



NUS NATIONAL
CONFERENCE



POLICY
2017



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All policy submissions have been reproduced without alternation or editorialisation with the exception of explicit language.

Questions regarding spelling, grammar and interpretation should be directed to the relevant policy author.

Constitution, Regulations and By-Laws

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National Union of Students Incorporated

A.C.T. Reg. No. A 01837

NOTICE OF AMENDMENTS TO THE NUS CONSTITUTION REGULATIONS AND BY –LAWS

Notice is given that at the annual meeting of National Conference to be held on 11th to 15th December 2017 it is intended that the following amendments be proposed to the constitution regulations and by-laws:

CRBL 1.1: Record those Delegations

Preamble:

Delegations are a mechanism by which the powers of different bodies or persons within an organisation are managed.

The National Executive within the NUS can delegate its powers but a comprehensive record of these delegations is not kept which represents a governance risk to the NUS.

Platform:

Delegations within the NUS should be clearly recorded.

Actions:

The National Executive will in the use of its delegations power under R28.2 maintain a list of “matters reserved to the National Executive” which are the matters it has not delegated to any Committee or Officer.

The National Executive will in the use of its delegations power under R28.2 maintain a register of delegations that will record what functions of National Executive have been delegated to Committees and Officers.

The National Executive will in the use of its delegations power under R28.2 not delegate:

1. this power of delegation;
2. the powers, authorities, duties or functions that are required to be exercised by the National Executive by written law;
3. any matter that requires an absolute majority or special majority vote of the National Executive; and
4. any matter determined by the constitution, regulations, by-laws or policy to not be delegatable.

Moved: Liam O’Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.2: Term Limits

Preamble:

The current provision relating to the term limits for NUS positions does not clearly encompass all State Officer positions and General National Executive Members. It is proposed a much clearer term limit be adopted to clarify this.

Amendment:

That R32.1 be deleted and replaced with:

32.1 A person who has been elected to a position in NUS three times in total is not eligible to nominate as an officer. Further a person may not hold the same office more than twice.

Moved: Liam O’Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.3: Removal from Office

Preamble:

The NUS Constitution currently does not make provision for the removal from office of its officers except for failing to submit reports or turn up to meetings. An officer currently may be removed otherwise by calling for a special meeting of National Conference to remove them. This prevents any form of removal from misconduct or adverse behaviour.

This amendment proposes to establish a process for removal from office.

Amendment:

That R55 be deleted and replaced with:

R55 Removal

55.1 Officers may be removed by the body that elected or appointed them by resolution passed by an absolute majority.

55.2 The National Executive may remove an officer by a resolution passed by a two thirds majority ($\frac{2}{3}$) upon the recommendation of the Discipline Committee.

55.3 The Discipline Committee shall comprise three persons, who shall be elected by a seventy five (75) percent majority of the National Executive, for a term of one (1) year. One of the persons elected shall not identify as male.

55.4 For the election each member of the Discipline Committee shall be elected in a single ballot, not with the use of proportional representation and to be elected a person must receive a seventy (75) percent majority in place of a simple majority.

55.5 Casual vacancies in the Discipline Committee shall be filled on the same basis as 55.4.

55.6 Where a member of the Discipline Committee is subject to the processes of the Discipline Committee then the National Executive shall elect another member of the Discipline Committee.

55.7 A quorum of the Discipline Committee shall be two (2) members.

55.8 The Discipline Committee shall be permitted to determine procedures to be used in its deliberation. These procedures shall include:

The calling of meetings;

Meeting by telephone or in a manner other than in person;

Submitting of written reports of the meetings and decisions of the Disputes Committee to the National Executive, including minority reports where relevant;

Keeping of proper records of charges, proceedings and decisions.

55.10 The Discipline Committee must at all times ensure procedural fairness.

55.11 The National General Secretary is to provide every assistance practical to the Discipline Committee as requested. Where the National General Secretary is subject to the processes of the Discipline Committee the National Executive shall appoint another National Officer to assist the Discipline Committee.

55.12 The Discipline Committee processes shall be commenced by providing an allegation of misconduct to one of the members of the Discipline Committee.

55.13 The member of the Discipline Committee in receipt of an allegation of misconduct shall forward the allegation within seven (7) days to all members of the Discipline Committee and the Officer accused of misconduct.

55.14 Misconduct shall comprise any of the following:

A breach of the constitution, regulations or by-laws;

A breach of the Act or the Regulations;

Conduct unbecoming of an Officer;

Conduct that brings the NUS or its reputation into disrepute;

Making a false statement or declaration, knowing it to be false or not believing it to be true during the course of any Discipline Committee process.

55.15 The Discipline Committee must:

Hear the matter referred to it as expeditiously and informally as possible while ensuring procedural fairness;

Give the Officer(s) involved written details of the matter;

Give the Officer(s) involved one (1) weeks notice of any meeting of the Committee hearing the matter, or any lesser period of notice which is adequate in the circumstances;

Give the Officer(s) involved the real opportunity to answer the matter; and

Report to the National Executive within one (1) month of the receipt of any matter.

55.16 The Discipline Committee may inform itself of any matter that it considers relevant to issues referred to it in any way it sees appropriate, including the conduct of its own investigations, the seeking of advice and information from any source it believes relevant, and the taking of evidence from any person or member.

55.16 The Discipline Committee in its report must provide a proposed action in relation to the misconduct for National Executive to ratify.

55.17 National Executive must meet within seven (7) days of a report from the Discipline Committee and resolve the actions to be taken in relation to the alleged misconduct, these actions may include:

1. Removal from Office by 55.2;
2. Suspension from Office for a period of time;
3. Revocation of privileges including remuneration;
4. Exclusion from any buildings, premises or event occupied or run by NUS;
5. A formal written warning; and
6. No action.

Moved: Liam O’Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.4: Relationship with CISA and CAPA

Preamble:

Due to NUS’s recognition of the Council of International Students Australia as the representative organisation of International Students, the position of National International Officer should be questioned given a number of campuses are paying twice for the representation of International Students.

It is therefore proposed to abolish the position of National International Officer and grant invitation to National Executive meetings to CISA and CAPA.

Amendment:

That all instances of “National International Officer” be deleted including R31.1 (j) and B80.

That R27 be amended to insert:

27.3 The President of the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations Inc. and the Council of International Students Australia shall be invited to every meeting of National Executive.

Moved: Liam O’Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.5: Campus Resolutions

Preamble:

A campus resolution is something currently prescribed in the NUS Regulations and By-Laws. However these mechanisms have never been used and for the sake of clarity around decision making power should be deleted, dissatisfied member organisations can call for a Special National Conference if they wish to overturn a decision.

Amendment:

Amend R26 by inserting:

“26.4 for the interpretation of this regulation “any resolution that could be passed at a meeting of National Conference (except a special resolution)” includes a resolution that removes a National or State Officer or amends the By-Laws.”

Amend B56 by deleting the word “Division” and inserting “Part”.

Delete B58 and replace with:

58.1 The votes of each member organisation shall be the same number of votes as they are entitled to cast at a meeting of National Conference and these votes shall be cast en bloc by a resolution of a simple majority of the governing body of that member organisation.

58.2 The governing body of the member organisation may not delegate this function and must resolve to either vote 'for', 'against' or 'abstain' on the resolution.

58.3 Only member organisations that had delegates accredited at the most recent National Conference may vote in a campus resolution.

58.4 Member organisations may only exercise their votes by completing the voting form circulated.

58.3 The voting form must:

- (a) include the details of the actual votes cast at the meeting;
- (b) be signed by the President or the equivalent officer of the member organisation;
- (c) be accompanied by a copy of the minutes of the meeting; and
- (d) be sent to the National General Secretary by certified mail, courier, fax or email, or be hand delivered.

58.4 Members may alter their votes in accordance with a subsequent decision of the member organisation by the submission of a fresh voting form before the close of voting.

Delete B59.

In B87.6 replace "campus resolution" with "an absolute majority of National Executive"

Moved: Liam O'Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.6: Number of Delegates

Preamble:

The introduction of the demand driven system to Universities has rapidly increased the number of students at all Universities across Australia. This has in turn affected the number of delegates elected by each member organisation, where there was previously a great spread in the number of delegates elected by each organisation nearly all campuses are electing seven delegates.

This also has resource implications for a lot of student organisations as the more delegates elected means that more people need to be paid for to be sent to National Conference.

Further a continued concern is the disconnect between decisions of National Conference and the leadership of membership organisations, it is proposed to establish campus Presidents as ex-officio delegates based upon the model used in NUS UK.

Amendment:

That R18.1A be inserted:

R18.1A The President (or equivalent) position of each member organisation shall be an ex-officio delegate to National Conference. Delegates elected in this regulation and R19 shall be in addition to the President (or equivalent) of each member organisation.

R18.1B A President (or equivalent) cannot be elected as an ordinary delegate. In the event that a candidate for election as President is also a candidate for election as delegate, should they be elected as a President they shall be ineligible for election as a delegate and counting in the delegate shall proceed as if that candidate's name did not appear on the ballot paper. All votes cast in favour of the candidate shall immediately be allocated to the candidate next in the order of the voter's preference. Such allocation shall not be considered a transfer.

That R19 be deleted and replaced with:

R19. Number of Delegates

The number of delegates to be elected by each member organisation in addition to their President (or equivalent) is:

EFTSLs	Number of Delegates
1 - 5000	2

5001 - 10000	3
10001 - 15000	4
15001 - 20000	5
20001 - 25000	6
25001 - 30000	7
30001+	8

Where EFTSLs are the EFTSLs of the students represented by the member organisation.

Moved: Liam O’Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.7: Further Education

Preamble:

It is rather unknown but the NUS is responsible for representing students within the TAFE/Further Education Sector in Australia. However this has never been the focus of any particular NUS Officer. In order to resolve this it is proposed to amend the role of the National Education Officer to include responsibility for Further Education

Amendment:

That R35 be deleted and replaced with:

R35. National Higher Education Officer

The National Education Officer:

is the official spokesperson of NUS in the area of higher education and further education (subject to the National President); and

is responsible for the supervision of NUS’s activities in the area of higher education and further education.

That R80.2 be amended to include:

(k) “higher education” refers to studying in a course that will result in the receipt of an award of Australian Qualifications Framework Level 7 or above.

(l) “further education” refers to studying in a course that will result in the receipt of an award of Australian Qualifications Framework Level 6 or below.

That B72 be deleted and replaced with:

B73. National Education Officer

Without limiting R35 and R47.1, the National Education Officer has the following specific responsibilities, in consultation with the National President:

1. higher education research;
2. further education research
3. higher education campaigns;
4. further education campaigns; and
5. responsible for conducting a phone linkup at least 2 times a semester of campus education officers, state Education Vice Presidents as well as campus activists to direct the National Education Officer on campaigns and priorities.

Moved: Liam O’Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.8: Account Signatories

Preamble:

NUS’s Regulation of its finances is quite lax compared to most student organisations. A principle developed within student organisations over many years is that at least two people should sign any payment. Further often the highest employee in the financial management is also a signatory as a fraud prevention measure.

This amendment proposes to fix the account signatories and always require two to sign and enable National Executive to add staff members as signatories.

Amendment:

That R73 and R74 be deleted and replaced with:

R73 Account Signatories

R73.1 All cheques issued by the NUS, or payments made from the NUS's bank accounts must have the approval of two (2) cosignatories.

R73.2 The National President and National General Secretary shall be cosignatories.

R73.3 The National Executive by a resolution passed by an absolute majority may appoint an employee as a cosignatory.

R73.4 If a co-signatory believes the expenditure for which a cheque or payment has been requested is inconsistent with the constitution, regulations, by-laws, standing resolutions, policy or budget, or that no current provisions of the constitution, regulations, by-laws, standing resolutions or policy exist on the matter, they have the right to:

refuse to sign/authorise the cheque or payment;

issue a stop payment on a cheque or payment, until such time the matter has been resolved at a National Executive meeting; or

if a cheque or payment has already been presented, the cosignatory shall advise the National Executive.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.9: Returning Officer**Preamble:**

There exists a typo in the Returning Officer By-Law that needs to be corrected.

Amendment:

Delete B50.2 and replace with

50.2 Nominations close at such time determined by the Returning Officer that shall be 48 hours prior to any ballot.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

CRBL 1.10: Independent Returning Officer**Preamble:**

At the 2016 NUS National Conference the Returning Officer went home after getting in a dispute with the National General Secretary, spilling a Victorian Labor Right touch out at conference. This demonstrated why the consistent appointment of a factional Returning Officer that is associated with a particular political party brings the NUS into disrepute.

If NUS is to mature as an organisation the Returning Officer needs truly independent and all delegates need to be able to rely upon the fact that they are without a bias or agenda for the conference.

Amendment

In B48 add 48.2(c)(iii):

(iii) a member of a registered political party at a Federal, State or Territory level in the last five years;

Moved: Liam O'Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Conrad Hogg (University of Western Australia)

CRBL 1.11: Election of Delegates**Preamble:**

Over the previous years a number of questions have been raised by the Electoral Commission of Western Australia in their conduct of the Curtin Student Guild and UWA Student Guild elections regarding the applicability of campus electoral regulations to the election of NUS Delegates. While the WAEC does apply some rules the lack of clarity arose this year in regards to the ability to conduct a recount after the certification of results. It is proposed that the following be inserted into the NUS Regulations to provide absolute clarity on this matter.

Amendment:

That R18.9 be inserted

18.9 Other than what is specified in this regulation the election of delegates by a member organisation shall be in accordance with the rules prescribed by that member organisation for its annual elections including:

any process for appeals and recounts;

any restrictions on persons other than students represented by that member organisation campaigning in the election or any campaign blackout periods;

the grouping of candidates under a common name and brand for the election;

any restrictions on the content, distribution and form of any campaign material including any limits on expenditure; and

any requirements for a nomination deposit, provided that no deposit for a nomination for a Delegate may be greater than \$10.

however rules of the member organisation regarding the eligibility of candidates shall not apply.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

Administration

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ADMIN 2.1: Transparency of board nominations:

Preamble:

1. Currently board (EG Academic Board, Uni Council etc) nominees are shrouded in secrecy prior to the opening day of election week. This is a hindrance for the nominees in question as they do not know who they are competing against and therefore not able to tailor their campaigns to ensure the best outcome for students. Furthermore, candidates are unable to familiarise themselves with their fellow candidates.
2. The familiarisation between nominees is critical for ensuring there is no corruption as without this transparency, nominees could be 'withdrawn' against their will or before voting day opens unbeknownst to other candidates.
3. Additionally the order of the candidates should be randomised each time students go to vote so that there is no preferential treatment for those who happen to have their name at the top of the ballot.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns any form of corruption within elections.
2. NUS recognises the importance of transparency within elections to guarantee the best outcome for students voting.

Action:

1. NUS proposes that there be a minimum period of a week between closing of nominations and the opening of elections. Candidates may withdraw their nomination at any time inclusive of this week period.
2. NUS proposes that the order of candidate during board elections be randomised so that there is no preferential treatment.

Moved: Lois Villar (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Michael Iroeché (La Trobe University)

ADMIN 2.2: Permit the Park

Preamble:

1. Students currently have to pay large sums of money for parking permits adding additional financial burdens to students who already struggle financially.
2. In addition, students do not enjoy the same parking privileges as staff members do. For example, staff members are currently able to purchase shorter parking permits than students are able to.

