

**Imperial College Union**

**NUS DELEGATE INSTRUCTIONS**

*A note by the External Relations Working Group*

**Background**

Shortly after students voted to re-affiliate to the NUS last autumn, the Council created a job description for our NUS National Conference delegates to ensure that our delegation is broadly representative of the student body of Imperial College. The job description of NUS (and ULU) delegates is shown below:

32. *Delegates elected to represent the Union to the National Union of Students (NUS) and the University of London Union (ULU) shall:*
- i. Attend all Union relevant meetings and represent the views of the Union to the NUS National Conference and the ULU Council.*
  - ii. Work with all other Union delegates to support motions that the Union Council believes further the aims, objects and policies of the Union.*
  - iii. Work with all other Union delegates to prevent motions that the Union Council believes work against the aims, objects and policies of the Union from being passed.*
  - iv. Be forbidden from joining any established political or religious faction.*
  - v. Where clarification is required on matters concerning 32.*

There are over 150 motions and amendments being presented to NUS National Conference in Blackpool later this month and final drafts and revisions have not yet been published. Three Imperial students attended the compositing session last weekend that essentially merged duplicate motions together and decided which amendments should be accepted. I am delighted to report that, thanks to representation by our delegates, our canoes and international medical students' amendments made the cut.

Last Monday evening the delegates met to discuss what motions we should support and oppose and to what extent the "whip" should be applied. A summary of our recommendations is shown in Appendix A and B.

**Matters for decision**

There are four matters that the delegates wish to raise with Union Council for further consultation and a clear steer on how we should tackle these issues:

1. Higher education funding - we propose the following principles should be adopted when considering all motions on this subject:
  - a. To oppose the "marketisation" of higher education,
  - b. To oppose an increase in the cap beyond its current ceiling of £3K,
  - c. To recognise some of the benefits the recently introduced funding system has produced; support for poorer students has increased massively and students are no longer obliged to pay upfront fees,
  - d. To acknowledge that increased taxation is not the answer and does not wash well with the public,
  - e. To support the "Admission Impossible" national campaign,
  - f. To oppose the organisation of a national demonstration this year and to focus on more sophisticated targeted lobbying tactics until 2009.
2. Activities representation – should the NUS Executive elect an activities officer? If so, should he or she be a full-time or part-time officer?
3. No platform policy – should ICU take a line on the NUS's no platform policy, which does not allow certain (usually extremist) political groups to speak at conference?
4. NUS Extra – should ICU support NUS Extra's strategy of seeking exclusive discounts from retailers that previously offered discounts to all students.
5. Not for politics, just for students – should we align ourselves with this quasi-faction?