

## Council Minutes

*3<sup>rd</sup> Week Trinity Term 2013*

**3<sup>rd</sup> Week Council held on Wednesday 8 May 2013 at 5.30pm in the Blue Boar Lecture Theatre, Christ Church College.**

**If you have any questions about OUSU Council, please contact David Railton, the Chair, at [motions@ousu.org](mailto:motions@ousu.org)**

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
- c. Ratifications in Council
- d. Elections in Council
  - 1 Positions for Deputy Returning Officer
  - 4 positions for Complaints Committee
  - 3 positions for Internal Affairs
  - 3 positions on Steering Committee
- e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers
- f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports
- g. Questions to Members of the Executive
- h. Emergency Motions
  - 1. University of London Union Shutdown
  - 2. UKBA Monitoring
  - 3. Royal Dutch Shell Partnership
- i. Passage of Motions Nem Con
- n. Other Motions
  - 4. NUS Conference Report 2013
  - 5. It Happens Here
  - 6. Elections of Division Representatives
  - 7. AFS
  - 8. Marking Criteria
  - 9. NSS
  - 10. Van Noorden Index
  - 11. Equal Access for Asylum Seekers
  - 12. Solidarity with 'Sussex Against Privatization' Campaign
- m. Any Other Business

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### **a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Minutes passed for Council 1<sup>st</sup> Week TT13

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### **d. Elections in Council**

The following positions were elected in OUSU Council of 3<sup>rd</sup> Week.

**Steering Committee** is responsible for compiling the Agenda for Council and referring motions submitted to Council to other committees for preliminary discussion as and when needed.

No hust.

Voting proceeded with Anna Bazley being voted into one of the positions on the Steering Committee.

49, 0 RON.

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#### **e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers**

David Townsend - President  
Nothing to add.

Chris Grey - VP Graduates  
We will be electing Division Reps online.

Suzanne Holsomback - VP Women  
Very soon, the It Happens Here Campaign will launch. Be on the look out for it in a college near you. I am bringing a motion to Council about it. We will be a permanent campaign, but not autonomous and we are hoping to have the usual OUSU funding of £500; however, this year we should get outside funding from the Soroptimist Club.

Sarah Santhosham - VP Charities and Community  
British Heart Foundation (BHF) box at OUSU taking donations that would normally go to landfill. Donations will be passed to BHF shops and money from shop sales will go to research at Oxford. A number of colleges are involved.

Katie Colliver - VP Welfare and Equal Opportunities  
Doing a lot of training, equality and diversity, and more.

David Messling - VP Access and Academic Affairs  
Undergraduate student finance discussions taking place in common rooms. Please have those conversations and take the golden opportunity that comes along every 3 years.

#### **f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports**

None.

#### **g. Questions to members of the executive**

Trinity JCR  
When will accounts from 2011/12 and the new website be published?

David Townsend  
Accounts are published all together with next budgetary year. May be available already, but I will check.

Website is slow, but with the funding increase we will get it soon. In the mean time, we'll get something up temporary to provide information that is needed for students.

## **h. Emergency Motions**

### **1. UNIVERSITY OF LONDON UNION SHUTDOWN**

#### **Council Notes:**

1. That University of London management have launched a bid to shut down the University of London Union.
2. That ULU acts as a social hub, democratic space and collective representative of tens of thousands of London students.
3. That management's decision is not based on open consultation with students on the issue.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. That effective democratic representation at a local, regional and national level is an important part of student life.
2. That university managements should not shut down student unions.
3. That an attack on student democracy at one institution affects all of us.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate the President to send a publicly-available letter to University of London management condemning their decision.
2. To advertise through the OUSU mailing list and whatever other appropriate fora
  - a) the link to the official 'Save ULU' petition and
  - b) the upcoming national London demonstration in support of ULU

**Proposed by:** *Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln College)*

**Secoded by:** *Peter Hill (St John's College)*

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

University of London represents 100,000 students and the university has shut it down, due to a lack of engagement. Bringing it to OUSU due to it being a national issue. If it happens once, it can happen anywhere. I urge you to pass the motion.

Katie Colliver (University)

What was student turn-out?

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

6%

David Townsend (St. John's)

Actually, it was lower - 2.18%

Anya Metzger (Wadham)

Is it related to the university giving separate degrees at separate campuses?

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

No.

Henry Chong (Harris Manchester)

Reasons include low turn-out and low engagement.

David Messling (St. John's)

What was the response from other University of London institutions?

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

The responses were mixed, some have supported it, some have not.

Harry Burt (Trinity)

Not greatly opposed. It is a complex issue and there are issues with getting involved in the federal body, we shouldn't jump into it as emergency motions should.

Katie Colliver (University)

I do not usually make a habit to jump into political situations. There is a salient point that the University shouldn't do this.

Arianna Tassinari (St. Antony's)

Vote in favour. This has significant implications on the precedence it sets. There are difficulties in engagement, especially with students identifying with another body under the student union, which OUSU understands well. It is dangerous for management boards to shut down student unions without consultation.

David Townsend (St. John's)

University of London took away funding instead of shutting it down. The decision is yours. I won't vote. The salient point that needs to be noted is that the voter turn-out is low. OUSU's turn-out is ten times this. Removal of funding is from students writing, but the main point is that there was no open process.

Jack Matthews (University)

It was started by students, from a petition. I will vote against since we don't have all the information to check the right course. We should look at how the university will redistribute the funding so that it goes back to the students. There are real issues with the structure and with student unionism in the university. Look at the last meeting of their Council where they did not condone the editor of the student newspaper due to not liking them. It was more opaque than the NUS. I have no problem it being got rid of.

David Messling (St. John's)

There was the constituents in the unions that lead this and we shouldn't jump on unless we know more. It is not a normal university or collegiate university. There has been a mess, so I'm happy to pass it to say that we aren't happy about this, but it needs to look at the service provision.

Arianna Tassinari (St. Antony's)

Low voter turn out is correct. There are proposals to increase voter turn out by timing it to local elections. They didn't want to do it this year, but will look into it for the future. If all the funding is taken away, it would cease to exist this summer. There is no proposal for what will be done. There is a need for a wider representation for London students.