3. In addition, for students wanting parking permits, they are required to pay the full amount upfront, causing a serious financial burden for students.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students believes that parking permits should be fair for students and extend the same right to students that staff currently enjoy.
2. The National Union of Students acknowledges that students are in much larger volume in universities than staff, but have considerably more financial problems.
3. The National Union of Students acknowledges that current parking and parking permit prices maybe high and students may be unable to pay the full cost of permits up front.

Action:

1. The National Union of Students, alongside willing Student Unions, will lobby universities to extend parking permits privileges enjoyed by staff to students. This includes allowing students to purchase 90 day, 6 months and 12 months permits.
2. The National Union of Students, alongside willing Student Unions, will lobby universities to introduce payment plans for the parking permits (e.g monthly payments for parking permits).
3. The National Union of Students, alongside willing Student Unions, will write to universities asking them to conduct a review into issues related to parking such as parking fees and permits.

Moved: Michael Iroeché (La Trobe)

Seconded: Annabelle Romano (La Trobe)

ADMIN 2.3: Allow cameras, stop the in camera

Preamble:

As the peak representative body for Australian tertiary education students, NUS should maximise its efforts to increase student engagement nationwide. A core method of doing so is through the student media outlets present at the majority of universities. However, this relationship is primarily dependent on a sufficient degree of accountability and transparency. Two current barriers to student engagement are the high cost for Media Observers to attend National Conference, and regular motions prohibiting audio-visual equipment from recording or broadcasting the outcomes of the Conference. As a result, Media

Observers are not capable of providing the highest quality coverage possible to their university constituencies.

Platform:

1. That NUS affirms its commitment to optimising transparent practices at all times, especially at National Conference.
2. That NUS understands that transparency is crucial for students to fully understand its function, its achievements and its roles.

Action:

1. That National Conference acknowledges the role of Media Observers in recording and disseminating the policies, discussions and other outcomes of the Conference.
2. That National Conference endorses audio-visual recording of the conference for recordkeeping, transparency, accountability, and accurate media reporting.
3. That National Conference embraces new methods of media engagement, such as Periscope, to broadcast the outcome of the Conference and engage students in real time.
4. The National Conference organisers will investigate decreasing the cost for Media Observers which will, in turn, allow for a greater media presence and subsequent engagement with student constituencies.
5. The National Conference organisers will investigate the possibility of livestreaming the National Conference for all students to engage with.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

ADMIN 2.4: Improving ballot processes

Preamble:

1. The secret ballot is one of the most important inventions of modern democracy, and Australia has been a particularly significant champion of it historically. The secret ballot is designed to prevent voter intimidation, a historic feature of the pre-secret ballot era, which disproportionately affected women, the working class and autonomous groups. The entire point of the secret ballot is that it is compulsory in secrecy – that there is no opportunity for potential pressure on people to reveal how they voted, or to hand over their ballots. “Optional secrecy” clearly is not

enough. That is why even photography within ballot rooms is banned by all proper electoral bodies and returning officers.

2. The NUS, while nominally maintaining a secret ballot, allows people to show and hand over their ballot papers under R80.4. This is not only simply not the definition of the secret ballot, but it also defeats most of the purpose of it. The balloting process at NUS is questionable at best, and has generated negative publicity and alarm with students and beyond. The kind of practises at NUS conference – showing people ballot papers and handing over large stacks of ballot papers – would be considered deeply shocking if they happened at a federal or campus election.
3. That said, there are alternatives to a secret ballot. If the NUS feels that the most important thing is the ability for people to transparently know how their representatives (their delegates) voted, than it can move to an open ballot instead. Such a measure could see an open floor vote recorded in a Hansard-type roll call recording. Or, it might see people hand in registered voting slips, electronically and in person, allowing them to be recorded in a report. If NUS feels instead that is not the primary objective, the only option is a secret ballot.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the importance of the secret ballot, the fact that compulsory secrecy is an inherent feature designed to protect intimidation, and the role of both in ensuring a fair vote for all, particularly women, the working class and autonomous groups.
2. NUS recognises that its current procedure under R80.4 is not compliant with this, and that it has a number of alternatives instead.
3. NUS is committed to reforming in some way its ballot procedure.

Action:

1. National Conference directs the National General Secretary to investigate various alternative ballot proposals which either ensure a full secret ballot or a full transparent ballot recordable in a report, and to present the proposal to the next National Conference in 2018.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

ADMIN 2.5: Equity Grants for National Conference

Preamble:

1. As the peak representative organisation for tertiary students in Australia, NUS should be transparent and accountable to its member organisations.
2. As the national annual general meeting of the NUS, National Conference is an integral decision making forum for NUS, and its proceedings should be accessible to as many students as possible.
3. A key barrier to the accessibility of National Conference is the price of non-official observer registration. Students who are not already deeply involved in NUS find it hard to justify shelling out \$225 to go to a conference with seemingly minimal personal benefits, which exacerbates the difficulty of engaging them in these decision making processes.
4. The impact of this is most apparent for interstate and rural students, who can come from campuses that are unable to sufficiently subsidise the numerous costs associated with attending National Conference.
5. This also disproportionality affects students from marginalised groups, for whom NUS conferences are an important way to network and build community with likeminded students.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the importance of engaging with its constituents, the majority of whom are disengaged with its governing processes, especially at National Conference.
2. NUS recognises that the high observer fee associated with National Conference disproportionately affects the ability of students from marginalised backgrounds to engage with student unionism on a national level.
3. NUS acknowledges its own responsibility in ensuring the accessibility of National Conference.

Action:

1. That NUS institute equity grants for students attending National Conference as non-official observers, to be put in place in time for the 2018 National Conference, through a process similar to that which is currently used for Education Conference equity grants.
2. That said equity grants are to be allocated to students on the basis of disadvantage, prioritising:
 - a. students from interstate or rural universities,
 - b. students from marginalised groups,
 - c. and first time attendees.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

ADMIN 2.6: An up-to-date NUS Website

Preamble:

1. The current NUS website contains information that is largely out of date. At the time of writing, the last minutes from National Executive and Office Bearer reports uploaded to the NUS website is from April. There also seem to be no office bearer reports from this year's office bearers available through the NUS website whatsoever.
2. As the peak representative body for students in Australia, NUS must lead by example in ensuring that information about its activities is transparent and easily accessible. In addition to this, NUS should make every effort to remain accountable to its affiliate organisations by ensuring that information about its internal proceedings are made available in a timely manner.
3. It is difficult for campuses to engage with NUS if individuals have no clear way of finding out about NUS' activities. This further lowers the incentive for campus student unions to engage with NUS.

Platform:

1. That NUS acknowledges the importance of having an up to date website in increasing the organisation's legitimacy. An up to date website will also allow NUS to raise the profile of its national campaigns and activities undertaken by its office bearers.
2. That NUS recognises the importance of fostering a culture of accountability and transparency, and acknowledges that this includes ensuring that information about its proceedings are made available to its affiliate organisations and the wider student population. This includes publishing National Conference minutes, National and State Office Bearer reports, and the minutes of National Executive meetings.

Action:

1. That the General Secretary, in collaboration with other National and State Office bearers, as well as National Executive, update the NUS website about current office bearer activities on a monthly basis at the minimum.
2. That the General Secretary uploads the minutes of each National Executive meeting, as well as Office Bearer reports, no later than one week after they are confirmed.

3. That the General Secretary uploads the minutes of National Conference onto its website no longer than a month after the close of the conference.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

ADMIN 2.7: Towards the reestablishment of the environment department

Preamble:

1. Climate change and environmental destruction are rapidly coming to shape the world that we live in. This is particularly pertinent to students and young people, who will live their lives in a world which bears the effects of global warming. Examples of these effects include:
 - a. Air pollution. In Australia alone, air pollution causes approximately 3000 deaths each year. In Sydney alone, about 130 premature deaths are thought to be caused each year by coal-fired power stations.
 - b. Increased intensity of extreme weather events. As the planet warms, hurricanes become more powerful and storms more dangerous. The amount of water that hurricanes and storms pick up is also partially dependent on the temperature of the ocean, and as it warms up levels of flooding increase. In addition, climate change is responsible for increased droughts and heatwaves, and in connection with that longer and more intense bushfire seasons.
 - c. Islands in the Pacific and elsewhere are rapidly becoming unlivable due to climate change. Smaller islands in the Solomon Islands have sunk in the past three years, and island nations such as Tuvalu have seen an exodus of up to 15% due to the harsh conditions for living and crop growth exacerbated by global warming.
 - d. Changed ocean currents, rising sea temperature and ocean acidification all combine, leading to an insufficiency of plankton. This in turn reduces the amount of baitfish in the ocean and as a result of decreases the availability of fish species key to human consumption.
2. The Australian government is closely connected in with the fossil fuels industry. The profits of fossil fuels companies are put before human lives by the government. Both Labor and Liberal regularly give major tax breaks to mining companies, as well as granting approval and funding to destructive projects such as Adani's Carmichael coal mine. It will take

pressure from below, a demonstration that ordinary people in Australia will not stand for this state of play, to shift the situation.

3. Universities around the country invest in fossil fuels. Students have been organising campaigns against investments in fossil fuels, and NUS could play a leading role in supporting and organising campaigns for divestment.
4. Mass sentiment in Australia cuts sharply against the decision of successive governments to allow the continuation of global warming. Nearly 70% of Australians oppose the \$1 billion loan which may be handed to Adani. This indicates that there is room to organise people, and particularly students, against the environmental destruction organised by corporations and the government.
5. NUS is the key body for organising students on an activist basis. It is imperative that the union takes seriously the question of climate change, and organises students to push against it.
6. 2017 has been the last year NUS has had an environment officer. Having no environment department will leave NUS without the ability to take charge of organising political activism around the question of the environment, right at the moment when the campaign against the Adani coal mine needs to escalate.
7. The Environment Officer position, if reestablished, has the potential to play an important role in positioning NUS as the key body organising students in the face of climate change.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises climate change as a serious threat.
2. NUS is committed to organising activism to halt the onset of climate change.

Action:

1. The NUS National Executive will explore re-establishing the position of Environment Officer in 2018.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

Seconded: Chris DiPasquale (NUS LGBTI officer)

ADMIN 2.8: Condemn the ‘Renewal Project’ at UWA

Preamble:

1. On December 2015, the UWA Vice-Chancellor and Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor – Paul Johnson and Dawn Freshwater respectively – announced the ‘Renewal Project’. This project proposed the sacking of 300 staff–100 academics and 200 administrative staff–and the amalgamation of 9 faculties into 4. The merger places UWA with the fewest number of faculties in relation to all its G08 competitors.
2. The university executive attempted to justify the cuts by citing a so-called ‘budget crisis’. In order for UWA to maintain its ‘flexibility’ and ‘innovativeness’, it needed to reduce its cost base. This is despite the fact that university had an operation surplus of 32.4 million in 2015. Plus, there being an exorbitant amount of money invested in executives’ salaries – with the VC earning \$900,000 a year (not including bonuses) - advertising – e.g. “Pursue Impossible” and YouWA – and research.
3. In late August, the executive announced they would sack a further 30 administrative staff. This means the number of jobs lost would increase to 330.
4. Throughout the implementation of the Renewal Project, unionists and left-wing staff members were intimidated for criticising the project, and forced to accept worse contracts. Notably, one Indigenous school staff member was fired for sharing a meme to his colleagues which criticised the VC.
5. At the beginning of 2016, the NTEU organised numerous protests to oppose the renewal. During semester one, education activists set up a campaign group – UWA uncut – to oppose the attacks, as they negatively impacted students. UWA Uncut’s protests were widely attended by both staff and students.
6. In a UWA Student Guild meeting on the 30th of March, a motion was passed which “officially recognised” the Renewal Project and prevented any Guild department from running or supporting future protests against it. The National Independents, the faction which runs the UWA Guild, have shamefully supported some of the biggest cuts in UWA history.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the UWA university executive and opposes the Renewal Project.
2. NUS calls for the immediate reversal of the Renewal Project and the reinstatement of hundreds of jobs.
3. NUS supports the NTEU and UWA Uncut in their resistance to cuts to education at UWA.
4. NUS condemns the UWA Student Guild’s support of the attacks, and their dead-end “negotiating” strategy.

5. NUS recognises the good work carried out by the NTEU and UWA Uncut in opposing the renewal.

Action:

1. NUS will support future resistance against cuts at UWA and other campuses that suffer from restructures.

Moved: Emma Norton (UWA)

Seconded: Madeleine Powell (UNSW)

ADMIN 2.9: 2018 Presidents’ Summit

Preamble:

1. NUS traditionally hosts President’s Summit, an important annual event that provides campus presidents and state branch presidents with valuable opportunities to network with fellow presidents, skillshare, workshop campaigns and discuss key issues in the higher education sector for the year ahead.
2. Higher education is in a state of limbo. Since 2014 the Coalition government has consistently proposed major reform packages which have all subsequently been rejected by the Australian public. While these proposed changes have consumed all of our attention, universities have started to experience some of the deep-rooted problems of the demand driven system which was introduced partially in 2010, and fully in 2012.
3. Is it therefore vital in our stagnant and chronically underfunded higher education system that student organisation presidents are adequately equipped with the skills and knowledge to invoke change and revitalise nationwide discussion of a high quality, equitable and accessible higher education system.
4. The introduction of the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) in 2012 has enabled many student organisations to expand and specialise the services and functions they provide to students.
5. It is important to ensure the long-term duration of these services and functions student organisations provide, and that campus presidents are able to manage the increased infrastructure and human resources demands.
6. Some student organisations across the country have opted to strictly provide services, and no representation functions for students at their universities. These student organisations are often the first to challenge the value of affiliating to the National Union of Students and falsely

determine that they'll receive no added benefit from attending NUS events such as presidents summit.

7. It is also imperative the NUS, as a democratic forum for students interests and affairs, retains a strong relationship with affiliate campuses, and receives their feedback on campaigns and activities of NUS and it's office-bearing team.
8. It is likely as a result of the dual-citizens issue, that there will be a federal election in 2018. With higher education in limbo for years, it's imperative NUS and the leaders of its affiliated campuses have the opportunity at the start of the year to strategise tactics that can be employed in the student movement in 2018 to revitalise discussions surrounding quality higher education.
9. Election or not, 2018 will be an important year for student organisations to be articulating a clear and unified message. It is therefore vital that the NUS office-bearing team, and in addition presidents of Australia's student organisations, are trained to reach out and respond to media to enhance effectiveness of their messages.
10. At the 2017 Presidents' summit, there was a comprehensive media training run by an external facilitator which was regarded by many campus presidents' as a crucial tool in the leadup to their year. It is important that these training sessions are ongoing, and run annually with the new leaders of the student movement.
11. Additionally, Presidents' summit provides the first opportunity for the NUS National Executive to meet in person.
12. The National Executive operates as NUS' Board of Directors, and are charged with giving sound management in governance, finances, hiring of staff, publication of material and implementation of policy passed at NUS National Conference.
13. Upon election, many members of National Executive are unaware of their legal responsibilities as directors of an incorporated organisation, an understanding of the constitution and regulations of NUS, and how to interpret the finances of NUS.
14. Most student organisations that operate under a student Board of Directors will provide professional legal and governance training to commencing student directors.
15. It's common for members of the NUS National Executive to be unable to attend Presidents' summit, and subsequently miss the training provided for members of National Executive.

