

C2 Delivering Justice for Students

Proposer: Jane Baston (York)

Agenda item: C Resolutions of Executive Committee Priorities

Summary

This year has seen students pushed back into high-cost campus accommodation, left with minimal financial support from the government and a lack of wellbeing support. This resolution identifies some key areas for the Young Greens to campaign on to deliver justice for students.

1 The Young Greens notes:

- 2 • The FE and HE sectors are experiencing a financial crisis like never
3 before. The effects of neoliberal marketisation is causing senior managers
4 to push financial risk off onto students and staff.
- 5 • In light of the financial crisis, and the over-reliance on tuition fees,
6 many universities are using metrics or hidden evaluation techniques to
7 implement large scale changes to their courses, shutting whole departments
8 and making large numbers of staff redundant.
- 9 • Throughout the pandemic the government has offered very little support to
10 students, instead leaving financial and wellbeing support to the
11 discretion of individual institutions.
- 12 • According to the NUS three in five students say that Coronavirus has had
13 some degree of impact upon their income.¹ Students have faced increasing
14 financial difficulties this year with around a fifth of students have
15 fallen into rent arrears with their landlord and a similar portion have
16 fallen behind on utility bill payments.
- 17 • Students have been increasingly isolated due to the lack of socialising
18 which has exacerbated poor mental health and wellbeing. Universities
19 provide inadequately funded mental health support that is often
20 overwhelmed
- 21 • Online teaching has been something that disabled students have campaigned
22 for in order to improve their access to their education.

23 The Young Greens believes:

- 24 • That due to the neoliberal model of university funding, students are being
25 treated like cash cows, being milked through sky high rent on student
26 accommodation and extortionate tuition fees.
- 27 • Education should be free and accessible for all.
- 28 • That campaigning for reduced tuition fees strengthens the narrative that
29 education is a commodity that can be paid and has a monetary value.
- 30 • That metrics should not be used to determine the worth of a course or use
31 to make decisions regarding the employment of staff.
- 32 • That universities are institutions for the public good and shouldn't be
33 focused on creating profits that necessitates severance of staff.
- 34 • That students deserve full living grants and proper financial support that
35 allows them to focus on their studies while living a decent standard of
36 life.
- 37 • That many decisions taken by university senior management have been to
38 protect the financial interest of their institutions and not the safety
39 and wellbeing of their staff and students.

40 The Young Greens resolves:

- 41 • To campaign for the abolition of tuition fees, the introduction of living
42 rents for all, and a write off of student debt.
- 43 • To stand in solidarity and campaign with UCU against any job cuts at
44 universities across England and Wales.
- 45 • To stand in solidarity with student rent strikers pushing back on poor
46 treatment of students and staff.
- 47 • To campaign with disabled students to ensure that education is accessible.
48 That online alternatives made necessary due to the pandemic are kept and
49 that appropriate support is put in place.
- 50 • To campaign for robust academic support and simple mitigation policies for
51 all students.
- 52 • To campaign for universities to prioritise student wellbeing by providing
53 comprehensive welfare support and mental health services.
- 54 • To campaign for the democratisation of universities where staff and
55 students are properly enabled to make and enact decisions at all levels of
56 the university.

57 ¹ [https://www.nus.org.uk/articles/student-renters-face-a-financial-crisis-due-](https://www.nus.org.uk/articles/student-renters-face-a-financial-crisis-due-to-the-pandemic)
58 [to-the-pandemic](https://www.nus.org.uk/articles/student-renters-face-a-financial-crisis-due-to-the-pandemic)

Supporters

Billy Wassell (Cheltenham Green Party); Rosie Rawle (Oxfordshire Green Party); Daron (Brighton / Oxford)