Look at an alternative panel, but there are no details. It leaves the hundreds of thousands of students without representation.

Darren Vanning (Oriol)

What examples have they had for winning for students?

Arianna Tassinari (St. Antony's)

Mayoral candidates, lobbying for council tax exemptions for part time students, transportation, TFL work on all sorts of issues, safety and security, safety from sexual harassment, London wide .

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT:**

To add to Believes:

1) ...on grounds of democratic process.

**Katie Colliver (University)**

**Sarah Santhosham (Corpus)**

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

This is a debate about student unionism and representation.

Harry Chong (Harris Manchester)

Amendment answers jumping in questions. Involvement in a complex issue and has hazards.

Motion passes.

## **2. UKBA MONITORING**

**Council Notes:**

1. There is substantial evidence to support a reasonable belief that at the request of the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) the University will monitor international students.<sup>1</sup>
2. Oxford University is an academic institution, not an institution for immigration control.
3. On the Oxford University website it states that '*Oxford's university community is truly international. Students currently come from 138 countries around the world and study a wide range of subjects. They make up one third of our student body, including 14 percent of our full-time undergraduate students and 63 percent of our full-time postgraduates.*'<sup>2</sup>

**Council Believes:**

1. The ethic espoused in the quote above should continue.
2. It is improper for Oxford University to carry out such monitoring.
  - a. As stated above Oxford University is an academic institution not a body for immigration control.

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<sup>1</sup> Email from Migration Struggles List (corroborated by information from Oxstu source)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/international\\_students/](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/international_students/)

- b. The University is not democratically accountable.
  - c. If such monitoring were to be deemed necessary it should be undertaken by an accountable public body.
- 3. Such monitoring contributes to the pervasion of surveillance of international students.
  - a. This will have a detrimental effect on the relationship between students, academic staff and the wider community since monitoring is based on negative assumptions about the trustworthiness of international students.<sup>3</sup>
- 4. Oxford University should not legitimise the malpractice of UKBA
  - a. The agency has been declared not fit for purpose by the Home Secretary<sup>4</sup>.
  - b. There have been numerous deaths and inhumane treatment of foreign nationals including asylum seekers in Immigration Detention Centres in the UK such as Campsfield House IRC situated in Kidlington<sup>5</sup>.
  - c. Students have been detained at Campsfield House IRC due to UKBA monitoring<sup>6</sup>.
- 5. The University is in a strong position to take a principled stand
  - a. It is a world renowned academic institution, respected and followed in its practices.
  - b. There is a high percentage (see above) of international students at the University.
  - c. Given that 'The Oxford Student' newspaper will be publishing a front page article on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May it is necessary that OUSU implements the measures stated in the subsequent section.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate the VP (Graduates) to find out the extent of this new procedure and when it will be implemented.
2. To state its opposition to such monitoring.
3. To mandate the VP (Graduates) to write to the Vice-Chancellor to require that he opposes the monitoring.
4. To mandate the VP (Graduates) to write to UKBA to denounce such monitoring.
5. To make the following clauses Policy Guidelines: Believes Clause 2; Resolves Clause 2.

**Proposed by:** *Kathryn Hayward (Wadham College)*

**Seconded by** *Vera Wriedt (Hertford College)*

Kathryn Hayward (Wadham)

Wanted help with this and use the democratic point. Most salient points are in the motion and it is important for OUSU to hear and for OUSU to take a stand if it is correct. The monitoring of international students is important and the main issue was with immigration control.

<sup>3</sup> <http://compasoxfordblog.co.uk/2013/04/we-want-to-hear-from-you-or-how-informing-works-in-a-liberal-democracy/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/mar/26/uk-border-agency-broken-up>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/aug/02/asylum-seeker-dead-campsfield>

<sup>6</sup> Asylum Welcome Press Release 20/03/13

James Blythe (Brasenose)  
What does 'monitoring' mean?

Kathryn Hayward (Wadham)  
Monitoring as set-out recording students' attending to a supervisor or line manager and it going back to UKBA. Part of the motion is to get the officer to investigate.

Chris Grey (Merton)  
Monitoring in Oxford isn't going to mean departments are supposed to change anything they do. It will be academics taking note of what they already do. It is them noting when they see you. Email exchanges, tutors, regular supervisions. It is a terrible UKBA policy, Oxford has done well meeting the guidelines and not making students feel like they are under surveillance. Records are kept by Oxford, UKBA will only come in and do spot checks, not keep track of individual absences.

Amendments accepted as friendly.

Motion is amended, no opposition, motion passes.

### **3. ROYAL DUTCH SHELL PARTNERSHIP**

#### **Council Notes:**

1. Royal Dutch Shell are launching a new partnership with the University's Earth Sciences department on Thursday 9th May 2013 with the Vice Chancellor and Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change in attendance.
2. This partnership is primarily concerned with research that will advance the location and extraction of new sources of hydrocarbons. The aims of this partnership run counter to recommendations made by climate scientists within the University.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. The University has a responsibility for student wellbeing and future opportunities. The exploitation of additional sources of hydrocarbons will have a negative impact on students' futures by accelerating global temperature increases.
2. Royal Dutch Shell is a corporation that has an extensive record of human rights abuses and encroaching upon the rights of Indigenous Peoples as identified by the UN. A partnership with Royal Dutch Shell has the potential to tarnish the reputation of the University and call into question the University's ethical standards.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. Formally oppose Royal Dutch Shell's partnership with the University's Earth Sciences Department.
2. Mandates the OUSU President to write to the University's Vice Chancellor outlining OUSU's position, asking for the partnership to be reconsidered.

**Proposed by:** *Chris Garrard (St Hilda's College)*

**Seconded by:** *Ellen Gibson (St Hilda's College)*

Chris Garrard (St. Hilda's)

A group of alumni, students, and researchers are writing a letter to be published in the Guardian about the upcoming Shell partnership with Oxford. It is strongly condemned due to human rights and environmental concerns. Two oil spills have occurred recently where Shell have not cleaned up the spill and are therefore under international scrutiny. The deal is £5.9m over 5 years. They made 1b in profits in the last quarter. They spend \$63b on the Nigerian military.