Platform:

1. NUS is committed to holding Presidents' Summit in January 2018.
2. NUS believes that Presidents' Summit should be designed to focus on adequately equipping campus and state branch presidents with the knowledge, skills and tools relevant to and necessary for them to

perform their duties effectively for the benefit of their respective student organisation or campus.

3. NUS acknowledges that one of its key responsibilities is to provide training and support to the office-bearing teams of affiliate organisations and state branch presidents.
4. NUS recognises the complexity involved in performing the duties of a campus or state branch president, and believes it is therefore important to address both the activism and HR/IR or management facets of these roles.
5. NUS acknowledges that it is important to ensure the longevity and self-sufficiency of student organisations through good management and the appropriate use of students' money, especially with the uncertainty associated to a potential election year.
6. NUS believes that the input of campus and state branch presidents is vital in the development of national campaigns and targets, and ensures NUS consults its affiliates and remains accountable.
7. NUS recognises the importance of facilitating good cross-campus relationships between affiliates as well as interstate relationships as a key responsibility and acknowledges Presidents' Summit as an important opportunity to create and further develop these relationships.
8. NUS acknowledges that dealing with the media is an important aspect of a campus presidents' and national office-bearers role, yet many have little or no experience in this area.
9. NUS believes that developing the ability to engage with the media is vital and that Presidents' Summit provides the perfect opportunity for presidents to receive media training to develop necessary skills.
10. NUS commits to providing ongoing media training and support to all affiliate campuses, and members of the NUS office-bearing team.
11. NUS acknowledges the importance of the NUS National Executive as the Board of Directors of the organisation and an important transparency mechanism for the organisation.
12. NUS acknowledges the importance of having a well trained Board of Directors in order to ensure sound financial management, administrative transparency and proper conduct of members.

Action:

1. That NUS directs the National President and the National General Secretary to coordinate a conference for all campus and state branch presidents, to be held at an affiliate campus in January 2018.
2. Invitations will be extended to other student leaders of representational organisations such as the Australian Medical Students Association (AMSA).

3. That the National President and the National Education Officer organise training, workshops and information sessions to be held at Presidents' Summit 2018 including but not limited to:
 - a. How to run targeted national and campus-specific campaigns, especially in an election year;
 - b. Lobbying skills;
 - c. Workshopping and further developing 2018 NUS campaigns;
 - d. Briefings on the higher education sector and priorities in 2018.
4. The National President will actively encourage campus presidents and state branch presidents to attend and participate in Presidents' Summit, and will ensure that representatives from all affiliated campuses, especially those in rural and regional areas or from poorly funded student organisations, are provided with the opportunity to attend through the provision of reasonable subsidies.
5. That the National President and National Education Officer ensure all sessions are designed to provide conference attendees useful information with a practical application where relevant; encourage feedback from campus presidents; and to facilitate knowledge and skill sharing between attendees.
6. That the National President will request a written report from campus presidents, to be presented at the Summit.
7. That the report from campus presidents includes, but is not limited to:
8. An overview of their student organisation, including:
 - a. Services
 - b. Commercial outlets
 - c. Representative functions and university support for student representation on campus
 - d. Governance structures
 - e. Budget overview
 - f. Staffing
 - g. Autonomous representation
 - h. Priorities for the year.
9. Course and quality trends at their university, including:
 - a. Cutting of courses and degree programs (e.g. any restructures to the amount of degrees or majors offered at your university)
 - b. Student Experience in the classroom (e.g. increases made to class sizes, lack of resources)
 - c. Your university and online learning: what is your university's approach to learning environments (e.g. flip classrooms, lecture recordings etc)
 - d. A map of student representation on governing committees at your university.
 - e. How the university distributed the SSAF in 2017, and how it will be distributing SSAF in 2018.
10. NUS President and NUS General Secretary will be responsible for coordinating media training at the 2018 Presidents' Summit.

11. The NUS President and NUS General Secretary will further be responsible for developing a best practice media guide for campus affiliates available at Presidents' Summit. This document will include:
 - a. Templates for media releases for a student union;
 - b. Advice on interacting and working with journalists; particularly in the leadup to an event (such as a National Day of Action).
 - c. How to utilise student organisations social media accounts to maximise exposure.
12. The NUS General Secretary will be responsible for organising a legal and governance training with the solicitors of NUS about the responsibilities of being a board member at the first physical meeting of the National Executive in 2018 at Presidents' Summit.
13. The NUS General Secretary will be responsible for keeping record of members of the National Executive who attend the legal and governance training at Presidents' Summit.
14. The NUS General Secretary will be responsible for facilitating supplementary materials for those members of National Executive who are unable to attend the legal and governance training at Presidents' summit.

Moved: Abby Stapleton (NUS Women's) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide SRC)

Seconded: Sophie Johnston (NUS President)

ADMIN 2.10: National Executive Conduct

Preamble:

1. The NUS National Executive is charged with the management of NUS, including but not limited to:
 - a. Setting the budget for NUS;
 - b. Regularly monitoring the finances of NUS;
 - c. Employing staff on behalf of NUS and;
 - d. Authorising the publication of material on behalf of NUS.
2. NUS National Executive members are directors of NUS, and have legal responsibilities to act in the best interest of the organisation, in good faith and with due care and diligence.
3. The NUS National Executive requires regular information and reports in order to fulfil its duties.
4. At the first NUS National Executive meeting of every year, it must determine how policy from National Conference will be implemented.
5. In 2017 there was no schedule for NUS National Executive meetings, nor were campus affiliates contacted about meetings or progress of the

national executive in accomplishing policy passed at the 2016 NUS National Conference.

6. In 2016 and 2017 papers for National Executive were often circulated with less than 24 hours notice before a meeting of the National Executive.
7. It is still extremely unclear to campus affiliates where minutes from National Executive minutes can be found, or if they even are available to affiliates.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the important role National Executive has as board directors.
2. NUS acknowledges the legal responsibilities of the National Executive and believes members are unable to make informed decisions on items circulated to the executive with less than a week's notice.
3. NUS believes in transparent and accountable finance management.
4. NUS commits to providing the National Executive with enough information and access to records for members to adequately provide financial and management oversight.

Actions:

1. NUS General Secretary will develop a schedule of meetings for the National Executive by the 12th of January 2018.
2. This schedule will be circulated to all National Executive members, National Office Bearers, and member organisations.
3. The NUS General Secretary will determine a reporting schedule setting out deadlines for reports and other material for consideration and provide this to the National Executive by the 12th of January 2018.
4. All meeting papers will be circulated for consideration to National Office Bearers, State Branch Presidents, and members of National Executive at least 1 full week in advance of meeting.
5. Ordinary meetings of National Executive can be rescheduled, provided that at least two weeks notice is given to members.
6. The National General Secretary will provide a profit and loss statement to the National Executive each month.
7. The NUS General Secretary will ensure that accurate minutes are taken of each meeting of the National Executive and all its committees, and will circulate the draft minutes of each meeting to the National Executive within one week of the meeting.
8. The NUS General Secretary will include the minutes of the previous meeting in the papers for each National Executive meeting, for consideration and approval as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
9. Upon the minutes of each meeting of the National Executive being adopted, the NUS General Secretary will ensure that all open minutes

are provided to member organisations, within one month of their confirmation by National Executive. The NUS General Secretary will also be responsible ensuring that all open minutes are published on the NUS website, within one month of their confirmation by National Executive.

10. The NUS General Secretary will be responsible for developing and distributing an induction pack to all members of the National Executive by 19th of January, 2018.
11. This induction pack will include the following materials:
 - a. NUS constitution, regulations and bylaws;
 - b. The 2014 NUS Structural Audit;
 - c. The most recently approved budget tracked against expenditure;
 - d. Schedule of meetings for 2018, including the scheduled deadlines for submitting reports to National Executive meetings;
 - e. Position descriptions of all NUS staff, and the staff Enterprise Bargaining Agreement;
 - f. Minutes of all 2017 National Executive meetings.
12. Any other documents deemed necessary by the NUS President or NUS General Secretary.
13. A reporting template for State Branch Presidents and National Office Bearers when submitting reports to the National Executive.
14. The NUS General Secretary will draft regulations and present these to National Executive codifying actions 1-11 above, where they are not already codified.

Moved: Abby Stapleton (NUS Women's) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide SRC)

Seconded: Sophie Johnston (NUS President)

ADMIN 2.11: Affiliations Strategy 2018

Preamble:

1. NUS is entirely dependent on the funding it receives from its affiliate student organisations, and without the funding NUS would be unable to operate.
2. As the peak organisation for undergraduate students, more affiliated student organisations will allow NUS to more accurately reflect the values and principles of students nationwide.
3. Previously student organisations under universal student unionism received funding directly from the General Service Fee.

4. The Howard Government's Voluntary Student Unionism threatened the funding of student organisations across the country, and significantly hindered their financial resources.
5. Student organisations around the country financially affiliate to NUS to support the peak representative body for students, supporting its operating costs.
6. Many student organisations which wish to financially affiliate to NUS will have strict funding agreements that require substantial financial planning.
7. Understandably, student organisations want to ensure that their affiliation money is being spent benefitting students, and that NUS exhibits a high degree of administrative transparency. This may include having access to minutes of meetings of the National Executive, or proceedings of the NUS National Conference, and subsequent actions made.
8. Some student organisations have recently developed Key Performance Indicators, which must be achieved by NUS in order for them to affiliate.

Platform:

1. NUS is committed to supporting the financial structures of its affiliate student organisations through support in sufficient financial planning of affiliation costs and logistics.
2. NUS believes it must take a proactive approach towards affiliations with member organisations.
3. NUS recognises that student organisations may require NUS to achieve specific quantitative indicators before they decide to affiliate.

Action:

1. The NUS President and NUS General Secretary will develop a timeline of financial requirements for the year; this will include but will not be limited to:
 - a. Due date for fee waivers
 - b. Date of affiliation committee meetings
 - c. Date invoices are due to be sent out
 - d. Date payment is to be made by affiliates.
2. The NUS General Secretary will then send out notice to each campus (including their President, General Secretary or Treasurer) before the 28th of February 2018.
3. In addition to this, the NUS President and NUS General Secretary will be responsible in following up campus presidents, general secretaries or treasurers one month in advance of any deadlines, as set in the timeline of financial requirements document.

4. The NUS President and NUS General Secretary will communicate with respective campuses to determine the existence of any affiliation KPIs as set by campuses.
5. These requirements -should they exist- will be reported to the NUS National Executive in the subsequent meeting. Affiliation KPI's will then remain a standing item of the National Executive until they have been achieved, and affiliation has been made.
6. NUS President and NUS General Secretary will complete and circulate a bi-annual report to campuses who develop affiliation KPI's. This report will cover the National Union of Students' progress towards negotiated KPIs.
7. The 2017 NUS National Conference directs the 2018 National President and General Secretary to develop an 'Introduction to NUS' pack for student organisations that currently do not affiliate to NUS.
8. The pack will include:
 - a. An introduction to NUS
 - b. Outline of benefits associated with being an affiliate.
 - c. The process for student organisations to affiliate, as well as the timeline of financial requirements specified in Action Point 1.
9. The 2017 NUS National Conference directs the 2018 National President and General Secretary to reach out to student organisations who currently do not affiliate to the National Union of Students.
10. The 2017 NUS National Conference directs the 2018 National President and General Secretary to provide a report to Education Conference in 2018 on their progress in contacting and initiating communications with non-affiliated campuses.

Moved: Sophie Johnston (NUS President) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide SRC)

Seconded: Abby Stapleton (NUS Women's)

ADMIN 2.12: NUS Strategic Planning

Preamble:

1. One of the key limitations of NUS as an organisation, as outlined in the 2014 Structural Audit, is the lack of strategic continuity as NUS Office Bearers are elected to single year terms.
2. While the short-term objectives of NUS Office Bearers may vary year to year, the principles and values of the organisation as a whole remain relatively consistent, providing scope for longer term goals for the union.
3. Most trade unions will develop and employ strategic plans to strengthen their organisations.
4. NUS is a democratic and transparent forum for students issues and affairs in Australian higher education, and it's values reflect those of its

affiliate campuses. Therefore any strategic plan of NUS must incorporate the views of affiliated campuses.

5. Additionally, the responsibilities of National Office Bearers are set out in R31-R44 of the NUS Regulations, and more specifically in B71-81 of the NUS By-Laws.
6. NUS Office Bearers and State Branch Presidents are required to provide reports to National Executive on their activities, however these recounts often fail to refer to their responsibilities or any goals set out at the start of their terms.
7. There is currently no quantitative metric for measuring performance of National Office Bearers and State Branch Presidents.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the difficulties in developing plans that exceed the lifespan of an elected NUS Office Bearer.
2. NUS acknowledges that at its core, its principles of promoting a high quality, equitable and accessible higher education system remains consistent.
3. NUS believes that with these core principles, strategic planning can be employed into the organisation.
4. NUS recognises the importance of strategic planning in order to strengthen, and ensure the longevity of national student representation.

Action:

1. The National President and National General Secretary will be responsible for drafting and publishing a strategic plan for the National Union of Students.
2. The National President and National General Secretary will be responsible for coordinating and facilitating a workshop at Presidents' Summit to seek input and advice from affiliate campuses on the contents of the strategic plan.
3. The strategic planning session will also incorporate development of Key Performance Indicators for NUS Office Bearers. These KPI's are to be negotiated by campus affiliates and members of the office-bearing team.
4. The National President and National General Secretary will produce a final strategic plan within two weeks of Presidents' Summit. This strategic plan will be available to all affiliates and will be published on the NUS website.
5. The National President and National General Secretary in the leadup to orientation week will develop a NUS Strategic Plan booklet. This booklet will include:
 - a. An introduction of NUS to campus affiliates
 - b. An introduction of 2018 NUS office bearers.

- c. Key Performance Indicators for office bearers, as agreed to at Presidents' Summit.
 - d. The NUS strategic plan.
 - e. Contact details of key NUS staff and Office Bearers.
 - f. Any other information deemed relevant by the National President and General Secretary.
6. The National President and General Secretary will be responsible for printing and distributing the NUS strategic plan booklet to affiliated campuses by orientation week.

Moved: Abby Stapleton (NUS Women's) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide SRC)

Seconded: Sophie Johnston (NUS President)

ADMIN 2.13: Graphic design 101

Preamble:

1. A professional student union (eg. Curtin Student Guild or UWA Student Guild) should have consistent branding guidelines that they use to help develop a strong brand as an organisation.
2. NUS's branding is traditionally varied across many different departments and there is no consistent branding across the Union.

Platform:

1. The NUS shall get with the memo and develop clear branding guidelines to ensure a consistent organisational brand.

Action:

1. The National Executive shall approve a NUS Branding Guide by 30 June 2018.
2. All material produced by the NUS must adhere to the guide outlined in 1.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (Curtin University)

Seconded: Conrad Hogg (University of Western Australia)

ADMIN 2.14: It's our money, no need to hide it.

