the work being done on workload in the Humanities Division to investigate student workload across the University and explore through representative structures and with expert advice the best ways to mitigate the impact of workload on student wellbeing.*
- *We will campaign for departments and faculties to agree norms for student workload in partnership with students and then set those norms out clearly and transparently in handbooks, including for teaching delivered in and by colleges.*
- *We will explore the value of, and potential for, a break in the middle of the undergraduate term as one means of reducing student stress and spreading workload*
- *We will campaign for training for all those with secondary welfare responsibilities in departments, faculties and colleges, such as college advisors, organizing tutors and Directors of Graduate Studies.*

Methodology

The preparation for putting this document together was a process which started in Michaelmas Term 2014 leading up to the Easter Break of 2015. We wanted to radically overhaul the Union's position in relation to education, but wanted to do so in a fashion that put the current views of students into the heart of our policy.

The purpose for this document was for OUSU to not only have an evidenced based approach to its future education campaigns, but also to start thinking strategically about the future of education at

Oxford. Given the slow pace of change in the University, having a long-term education position gives the executive the best chance of seeing some of these changes through.

The research for this document was compiled from data analysis of three main surveys and from a series of qualitative responses from focus groups. We have analysed the National Student Survey 2014, which is completed by finalists, and the Student Barometer which is an internal survey taken by all students at Oxford. In addition OUSU designed its own survey, which explored new areas within the student experience here at Oxford.

The qualitative responses were collected from running 11 focus groups across the University. These were 1 hour sessions with a range of students who were asked a series of questions relating to their education here at Oxford.

From work undertaken in Michaelmas Term 2015 to write the Student Written Submission for the University's review by the Quality Assurance Agency, we have taken 10 of the 36 recommendations and added them to the Education Vision.

In compiling this new set of policies, OUSU used both current data available:

2014/15 Student Barometer 8,881 individual responses

National Student Survey 2014 1824 responses

OUSU Education Vision Survey 953 responses

Focus Groups

OUSU Disabled Students Community

CRAE (Campaign for Racial Awareness)

OUSU Women's Campaign

Regents Park College

Corpus Christi College

University College

OUSU Council

Mansfield College

St John's College

Kellogg College (Via online comments)

Graduate Teaching Opps Meeting

Support from the Oxford Learning Institute and the Student Engagement Partnership (based within National Union of Students) in the survey design and layout of the report.

Graduate Vision



Ensuring a better experience, and a better OUSU,
for Oxford's 10,000 graduate students

Approved by OUSU Council, 7th week Trinity Term 2016

Nick Cooper, Vice-President (Graduates)

Marina Lambrakis, Vice-President-elect (Graduates)

Introduction

At the time of writing, 46% of the University's students are on graduate programmes – either on taught courses (usually at Masters level) or research degrees such as the DPhil. This proportion is likely to increase with time, approaching equivalence with undergraduate student numbers. It is crucial that the collegiate University and OUSU represent graduate students with a similar equivalence, and ensure that improving the graduate student experience is prioritised similarly to the undergraduate experience.

This Vision sets out current priorities for graduate students, based on surveys and focus groups run by OUSU, the Student Barometer survey, and the work of OUSU officers. It also makes proposals for how OUSU can continue to work to engage graduate students more effectively, given the evident disparity in the types of students usually involved in its work.

This document should be read in conjunction with OUSU's Access, Welfare and Education Visions, which also contain stances and campaigning priorities for graduate student issues.

Priorities for the collegiate University

There is considerable work already ongoing to improve the graduate student experience, such as improving feedback and contact time on taught Masters courses, increased attention on the need to improve DPhil submission rates within a student's funded period (if they have funding), and a call for more graduate accommodation in the city. Nonetheless, we believe that it is crucial that the collegiate University continues this work, focusing in particular on the areas outlined below.