Katie Colliver (University)

What links are there already in place?

Jack Matthews (University)

Shell funded the original Earth Sciences, so there is a long standing tie to Shell, as there is with other departments and oil companies.

Elly Milnes-Smith (St. John's)

Is the unity of staff for or against it?

Chris Garrard (St. Hilda's)

There are historic links, but there is a significant amount of staff opposed to it and research is asked for.

Darren Vanning (Oriel)

Has OUSU written to Shell in the past?

David Messling (St. John's)

Probably.

David Railton (St. Catherine's)

It is not in the policy booklet.

Anya Metzger (Wadham)

If the partnership is broken, where will the funding come from?

Chris Garrard (St. Hilda's)

I don't have enough information. Ed Davies is looking into it. It is being endorsed by a lack of university funding.

David Townsend (St. John's)

How much is going to student scholarships?

Chris Garrard (St. Hilda's)

I don't know. Many doctoral research projects are tied to larger projects, some supervisors are high ranking officials from Shell.

Elly Milnes-Smith (St. John's)

Four masters degrees from website.

Jack Matthews (University)

I spoke to undergraduates and did not find one person opposed to the partnership. It is being misrepresented in this motion. The head of department has guaranteed that Shell will not direct the department's research, which is controlled by the academics. Without the money of the hydrocarbon industry, many students would not be here. I would not be here. It is not that they direct you. This isn't just about finding more oil, it is about sedimentary bases. It might help find more oil, but other research as well.

Elly Milnes-Smith (St. John's)

I sit on Division Rep Board. There is a lack of funding and the departments rely on funding from corporations. This is not in the interest of student members. Making this kind of statement won't change Shell's practices.

David Messling (St. John's)

There is a moral debate on taking money from anywhere. The money should affirm what the company does.

Beate Dirks (Linacre)

Support point: the question is if the company would remove money if we stopped doing research in the area they want? All students should have a voice on this.

Ellen Gibson (St. Hilda's)

Draw on point: this affects Earth Sciences, it influences the ethical investment of the University and the involvement with Shell and on climate change. It will affect all students' futures and it is endangering ours.

Michael Davies (Somerville)

If Shell only gives for hydrocarbon research, then we should look into other funding so we can research any topic.

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

Council passed a motion condemning past unethical connections. Appreciate the funding cuts, but we need to look at what Shell is responsible for.

Beate Dirks (Linacre)

As a scientist, do I look at future funding or am I compromising my freedom of speech as a scientist.

Elly Milnes-Smith (St. John's)

Potential to do good. If we don't work with Shell, they'll withdraw and we don't have the chance to influence them.

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

Are both sides looking at legitimacy of ethical links?

Anya Mezter (Wadham)

If partnership was perpetuated in other areas, would the reputation hinder other ethical funding?

David Railton (St. Catherine's)

Is that a rhetorical question?

Ayna Mezter (Wadham)

Yes.

Alex May (New)

Look at money spent and not on the moral link with Shell.

Jack Matthews (University)

This is victimisation on the Earth Science department due to a public event on Thursday. If we are looking at this, also look at Said Business school and other departments. Shell are expecting things back, they have been sponsoring the Geological Society despite not striking oil.

Ellen Gibson (St. Hilda's)

Not victimisation. If there was an unethical connection, we would oppose it.

Chris Garrard (St. Hilda's)

Mischaracterisation of victimisation of Earth Sciences. We should have ethical red lines. Where do we stand? Specifically funded research that has support as not going in the right direction.

Jack Matthews (University)

It is about wider research that will help expanding energy and it is wrong for OUSU to make a statement. If OUSU wants to make a statement, then they should have spoken to the department.

Motion passes, 26 to 21 with 9 abstentions.

## **i. Passage of Motions Nem Com**

### **1. AFS**

#### **Council Notes:**

1. Academic Feedback Sessions (AFS) were introduced by The Queen's College and University College in 2007, and are now operated by around half of JCRs, in a model encouraged and supported by OUSU.
2. AFS has been a great success in getting more and better feedback from undergraduate students on their teaching.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. That a state of affairs where feedback response rates are low is undesirable since it means both that students are not providing feedback on their learning experience and also that colleges can discount what is presented as a result of a low response rate.
2. That AFS lead to a greater level of dialogue between Senior Tutors and Common Room Academic Affairs officers, which is both positive in its own right and also leads to increased mutual understanding between the JCR and SCR

3. That AFS make Senior Tutors aware of both good and bad practice among tutors, meaning that they are more aware of what problems exist and how they could be remedied.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To encourage JCR representatives to consider introducing Academic Feedback Sessions in their colleges, with a view to AFS being implemented in all undergraduate colleges.
2. To mandate the OUSU Vice-President (Access & Academic Affairs) to campaign for the wider adoption of AFS, and to produce information on AFS for Common Room Officers.
3. To make the following clauses Policy Guidelines: Believes 1, and Resolves 1,2.

**Proposed by:** *David Messling (St John's College)*

**Secoded by:** *Anya Metzger (Wadham College)*

## **2. MARKING CRITERIA**

#### **Council Notes :**

1. Students at Oxford have repeatedly raised the issue of lack of proper understanding of marking criteria.
2. In the 2012 National Student Survey, only 59% of Oxford students agreed with the statement "The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance" versus a Russell Group average of 71%.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. That for students to fulfil their academic potential they need to understand the criteria against which they are being marked.
2. That an understanding of marking criteria is important for a students' well-being, since it can undermine confidence in their own abilities.
3. That there are existing examples of good practice within Oxford which those faculties with dissatisfied students in this area could learn from.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate the OUSU Vice-President (Access & Academic Affairs) and the OUSU Academic Affairs Campaign Officer to campaign for improvements in this area.
2. To encourage Joint Consultative Committee reps in Departments & Faculties to raise this issue in JCC meetings (or their equivalents).
3. To make the following clauses Policy Guidelines: Believes 1, 2, and Resolves 1.