Preamble:

1. The NUS is required in accordance with its constitution to have its financial statements audited each year.
2. These audited financial statements are usually presented at the first session of conference floor as a print out with barely one minute for members to read the statements before accepting them.
3. A normal incorporated association would include the statements in the agenda of their General Meeting which would be sent out to its members.
4. Many associations and student unions also place their financial statements

Platform:

1. The NUS should be transparent around its finances.

Action:

1. The National General Secretary will following the conclusion of the 2017 NUS National Conference upload the audited financial statements to the NUS Website in the same place that the minutes of National Executive and Constitution can be found.
2. The National General Secretary will following the conclusion of the 2017 NUS National Conference send the audited financial statements out to all Campus Presidents.
3. In future years following the 2017 National Conference the Audited Financial Statements will be sent out to Delegates and Campus Presidents at least one (1) week prior to the commencement of National Conference.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (Curtin University)

Seconded: Megan Lee (University of Western Australia)

ADMIN 2.15: Conflicts of Interest at National Executive

Preamble:

1. National Executive members are currently not clearly required to declare conflicts of interest on matters before the National Executive.
2. It is important to ensure the good governance of the Union and that material interests on matters for discussion and resolution at meetings of National Executive are disclosed and managed.

Platform:

1. Material personal interests of National Executive Members should be managed.

Action:

1. R65 of the NUS Regulations will apply to National Executive.
2. Disclosures of Interest will be a standing agenda item at National Executive Meetings following apologies and proxies.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (Curtin University)

Seconded: Megan Lee (University of Western Australia)

ADMIN 2.16: Minutes should actually say what's happening

Preamble:

1. Meeting minutes within the NUS in 2017 have been poor, not properly recording discussion or in some cases even the correct attendance.

Platform:

1. Minutes of meetings should record the occurrences at a meeting as outlined in this Policy.

Action:

1. The minutes of each meeting are to record:
 - a. the time that the meeting was opened;
 - b. the names of those in attendance at the meeting;
 - c. the apologies received and the leave of absences;
 - d. where a member or standing invite joins the meeting after its commencement or leaves before its closure the time or times that the member joined or left the meeting;
 - e. disclosure of members' interests and the action taken by the meeting in relation to each disclosure of interest;
 - f. each motion and amendment and whether it was carried or defeated and, if carried, the terms of the resolution;
 - g. summary of discussion;
 - h. date and time of the next meeting; and
 - i. the time that the meeting was closed.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (National Executive)

Seconded: Megan Lee (National Executive)

Unionism

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UNION 3.1: Domestic Violence Leave

Preamble:

1. 1 in 5 women and 1 in 20 men experience domestic violence from an intimate partner.
2. Data is limited for those experiencing domestic violence who identify outside of the gender binary. 16-24 year olds are four times more likely to experience domestic violence. This includes abuse that is physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial or otherwise.
3. The Council of Trade Unions is campaigning for a domestic violence leave clause in the National Employment Standards, in which job providers would provide workers with a guaranteed paid 10 days of leave “for the purpose of attending to activities related to the experience of being subjected to family and domestic violence”, which could include attending legal proceedings, counselling, or making safety arrangements.
4. Currently one million people have access to paid family violence leave, but this is under individual business arrangements that mean that individuals do not have guaranteed access to domestic violence leave under their employment contracts and it is up to the will of employers.
5. This would mean that it would be expanded to include the more than 2 million workers on award agreements.
6. Some employers are arguing that the changes would cost businesses too much money, but the latest government statistics say that domestic violence costs the Australian economy \$22 billion a year.

Platform:

1. NUS is the peak representative body for student welfare.
2. NUS stands against domestic violence and recognises abuse in all of its forms, whether that abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial or otherwise.
3. NUS recognises that the rights of workers and students experiencing domestic violence must be protected.

Action:

1. NUS supports and commends the campaign from the Australian Council of Trade Unions for guaranteed paid 10 days domestic violence leave for workers and will work with them where possible.
2. NUS directs the Women’s and Welfare Officers to letter-write and lobby the relevant ministers on this issue.
3. NUS works with campus Women’s Officers and Welfare Officers, collectives and other relevant student groups to ensure there are resources and support services on-campus for those experiencing domestic violence.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

Seconded: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate)

UNION 3.2: Interns*s**

Preamble:

1. It is becoming increasingly common for students to undertake a internship as part of their course. In order to undertake these subjects the student must still pay subject fees, even though these subjects require little to no university resources.
2. These internships are unpaid, resulting in students doing in many cases over 100 hours of labour and paying for the privilege. These interns often do the labour of paid staff, an exploitative practice which in many cases may not provide a beneficial learning experience to the students.
3. Completing an unpaid internship is simply not an option for many lower-SES students or those with family commitments who cannot take the time off from paying work or caring duties in order to work for free, embedding disadvantages in the labour market.

Platform:

1. That the National Union of Students recognise that while a internship can be useful in gaining employment and gaining skills in relevant professions, the exploitation of young people seeking to survive in an increasingly competitive labour market is abhorrent.
2. That the National Union of Students believes that any unpaid internship as a requirement of a student’s course must be directly relevant to the course of study and be flexible in nature.

Action:

1. The 2018 National Union of Students Education and Welfare Officers will work with student unions to inform students of their rights in relation to unpaid internships.
2. The National Union of Students in 2018 will campaign against unpaid internships and compulsory internships due to their exploitative nature.

Moved: Nattydd Siguthur (USASA Delegate) on behalf of Alice Smith (UMSU)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University) on behalf of Hannah Buchan (UMSU)

UNION 3.3: Learning from Kiwi's

Preamble:

1. At Education Conference 2017 the New Zealand National Union of Students presented to the conference.
2. As part of this presentation the NZUSA discussed how over half its revenue came from sources unrelated to affiliation fees.
3. The bulk of this alternative revenue came from funding from the government department of Education and the Academic Quality Agency of New Zealand.
4. The NUS is presented with a similar opportunity in Australia.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students will seek to implement the NZUSA model to order to provide for an alternative revenue stream and to raise the relevance of the NUS to the higher education sector.

Action:

1. The National President and National General Secretary will present a plan to NUS Education Conference to position the NUS to assume funding from TEQSA and the Department of Education.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (Curtin University)

Seconded: TBC (Pending attendance)

UNION 3.4: No cuts at Flinders Uni

Preamble:

1. Flinders University management has followed suit with several other unis in their commitment to cuts and restructures. In this climate for higher education it is a familiar story. Vice Chancellors say the need to tighten belts here and there in order to improve efficiency and education/research outcomes. In reality, the Flinders VC knows that these manoeuvres provide cover for redundancies and sackings of academic and administrative staff.
2. Beginning with a sweeping restructure of school and faculty, mergers have squeezed them into 6 colleges. This has caused the redundancies of over 200 staff across the university. It is leading to upswings in job uncertainty perception for the staff there, already under the pump as uni staff are. This comes after threats of millions in cuts to wage bills for specialised academic staff, particularly to Health Science.
3. This perception is totally backed up by reality. The VC Colin Stirling sent late night text messages to staff for a meeting about the new roles staff

were being assigned to, as part of the ongoing restructures. According to the NTEU consultation has been very limited, and structured as top-down information dispensing, with no intention of listening to staff. Constant money-pinching scrutiny is weighing down staff and leading to increased stress. It's all part of a process of demoralising staff to the point where the next round of redundancies could have more takers. "Dehumanising", as it was called by staff in a counter protest.

4. This is all on top of the fact that Colin Stirling continues to give himself payraises, and the Plaza's redevelopment cost \$63 million dollars. There is the hard effects of years of federal funding cuts, but even then the admin can find money for VCs at the expense of staff.
5. There is no sign of this cut and restructure agenda abating either at Flinders or around the country. Everywhere it has been precisely the anti-staff, anti-student nightmare expected.

Platform:

1. NUS stands against the restructures and staff cuts by Flinders Uni administration.
2. NUS condemns the Vice Chancellor Colin Stirling for his role in the demoralisation of staff and the debilitating restructures.
3. NUS calls for a halt to the ongoing restructures, recognising them as a way of transforming the university into a slick money making machine.

Action:

1. NUS will maintain their watchdog role over university administrations nationwide. This includes seeking out information as much information from relative bodies about campus restructures, cuts and admin plans.
2. NUS will support campaigns run by staff and students, and their unions, against the restructure's impacts as well as future attempts to restructure the university.
3. NUS will assist student unions in their fights against restructures. This includes distributing material for student actions and promoting the campaigns through their channels, such as social media.

Moved: Tom Auld (Adelaide)

Seconded: Madeleine Powell (UNSW)

UNION 3.5: Protecting Penalty Rates

Preamble:

1. Penalty rates have significant impacts on employees in sectors such as retail, hospitality, cleaning, construction, home maintenance and aged and child care industries. In the retail and hospitality industries alone, more than 1.1 million workers regularly work on weekends.
2. Penalty rates are a fundamental part of a strong safety net for workers, enabling those on low incomes and people in highly casualised industries to share in the nation's prosperity. They help to increase the economy's competitiveness and to reduce inequality and the gender pay gap across the community.
3. The Productivity Commission (PC) last year recommended that Sunday penalty rates should be brought in line with those applying to Saturday.
4. Changes to penalty rates would represent significant changes to the total earnings and income of workers in hospitality and retail, which have a higher prevalence of casualisation, and would have an impact on fairness and the performance of the economy.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the Productivity Commission's reports that make it clear penalty rates should be cut.
2. NUS acknowledges the hard work of the Shop Distributive & Allied Employees Association (SDA) on their campaigns to protect weekend penalty rates and thanks them for their efforts in fighting for an issue that affects so many Young Australians.

Action:

1. NUS condemns the Turnbull Government on attacking workers.
2. NUS supports the protection of weekend penalty rates and encourages all members to get involved in the fight to save weekend penalty.
3. NUS will work with Trade Unions and other relevant organisations to campaign against the shameful cuts to weekend penalty rates.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Dane Bracewell (University of Western Sydney)

UNION 3.6: KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Preamble:

1. A high proportion of young people and students, both domestic and international, are taken advantage of in the work force. They are paid cash in hand, exploited for long hours without adequate pay including the omission of penalty rates (shame) and superannuation.

Platform:

1. NUS Recognises the need for workplace education for young workers.
2. NUS recognises the importance of knowing rights and responsibilities within a workplace.
3. NUS understand that students in particular are an adversely affected group by not knowing their rights at work.
4. NUS condemns any workplace that is exploiting any workers and is impeding their rights.

Action:

1. NUS will write to the Minister for Employment condemning the exploitation of students, both domestic and international.
2. NUS will provide student unions with relevant information for advocacy services to assist students who are currently or have previously been exploited in the workforce.
3. NUS will assist student unions with implementing a "Know Your Rights" workshop, both in person and online, for students to learn their rights in the workplace.

Moved: Annabelle Romano (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Michael Iroeché (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.7: OPEN UP FOR OPEN DAY

Preamble:

1. At the beginning of 2017, the LTSU Education Department conducted a survey asking students 'Why Did You Choose La Trobe?'. This was a comprehensive survey, which sought to establish why students commence their studies at La Trobe University.
2. This survey exemplified that more than half the respondents attended an open day (56%) and of those students; the majority of respondents claimed that they were more likely to prefer La Trobe after attending.

3. This clearly shows that open day is an important event that student unions, especially the National Union of Students (NUS) should play a more active role in. By being involved in open days, this is a great way to increase NUS' publicity, campaigns and promote more student engagement and activism on campuses Australia wide.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the hard work student unions put in to attend and their presence at University Open days.
2. NUS commends student unions on their current involvement in university run activities and university organised events.
3. NUS however, hold a regard that students and student unions should be at the forefront of said university activities and events.

Action:

1. NUS will actively work with student unions and universities to promote student unionism involvement on campuses.
2. NUS will encourage on campus student unions to run NUS campaigns through active collaboration.
3. NUS Office Bearers will contact student union Presidents and actively collaborate and participate in open day activities on campuses as permitted.

Mover: Jake Cripps (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Lois Villar (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.8: Up the Unions

Preamble:

1. Under the Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) model, introduced by the Howard Government, it is not compulsory for universities to fund their campus student unions or for students to be student union members (shame). In response to this and due to substantially lower funding, student unions have had to cut essential welfare and educational services that they would normally provide.
2. A minimum Students Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) percentage of thirty eight percent (38%) would allow student unions to run more effective services, campaigns and events within the universities for students.

3. Student Unions prior to VSU had an number of services that they were providing, e.g. Childcare, Legal Services, Accommodation assistance, Food outlets a lot of these services that were cut due to the drastic decrease in funding,
4. 25 out of 30 organisation reported to have job losses and cuts in the areas of services and support.
5. 13 out of 18 student organisations reported having substantial or total cuts to services, department or portfolio funding
6. VSU reduced funding by \$166 million to the sector causing the need to further budget restraints and cuts.

Platform:

1. NUS proposes that a minimum of, but not limited to, 38% of SSAF collected be given to student unions under certain spending guidelines.
2. NUS recognises that student unions require a certain amount of funding to run effective services for students including welfare, education and advocacy services.
3. NUS recognises a transitional period might be necessary for some universities to either reallocate assets to Students Unions or find alternative revenues to fund their existing student services.

Action:

1. NUS will lobby the Federal Government and Vice Chancellors to support a minimum SSAF percentage for student unions.
2. NUS President and Gen Sec will support campus presidents in lobbying their universities in securing more funding.
3. NUS will support campus Student Unions, who will conduct a survey about the effectiveness of the services they provide.

Moved: Annabelle Romano (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Michael Iroeché (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.9: SAVE WUSA

Preamble:

1. Students at the University of Wollongong have been campaigning to defend the Wollongong Undergraduate Students' Association from being restructured, defunded and shut down.
2. The Young Liberals who have run WUSA for the past two years have been systematically sabotaging the organisation. They have attempted to bankrupt WUSA by requesting no SSAF funding from the university, submitted reports to the university - which they and the university

refuse to release - which encourage WUSA's closure, refused to publish their meeting minutes, budgets, and standing orders, and have systematically denied undergraduate students' membership of WUSA, demanding a \$20 membership fee which has not been approved or passed by any meeting of WUSA. The current executive have also been using the union to campaign in favour of the Federal government's budget and higher education cuts, which President Jasper Brewer described as "equitable" and "exciting".

3. The University of Wollongong has assisted the Young Liberals in their anti-union activity. The university has upheld the decision of the Young Liberal leadership to deny students membership of their union, has refused students' repeated requests for WUSA documents which are in their possession, and this year conducted a 'review' into student organisations on campus which student activists believe is the pre-text for WUSA's restructuring or closure. Most notably, the University refuses to commit to providing SSAF funding for WUSA, which jeopardises its existence as an independent, democratic student-run body into the future.
4. The 2017 elections for WUSA delivered the presidency and 8 positions on council to the activist group 'Save Our Union' who have been campaigning to defend WUSA against the Young Liberal and the University's attempts to undermine the organisation. Following an appeals process, president-elect Chloe Rafferty who won with 765 votes was disqualified by the Appeal Panel "for campaigning in class" after receiving a written warning not to. It is standard practice in student union elections across the country for students to make announcements publicising the election before classes commence. Furthermore, the Save Our Union group received no written warning disallowing before-lecture announcements, despite the Appeals Board's claims. Disciplining a candidate on these grounds amounts to political suppression.
5. The decision by the University appointed Appeals Board to disqualify Chloe as President elect is an undemocratic attack on students' rights to free speech, student unionism, and independent representation. It is consistent with the behaviour of the University all year, who have been quietly working to undermine WUSA through restructure, or to wind it up via bankruptcy.

Platform:

1. NUS reaffirms its position in support of independent, democratic unions, and full student control of student affairs.
2. NUS condemns the 2017 WUSA council for denying students membership of WUSA, and their central role in sabotaging and attempting to bankrupt and close the union.
3. NUS condemns the decision of the Wollongong University Appeals Board in overturning the results of the democratic election which

disqualified president-elect Chloe Rafferty. NUS demands Rafferty's immediate reinstatement.