Taught Masters course academic experience

- *Urgent efforts should be made to improve the quality and quantity of feedback provided to Masters students on written and other work, and to ensure this is useful and effective in improving their performance on summative assessment*
- *More consideration should be given to ensure that particularly international students are clear on marking criteria and what is expected in assessed work*
- *The use of a wider range of assessment methods should be considered throughout the University, and assessment should be distributed throughout the year with due regard for the number of deadlines at any time, and other commitments such as applications for doctoral study*
- *The rationale behind course structure, assessment methods, and timing should be made clearer to students when on course, and student feedback taken seriously to improve courses both for that cohort and for future years*
- *Departments should consider greater use of open office hours by course directors or tutors, to allow students the opportunity to ask questions, clarify material and feel valued members of the department*
- *Divisions should continue to monitor the amount and quality of contact time received by taught graduate students to ensure it is sufficient across courses*

- *Part-time courses should be well considered to ensure students receive an equivalent experience to those on full-time courses, and that part-time students feel equally part of their college, department and the wider University*
- *Provision should be put in place for divisions and the central University to assess students' satisfaction with their courses later than the Student Barometer in Michaelmas Term (via focus groups, a survey or similar)*
- *Promotional material, including course websites, should be written in consultation with current students to ensure its accuracy, usefulness and clarity*
- *Fee increases on courses should not be considered in the absence of consistently positive student feedback, a clear pedagogical rationale, and provision for increased student bursaries or scholarships – and should ideally not be considered at all*

DPHil academic experience

- *The University, divisions and departments must continue to work to improve on-time submission rates, and monitoring of supervisor-student relationships via the successor to the GSS system.*
- *We encourage the University to recommend co-supervision as the standard model, stressing the benefits for students (for gaining multiple opinions and not being reliant on one person), supervisors (to reduce workload) and postdocs (who often need supervisory experience). It should however be ensured that where co-supervision is not in place, students have a departmental advisor or similar – to guarantee a second point of contact for academic discussions*
- *All divisions (or, if necessary, departments) should set out recommended working hours clearly, and ask students and supervisors to discuss this early in the DPhil (within four weeks). This should include an expected working week of 40 hours/week, with a working week not to go above 48 hours except in exceptional circumstances. Students should be entitled to (and encouraged to take) leave of at least six weeks per year.*
- *It should be standard practice for supervisors and students to hold an initial setting of expectations as early as possible, and to report this back to the division.*
- *It is expected that on average, supervisors should meet their students no less than once a month – and preferably more frequently than this, if the student requests this (noting possible exceptions due to e.g. field work, sabbatical leave, but noting the possibility of alternative forms of communication).*
- *We encourage departments to facilitate bringing students together to share ideas, for instance by providing funding for seminar series by DPhil students or similar (which has the secondary advantage of providing presentation experience).*
- *We also encourage increased frameworks for interdisciplinary work and for sharing of knowledge and information between students, and between students and academic staff.*

Graduate student welfare

- *The recommendations of the Welfare Vision as they relate to graduate students should be implemented by OUSU and the collegiate University in partnership*
- *It is crucial that graduate students are signposted more clearly to the welfare provisions available in the collegiate University, and it must be clear whom students should turn to in the event of welfare concerns*
- *Via the graduate monitoring system or otherwise, closer links should be made between college and departmental academic and pastoral staff, to ensure that graduate students do not fall between the cracks of the Oxford system*

- *We urge the collegiate University to increase provision of welfare and other services outside of term time, to continue to foster a sense of community for graduate students who are not bound to the 8-week term structure*

Skills training and development

- *The University should review graduate teaching opportunities, to promote greater transparency of opportunities and their allocation, and to increase the number of opportunities open to graduate students who want to do this.*
- *Divisions should work to provide clearer guidance on skills training opportunities, and recommend that students complete analyses of their training needs in a way that is helpful and not overly bureaucratic*
- *Divisions and departments should work to ensure that, except where it is absolutely necessary, supervisors encourage, and do not block, graduate students' attempts to engage in teaching, skills training or other activities that improve employability and that do not adversely affect academic work*

Accommodation, colleges and other provisions

- *We will support the maintenance of the collegiate University's current accommodation, and in particular, the continued existence of Castle Mill*
- *However, we believe that an expansion of the colleges' and University's graduate accommodation is vital, and should be a major priority given the cost of living in Oxford. New accommodation should reflect the needs of all students, including mature students, student parents and carers, students with disabilities, and international students from across the world.*
- *As part of this, it is crucial that the University and colleges work towards a guarantee of accommodation for all first-year graduate students as a minimum, allowing students to concentrate on their studies and not on finding and dealing with expensive private accommodation*
- *We will only support increases in student numbers where there is a commensurate increase in accommodation, academic and pastoral provision, and financial support. We do not support significant increases in part-time student numbers where the collegiate University does not put in provision to adequately support these students*
- *The University and colleges must continue to expand scholarships, for full and part-time students, for students on Masters and DPhil programmes, and for students regardless of whether they are from the UK, European Union, or overseas*
- *Colleges should work to ensure graduate students are aware of the many benefits of the collegiate system, and to provide an experience that makes graduate students value these benefits*
- *The colleges and University must recognise the diversity of the graduate student community, in race, nationality, educational background, parent or carer status, age and other ways, and to ensure the student experience is as equivalent as possible regardless of these factors*