**Proposed by:** *David Messling (St John's College)*

**Secoded by:** *Anya Metzger (Wadham College)*

## **3. NSS**

#### **Council Notes:**

1. The National Student Survey (NSS) is a survey of all final year undergraduate students, carried out annually across the UK and is compulsory for Universities.

2. That NSS data is examined by the University and colleges, used by OUSU and is published online as part of the Unistats Key Information Sets (KIS) for prospective students.

**Council Believes:**

1. That a low response rate on the NSS is a problem as it means that out-of-date data is included for Oxford when calculating our positioning in league tables and for KIS.
2. That a low response rate on the NSS is also a problem as it means that concerns over relatively low satisfaction levels on areas including feedback and understanding of mark schemes in exams can be more easily dismissed by the university as being unrepresentative.
3. That accurate and reliable survey data can be a valuable campaigning tool for Common Rooms and OUSU as it draws attention to student issues with the University and Colleges.

**Council Resolves:**

1. To support the University in raising response rates amongst Finalists to the National Student Survey.
2. To make the following clauses Policy Guidelines: Resolves 1.

**Proposed by:** *David Messling (St John's College)*  
**Seconded by:** *Anya Metzger (Wadham College)*

#### **4. VAN NOORDEN INDEX**

**Council notes:**

1. Many JCRs are currently in the full swing of rent negotiations
2. That JCR Presidents have united in forming a statement about the Van Noorden Index (Appendix C)

**Council Believes:**

1. This statement is very good
2. That VNI is flawed for the reasons mentioned in the statement

**Council Resolves:**

1. To endorse the Van Noorden Index Statement from Common Room Presidents
2. To mandate the OUSU President and Rent and Accommodation Officer to take up the cause of the JCR Presidents by opening discussions to implement their proposals
3. To make the following clauses Policy Guidelines- Resolves 1.

**Proposed:** *Jane Cahill (The Queen's College)*  
**Seconded:** *Alex Bartram (Balliol College)*

#### **5. EQUAL ACCESS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS**

**Council Notes:**

1. Asylum seekers and individuals with Discretionary Leave to Remain (DLR) in the do not qualify for Home/EU fees at Oxford and do not qualify for a student loan.
2. Asylum seekers and those with DLR are in the UK legally, and can go to school.
3. Asylum seekers receive basis state support of £36 per week.

4. Northern Ireland and Wales allow individuals with DLR access to student loans and charge them Home/EU fee rates.
5. Several English universities, including Leeds, Manchester and Royal Holloway, have agreed to charge Home/EU fee rates for asylum seekers and applicants with DLR.

**Council Believes:**

1. That everyone ought to have an equal opportunity to education.
2. That no one should have to put their entire life on hold for years whilst unable to get an education.
3. That the current funding system, both nationally and within Oxford University, is unfairly punitive towards asylum seekers.
4. That Oxford University should take a leading role in this national campaign.

**Council Resolves**

1. To pledge support for the Student Action for Refugees (STAR) campaign.
2. To mandate OUSU President and Vice President Access & Academic Affairs to lobby the Vice Chancellor to:
  - a. Offer degrees at 'home rate' prices to Asylum Seekers.
  - b. To make the Oxford Bursary available to Asylum Seekers.
  - c. To pledge Oxford University's support and campaign for a change in government policy that will give Asylum Seekers equal rights to government funding.
3. To make the following clauses Policy Guidelines : Believes 1,3, 4 and Resolves 1.

**Proposed by:** Sarah Pine (Wadham College)

**Seconded by:** David Messling (St John's College)

n. Other Motions

**6. NUS CONFERENCE REPORT 2013**

**Council Notes:**

1. That OUSU is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS).
2. That OUSU sent 7 delegates (the President, the President-elect and 5 elected NUS Delegates) to the NUS Conference on 8 to 10 April 2013.
3. That, during Hilary Term 2013, OUSU Council discussed and voted on several matters which were the subject of motions at the NUS Conference.
4. That Standing Orders Sch 1 M 3.7 requires the President, in consultation with the other delegates, to submit a report to the first meeting of OUSU Council following the NUS Conference describing "the fulfilment of mandates and any other matters which may be of interest".

**Council Resolves:**

1. To receive the 'President's Report on OUSU's Attendance at the NUS Conference 2013' (Appendix A).

**Proposed:** David J. Townsend (St John's College)

**Seconded:** Tom Rutland (Jesus College)

David Townsend (St. John's)

Presented this last time and brought it back so other delegates could answer questions. Yulin is applying for visas and Emily is in London, Aled is in a tutorial.

Kate Colliver (University)

Main reason we asked you to come is to answer concerns with the motion regarding gender balancing at NUS conference. We had a debate and the voting record doesn't match with Council.

David Townsend (St. John's)

I voted along Council lines.

Helena Dollimore (St. Hilda's)

I voted for it. I was not bound on the motion by Council. Took opinion of students I talked to.

Tom Rutland (Jesus)

Voted in favour. Took steer from Council, needed to hear reasoning for motion. Facts brought to OUSU Council were inaccurate.

David Railton (St. Catherine's)

I will read Aled's email since he cannot be here:

Hello OUSU Council, I hope everyone's keeping well and is enjoying the meeting.

As you are listening to this I am currently wading knee deep in contract law in a Homeric two hour tutorial about an 'old coal merchant called Peter Beswick' (Lord Denning's words not mine) and am thus unable to attend the debate surrounding the report about NUS conference so decided to send this bad boy in instead.

I understand there's considerable debate around how Oxford University delegates voted on motion 701 - that to gender balance delegations to next years NUS Conference. Even though NUS conference voted for a secret vote on this motion, I feel that its massively important for students to know how their delegates voted, so I'll ignore the secret vote thingy: I voted for motion 701, despite a straw poll in a Hilary OUSU council showing a clear preference against the motion.

However as I understood it, this vote was not a binding one upon delegates and not one which mandated us to vote in a certain direction. The straw poll, in my view, was just that: a straw poll. In running in October I ran on a platform and with a group of people who were extremely supportive of mechanisms such as this to ensure that structural inequality and unfairness should be fought against tooth and nail, and thus I felt that my own personal feelings on the topic of gender balancing, which I did not hide at all during the election campaign, meant that, as an autonomous NUS delegate, I was able to vote for this motion.