4. NUS reaffirms its position in support of open and democratic student union elections which includes the right of students to leaflet, poster, set up information stalls, petition, chalk, use online platforms and make lecture announcements to campaign.
5. NUS calls on the University of Wollongong to release the funding collected through the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) exclusively to WUSA to facilitate its proper and independent functioning, under democratic student control.

Action:

1. NUS condemns the decision of the Wollongong University Appeals Board in overturning the results of the democratic election, and for disqualifying president-elect Chloe Rafferty. NUS demands Rafferty's immediate reinstatement.
2. NUS will share material from the reinstatement campaign on social media and any student union websites, newsletters, publications, and so on.
3. NUS will actively support any attempts by UoW activists to reaffiliate WUSA to NUS, including but not limited to:
4. NUS national officer bearers travelling to UoW to aid a reaffiliation campaign
5. Printing materials related to a reaffiliation campaign
6. Publishing material in hard and soft copy outlining why WUSA should affiliate to NUS
7. Utilising social media platforms to encourage reaffiliation
8. Providing other forms of assistance as requested by UoW activists

Moved: Eleanore Morley (University of Sydney)

Seconded: Madeleine Powell (UNSW)

UNION 3.10: The importance of solidarity with the NTEU

Preamble:

1. 2017 continued the long stalemate that has existed between the federal government and university students and staff since the Abbott government's failure to ram through their hated education cuts in 2014. Since then, the Turnbull government has warily tried to land some softer blows, however even these have elicited sparks of protest, as happened this year after Simon Birmingham's announced a suite of attacks in the federal budget, which have as yet still failed to pass. Given the

government's inability to provide certainty for the vice-chancellors, who are already deep in a funding crisis thanks to years without adequate increases to commonwealth funding, this has deepened the extremely worrying trend we have seen over the last few years of administrations taking the initiative to jump the gun and make savage cuts themselves—and as always, university staff are in the firing line.

2. One of the biggest threats is mass sackings, often under the guise of innocent sounding 'restructures'. This year we have seen sackings at the following institutions—UNSW (150 jobs gone), Victoria University (100+), Curtin University (150), and as-yet-undeclared cuts are anticipated at Griffith University, the University of Queensland, and many other institutions. This follows sackings in 2016 at UWA (300+), USyd (60), and there are surely many other examples left out here that conference delegates can attest to.
3. Another threat is casualization of staff, which not only makes surviving during the long summer holiday months difficult, but undermines their ability to unionize, and increases the ease with which administrations can attempt to sack staff. Casualisation has jumped from about 10 percent of the academic workforce in 1990 to 53 percent in 2011 (as found by the Gillard government funded Lomax-Smith review) and is surely even higher today.
4. The most alarming event of 2017, however, was the landmark decision of the Fair Work Commission to terminate, on the application of Murdoch University's enterprise bargaining team, that university's enterprise agreement with staff. As of September that agreement has now ceased, meaning that 3,500 staff have seen their wages and conditions immediately stripped back to award conditions, which do not even live up to the concept of 'safety net'. The ACTU has estimated workers could see pay cuts of a whopping 30 percent. Going into 2018, up to 30 other universities could now be seeking to replicate this maximal strategy to remove union control on management decisions, as well as fixed-term contracts and staff discipline rules. Given the University of Sydney's attempt to do just this in the aftermath of the Murdoch decision, we should almost certainly expect some big battles ahead next year, and NUS should be prepared to throw ourselves into staff solidarity, and where possible to integrate this work with our general national education department campaign.

Platform:

1. NUS lends our unwavering solidarity to the NTEU, as we do to all trade unions, but in particular because we recognize that staff working conditions and student learning conditions are inextricably bound together.
2. In 2018 all education activists will endeavour to revive campus traditions of student-staff solidarity.

Action:

1. Going into 2018 NUS will lend its solidarity to the NTEU by: promoting staff strikes through mass lecture announcements in the weeks leading up to them; by joining and helping maintain picket lines; organizing student solidarity protests; and in general by raising merry hell for the administrations seeking to attack our staff.
2. NUS state branches and education officers will contact the NTEU early in January to enquire about anticipated industrial action and to offer our support, and also to see if it is possible to time NUS education protests to coincide, as was done successfully in 2017 with the USyd and UTS NTEU strikes.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

UNION 3.11: Murdoch University - Shame on the administration, no to union busting!

Preamble:

1. On September 26th, 2017, the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) that covered staff at Murdoch University was terminated.
2. The administration cited a weak financial position for the termination, at the same time as the senior executives spent \$900,000 on company credit cards.
3. The termination of the EBA has resulted in staff losing:
 - a. 26 weeks paid maternity leave
 - b. 70% of their redundancy package
 - c. 8% of their superannuation entitlements
4. The administration will be free to increase workloads, restructure departments and discipline staff over minor issues.
5. The termination of the EBA means that the staff at Murdoch have been thrown back onto the award rate, which hasn't been updated in many years.
6. The Fair Work commission approved the termination of the deal, showing that the current industrial laws are wholly inadequate to protect workers.
7. Unions and their members are under attack in Australia. Bosses around the country are terminating agreements so that they can force down wages and skimp on paying for sick leave and other entitlements.
8. The government has introduced new bodies such as the Registered Organisation Commission in order to pursue an agenda of smashing up the unions.

9. The Liberals have orchestrated raids on unions in blatantly political attacks.
10. In response to the termination of the Murdoch EBA, Simon Birmingham encouraged other university administrations to follow suit.
11. The attacks on staff go hand in hand with the government's attempts to attack higher education, and their general attacks on the working class and working class institutions in Australia.
12. Birmingham's support for the termination of the EBA shows his determination to restructure the university sector despite the fact his attempts have been blocked by the senate.
13. If other universities follow suit, all staff employed by universities around Australia at risk. When staff conditions are cut, the
14. These attacks are reflective of a broader attack on unions and workers in Australia.

Platform

1. NUS stands with Murdoch staff, and calls for the university to immediately overturn its decision.
2. NUS recognises the industrial laws in Australia give power to the bosses and consistently attack the rights and conditions of workers. The Liberals are determined to undermine the Union's' ability to defend its' members rights.
3. NUS will support Murdoch staff if they take further action in order to negotiate a new EBA.
4. Action
5. NUS will support any actions, strikes or campaigns to support the staff at Murdoch.
6. NUS will fight against anti-union and anti-worker laws and legislation.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

Seconded: Clare Francis (Curtin University)

UNION 3.12: Fighting the bosses at the University of Sydney - lessons from the 2017 NTEU USyd EBA campaign

Preamble:

1. EBA negotiations took place this year between the USyd National Tertiary Education union and USyd management. Negotiations started with a series of clear attacks on the table, management wanted to among other things: give the staff a pay cut, make academics negotiate their workloads individually and strip them of the 40/40/20 model (a model that ensures that staff can maintain reasonable workloads, have equal access to research opportunities and can't be forced to take on

- additional teaching and administration duties), not guarantee redeployment in the case of redundancies, and offer no prospect of job security for casual staff.
2. These attacks were clearly ways of trying to achieve paying less staff less pay for more work, and in the process strip people of their livelihoods and students of their invaluable staff.
 3. This is at a University with the highest paid VC in the country, who is currently spending \$2.3 billion on new campus building construction.
 4. In August the USyd NTEU branch voted overwhelmingly to take strike action. This was an excellent development, as a fighting campaign of industrial action is the only thing that could beat back management's attacks. Once the campaign had got rolling, NTEU meetings swelled to record sizes, and hundreds of members volunteered in various ways to build the campaign, be it through postering, leafleting, phone-calling, and organising meetings.
 5. The NTEU disrupted USyd Open Day in August, leafleting incoming students and later rallying and marching to the VC's office. And then on September 13, the USyd NTEU had a 24 hour strike, which was a roaring success. Hundreds of staff and students picketed six campus entrances. Cars were turned away, and the campus was largely deserted. Many new union members were recruited over the course of the day – staff on one picket convincing 10 people to join. USyd student activists consistently played an active role in supporting the NTEU campaign, by showing their support in union meetings, and working to promote support for the strike amongst the student body. And on the strike day USyd student activists had a strong presence on the picket lines.
 6. The NTEU EBA campaign shaped up to become a testament to the values of 'old-school' unionism - rank and file members meetings, going on strike, and picket lines. The USyd NTEU gained over 200 new members over the course of the industrial action campaign. This upswing in membership, and burst of rank and file activism seen in all the activity on the day of the 24 hour strike and leading up to it, was a heartening and positive example of effective unionism.
 7. But one 24 hour strike would not be enough to curb a vicious management that was thriving in an era of thoroughly neoliberalised education and a government that fully supports that project. A 48 hour strike would have been exactly what the campaign needed to push things further, and what could really pressure management into relinquishing on their attacks.
 8. The day after the strike a union meeting with hundreds of members voted for a 48 hour strike, Unfortunately, the union leadership were not prepared to follow through on the vote to escalate the campaign and intervened to accept management's offer.
 9. Two key lessons can be garnered from this experience. One being, the potential for an active and militant industrial campaign built on the energy and input of rank and file members is very much a possibility in

contemporary Australia. The cuts to staff pay and conditions are a key aspect of the neoliberalisation of higher education, and of the poor quality of education students are increasingly offered. The other key lesson is that it is only a concerted campaign of militant strike action that is capable of reversing these attacks. We have seen the university become even more aggressive since the union accepted this deal, not less. After the strike campaign wound up university management sanctioned campus security to confiscate all NTEU material from staff offices, everything from stickers to membership forms. Rolling over to management's offer will not make management any nicer, only more confident to squeeze their workers and attack the union even harder.

10. The strike campaign at USyd this year was a positive example of the type of fighting unionism that is needed to reinvigorate the unions, and that can beat back management's attacks. It's a shame the campaign was wound down, as it is only a commitment to confronting management with strike action, that is going to ultimately win staff better pay and conditions.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises universities are neoliberal institutions designed to exploit staff and students, and increase the wealth and power of management
2. NUS stands unequivocally on the side of university staff in their fight against management
3. NUS believes industrial action that disrupts and challenges the normal running of university and sees staff on strike, is the most effective kind of action for fighting attacks on university staff

Action:

1. NUS will continue to support and work with the NTEU, and endorse any NTEU campaigns that are fighting to strengthen the union and fight back against attacks by management
2. NUS condemns the University of Sydney management for stealing union resources in the wake of successful strike action

Moved: Eleanore Morley (University of Sydney)

Seconded: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

UNION 3.13: Solidarity with Esso workers

Preamble:

1. Workers at the Esso gas production plant in the Bass Strait are currently facing severe attacks on their living standards. Esso terminated the agreements of over 200 maintenance workers at the plant. These workers were then told to reapply for their positions under a new agreement with significantly eroded conditions, a 30% pay cut, and a rostering system which favours the employers.
2. The termination of agreements - most famously used in the Carlton United Breweries dispute last year - is becoming more common across Australia as a way for bosses to significantly reduce workers' pay and conditions.
3. A union campaign to support the Esso workers, organised by the ETU, AMWU and AWU, is ongoing. Workers have been maintaining a protest outside Esso's Longford site since June.
4. Esso's parent company, ExxonMobil, made over \$8 billion in Australia last year while paying no corporate tax.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that it is important for student unions to show solidarity with workers when they are fighting for pay and conditions..
2. NUS stands unequivocally on the side of maintenance workers at the Esso gas plant in their struggle to preserve pay and conditions. NUS condemns the actions of Esso management.
3. NUS commits to supporting the ongoing campaign in support of the Esso workers.

Action:

1. NUS will release a statement in support of the Esso workers
2. NUS will promote union organised events in support of these workers.

Moved: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

UNION 3.14: NUS is best when it protests

Preamble:

1. The purpose of a student union is to fight to defend the education, welfare and rights of students.
2. The cause of free, fully-funded, quality higher education that is accessible to all regardless of their background is one that is fundamentally at odds with the neoliberal interests of university administrations and the Australian government. University managements run their institutions as for profit enterprises, churning through students as fast as possible while cutting staff and course content, as well as pushing for higher fees. Successive Liberal and Labor governments have sought to off-load the cost of higher education onto students, abolishing free education in 1987 and implementing cuts to funding and increases to university fees over successive decades.
3. Protests are the only way students can fight back effectively. Students can only rely on public demonstrations of their collective power to force these bodies to concede to our demands. By disrupting our campuses and major city streets, students can bring political pressure to bear on those who would attack higher education. The 2014 “Abbott and Pyne: Hands off our education” campaign organised by the NUS education office combined large street demonstrations in major cities and high profile stunts to ultimately defeat fee deregulation three times and became a significant part of the resistance to the Abbott government.
4. Protests are vital to rebuilding student unionism. Unions demonstrate their real power and their value when they tap into the outrage of their members and channel it into public mass activity. NUS organised and supported protests over the last few years have been the largest events involving layers of students wanting to fight for their rights. By fighting, and by winning, unions prove their relevance. The 2017 “Save Our Union” campaign at the University of Wollongong shows that even when student unions are in the most dire of situations, students respond to, defend, join and participate in unions that protest and fight against attacks on education.
5. Participation in protest campaigns also rebuild the reputations of unions as a progressive force in society. Over the last 10 years, the active participation of the National Queer/LGBTI department in the campaign for marriage equality has provided NUS with a platform to not only champion the struggle for LGBTI rights, but to demonstrate its ability to be a force for social justice for students and young people.
6. The advantages for NUS of organising and participating in protest campaigns cannot be replicated by any other activity that NUS participates in. Political lobbying by a passive union that does not mobilise the collective power of students in the streets is simply impotent begging. Organising surveys to provide information that is

already widely available does not rebuild the collective power of the student movement and also presents NUS as a union that not only does nothing, but also one that knows nothing. Social media visibility campaigns are not a solution to oppression that builds the confidence and collective power of the oppressed nor one that marks NUS out as a body with any real-world power.

7. For these reasons, protesting must be at the centre of all NUS campaigns and the project of rebuilding student unionism in Australia.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students’ main purpose is to organise a fighting student movement to defend education, welfare and student rights.
2. The National Union of Students recognises that university management and the Australian government are the enemies of the students.
3. The National Union of Students recognises protests as the only way students can exercise power in society.
4. The National Union of Students recognises that fighting collectively is the lifeblood of unionism.
5. The National Union of Students seeks to involve as many students as possible in collective action.

Action:

1. The National Union of Students will organise protests on university campuses and major cities in 2018 to fight for student rights, to defend higher education and to improve student welfare.
2. The National Union of Students will organise and support protests against oppression.
3. The National Union of Students will produce posters promoting its demonstrations to maximise the size, reach and power of its protests.
4. Protests organised by the National Union of Students will be promoted by the social media channels of all NUS departments.

