

Should LSESU disaffiliate from the NUS?

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This Union Notes:

The National Union of Students (NUS) does not directly represent students through its officers being elected by just two representatives from each constituent university or college union.

Of the 75 motions that were submitted to the 2014 NUS national conference, only 41 were voted on by the two delegates from each university or college while the remaining 34 were remitted and voted on by the NUS National Executive Council (NEC). The NEC also voted on 20 other motions that its officers submitted to itself.

It cost LSESU £34,785 to be affiliated to the NUS in the 2013/2014 academic year and this amount will increase in the future.

Other organisations such as UNiDAYS and Save the Student offer deals and discounts to students that are accessible without having to pay a fee such as that paid for NUS Extra Cards.

The universities of: Aston, Cardiff Metropolitan, Dundee, Glasgow, Imperial College London, Southampton and St. Andrew's are currently unaffiliated to the NUS.

This Union Believes:

The vast majority of the 7 million students represented by the NUS have minimal awareness of let alone affinity to the organisation and its work.

The NUS makes little to no effort to engage with the students it represents and provide them with a simple way of shaping its policies and getting involved in its campaigns. The NUS therefore only truly works for the existing bureaucratic elite of its executive which has voting control of more than half of all motions.

The NUS regularly adopts policies on controversial issues which have little to do with improving student life and which alienate many of its members. Examples include the passing of: Amendment 101c in the 2014 national conference ("Make opposition to UKIP and the nationalist right a central part of our campaigning in the run up to the general election" (2. National Union of Students, 2014)), a Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions policy against Israel by the NEC in its 2014 meeting, and the

passing of motion 314 in the same meeting calling for “full public ownership of the banking sector and the creation of a publicly owned banking service (1. National Union of Students, 2014)”.

The NUS does not provide value for money in terms of the representation and voice it gives to its student community.

The amount of money saved annually from disaffiliating from the NUS (a minimum of £34,785) ought to be spent on mitigating the loss of sponsorship funds suffered by the AU. Any remaining funds shall be distributed equally amongst society budgets based on membership numbers alone.

This Union Resolves:

To disaffiliate from the NUS and not to consider reaffiliation until such time that it shows itself to be a democratic organisation that is adequately representative and accountable to its membership.

To request that the Sabbatical Officers of LSESU make efforts to engage with those of other unaffiliated student unions and consider with them the possibility of creating a rival organisation to the NUS that is democratic and accountable to the students which it represents.

References

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