Priorities for OUSU

It is crucial that OUSU represents graduate students effectively at all levels, be it the Sabbatical officers, Divisional Board representatives, elected representatives, our communications, the Campaigns, Council or elsewhere. The six priorities below are an example of ways in this can be ensured.

- *All of OUSU should encourage more participation by graduate students in OUSU's democratic structures (including elections), at OUSU events, in training and support, and in all of OUSU's work. This must include ensuring that events are equally accessible to graduate students based on time, location and method of advertising*
- *Sabbatical Officers should work with their Campaigns to ensure that graduate students who are interested in the work of those Campaigns have no barriers to participation (both attending and joining the committees) compared to undergraduate students*
- *OUSU should consider how best to tailor its communications to graduate students, and ensure that communications are appropriate, via the best channels, and most importantly, as relevant to graduate students as they should be to undergraduates*
- *OUSU, led by the Sabbatical Officers, should recognise the similarities and differences in the makeup of the graduate student community – for example, in their connection with colleges (and hence with common rooms), in their stages of life, and their concerns and interests – when deciding what to campaign on, and how. Continued consultation with graduate students should remain a key priority*
- *Providing graduate students with opportunities, such as employment, trustee experience or simply campaigning, should remain a priority for OUSU, and this should be promoted widely among the graduate student community.*
- *The Sabbatical Officers should do more to work with graduate Common Rooms, making them aware of OUSU's work, encouraging their involvement, and assisting them with their own work.*

Welfare Vision



The student view for supporting all Oxford students

Approved by OUSU Council, 7th week,

Trinity Term 2016

Alasdair Lennon, Vice President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities)

Becky Howe, President

Introduction

We believe that maintaining and promoting positive wellbeing is critical to an individual's academic and personal success. Every student at Oxford should be able to access the necessary support, care, and adjustments required to demonstrate their true potential, and to enjoy their time here. We believe that a student's education should never come at the expense of their health, and that an Oxford education should be academically challenging and rigorous without compromising students' wellbeing. Alongside this, we believe in promoting an environment based upon: fairness, equality of opportunity, and respect.

We believe that work on liberation is fundamental to our work on welfare. We will continue to work to make Oxford a place that is more accessible to disabled students, women, LGBTQ students, and BAME students who were found to be disproportionately negatively affected by a number of welfare related issues. OUSU's work in this area also features in our Education and Access Visions, and we encourage the creation of a Liberation Vision to set out OUSU's priorities and beliefs in one place.

We believe that a consistent and strategic approach to the issue of student welfare is critical to our success in improving the lives of Oxford students. We will aim in everything that we do to pursue pragmatic and evidence-backed initiatives in order to achieve the most in the area of student welfare. We believe that 'the average student' does not exist, and that each student will have diverse needs, experiences, and difficulties. We will always reflect this in our work, and ensure that our activities do not alienate or disenfranchise any student. In our work on student welfare, we aim to:

1. **Ensure** that students and staff know how to access various sources of support, and aid others in engaging with support.
2. **Promote** an environment in which equality, respect and wellbeing are central to our University, work and life.
3. **Develop** with the University, the Colleges, and the Permanent Private Halls progressive policies that reflect the needs of diverse student body.

Contents

This Vision sets out our campaigning priorities in the following areas:

1. Government policy
2. Welfare across the University, and within academic departments
3. Colleges and Permanent Private Halls
4. Common Rooms
5. External Agencies and Organisations
6. Methodology

Government policy

We believe that student wellbeing and mental health needs to be better prioritised nationally. We will work with other student unions, and with the National Union of Students, to ensure that government policy is working in the best interests of students.