Moved: TBC (Pending attendance)

Seconded: TBC (Pending attendance)

UNION 3.15: Stand with the CFMEU Against the ABCC

Preamble:

1. In late 2005 the Howard Government introduced the Australian Building and Construction Commission, a watchdog for the CFMEU with the purpose of intimidating and prosecuting those who engage with the union on site or who take industrial action. It saw a spike in construction

- deaths because the union could not do its job of protecting and implementing safe working conditions.
2. The Turnbull Government hoped the 2016 double-dissolution election would provide the Liberals with the mandate to revive the ABCC.
 3. In December 2016, the ABCC was passed in the senate with the help of One Nation senators, the Nick Xenophon team, Liberal Democrat David Leyonhjelm and Darren Hynch.
 4. The bill aims to facilitate 'economic productivity' for construction bosses at the expense of workers. In particular, it aims to dismantle decades of struggle that have coalesced in victories for the most basic demands of health and safety on construction sites. Militant industrial action has been integral to these victories.
 5. Already, construction deaths are up from this time last year. Under the ABCC penalties have more than tripled for breaches of the law, restricting construction workers' right to take industrial action. It has also limited the rights of unionists to legal representation and their right to silence. The ABCC has essentially criminalised effective trade unionism in the construction industry.
 6. The ABCC is spreading to other industries that include ancillary sites – sites that supply materials to construction projects and transport workers that deliver materials to construction sites. This is a dangerous precedent to set.
 6. This is one aspect of a raft of anti-union laws and attacks that resemble the neoliberal onslaught from both the Liberal and Labor Party in recent decades. These include the royal commission of 2014-2015 which vilified effective unionism under the guise of anti-corruption. The government wants to attack the CFMEU because it is a strong and effective union and gets in the way of unfettered profit-making for construction bosses.
 7. The cutting of penalty rates for hospitality, retail and pharmaceutical workers is another wholesale neoliberal attack on workers. The CFMEU struck and rallied to defend penalty rates even though the cut to penalty rates didn't immediately and directly affect construction workers. The CFMEU sees that such attacks are an attack on all workers because the Liberals will not be content to stop at cutting penalty rates. Under the ABCC, CFMEU taking a stand for penalty rates is illegal.

Platform:

1. NUS stands in solidarity with the CFMEU, and will extend that solidarity to all Unions under neoliberal assault by either the Liberal or Labor Party.
2. NUS recognises that industrial action is integral to trade unions. Attempts to dismantle this process by either Liberal or Labor governments is anti-union and thus can be considered anti-working class.

3. NUS condemns the prosecution of members and officials of the CFMEU under the ABCC as an assault on civil rights and the right of unions to protect their workers.

Action:

1. NUS must publicly condemn the ABCC, and publicly promote campaigns committed by the Unions against the ABCC on the NUS website and affiliated NUS social media pages.
2. NUS Office Bearers will attend any demonstration called by the Unions against the ABCC.
3. NUS will actively stand in solidarity with the CFMEU against the ABCC.

Moved: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

UNION 3.16: Against the CFA

Preamble

1. The Country Fire Authority (CFA) is a volunteer-based organisation responsible for firefighting across most of Victoria, including outer suburbs of metropolitan Melbourne and larger towns including Bendigo and Geelong. Compared to other states, for example NSW where 90% of the population is protected by the state fire department comprised of very few volunteers, Victorians are covered by an under-trained, under-resourced and under-staffed volunteer organisation.
2. This doesn't just put those living in CFA covered districts at unnecessary risk but undermines the wages and conditions of career firefighters employed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) and covered by the United Firefighters Union (UFU). Having free firefighters in the same districts puts a downward pressure on the wages of career firefighters and having volunteer organisations makes political arguments about union control harder to prosecute.
3. This was evidenced in 2016 when a dispute over how much control the union had at joint brigades shared by the CFA and the MFB blew up into a national scandal. The rights of workers to intervene into running of their workplace was painted as a greedy union shutting down the friendly, community based volunteers by major newspapers including The Herald Sun and The Age, the state and federal Liberal Party, and the CFA.

4. The MFB is in desperate need of updates of equipment, increases in staff numbers, and changes to shifts. The Liberals' call for 'protecting' the CFA is just a cover for a government which wants to see the working conditions of career firefighters degraded.

Platform:

1. NUS supports fully funded state run emergency services and understands the protection of communities against fires necessitates
2. NUS stands as a matter of principle on the side of unionised workers in disputes against state departments and volunteer organisations.
3. NUS opposes the smear campaign against unionised MFB workers

Action:

1. NUS calls on state and federal governments to restructure emergency services including fire fighting provisions so that they are fully staffed by qualified and paid workers. In Victoria, this means replacing the CFA with an statewide brigade of fully trained and qualified career firefighters, not volunteers.
2. NUS office bearers will reach out and support the UFU in disputes against the MFB and the state government, will attend events including demonstrations called by the UFU in support for their members.

Moved: Tom Gilchrist (UniSA)

Seconded: Chris DiPasquale (NUS LGBTI officer)

UNION 3.17: Solidarity with workers in the Glencore lockout

Preamble:

1. We are living in a period of vicious attacks on the working class, from both the Turnbull government, but also from the capitalist class themselves. One of the big pitched battles between workers and bosses in 2017 has been the Glencore lockout of its workers at the Oaky North underground coal mine, in central Queensland.
2. The Oaky North mine produces hard coking coal for export markets and is one of three mines forming part of Glencore's Oaky Creek mining complex. The mine is located just outside the small town of Tieri, about 900 kilometres north-west of Brisbane in Queensland's Bowen Basin. Tieri was established by the company in 1983 to accommodate its mining workforce.

3. Glencore's workplace agreement with Oaky North miners expired two and a half years ago. The union has been bargaining for a new agreement since, however, all offers put by the union have been rejected. The main points of contention are that the company wants to strip away workers' rights to union representation in workplace disputes, and also wants the power to unilaterally change rosters and introduce workplace changes that may compromise workers' safety. In mid June, the workers proposed rolling over conditions from the current 2012 agreement for another two years, taking no pay increase, to which the company also refused. Its hardline stance reveals that this is really an exercise in union busting.
4. Recently, workers began implementing work bans and stop-works, and in July, the company responded by locking the workers out. The workers established a 24 hour protest in front of the mine site. A picket line has been maintained continuously outside the mine, which is now being operated by contractors.
5. The Fair Work Commission issued a comprehensive censure of Glencore's use of military-style tactics to intimidate union members. The company admitted employing an army of private security guards to monitor and film union members and their families at their homes and around the town. The company was ordered to stop surveilling union members and to withdraw a directive banning workers from wearing union gear. The commission found that Glencore's conduct "undermines collective bargaining and freedom of association". It was also directed to drop disciplinary action against 24 workers, who had been accused of "inappropriate conduct" for calling contract labourers "maggots" and "grubs".

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the locking out of workers at Glencore's Oaky North underground coal mine, and stands in solidarity with the Oaky workers fighting not just for better pay and conditions but for their right to a union.
2. NUS activists continue to collaborate with the CFMEU, who we thank for their continued support for our fight against the federal government's attacks on university students.
3. NUS calls on the Fair Work Commission to immediately rule Glencore's lockout illegal, and to penalize the company until the Oaky workers' demands are met.

Action:

1. NUS and its affiliates continue to lend active solidarity to the CFMEU, particularly during strikes or lockouts, by way of organising NUS contingents to picket lines and protests, passing motions of support in

- student council meetings, inviting CFMEU speakers and contingents to NUS rallies, and collecting for strike funds.
- NatCon 2017 delegates take a solidarity photo to send to the Oaky North miners.

Moved: Kim Collet (Griffith University)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith University)

UNION 3.18: Solidarity with workers trying to unionise AB Oxford Cold Storage

Preamble:

- Workers at AB Oxford Cold Storage in west Melbourne are currently in a battle for union representation, the right to enterprise bargaining, and against extreme labour hire practices.
- AB Oxford's 400 workers are employed under nine separate employing entities. 200 of the workers are employed by three shell companies, employment agencies which exist only on paper. These agencies are used to atomise the workforce, and to prevent the possibility for protected industrial action, which is only available during enterprise bargaining periods.
- Every few years, workers are told that the agency is 'wrapping up', and that they are being transferred to a new agency before the expiry of their enterprise agreement. The new agencies, which are all part-owned by the same three people, have new enterprise agreements in place, and workers are unable to negotiate new agreements.
- Despite active intimidation by the company, a ballot of AB Oxford workers confirmed that an overwhelming majority want to fight collectively for a new deal that covers the entire workforce. Workers at AB Oxford are fighting actively against the atomisation and intimidation imposed by the bosses.

Platform:

- NUS stands in solidarity with AB Oxford workers fighting for the right to union representation and against extreme labour hire practices.
- NUS recognises the right of workers to union representation, industrial action, and collective bargaining.
- NUS opposes the use of intimidation against workers attempting to unionise.
- NUS supports similar attempts to unionise workplaces, and agitates for students to join their unions.

Action:

- NUS will release a public statement in support of the AB Oxford workers' struggle, condemning the employer for their attacks

Moved: Madeleine Powell (UNSW)

Seconded: Tom Auld (Adelaide University)

UNION 3.19: The Collie Miners' strike

Preamble:

- The enterprise bargaining agreement at the Griffin Coal mine in Collie was terminated in June 2016 by the Fair Work Commission.
- This is part of a trend of the Fair Work Commission terminating enterprise agreements, such as at Murdoch University this year.
- The new agreement being pushed by Griffin includes a 43% wage cut, reductions to redundancies, entitlements, allowances and the abolition of protective clauses.
- Maintenance workers at the Griffin Coal mine in Collie have gone on indefinite strike to defend their wages and working conditions, in what is now the longest running Collie coalfields dispute since 1911.

Platform:

- NUS opposes the termination of the Griffin coal mine EBA by the Fair Work Commission.
- NUS supports strike action taken by maintenance workers at the Griffin Coal mine to defend their wages and conditions.

Action:

- NUS West will publish a statement of solidarity with the striking Collie miners.
- NUS West will promote solidarity actions for the Collier miners.
- NUS West will encourage donations to Collie Fighting fund by contacting all Student Guilds in WA to inform them of the situation and encourage donations and promote the Collie fighting fund on the NUS West facebook page.

Moved: Lily Campbell (University of Sydney)

Seconded: Kim Collet (Griffith University)

UNION 3.20: Against dodgy SDA deals

Preamble:

1. The SDA has had a disgraceful track record of signing dodgy deals with massive companies. Given the fact they cover some of the biggest employers in the country, the impact these deals have on wages means a lot for people surviving on low wages. These deals can set the tone, putting downwards pressure on wages across the board.
2. Well-publicised and high profile examples of this have hit the headlines. Investigations have blown the lid off the contents of the deals between the SDA and supermarket giants like Coles. These deals consistently fail the Better Off Overall Test (BOOT) when take-home pay-packets of workers under a union deal are worse than the award rates of categories like base pay, casual loading and penalty rates.
3. Most recently a deal between Domino's Pizza and the SDA failed this test. According to Ben Schneiders and Royce Millar's Sydney Morning Herald piece, it's a deal that covered more than 20 000 workers. The estimates show that the workers missed out on hundreds of millions in dollars in wages compared to the award rate, including \$30 million in penalty rates.
4. It is a testament to the bankrupt strategy that even the penalty-rate-destroying Fair Work Commission said to the SDA 'woah that's a bit much mate, we're tearing that deal up.'
5. The SDA is the sharpest edge of a school of unionism that sees the role of unions as simply cutting deals in board rooms, keeping bureaucratic control of their personal little kingdoms, and rejecting rank and file action.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the attacks on wages and conditions for workers across Australia.
2. NUS recognises and condemns the role the SDA has played in taking wages from workers and giving them to the bosses in the form of dodgy deals.
3. NUS supports a unionism that takes on the management with real industrial struggle, recognising that this is the method of turning the union movement around.

Action:

1. NUS office bearers will pressure the SDA to end these exploitative agreements with bosses.
2. NUS will issue a public statement condemning the dodgy deals of the SDA and calling for an adoption of a fighting strategy to improve the conditions and wages of workers covered by the union.

3. NUS will support campaigns that defend penalty rates, including those which take aim at the SDA leadership for their role in eroding penalty rate rights for some sections of the working class.

Moved: Belle Gibson (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Tom Gilchrist (University of South Australia)

UNION 3.21: Stand with the VU NTEU - Stop staff sackings, don't attack our leadership

Preamble:

1. Victoria University (VU) management this year announced plans to cut 115 teaching and research staff, more than a quarter of VU's academics. Another round of redundancies is still to come. On top of the impact these cuts will have on all staff and students, the job losses are being used as a union busting exercise.
2. This is another vicious step in a national campaign of university management against their workers following the September Fair Work decision that allowed Murdoch University to tear up its Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) with staff.
3. The cut positions are being replaced by 65 entry-level academic jobs in an entirely new organisational entity (a first year college) the management have set up to side step the VU enterprise agreement. The positions will have higher teaching hours and limited research and career opportunities. A similar intensified workload model was proposed by management last year and overwhelmingly rejected in a staff vote.
4. Management have claimed the job cuts are a result of a financial crisis, but they have found enough in the budget to award vice-chancellor Peter Dawkins, who already had an annual salary of \$795,000, a \$70,000 pay rise, and another \$1,000,000 for legal and human resources consultancy fees to slash jobs and attack the union.
5. These job cuts are also part of a persistent attempt by management to smash the VU NTEU branch. Three out of four union officials are being retrenched just as the branch was about to start enterprise bargaining. National Tertiary Education Union branch president Paul Adams, vice president Stuart Martin and secretary David Garland have all been forcibly made redundant.
6. It is no surprise that the university recently hired notorious union-busters from Patrick Stevedores, one of whom was overheard bragging that they are "here to smash the union".

7. Protests this year have fought back against the job cuts and the attacks on the NTEU, and have been supported by a wide range of unions, who rightly see VU as a battleground for the union movement more generally. NUS needs to stand with the VU NTEU.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the VU management for their union busting and attacks on staff.
2. NUS extends its solidarity to the VU branch of the NTEU in their fight against these attacks.
3. NUS condemns more generally the vicious campaign by university managements and governments throughout Australia to further corporatise education and attack staff and students.
4. NUS recognises that federal funding cuts exacerbate these vicious attacks on a university level.

Action:

1. NUS will support campaigns at VU against attacks on staff and the union.
2. NUS demands that VU reverse these staff cuts.
3. NUS demands that VU reinstate the retrenched union officials.
4. NUS will continue the national campaign against cuts to education funding and will include opposition to local attacks as part of this campaign.

Moved: Emma Norton (University of Western Australia)

Seconded: Elliot Downes (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.22: Unions need to defy anti-strike laws

Preamble:

1. Australia's laws around industrial action are amongst the most restrictive in the world. Workers can only strike with other workers employed by the same boss, in isolation (not across a supply train for example) and they cannot strike in solidarity with other workers. They can only strike for rights that can be put into an agreement, and this only when they are in a bargaining period when an old agreement expires. Even within these guidelines the Fair Work Commission has the power to suspend or terminate actions.
2. Workers' share of GDP has tracked the strike rate – when the working class has been on the offensive with its industrial might it has been far better positioned.

3. In 1983, union leaders and the Hawke Labor government formed an agreement, the Prices and Incomes Accord, which gave up their established rights to striking in return for having wages indexed by the Arbitration Commission and promises of social reforms. But, having turned away from the real strength that is on the side of the working class, their ability to withdraw their labour, the unions had no force behind them and wage growth has steadily declined since, in keeping with the rate of strikes.
4. On becoming Secretary of the ACTU this year, Sally MacManus said, in defence of unprotected industrial action taken by the CFMEU, that when a law is unjust, there isn't "a problem with breaking it." This is a much-needed sentiment in the union movement, and breaking the laws is the only way forward. Unions have, in the past, carved out their rights to strike by taking illegal action.
5. In 1969, Melbourne Tramways Union leader and communist Clarrie O'Shea was jailed for breaking the penal laws which had been harshly controlling organised labour. The labour movement responded with a rolling general strike, drawing in workers across the country from Pilbara miners to Melbourne tram drivers. Within a week O'Shea was released, and from then on there was a shift – unions had won their rights to go on strike, because they had demonstrated what a suppression of those rights could provoke. They had been able to shut huge sections of the economy down.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that Australia's labour laws are incredibly restrictive and that a fall in strikes has seen a fall in wages.
2. NUS supports strike actions which are taken in defiance of these anti-strike laws.
3. NUS recognises these actions as being crucial to rebuilding the strength of the Australian labour movement.