I was elected by the students of this university and it is they who I feel most accountable to, the autonomy of our NUS delegates is something that I see as extremely important, specifically on motions that delegates feel strongly about, and ultimately, as OUSU council were able to bind us, and didn't, I felt that I had been given the autonomy to listen to the arguments and come to a conclusion regarding

motion 701.

So thus, taking my personal views on the current structural inequalities in the society into account, I decided to go against the wishes of the straw poll of OUSU council, and vote for this motion.

Thank you very much for listening to this and may I thank the beautiful David Railton for reading it out so well (if David didn't read it out, to whoever did you're beautiful as well.) I'll rush out of my tutorial at 6:30 and rock on over to Christ Church afterwards as soon as possible so will be free to take any questions from OUSU council members then.

Aled Jones (Corpus Christi)

David Messling (St. John's)

Did anyone in their manifesto state that they were in favour of gender balancing?

Helena Dollimore (St. Hilda's)

No.

Tom Rutland (Jesus)

No.

Jane Cahill (The Queen's)

Motion was billed as a point of discussion. The BDS was an actual vote and not in report and gender balancing was, so it was like it was snuck in.

James Bythe (Brasenose)

What is the sovereignty of NUS delegates and this Council? There isn't a clear line. Let's mandate the President or President-elect to do something.

Rio Jones (Hertford)

A bit scandalous: given indication from Council. Listening to motion wasn't that convincing since it failed. How is OUSU representative if what we vote on is ignored?

Helena Dollimore (St. Hilda's)

If OUSU wanted to make it binding, they should have and it only fell by a small margin at NUS conference. There was a NUS vote on secret ballots, I voted against it. I'm happy to be open about how I voted.

Tom Rutland (Jesus)

We asked for a steer and we wanted to hear NUS arguments. It could have been amended as binding. We would take it into account and we did.

David Townsend (St. John's)

There was a larger question on gender balancing and zone conferencing. My recommendation for Tom that all motions to OUSU Council for NUS delegates should be binding. On balance, it was better to have a binding vote.

Jack Matthews (University)

Do you recognize that the difference between a straw poll and a binding vote is very small? Are you a member of the representative body that votes politically on this issue?

David Townsend (St. John's)  
No.

Tom Rutland (Jesus)  
Yes. I disagree that a straw poll is quite small.

Jack Matthews (University)  
Do you think people would have voted differently?

Jane Cahill (The Queen's)  
Yes. I think so.

Helena Dollimore (St. Hilda's)  
People would have wanted to go back to their Common Rooms. I'm a member of the Labour Party, but I'm a strong supporter of gender quotas. The first position I held was on a gender quota.

Patrick \_\_\_\_\_ (Jesus)  
Can we have assurance that this won't happen in the future. It was a waste of time and misleading for Council.

David Townsend (St. John's)  
It is your decision what to do with a motion. These were brought in on the initiative of the NUS Delegation. Ultimately, it is your decision.

Chris Grey (Merton)  
Disagree with the delegates, it is a shame that we didn't bind you. It isn't Council's responsibility. It is yours if we should make it binding or not.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT:**

To add to Resolves

2)...mandate the President to produce guidelines for NUS delegates for the future, explaining the balance behind Council's sovereignty and manifestos, and bringing those guidelines to council.

**Proposed: James Blythe (Brasenose)**  
**Seconded: David Messling (St. John's)**

Anya Metzger (Wadham)  
There is a clause that if there is something in a manifesto, that supersedes Council.

David Townsend (St. John's)  
I do not take this as friendly. Guidelines are too woolly and I am happy to sit down and write more specifics.

James Blythe (Brasenose)  
That is what I want David to do. Let's sit down so this doesn't happen again.

Helena Dollimore (St. Hilda's)

When we stood, there wasn't an NUS agenda, so we couldn't have known what to put in our manifestos.

David Messling (St. John's)

How does Council binds delegates? When is Council discussing or binding?

**CHANGE AMENDMENT:**

Add to Resolves:

2)...mandate the president to produce guidelines for NUS delegates for the future, explaining circumstances in which NUS delegates are bound by council.

David Townsend (St. John's)

I accept that as friendly.

David Messling (St. John's)

General point, there is a differing opinion of NUS delegates responsibilities. I don't understand an autonomous delegate. Technically, Council didn't bind you, but as a representative, you convey the feeling of your constituents. I hope this will clear it up for the future.

Jane Cahill (The Queen's)

Quite unfair, delegates should not assume that the people in the room have talked to their students. There wasn't the time or ability to talk about it. It was a discussion and they declared that they were Labour students. If we were open that this was a mandate. I think the delegates have been unfairly treated.

Jack Matthews (University)

I'm disappointed in those who voted against what Council said. A past delegate voted against Council and was chucked out. You were saved on a line. You should be disappointed in yourselves.

Anya Metzger (Wadham)

It is frustrating that a straw poll is a difference. It is sending a feeling and it is not the same as a binding motion.

## **7. IT HAPPENS HERE CAMPAIGN**

**Council Notes:**

1. That OUSU has worked with the Equality and Diversity Unit and the University of Oxford on the Harassment and Bullying Policy to incorporate sexual harassment.
2. That OUSU has been running Sexual Consent discussions since 2011 in Common Rooms, Sports Teams, and local schools.
3. That there is a growing It Happens Here Campaign consisting of Oxford University students, who feel that advocacy and education would be significantly improved if it were to become a permanent OUSU campaign.
4. That, while Standing Orders may no longer be amended, Council wishes the It Happens Here campaign to have the same status as other campaigns.

**Council Believes:**

1. That preventative and restorative interventions need to work in tandem.
2. That survivors of sexual abuse should have proper support from their colleges and university.
3. That awareness raising, education, and training improves structures that support students.
4. That campaigns are stronger when more people get involved and the campaign has institutional support.
5. That It Happens Here should be given the formal status of permanent campaign of OUSU.

**Council Resolves:**

1. To make It Happens Here a permanent campaign of OUSU.
2. To mandate the OUSU Executive to assist, where possible, in terms of mobilising students, providing publicity and liaising with University and College officials who work with survivors of sexual abuse.