Campaigning priorities:

- *We believe that NHS mental health services should have significantly more funding, and that there should be parity of funding and attention on mental and physical illness.*
- *Many students move away from their University town for significant periods of time between terms, making continuing care from General Practitioners difficult. We will lobby for students to be able to register at more than one practice at once during their time at University, to ensure continuity of care.*
- *We will be an active part of the national campaign to repeal the PREVENT strategy within the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015).*
- *We will support lobbying efforts to overturn the 1994 Zellick guidelines, which advised universities that in cases of sexual violence, disciplinary action should follow only in cases where police are involved.*
- *We acknowledge the funding crisis in national LGBTQ services, and will campaign against cuts to the Terrence Higgins Trust in Oxford.*

Welfare across the University, and within academic departments

OUSU has a constructive relationship with the University of Oxford; student representatives are involved in all levels of the University's operation and governance. We support and commend this approach of collaboration and mutual respect. However, our thoughts and views often differ and what follows are a series of our priorities, commendations, and recommendations for the institution and its academic departments.

Campaigning priorities:

Provision and policy

- *We will support any moves to further expand and develop the University Counselling Services, the Disability Advisory Service and the Equality and Diversity Unit.*

- *We fully support the University's peer support programme, particularly the recent additions, Rainbow Peers and Peers of Colour, and welcome any further expansion and diversification of the service.*
- *We will recommend that the University offers additional peer support training programmes outside of full term-time, for the benefit of graduate students whose terms are not eight weeks long.*
- *We will encourage the University to create an additional, shorter peer support training programme, to cater for students who cannot make the time commitment to be fully trained, but would like to have practical help to better support their peers.*
- *We will consult with students and with the collegiate University on the introduction of a 'reading week' for students who currently have eight week terms.*
- *We encourage the University and departments to make it clearer to students their expected workload.*
- *We will further consult students on their workload, work management and perceptions of workload in order to understand the pressures on students.*
- *We will lobby for the creation of centralised study skills sessions within departments, to give all new students the opportunity to learn mechanisms to help them thrive academically.*
- *We will encourage the academic divisions to work closely with Conference of Colleges to clarify the interaction and coordination between colleges and departments when supporting students, recognising that for many graduate students, their department is more central to their Oxford life than their college is.*
- *We recognise the negative impact of debt, hardship, and financial burden on many students' welfare, and welcome the current review of hardship provision. We will support and lobby for models of financial support that take a holistic view of the student's situation, taking into account factors such as family estrangement. We will lobby the University to also consider the financial needs of students who are transitioning.*
- *We will lobby the University to create clear policies and disciplinary procedures regarding online bullying and harassment.*
- *We support campaigns which work to destigmatize mental illness.*
- *We support campaigns which work to destigmatise chronic illness and disability.*
- *We believe that students should be able to anonymously report racism and racial harassment within the University. We will explore the possibility of an online reporting and testimonial-sharing platform for this purpose.*
- *We believe that students should be able to anonymously report queerphobia and queerphobic harassment within the University. We will explore the possibility of an online reporting and testimonial-sharing platform for this purpose.*
- *We will lobby the University to make all new and existing policies gender neutral.*
- *We will lobby the University to provide clear guidelines for all staff regarding support and adjustments made for students who are trans/transitioning.*
- *We will lobby to ensure that training of the Proctors and the Assessor be introduced to ensure a fair and consistent functioning of the office.*
- *We will lobby the University to provide thorough welfare and signposting training to all new and existing tutors and supervisors.*
- *We recognise that a year abroad can be an isolating and challenging experience. Similarly, we recognise that part-time study, especially distance learning, can make*

support harder to access. We will lobby the University to create support routes for students who are not physically in Oxford, such as ensuring that they have a welfare point of contact within their college and department.

The Prevent Duty

- We will lobby for the establishment of an independent Prevent Duty complaints procedure to be used by those staff and students who require it.*
- We will lobby for the University to formally recognise and make efforts to mitigate the risk of students feeling concerned about engaging with welfare services due to this new institutional obligation.*
- We will not allow the Prevent Duty to restrict our learning, debate, and research: we will lobby for the University to actively promote freedom of expression, whilst protecting safe spaces and students' right to protest.*
- We will lobby for OUSU representation on any internal review of the University's compliance with the Prevent Duty.*
- We will lobby for the training required under the statutory guidance to be combined with training on pre-existing rights and obligations.*
- We will lobby for the University to comply with the Congregation resolution which requires that central policy reflect that of the Conference of Colleges Prevent Working Group.*
- We will lobby for OUSU to be involved in the Event Appeal and Approval system to ensure that student events are not unjustifiably cancelled.*
- We will lobby to introduce safeguards throughout all Prevent policies and activities to protect students and prevent discrimination.*
- We will work with other unions such as the University College Union in ensuring that the University remains a place in which students and staff can work without the fear of discrimination or unwarranted interference.*