Action:

1. NUS will make clear through press statements and social media that it supports the breaking of anti-strike and anti-union laws.
2. NUS will offer solidarity in whatever form possible and appropriate to unions and unionists facing persecution and victimisation because of their involvement in industrial action.
3. NUS will organise support including but not limited to legal and financial support for students who face charges or state persecution because of their involvement in NUS protests.

Moved: Tom Auld (Adelaide University)

Seconded: Emma Norton (University of Western Australia)

UNION 3.23: Students stand with the CFMEU!

Preamble:

1. The Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union has become the target of a vitriolic and disgusting union-bashing campaign by the current Turnbull Government. The CFMEU represents workers in one of Australia's most dangerous industries and these workers need a strong union.
2. This is a government that is fundamentally opposed to unions, and just like any Liberal Government, when their back is against the wall they engage in union-bashing. We recently saw the media tip-offs of the raid on the offices of AWU and the reintroduction of the Australian Building and Construction Commission.
3. The ABCC is supposed to monitor the construction industry but spends near all of its time and resources investigating the CFMEU. These are disgraceful attacks on the union movement and must be resisted by all of us.

Platform:

1. NUS stands in solidarity with the CFMEU in their struggle against this union bashing government.
2. NUS calls for the immediate abolition of the ABCC and the Registered Organisations Commission.
3. NUS calls on Employment Minister Michaelia Cash to immediately resign, and failing that, calls on Malcolm Turnbull to sack her.

Action:

1. NUS will work with the CFMEU in their campaigns against the ABCC and the ROC in the future.

Moved: Lewis Whittaker (WA State Branch President)

Seconded: Nick Douros (ACT State Branch President)

UNION 3.24: F* Jeff Kennett**

Preamble:

1. Since Jeff Kennett's privatisation legacy in the 90's, many public services were sold off to private vendors at the expense of quality and taking the profits of these services out of public hands.
2. Looking at the railway alone, the private operators take about \$65 million a year out of the system in profits. That money goes back to

overseas shareholders, when it could be used to upgrade infrastructure or provide additional services. While at the same time the public watches service standards are getting worse and maintenance backlogs are getting longer.

3. Over the past few years, the Victorian branch of the Australian Rail Tram Bus Union lead by state secretary Luba Grigorovitch, engaged in a sustained campaign against the inadequate service provided by the current Metro Trains franchisee and called for the renationalisation of all rail services provided throughout Victoria and Australia.
4. This was an important move that highlighted not only the need for the end of privatisation of rail services, and an end to the monopoly's created and exploited by private franchises. It also highlighted the fact that privatisation of services means that money that could, and should be going back into the public to fund either bettering the services or to provide more welfare for the public, is instead ending up in the pockets of private corporations.
5. Student support for the renationalisation of not only rail services, but also electricity, gas and water distribution should be on the agenda as we support both the unions who look after workers in these industries, as for the betterment of society in years to come.
6. It's also important as privatisation is back on the Liberal Party agenda especially currently in NSW with electricity, that NUS is backing the importance of public owned services.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the renationalisation of services, and emphasises the necessity of owning public assets
2. NUS supports all actions undertaken by the RTBU in support of the renationalisation of all rail services throughout Australia, and all actions undertaken by unions in support of renationalising private services, or fighting against privatisation

Action:

1. NUS will support all actions from unions and all other supporting organisations working in support of the renationalisation of privatised services within Australia.
2. NUS will take a strong stance against privatisation of public services

Moved: Tom Quinlinvin (National Executive)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe Delegate)

UNION 3.25: Solidarity with the Trade Union movement

Preamble:

1. The National Union of Students represents students from tertiary education institutions; both universities and TAFEs.
2. The trade union movement has a history of protecting workers and students alike, as often these fields crossover.
3. It is important that all unions support each other in movements to protect and uphold the rights of the vulnerable and exploited.
4. Solidarity is key to the union movement, as there is power when we stand together.

Platform:

1. That the National Union of Students recognise the importance of showing support and show solidarity in trade union movements and campaigns.

Action:

1. That the National Union of Students support and show solidarity in trade union movements and campaigns, supporting lobbying and being present at rallies.
2. The National Union of Students will continue to support the trade union movement as they have done so this year.
3. That the National Union of Students provide resources as necessary to trade union movement campaigns as an act of solidarity.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

UNION 3.26: Mandatory Union Inductions at All Workplaces

Preamble:

1. Union density for people aged under 30 is currently sitting at 8%; a statistic that is both concerning and a cause for action.
2. Many workplaces are apprehensive and cautious about unions entering workplaces, which is often associated with the misguidedly negative view that militancy is a bad thing, and that all unions are militant.
3. Unions are important as young workers are often exploited in the workplace and they are often in heavily casualised workforces.

4. A consistent union presence and mandatory induction process would improve union density among young workers, and may prove to soften the stigma of unions.

Platform:

1. That the National Union of Students recognise that young people constitute a heavily exploited workforce.
2. That the National Union of Students recognise the importance of supporting young workers, as they are often seeking education at university or TAFE.

Action:

1. That the National Union of Students engage with trade unions (through Trades Halls in each state) representing young workers to implement mandatory union inductions.
2. That the National Union of Students encourage campus office bearers to engage in unionising workers on their campus.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

UNION 3.27: Unionise your campus!

Preamble:

1. Universities usually have independently owned and run fast food places and shops where workers work under differing conditions. From this, many universities actively encourage small (and large) businesses to hire students on campus to incentivize longer hours on campus.
2. Due to businesses on campus sometimes providing specific 'benefits' for being students working on campus, many students do not see the need to join their respective union, and see management as much more benevolent than they actually are.
3. Unionism is dying due to the union movement catching up with new ways in how to recruit young people. Young People are likely to switch careers at least 5 times in their life, a dramatic difference to the previous generation, and are more likely to be insecure, unsafe and unfair work. Targeting university students gives NUS a large role to play in revolutionizing the growth and processes of the union movement.
4. It's important that students understand their rights at work, and their identity as a student and a worker should not affect or determine each other.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges that young students face new challenges as workers that previous generations before did not.
2. NUS acknowledges that more needs to be done to incentivize students to join their respective union.
3. NUS understands their role in young people's live, and how their working life intersects with their quality of education.

Action:

1. NUS will create information packs for student unions to utilise to unionise shops and stores at their respective universities.
2. NUS will create a social media and grassroots campaign around unionising young workers and understanding why unionising at a young age is important now more than ever.
3. NUS will work with the respective Young Workers Centre from each state to devise a strategy to effectively unionise students who work on campus.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

UNION 3.28: Student Unionism into Trade Unionism**Preamble:**

1. There is currently only an 8% union density for young people, if this goes unchanged, we will see our union movement die. It should be the role of student unions especially to help engage young workers about joining and engaging in the union movement. It's important to bridge the gap between students and workers. It's important for student unions to use their power and voice towards students.
2. The liberal government's continual attacks on not just student unions, but also the union movement as a whole has gutted union density. Student unions have greatly felt the effects of liberal government changes, like voluntary student unionism. The only way we can ensure workers' rights are protected is through unions. Many students aren't aware of what their rights even are at work, nor what the union movement has won for them. It's near impossible to fight for better rights at work if you don't understand what they are, or what your union can do for you.
3. Important initiatives from unions like the Australian Education Union have been incredibly rewarding regarding student and youth joining their union. They have free membership for students, and inclusive

personal development programs to entice students to join. These sort of programs have been trialled and are utilised by many unions.

Platform:

1. NUS values the importance of Trade Unions and helping students transition into them.
2. NUS aligns to the vision of the Young Workers Centre; "A state in which young people are safe at work, do not suffer harassment or bullying, and are provided their legal entitlements. For this vision to be realised, we must encourage young people to speak up without fear and join with other young workers to make change and improve their workplaces and communities."
3. NUS understands its power as a voice to students, and that this voice should be used to encourage students into the union movement.
4. NUS will continue its unconditional support for the Union movement.

Action:

1. NUS will support all progressive union campaigns at the discretion of the executive.
2. NUS will support the young workers centre campaign towards youth joining their unions.
3. NUS will create a campaign geared towards encouraging students to join their unions if possible while as a student, and the purpose of joining your union once you enter the workplace. NUS will focus the campaign towards breaking the stereotype that "Unions" is a bad word.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

UNION 3.29: Solidarity Forever! Teachers and Students unite**Preamble:**

1. The NTEU are the main union that represent staff in the higher education sector, particularly teaching staff that students interact with the most.
2. The staff the NTEU represents and students have shared interests in the pay and conditions of staff, as their working conditions are our learning conditions.
3. Furthermore, the student movement and the union movement share many common struggles and aims, particularly at a time where many students are also in the workforce during their studies.

Platform:

1. That NUS recognises the key role that the NTEU plays in maintaining and improving learning conditions at universities around the country.
2. That NUS recognises the importance of student solidarity with the NTEU to ensure that the staff that help and educate us receive proper pay and conditions.
3. That NUS recognise that as the peak body for student representation it needs to set an example of cooperation with the NTEU.

Action:

1. That the NUS president and General Secretary seek to strengthen ties between the NTEU and NUS.
2. That NUS Office bearers support the NTEU in Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations and industrial actions.
3. That NUS work with the NTEU as a united front on issues that are common to the members of both unions.
4. That NUS Office bearers seek to involve the NTEU in events and campaigns that also hold relevance to staff.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Pat Callanan (MSA Delegate)

UNION 3.30: The Greens party members are Liberals in disguise**Preamble:**

1. The Greens like to offer themselves as the progressive alternative in Australian politics, a party for young people, equality and the environment. However disgracefully Greens leader Richard Di Natalie in a November article last year in the Sydney Morning Herald said he would be taking a plan to the next national conference where the Greens could govern with "Liberals or Labor".
2. This is disgusting, Thatcherite, right wing, anti-poor, anti-worker, anti-young people and anti-student behaviour from the Greens. If the Greens were truly a left wing party they would rule out ever governing with the Liberal party. The Greens have form on this, they governed in Tasmania with the Liberals between 1996-1998, supporting conservatives over Labor.
3. With the crisis of climate change, housing affordability, high cost of living and studying, low wages, increasing inequality, the rise of the far right, racism, sexism and homophobia Australia cannot afford more Liberal governments. The Greens must take a stand to never ever put them in power again.

4. It is also reflective of a current swing of greens aligned student politicians and activist doing deals with right wing and conservative tickets to gain control of student unions. This worrying trend shows greens don't seem to have any morals they uphold to when the opportunity for power comes up.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the Green Party's intentions to ever govern with the Liberals
2. NUS calls on Richard Di Natalie to rule out the Greens will ever govern with the Liberals ever
3. NUS calls on progressive students to uphold their values when running and student elections and move away where possible from working with right wing tickets.

Action:

1. NUS President will write to Senator Di Natalie and express our demands
2. Whenever the opportunity arises NUS will campaign against and shame the Greens until they change their policy of being open to supporting Liberals into government

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Adriana Mells (National Executive)

UNION 3.31: STOP THE RACIST CDP! First Nations Workers deserve fair pay! Support the FNWA!**Preamble:**

1. All Australians deserve the opportunity to have a good, steady job and the dignity of work. The Turnbull Government's Community Development Program (CDP) is depriving tens of thousands of people of that opportunity. It's punitive, heavy-handed and racially discriminatory and the Union movement is determined to see it removed.
2. CDP workers are not actually classified as workers. They get well below the minimum wage (the dole pays \$11.60/hour or \$290/week) for working for 25 hours a week for non-profit and now for-profit businesses.
3. They are not covered by the Fair Work Act, they don't have Federal OHS protections or workers compensation and they can't take annual leave, sick leave or carer's leave.
4. Those under the CDP are forced to work up to three times longer than city-based jobseekers to receive welfare payments. Since July 2015, less

than 3,500 Indigenous participants found full-time or part-time work lasting six months or more.

1. CDP workers have 70 times the financial penalties imposed upon them than non-remote dole workers.
6. Fines for missing activities under CDP – which covers a tiny fraction of the population – account for more than half the total penalties across the entire welfare system.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the racist CDP
2. NUS demands fair pay for our First Nations Peoples
3. NUS Demands reparations be paid to Indigenous Australians as sign of reconciliation for their stolen land, the destruction of culture, genocide and the stealing of children by colonialist invaders.

Action:

1. NUS Support the First Nations Workers Alliance, set up to get rid of the CDP and advocate for Aboriginal workers to receive fair pay
2. NUS will write to Zach Wone to express support for the movement
3. NUS will lend support to any actions the FNWA take to achieve wage justice

Moved: Pat Callanan (MSA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

UNION 3.32: Support Staff Strikes at UTS

Preamble:

1. The University of Technology, Sydney management is currently in negotiations with the NTEU in regards to the enterprise agreements. Enterprise agreements determine the fundamental conditions of university staff's employment such as their hours of work, leave entitlements and pay. They also provide important protections by defining the process to resolve disputes, as well as independent review of accusations of misconduct or unsatisfactory performance.
2. UTS is the only university in NSW that doesn't have Annual Leave loading, and is also known to be one of the lowest paying universities in Sydney. It is also the only NSW university that doesn't have a standing consultative committee, which means that staff have less access to their university data in regards to employment, as well as and increased rate of casualization in universities

3. Through campaign titled "There's No UTS without US", and NTEU strike held on the 19th of October, there has been a shift in the attitudes of university management, however there is still a lot of work to be done. While there was a strike planned for the 16th of November that was withdrawn, there is still a potential need for a strike in the future.

Platform:

1. NUS recognizes that the best way to have a quality education is to have good support for teaching staff
2. NUS recognizes that harm to teacher's working conditions ultimately leads to a harm in students learning environment
3. NUS rejects university management's attempt to increase casualisation and fixed-term contracts, as well as the treatment of universities as business, rather than places of learning.

Action:

1. NUS stands in solidarity with the UTS NTEU campaign and fight for fairer working conditions.
2. NUS encourages all students of every university that is able to attend to stand on the picket line and encourage staff and students alike not to cross it if another strike were to occur.
3. In 2018 NUS will support all university staff who go on strike for better conditions.

Moved: Angela Griffin (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.33: Stands in Solidarity with Support the Go Home On Time Day

Preamble

1. 'Go home on time day' is a national union event held on the 22nd of November, and in 2018, it will be its 10th annual year of this event, and imitative of the Australian Institute. It is supported by a variety of unions, including the NTEU, and encourages all working people to leave work at the time they are meant to finish. It has been found that in a variety of sectors, people contribute a large amount of work with unpaid labour, because they stay after work. The NTEU for example found that a conservative estimate of the amount of unpaid labour by staff members is around \$2.5 billion. They recognize that this labour is necessary, but it is still unpaid.