**Council Further Resolves:**

1. It Happens Here Campaign shall be a Permanent Campaign of OUSU and shall be treated for all purposes as if it was included in the list of campaigns in Standing Order E (MT 11). All provisions relating to Permanent Campaigns shall as such apply to the It Happens Here Campaign.
2. a. The It Happens Here Working Groups shall be responsible for:
  - i. organising and running sexual consent discussions and Good Lad groups
  - ii. raising awareness of sexual abuse in communities
  - iii. advocating for policies to best support survivors of sexual abuse in the University and colleges
  - iv. reaching out into the larger community by supporting Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre
- b. The It Happens Here Campaign shall have a Coordinating Group, which shall consist of nominated representatives from the campaign's Working Groups and OUSU's Vice President (Women).
- c. The Coordinating Group will elect a chair and secretary annually and any other such organisers as decided by the Coordinating Group.

***Proposed: Suzanne Holsomback (Green Templeton College)***

***Seconded: Laura Nelson (New College)***

Suzanne Holsomback (Green Templeton)

Motion brings a new campaign into existence. It will not be autonomous but will be supported by OUSU with staff and executive time. It will address issues around sexual consent and sexual abuse, an area which OUSU has been doing a lot of work on this year. There will be an outreach branch, a policy branch, and a fundraising branch.

Arianna Tassiarini (St. Anthony's)

How will the campaign interact with Womcam going forward?

Suzanne Holsomback (Green Templeton)

It will be entirely separate, although there is some overlap in personnel.

Katie Colliver (University)  
How can more people get involved?

Suzanne Holsomback (Green Templeton)  
Email me or go on the website, [ithappenshereoxford.co.uk](http://ithappenshereoxford.co.uk).

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)  
How is the committee appointed/elected? How are priorities chosen?

Suzanne Holsomback (Green Templeton)  
Various working groups nominate people to go to the coordinating group. The priorities are chosen by the working groups based on their experience on the ground.

Jack Matthews (University)  
Do we need to change the governing docs?

Suzanne Holsomback (Green Templeton)  
Yes but it can be incorporated into on going work on the byelaws.

Motion passed without opposition.

## **8. ELECTIONS OF DIVISION REPRESENTATIVES**

### **Council Notes:**

1. That OUSU Council currently elects on an annual basis eight student division representatives - one postgraduate and one undergraduate student for each division.
2. That OUSU has been working over the past year to build better connections between department student representatives, division representatives and OUSU.
3. In previous years Division Representative positions have been vacant at the beginning of the academic year and often there has been no handover with outgoing representatives.

### **Council Believes:**

1. That student representatives should be elected by the constituency that they represent.
2. That direct elections provide an opportunity to publicise the existence of student representatives, and build lasting links with students in their division.
3. That direct elections will strengthen the mandate of student division representatives in representing their constituents to their division.
4. That elections should take place before the end of the academic year, in order to enable an effect handover.

### **Council Resolves:**

1. To appoint the 2013/14 division representatives during Trinity term 2013.
2. To appoint division representatives for the 2013-14 academic year by a process of direct election in each division following the procedure laid out in Appendix B.

**Proposed by:** David Messling (St John's College )  
**Seconded by:** Christopher Gray (Merton College)

David Messling (St. John's)

Motion for division reps to be elected by the students in their divisions. We believe this is a better way to elect the representations and have contact with their constituents. They are reps of the students, not reps from OUSU. This is a one year thing, if no one gets elected, we'll look at it next year.

Arianna Tassinari (St. Antony's)  
And postgraduate taught students?

David Messling (St. John's)

We talked and were in favour of handover for division wide representation, so continuity isn't lost.

Motion passed no opposition.

## **9. SOLIDARITY WITH 'SUSSEX AGAINST PRIVATIZATION' CAMPAIGN**

### **Council Notes:**

1. In May 2012, the University of Sussex announced that 235 non-academic jobs, which represents over 10 percent of the workforce, would be outsourced to the highest private bidder. This decision was unilaterally announced by the University management, with no student consultation, and next to no consultation with the 235 workers and trade-unions concerned.
2. Whereas currently, any surplus generated from the provision of services has been reinvested in the University's facilities; privatization would see these surpluses channelled into the hands of private companies and investors. For the 235 workers affected, privatization will mean reduced job security, the handing of control over pensions to private companies, and the deterioration of pay terms, working hours and conditions.
3. In response, students and staff have joined together in the 'Sussex Against Privatization' campaign. They are demanding:
  1. A complete halting of the ongoing bidding process and end to the entire privatization program, effective immediately;
  2. A commission of students, staff and lecturers to be formed, with full remit to re-evaluate procedures and channels for holding management accountable as well as reviewing and extending student and workers' say in these decisions;
  3. An end to the intimidation that senior and middle management have used to deter students and workers for airing and acting on their concerns.
4. Up until now, negotiations, demonstrations, motions and petitions have failed to spur management to halt the bidding process. In light of this, unions representing affected workers decided to conduct indicative strike-ballots: 93% of Unite members and 75% of UCU members have voted in favour of taking industrial action over the privatization process.

5. The Campaign has been supported by, among others, the University of Sussex Students' Union, SOAS Students' Union, and the National Union of Students (NUS). A range of public figures have also expressed solidarity including Noam Chomsky, Ken Loach, Owen Jones, Vandana Shiva, and Will Self.

**Council Believes:**

1. Publicly funded education is worth defending.
2. The decision to bring private providers into the education sector reflects a larger ideological push by this and previous governments to marketise education as a consumer good.

**Council Resolves:**

1. To issue a public statement expressing its solidarity with the 'Sussex Against Privatization' campaign.
2. To send £150 to the Campaign's Hardship Fund.<sup>7</sup>
3. To make the following clauses Policy Guidelines: Believes 1 and 2.