Suspension

- We fully support the University's decision to allow suspended students to retain access to University facilities and services.*
- We wish to emphasise that "fit to study" does not necessarily mean that students do not require reasonable adjustments. We encourage colleges and the University to be flexible in accommodating students' needs even if this means a restructuring of their courses or the assessment regime.*
- We believe suspended students are regularly not given the information they need in relation to their rights, the support available, and the potential impact of suspension on issues such as accommodation, exam entry, council tax, visas and finances. Suspended students must automatically be signposted to this information which is available from SusCam (OUSU's suspension campaign) or the University's Student Information team.*

Colleges and Permanent Private Halls

Colleges and halls are often tight-knit communities, which greatly enrich the student experience at Oxford. OUSU recognises that the constituent colleges and halls are, by and large independent entities, with many of their own rules, policies, and welfare facilities. However, we

believe that baselines and the sharing of best practice could significantly improve student welfare support across the University. What follows are a series of recommendations and campaigning priorities for OUSU with regards to colleges and halls.

Campaigning priorities:

Provision

- *We will research and discuss alternative welfare structures in colleges with students and staff, proposing different models. For example, we would welcome investigation into a system whereby each undergraduate has a 'personal tutor' for welfare, who is not their academic tutor.*
- *We will lobby colleges to have a member of staff whose role is solely to coordinate welfare and support services within college.*
- *We will encourage colleges to work with students to establish clearer information on welfare support within college, to ensure all students know who they can turn to if they need support.*
- *We will work with students, the colleges, the university and external groups to provide mental health awareness related education for incoming students.*
- *We will lobby and recommend to the colleges that they fully fund the training of Peer Supporters in Junior and Middle Common Rooms.*
- *We will lobby and recommend to colleges to provide at least two Junior Deans and that they undergo appropriate training including mental health first aid and first response to disclosures of sexual violence.*
- *We believe that all non-academic and academic staff should be equipped to respond to and signpost students in distress or crisis. Accordingly, we will lobby Conference of Colleges to create a handbook for all academic and non-academic staff who regularly work with students, detailing services within and external to the University to refer students to.*
- *We will lobby the colleges to have all staff who interact most with students - such as tutors, supervisors, senior tutors, scouts and porters - trained in mental health first aid (or similar), first response to sexual violence, and unconscious bias, to ensure they have the same level of training as Common Room Welfare Officers, and are equipped to make compassionate referrals.*
- *We support the establishment of Tutors for Race and Women at a number of colleges, and we recommend and encourage other colleges to appoint similar fellows of this nature. We similarly recommend the establishment of fellows to advocate on the behalf of LGBTQ students and disabled students.*
- *We will campaign for colleges to provide a Sexual Assault Referral Centre travel scheme which will be free for students who need it.*
- *We will encourage and recommend to colleges, in conjunction with the University, to provide appropriate accommodation for disabled students, couples, and families.*
- *We will lobby the colleges to provide clear guidelines for all staff regarding support and adjustments made for students who are trans/transitioning.*
- *We recommend the provision of multiple harassment advisors in each college and of varying gender identities where possible.*
- *We recommend the provision of gender neutral toilets in colleges.*
- *We recommend that colleges fully cover the costs of the Peer Support Programme for their student led common rooms.*

- *We recommend all Senior Tutors to participate in the University Counselling Service's Supporting Students in Difficulty Training. This is a condensed alternative to the two-day Mental Health First Aid Training course, adapted to address the needs of students and the Oxford context.*

Policy

- *We encourage colleges to consider and consult with students on the issue of staff members retaining a welfare and disciplinary role in the college.*
- *We wholeheartedly welcome the creation of the Conference of Colleges Welfare Forum, and encourage the colleges to share best practice on welfare, whilst ensuring student representatives at every level are in the conversation as genuine partners.*
- *We encourage the colleges to continue to invest in the University Counselling Service, and to perceive college counsellors as an addition to rather than a substitute for the centralised Service.*
- *We will lobby colleges to adopt a clear and accessible harassment policy, which is in line with the University's policy.*
- *We will lobby the colleges to make all new and existing policies gender neutral.*

The Prevent Duty

- *We will lobby for student representatives to be meaningfully involved in the implementation and review of the colleges/PPHs compliance with the Prevent Duty.*
- *We believe that any college staff members that require training under the Prevent Duty must also undertake unconscious bias training, and rights-based training.*
- *We recommend that colleges do not have all welfare related staff trained in Prevent Duty related training so as to mitigate the risk of students who feel most targeted by the legislation being concerned about engaging with welfare services.*
- *We will lobby for the colleges to follow the example set by the College of Conference Prevent Working Group which places the Prevent Duty in the context of preexisting rights and obligations.*

Disability

- *We recommend that colleges/PPHs do their utmost to support disabled students in light of changes to the Disabled Students Allowance and the difficulty it will cause. We commend the attitude and actions of the Disabled Students Allowance College Working Group and the Disability Advisory Service in their efforts to support students. We recommend that colleges/PPHs follow their lead in supporting students.*
- *We recommend that staff should regularly seek feedback from disabled students as to how accessibility to academic and social activities can be improved.*
- *We recommend that colleges and halls scrutinise their own accessibility, and that work is done to ensure that the site and activity is inclusive of disabled students.*
- *We will encourage colleges to have a greater awareness of reasonable adjustments disabled students may need in academic settings, such as tutorials.*
- *We will work with colleges to clarify the process for examination adjustments for students with disabilities.*

Suspension

- *We believe and recommend as a minimum, suspended students should have the same rights to access college site, events and facilities as guests of on-course students at weekends. Permission may need to be sought on weekdays to ensure colleges remain academic communities that protect the progress on course students.*
- *We believe and recommend re-entry criteria for undergraduates following suspension of status for medical and/or welfare reasons should be based on fitness to study and not on current levels of academic performance. Any academic conditions attached to return should follow this principle (e.g. can the student research and write an essay, or complete a collection paper, it should not be can the student score a particular mark over and above the university pass mark).*
- *If there are conditions attached to the student's return, these must be made clear to the student, in writing, as early as possible. Conditions must be sufficiently specific (e.g. it shouldn't be "make significant progress"). The consequences of not meeting any stated conditions must be stated alongside the requirements*
- *We wish to emphasise that "fit to study" does not necessarily mean that students do not require reasonable adjustments. We encourage colleges and the University to be flexible in accommodating students' needs even if this means a restructuring of their courses or the assessment regime*

Common Rooms

Common rooms are at the centre of Oxford life for many students, and we believe their role is vital in the functioning of the University. OUSU's relationship with the Common Rooms is unique. We work in cooperation with the Common Rooms often advising and representing them on a number of issues. What follows are a series of assurances and recommendations OUSU would like to make in supporting Common Room and our joint aim of enhancing the lives of Oxford students.

Campaigning priorities:

Provision

- *We will continue to supply sexual health supplies and sanitary products to common rooms at a highly discounted rate. We will continue to encourage Common Rooms to take part in this scheme.*
- *We will continue to run our Safety Taxi Scheme and we encourage Common Rooms to make their members aware of this service.*
- *We will continue to organise, in cooperation with the National Health Service, accessible sexual health screening events.*
- *Welfare Officers within Common Rooms are often the first port of call for students in distress or crisis. We believe their primary role should be to promote wellbeing and community amongst the student body, to lobby their college to ensure sufficient support for all students, and to signpost students to help should they need it.*
- *We will encourage Common Rooms' Welfare Officers to make special efforts to ensure that groups that are not represented by a specific officer such as: student parents, student carers, international students, students of faith, and mature students are catered for within their activities and welfare provision.*

Training

- *We will expand our own training of Common Room welfare officers, to ensure that training for welfare and liberation officers is available termly. We encourage Common Room Officers to take part in this training.*
- *We will continue to provide First Respondent training, to equip Common Room officers who are most likely to receive disclosures of sexual violence. We encourage Common Room Officers to take part in this training.*
- *We recommend that Common Room Welfare Officers are trained in the University Counselling Service's Peer Support Program.*

Organisation

- *We recommend that Common Rooms ensure all of their events are as accessible as possible, particularly for: disabled students, student parents, student carers, and students of faith.*
- *We will support all efforts within Common Rooms to create committee positions for liberation officers, and international officers.*
- *We recommend that Common Rooms provide a range of events in Freshers' Week which cater for the diverse needs of Oxford students.*
- *We recommend that Common Rooms have Welfare Officers of differing gender identities.*
- *We recommend the facilitation of regular events in which members of marginalised groups can socialise in safe and respectful place free from discrimination.*

External organisations

OUSU in its work related to student health and welfare works with a number of external organisations and agencies in order to improve the lives of Oxford students. Below are a series of statements which concern who we may engage with and on what terms.