**Proposer:** *Shozab Raza (St Antony's College)*

**Secunder:** *Arianna Tassinari (St Antony's College)*

Shozab Raza (St. Antony's)

235 of jobs at University of Sussex were outsourced. Without sourcing, profit has been introduced and kept by outside companies. No control of pensions. Workers were against privatisation, as well as students and many faculty members. Petitions for support, but management hasn't changed their mind. Pop-up unions have appeared and most members are part of the pop-up unions and they are planning on striking and the funds would go to supporting those workers.

**POINT OF INFO**

Katie Colliver (University)

Might be difficult if we as a charity give to another charity that conflicts with our charitable objects. It would have to go to the OUSU trustee board

David Messling (St. John's)

Can you link how the privatisation of workers links to education?

Shozab Raza (St. Antony's)

These are service jobs. Surplus from university is put back into university. When it is privatised, it stays with that organisation.

Alex Bartram (Balliol)

Resolves is to send £150. What will that do?

Shozab Raza (St. Antony's)

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<sup>7</sup> Should workers decide to strike, this fund will be used to support those represented by the recently created Pop Up Union. Given that their dues are only 50p/month, they do not have the funds to cover for lost pay. This fund is also used to support students facing internal fines for supporting the campaign.

Since most just joined unions, they don't have the striking funds, so this goes to that for the workers to live. The hardship fund contributes to students' internal fines.

Alex Bartram (Balliol)

I understand why it exists. What about the £150?

Shozab Raza (St. Antony's)

It is the recommended amount.

Anya Metzger (Wadham)

Can you clarify points about education?

Shozab Raza (St. Antony's)

We are talking about the education sector and privatisation. It happens here in some colleges. Working conditions in education section affects education.

Nick Cooper (St. John's)

Why aren't the larger unions supporting them?

Shozab Raza (St. Antony's)

Most UNITE and UCU members are in favour. UNISON will not support.

Jack Matthews (University)

Concerns about the precedence it sets and the road it leads us down if we can even do this. We don't know what this organisation is? It is illegal for a charity to donate to another charity? We don't know if we can do this. This should be voted down or retracted until we have a confirmation from the trustees and information from you about the organisation.

Arianna Tassinari (St. Antony's)

Outsourcing non-academic jobs is done to contain costs in-line with funding cuts, so the two are related. Legality of sending funds should be looked at, but it shouldn't be shut down

Katie Colliver (University)

I was not making a point, I was making a statement of fact. Perhaps we amend to say 'if possible' to send funds, if Council is okay with us looking into practicalities?

Chris Grey (Merton)

Vote how you feel and we'll send it if we can.

Shozab Raza (St. Antony's)

OUSU has charitable purposes and cares about education sector, so this falls in our charitable remit. Past government and union regulations mentioned representation.

David Messling (St. John's)

Critique that the University might say that outsourcing could do it more cheaply and help do core education better. But that the workers say that it will not be good for their working conditions, not always best for universities to do this.

Shozab Raza (St. Antony's)  
Workers all support the strike.

Jack Matthews (University)  
Have concerns, it is my opinion that OUSU working so hard to raise funds don't want their funds to go elsewhere.

Motion falls, 13 against, 12 for, 9 abstentions.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A - PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON OUSU'S ATTENDANCE AT THE NUS CONFERENCE 2013

OUSU is affiliated to the National Union of Students. Policy for the National Union of Students is set at its annual national Conference; in 2013 the Conference occurred between 8 and 10 April in Sheffield.

OUSU is entitled to send 7 delegates to the NUS Conference: 2 are *ex officio* (the President, who acts as Lead Delegate for organisational purposes, and the President-elect); the other 5 are elected specifically as NUS Delegates in the annual elections in Michaelmas Term.

The OUSU delegates to the NUS Conference 2013 were:

- *Ex officio* David J. Townsend (St John's College), President and Lead Delegate
- *Ex officio* Tom Rutland (Jesus College), President-elect
- Emily Cousens (Wadham College)
- Eleanor Davidson (New College)
- Helena Dollimore (St Hilda's College)
- Aled Jones (Corpus Christi College)
- Yulin Zhang (Wolfson College)

Unfortunately Eleanor Davidson was unable to attend the NUS Conference due to illness.

OUSU Standing Order Sch 1 M 3.7 requires the President to report back to the next meeting of OUSU Council after the NUS Conference, describing "the fulfilment of mandates and any other matters which may be of interest". This is that report.

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During the course of Hilary Term 2013, OUSU Council discussed material relating to the following motions which were on the agenda for the NUS Conference.

- Motion 301: Targets in campaign for integrated access agreements
- Motion 312a: Reinstate the Post-Study Work visa route
- [Motion 404: Tax avoidance]
- [Motion 405: Child poverty]
- [Motion 414: Sex and relationship education]
- [Motion 423: Boycott, divestment and sanctions]
- Motion 603: Anti-early release campaign
- Motion 701: Proportion of female delegates

Some of these motions were placed on the agenda as a result of OUSU Council itself voting to submit them, others were on the agenda because they had been submitted by feeder committees which take place in advance of the NUS Conference itself. Due to the large number of motions on the agenda for the NUS Conference, not every motion was

discussed: those which were not discussed due to the allotted time elapsing are in brackets above; no vote was held on these motions.

In respect of the motions which were discussed and put to a vote, OUSU Council's vote in advance of the NUS Conference, the OUSU delegates' vote at NUS Conference, and the final result of the motion at NUS Conference are as follows:

- Motion 301: Targets in campaign for integrated access agreements  
OUSU Council: Voted in favour (with no one opposing) 7th Week HT13 (27-02-13)  
OUSU's NUS Delegates: 6 voted in favour  
Result at NUS Conference: The motion was passed
- Motion 312a: Reinstate the Post-Study Work visa route  
OUSU Council: Voted in favour (with no one opposing) 7th Week HT13 (27-02-13)  
OUSU's NUS Delegates: 6 voted in favour  
Result at NUS Conference: The motion was passed
- Motion 603: Anti-early release campaign  
OUSU Council: Voted in favour (with no one opposing) 5th Week HT13 (13-02-13)  
OUSU's NUS Delegates: 6 voted in favour  
Result at NUS Conference: The motion was passed
- Motion 701: Proportion of female delegates  
OUSU Council: Indicative poll (not formally binding) 44 against, 17 for, 11 abstentions 7th Week HT13 (27-03-13)  
OUSU's NUS Delegates: 2 voted against (Townsend and Zhang), 3 voted in favour (Dollimore, Jones and Rutland), 1 abstained (Cousens)

Result at the NUS Conference: The motion was defeated

One OUSU delegate spoke at the NUS Conference. Yulin Zhang spoke in proposition of Motion 312 (Reinstate the Post-Study Work visa route); nobody spoke in opposition of the motion, due in no small part to the eloquence of Delegate Zhang!

\*\*\*\*\*

I would like to thank my fellow OUSU delegates for their good humour and good fellowship both before and during the Conference. In particular, I want to thank Tom Rutland for shouldering some of the organisational responsibilities in the 2 weeks immediately before the Conference while I was out of the country on other OUSU business.

I would like to extend my best wishes to individual members of OUSU who, of their own volition, travelled to the Conference to take part in some of the fringe activities even though they were not themselves official delegates; Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln College)

and Arianna Tassinari (St Antony's College) were in this number. Deserving of special mention, however, is Jack Matthews (University College), a registered Observer at the NUS Conference and the founder of They Work for Students, whose longstanding interest in and scrutiny of the NUS is without equal.

Finally I would like to thank Mama's Moroccan Grill, Sheffield for their excellent chicken tibs.

David J. Townsend

President

21 April 2013

## APPENDIX B - ELECTING DIVISION REPRESENTATIVES

1. The deadline for nominating candidates shall be noon on Thursday of 5<sup>th</sup> Week.
2. The details of nominated candidates will be announced within 48 hours after the close of nominations and will publicised on Division and Department mailing lists.
3. Polling shall take place from 8am Tuesday - 6pm Thursday of 6<sup>th</sup> Week.
4. The Returning Officer shall resolve complaints about the election process.
5. If a position remains vacant after direct elections, then an election will take place in Council.
6. The Division Representative term in office shall begin from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> Week Trinity term for one academic year.

### Activism and Campaigning

1. The Returning Officer shall produce guidelines on campaigning for the candidates.
2. Violation of these guidelines may result in a nominated candidate being removed from the ballot at the discretion of the Returning Officer.

### Positions

Humanities Undergraduate Representative  
Humanities Postgraduate Representative  
MPLS Undergraduate Representative  
MPLS Postgraduate Representative  
Medical Sciences Undergraduate  
Medical Sciences Postgraduate Representative  
Social Sciences Undergraduate Representative  
Social Sciences Postgraduate Representative

## **APPENDIX C - THE VAN NOORDEN INDEX: STATEMENT FROM COMMON ROOM PRESIDENTS**

Every year the Estate's Bursars Committee's College Finance Working Group releases an index of cost inflation for Oxford colleges, known as VNI. This statement from Common Room Presidents is intended to raise some concerns with the calculation of this figure, as well as its application by colleges during rent negotiations. We have proposed some solutions to this concern and look forward to working with the relevant parties to resolve these.

### *Transparency*

Our first concern is that there is a lack of transparency when deciding VNI. Although the committee have been more open in recent years, and have published a breakdown of VNI, it is difficult to calculate the relevance of VNI for one's own college with the figures provided, for a number of reasons.

1. Changes in provision across colleges. The Bar in Balliol is run solely by the JCR, which absorbs all its cost increases. Often college bars are closed for renovation. Many colleges provide kitchen facilities for undergraduates whilst others do not, and many colleges undertake building works that affect provisions for students.
2. Conflation of categories. The SCR staff, whose costs are not relevant for students, are included in Hall and bar staff. Laundry and Cleaning are categorised together, despite the fact that many students pay for their own laundry within colleges.
3. Unclear categories. Under 'value' it is not clear if this is 'direct cost' or 'net cost'. If it is 'direct cost' it unclear why, under bar supplies, students at colleges with well-managed bars should be affected by cost of supplies in other bars and vice versa.
4. Unlabelled expenses. Under 'Administration' costs, 'other' costs remain unexplained.

As a result the figure either has to be accepted by negotiating JCRs or rejected entirely, which is an extreme position for Common Rooms to find themselves in during discussions. Greater transparency in the process by which the VNI is generated would greatly help common rooms in their discussions. It would make it a figure which could be recommended by the Student Union.

### *VNI in Rent Negotiations*

CR Presidents urge Bursars on the working group to be as transparent as possible with regard to the figures the college has contributed to the Working Group's calculations. It is also important that, where possible, consistency is used in which figures are adopted for the purpose of negotiations.

CR Presidents believe that in principle there are varying ways of measuring inflation and support a more nuanced use of the different figures as appropriate, in contrast to sole reliance on VNI. Using different figures, which are published online every month, to inform discussions allows for prior knowledge about the expectations of negotiations, and reduces conflict. This happens, for example, at St. Edmund Hall. With this in mind, the

VNI figure should be made similarly transparent, so that it can be used in conjunction with other figures to inform discussion: greater transparency allows for a smoother negotiation process.

**Proposals:**

- That the OUSU President be allowed to represent JCR interests at the Working Group
- That the Report of the Working Group be made public
- That a more detailed breakdown of VNI be made available, not only general categories
- That college bursars understand the complications in taking VNI figures as authoritative indicator for rent increases

Yours sincerely,

**Hugh Baker, Hertford JCR President**

**Andrew Butler, Trinity JCR President**

**Alex Bartram, Balliol JCR President**

**James Blythe, Brasenose JCR President**

**Jane Cahill, The Queen's College JCR President**

**Jahnvi Emmanuel, Wadham SU President**

**James Newton, Keble JCR President**

**Edward Nickell, Exeter JCR President**

**Thomas Pope, St. Hugh's JCR President**

**Andrew Rogers, Jesus JCR President**

**Nicole Sparkes, Merton JCR President**

**Patricia Stephenson, Corpus Christi JCR President**

**Margery Infield, St. Edmund Hall JCR President**

**Elizabeth Stockdale, St. Peter's JCR President**

**William Valori, Worcester JCR President**

**David White, Pembroke JCR President**

**Arthur Wakeley, Lincoln JCR President**