Campaigning priorities:

- *We will engage with and advocate for government services and agencies that meaningfully improve student health and welfare.*
- *We will seek to feedback student concerns into government services and agencies that are linked to student health and welfare.*
- *We will only engage with law enforcement agencies to protect and safeguard students.*
- *We will engage with ombudsmen and agencies with an adjudicatory/regulatory function to make students aware of their lawful rights, methods of recourse, and support available.*
- *We will engage with charities to provide students with additional sources of information and support.*

Methodology

The creation of this Vision was a process that started in the Trinity Term of 2015 and continued up until the Trinity Term of 2016. In creating this Vision, and following a great deal of consultation, we aimed to clearly define our objectives, recommendations, and priorities in the area of student health and welfare for the next three to five years.

The Welfare Vision gives OUSU officers a longer-term, strategic document that is based on student opinion. Our experience this year following the introduction of the Education Vision is

that the Visions give important weight to our comments during University committees, and demonstrate our commitment to realise change.

The content of this Vision has been made using an evidence-backed approach. Our primary source of evidence for this Vision was the results of the 'OUSU Welfare Survey'. This was a comprehensive survey that aimed to seek student thought and opinion on a large range of issues. Nearly 6,000 Oxford University students responded to the survey, and as far as we are aware, it is one of the largest studies and datasets of its kind.

In compiling this set of priorities and recommendations OUSU used the following sources of information:

- OUSU Welfare Report (2016)
- Many hundreds of comments from OUSU's Welfare Survey (2016)
- OUSU Suspended Students Campaign Survey (2016)
- OUSU It Happens Here Survey (2015)
- OUSU Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality, '100 Voices' Report (2014)
- The Assessor's Report on Race Equality at the University of Oxford (2016)
- National Union of Students: handbook on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention (2016)
- The Student Barometer (2010-2015)

Appendix F – Election of Divisional Board representatives (TT16)

Nominations Panel – composition and guidance

The Divisional Board Nominations Panel will comprise:

- OUSU Vice-President (Access & Academic Affairs)
- OUSU Vice-President (Graduates)
- An elected member of OUSU Council (or, if the position is vacant, OUSU's Returning Officer)

The member of Council will be a Student Member elected each year in Hilary Term (or at other times in the event of a vacancy), and will serve for twelve months.

The Nominations Panel will set its own procedure and timetable when required, but this guidance is offered as a suggestion:

- Nominations should be opened early in Trinity Term and well advertised to all students, including current department representatives
- The aim should be to take names for ratification in 7th week, Trinity Term
- In the event of a vacancy in any Divisional Board Representative, this procedure should take place as quickly as possible to fill the vacancy
- The Panel should judge applicants on their ability to fulfil the description of tasks in the role description, their demonstration of the skills required in the role description, and their ability to meet the time commitment of the role.

The Nominations Panel will put forward one candidate for each position for Council's ratification, by simple majority. In the event that Council does not ratify the candidate, the Nominations Panel will, where possible, take the name of two candidates to the next meeting of Council. Council must choose between these two candidates.

Appendix H – Relating to Accessibility (HT15)

Family Friendly Checklist

- The event does not involve people getting drunk, and probably doesn't involve alcohol at all (things like summer barbecues with a couple of beers might be the exception).
- The event includes at least one activity that might interest children (colouring? some sort of craft? games outside? Poundland water pistols?).
- If the event includes food, there is food suitable for children (i.e. not spicy or too messy; finger foods are great).
- The venue is suitable for children (think about precious college furniture, antiques, or lots of sharp corners).
- There are baby-changing facilities nearby.
- The event doesn't take place late at night or during work hours (probably you're looking at 5-7pm on weekdays and 9-7pm on weekends).
- Any children need to be supervised – probably by their parents, but you might want to remind parents of this.