2. This is particularly true for university staff, and casual university staff in particular, with UTS staff for example working an estimated 3-10 unpaid hours a week, according to the NTEU.

Platform:

1. Many students are unaware of their rights in regards to NUS recognises that when professors are burnt out from doing extra, unpaid work, and do not have the time to recuperate and be with their friends and family, the quality of education is diminished greatly.

Action:

1. NUS supports the 'Go home on time' campaign.
2. NUS will work with a variety of unions that specifically attract university students (Such as the SDA) to advertise this day to students in 2018.

Moved: Angela Griffin (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Katie Crossin (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.34: Getting Students Involved In Their Unions

Preamble:

1. In Australia, only 38.5% of workers are a part of their union. While this is higher than the world average, it is essential to realize that with younger generations this rate is dropping greatly. The population of Australia is increasingly disenfranchised and dissatisfied with the union movement. However, young people also don't realise the importance of unions and the incredibly important work they do for workers.
2. They do not understand that the things we take for granted like women being able to work, the right to breaks, the right to work in a safe location, the 8 hour work day, RDO's and leave with pay have all been hard fought for and won with the support of unions and workplace organising.
3. Over the past few years, unions have won greatly with campaigns such as the #StreetsFreeSummer and the CUB55, however continued support and growth is necessary for these continued fights.

Platform:

1. NUS recognizes that not enough young people are not joining their unions, and are not being engaged with the Union Movement

2. NUS realizes the difficulties in getting young people involved in their union, either due to the fact they don't know what union to join, or they are, in general, unaware of their union.
3. NUS understands the importance of young people being involved with their union, in order to keep the union movement strong.

Action:

1. NUS encourages campus groups to connect with unions specific to their universities, and degrees offered at their universities (i.e. the MEAA for Media and Journalism degrees).
2. NUS supports the tabling of all unions on university campuses.
3. NUS will endorse visible action of all unions, such as strikes and support the advertisement of these actions on campus across Australia.

Moved: Angela Griffin (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

UNION 3.35: But What Union am I?

Preamble:

1. It is a known fact that there is a low involvement rate for young people within their unions. This could be for a variety of reasons, but one of the main ones is lack of knowledge. Many students don't know why they should join their union, and even more students don't know which union they should join.
2. Many students aren't aware of the ACTU phone line which can be utilised to find out which union you belong to.

Platform:

1. NUS understands the importance of collective action and getting young workers involved in their union.
2. NUS supports the union movement as a way to ensure rights for workers, and supports the involvement of everyone with this movement.

Action:

1. NUS will create a page as a part of their website that compiles all of the unions in Australia
 - a. This page will allow for students who are planning their degrees to find out what union they are in.

- b. It will also have a separate page for the job (and they type of job, i.e. casual, part-time etc) they are currently in, in order to give students the most information possible.
 - c. This page will have information on the importance of students joining their union.
 - d. It will then send them to a page where they can learn more about that union, and how to join it
2. NUS will engage with campus unions in order to spread the word of this page, and encourage all students to join the union they should be a part of.
 3. NUS will also highlight existing programs such as the ACTU phone number to engage students in joining their union.

Moved: Angela Griffin (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

UNION 3.36: Return to industry-level industrial bargaining

Preamble:

1. Under current enterprise bargaining, workers negotiate directly with individual firms to determine wages and working conditions. This system leaves many vulnerable workers behind, who may not enjoy strong unionisation and representation. Industry-level bargaining is a tried and true method that sees wages and working conditions determined at an industry level so no worker gets left behind.
2. This means less unionised workplaces enjoy the benefits of collective bargaining conducted by trade unions. Wage growth is needed desperately and industry-level collective bargaining would help to achieve decent wages and working conditions for all. The emergence of the gig economy, with heavy casualisation and poorer working conditions, makes this change increasingly crucial.

Platform:

1. The NUS supports the reintroduction of industry-level collective bargaining to help address the issue of record-low wage growth and increasing inequality.

Action

1. The NUS will campaign alongside progressive unions for the reintroduction of industry-level collective bargaining.

Moved: Angela Griffin (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.37: Bring on parallel bargaining

Preamble:

1. Parallel bargaining allows workers to use other EBAs from similar contexts and industry as a benchmark for their own EBAs. Shamefully, this is currently illegal.
2. This is despite employers and businesses using other firms as benchmarks for their own industrial bargaining methods and goals. We know the termination of the EBA at Murdoch University was used as a benchmark by other universities like the University of Sydney during recent collective bargaining.
3. If universities can lean on weakly unionised universities like Murdoch Uni, unions should be able to draw upon strongly unionised universities that can achieve better results in collective bargaining. Indeed, this should apply across all industries.

Platform:

1. The NUS considers it unfair that it is illegal for unions to use other EBAs as a benchmark for their own collective bargaining yet businesses and universities often do
2. The NUS supports the legalisation of parallel bargaining to improve the wages and working conditions of workers with weaker unionisation by helping bring them in line with stronger unionised workforces

Action:

1. The NUS will campaign for parallel bargaining reform to industrial relations law to assist university campuses with weak unionisation. Staff working conditions are student learning conditions.
2. The NUS will campaign for this legislation to apply to all workers and firms, to encompass students working alongside their uni degrees and other workers. All workers deserve a fair go.

Moved: Angela Griffin (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.38: Strive for full unionisation of workers

Preamble:

1. The NUS believes in unionism and a long-term goal that every worker should be unionised.
2. If a worker loses their job, they can lose everything: their home, food to eat and a decent life. If a business loses a worker, there is always another worker who can take their place. Thus, workers are always at a disadvantage against capital.
3. Only through collective bargaining and cooperation can workers secure decent wages and working conditions. Solidarity of workers is their only chance to make capital comply with worker demands, by threatening action to damage profits and/or offering alternative arrangements that work in the interests of all.

Platform:

1. The NUS supports full unionisation of the workforce
2. The NUS supports unionism as an essential means to combat the disproportionate power of capital and fight for equality, democracy and justice

Action:

1. The NUS will promote unionism and unionise workers wherever and whenever it can
2. The NUS will make efforts to make unionisation accessible to students
3. The NUS will campaign alongside unions for their progressive goals and for our own, including full unionisation of the workforce

Moved: Angela Griffin (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

UNION 3.39: Strive for full socialisation of industry

Preamble:

1. The NUS should strive to replace the current capitalist system of industrial relations with one in which workers democratically determine decisions in the workplace. The current system where capitalists dictate terms to workers is a key source of inequality today. It promotes a classist system that disadvantages the many and privileges the few by prescribing them disproportionate power.

2. Democracy should be a core value of the NUS. The socialisation of industry is the extension of democracy to the workplace. This is the next step beyond the goal of full unionisation of the workforce, another long-term goal that seeks to introduce democracy to the workplace.

Platform:

1. The NUS calls on the government to promote worker's cooperatives with financial incentives for greater democracy in existing firms and for creation of new worker cooperatives.
2. The NUS calls on unions and business to also set this goal of the socialisation of work and industry

Action:

1. The NUS will campaign for full unionisation of the workforce to help facilitate socialisation
2. The NUS will campaign for government assistance for worker's cooperatives to democratically develop out of existing firms and/or to be newly created.

Moved: Angela Griffin (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Adriana Mells (National Executive)

UNION 3.40: Bring Back USU

Preamble:

1. 10 years on a return to universal student unionism is integral to creating an environment where student associations are able to better afford to represent and provide service to their members.
2. Student unions were gutted under the liberal government implementation of Voluntary Student Unionism. Under SSAF based funding, students are forced to negotiate with universities for money to fund their campaigns and services. This forces student unions to work with universities, when they should be able to work as organisations completely separate from university scrutiny.
3. A new proposal put forth in a push to move back towards USU is a process where each student association is allocated 85% of SSAF paid by the students it represents. Meaning that universities with both postgraduate and undergraduate associations or student associations for different campuses, base the figure off of the amount of SSAF paid by the students directly represented under that association.
4. For example, a post-graduate association will only receive 85% of SSAF paid by postgraduate students and likewise a student association such

as the Bendigo Students Association that represents La Trobe Bendigo students who are not represented by the La Trobe Student Union, would receive 85% of La Trobe Bendigo students' SSAF payments.

5. An ensured 85% SSAF payments scheme would mean for Student Unions that they could work as organisations completely separate to the university, with focus on campaigns that best address students needs and demands for the university. This would mean an end to tiresome SSAF negotiations every year that waste student Unions time which could be better spent addressing the needs of students. Student unions should not have to waste time constantly selling the services they provide to the University.

Platform:

1. NUS supports a USU structure that legally requires all universities to pay 85% of Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF) to its student run organisations ie. Union, guild, Association.

Action:

1. National Union of Students will create rally's and lobby the government and universities to show the National Union of Student's support for Universal Student Unionism.
2. National Union of Students will create a campaign dedicated to highlighting the importance and public popularity for Universal Student Unionism.

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

UNION 3.41: Construct a Unionised Future

Preamble:

1. One of the favourite hobbies of universities is construction, but what are we as student unions doing to ensure the safety of workers on our campuses? Student unions should be ensuring that everybody working on these sites are union members.
2. Union worksites are safer worksites. Safer worksites mean fewer workplace accidents, which can be harmful to both workers and students in the vicinity.
3. As members of our respect student unions we must work with other unions to ensure that both workers and students at university come home safely.

Platform:

1. That the National Union of Students believes that all workers on university construction sites should be members of their respective unions.
2. That the National Union of Students believes that all workers have the right to come home safely at the end of the day, and that union membership promotes greater safety and solidarity on worksites.
3. That NUS believes that a safer worksite on campus means a safer campus, and that it is important for the entire university community that construction workers are safe and treated fairly.

Action:

1. The National Union of Students will work with individual student unions to encourage construction workers on campus to unionise
2. That the National Union of Students will engage with our trade union movement to support the unionisation of campus construction, and support those unionised in fighting for a safer workplace
3. The National Union of Students will create a campaign that will encourage all students to be members of their respective union, and engage actively with the union movement as a whole.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (LTSU delegate)

UNION 3.42: Supporting Young Workers Initiatives Nationwide

Preamble:

1. With the manner in which we work hurtling into a time of precarious employment, the rise in casual contracts and a drop in young people joining unions is leading to a decline in young workers rights and treatment at work.
2. Instability and inaccessibility of work has meant that employers have been able to get away with rampant underpayment, bullying, sexual harassment and assault, unsafe work environments, and a failure to fulfil the workplace entitlements of young people, namely student, for decades. This is only getting worse as demand for jobs fails to meet supply.
3. Trades hall in Melbourne have aimed to tackle this through creating a youth specific, workers' rights organisation – Young Workers Centre (YWC). Not only has YWC been a body to education young people on their rights at work, but it has spearheaded campaigns against noted abusive employers, such as Grill'd, Honey Birdette, 7-11, and Subway.

4. More of these organisations are popping up around the country, highlighting that this is an issue as widespread and detrimental as anything, and mandates specific organisations to spearhead change. Such organisations, however, can only run effectively with the support of student unions and young activists.
5. Young Workers Rights are student rights, and, therefore, it is imperative that NUS support initiatives that aim to advance these rights.

Platform:

1. That NUS believes that the rights of young workers are the rights of students
2. That NUS, in all its capacity, should be promoting the rights of young workers as a matter of student welfare
3. That NUS applauds the creation of specific campaigns and organisations that are working in this area, and will support them on matters it deems relevant to promotion of young people and young workers rights
4. NUS understands that young workers centres are not a replacement for a union, but are a good tool in bringing young people into the union movement.

Action:

1. State Branch Presidents will provide the national welfare office and national president with information regarding initiatives that the union movement, or like movements/organisations, are doing in their states to excel the rights of young workers
2. Through this, NUS will create a directory of contacts and resources for campuses on these initiatives and will actively promote them in a campaign based around young people's rights at work
3. That this information must be disseminated to all member organisations under the assertion that it should be promoted to all students
4. That the National Welfare Office will work with its members to create collectives and campaigns at campuses that are aimed to promote the rights of young workers, that will work in conjunction with relevant state or national initiatives (i.e Victorian Young Worker's Centre)

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

UNION 3.43: Refugee rights are union business

Preamble:

1. It's important for NUS as a union to stand up for social justice issues when they do occur. As a union, we should be organising around issues and fighting for rights whenever and wherever we see them being abused.
2. There are 60 thousand displaced people across the globe and Australia has a humanitarian responsibility to provide a safe home and an escape from danger.
3. An important way to engage students in the potential and importance of NUS is standing alongside the union movement in its role to stand up for things are unjust and unfair. It's important that students, no matter where they come from, can see that NUS supports all students, no matter where they or their family come from.
4. It is important as student activists to have a stance in campaigns like #LetThemStay and to utilise our platform to engage more students within these issues.
5. To quote Union Aid Abroad APHEDA Executive Officer Kate Lee: "We are just plain lucky. It was only an accident of birth that meant it wasn't us running from a war in Syria. Let's face, that's the reality, we're really lucky. It could be our families, our kids who face deportation to Nauru or our kids drowning on a beach in Turkey. Unionists stand together to support those who can't stand up on their own."

Platform:

1. NUS believes that Australia is a country that should stand for fairness, equality and multiculturalism; policies from any public party that show a racist stance towards asylum seekers are to be condemned.
2. NUS believes that the only way to implement proper policies to support migration and refugees is on the basis of fairness, empathy and opportunity
3. NUS asserts its position against the turn back of refugees and disagrees with referring to them as 'boats' which concretises the xenophobic ideals of the Liberal Party's policy
4. NUS is against any form of detainment or detention for those seeking asylum within Australia.
5. NUS stands in solidarity with the NTEU campaign that refugee rights are union business, and that it's important for unions to take a stance on such matters.

Action:

1. That NUS will make a statement asserting its position against the human rights atrocities that have occurred against refugees.

2. Victorian Young Labor condemns the treatment of refugees in detention centres, the human rights atrocities that occurred on Manus Island, and the Australian government's unwillingness to allow asylum seekers into Australia and will continue to speak against it.
3. NUS will use its position to lobby the government to change its stance on Australia's treatment of asylum seekers.
4. NUS will show support through social media and physical presence where possible at future rallies in support of refugee and asylum seeker rights.

Moved: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate)

UNION 3.44: What do we do when the rules are broken?

Preamble:

1. When Sally McManus took over the role of ACTU secretary she boldly stated that when workers and unions sometimes have to act illegally in regards to industrial action, "It might be illegal ... according to our current laws, and our current laws are wrong. I believe in the rule of law when the law is fair and the law is right. But when it's unjust I don't think there's a problem with breaking it."
2. At a time when we are seeing the biggest wage cuts since the Great Depression, unions are one of the most important bodies we have in fighting back against conservative neoliberal governments who do not care about us as workers. It's important that unions have the strengths enshrined in law to protect us at work.
3. With penalty rates attacked, it appears there is no level the Liberal government will not stoop to when it comes to attacking workers and the working class. This dangerous precedent means we need strong militant unions in our corner protecting us now more than ever.
4. We need to be heading towards 0% deaths, and by breaking unjust industrial action laws it is unions like the CFMEU who are taking the action to be the first on the scene to help save and protect workers.

Platform:

1. NUS supports unions who must break unjust laws for the sake of protecting workers and fighting for workers rights.
2. NUS acknowledges the financial and social pressures facing workers and students everyday, and understands the importance of standing in solidarity with unions protecting workers.

3. NUS condemns the actions of unions who are not doing enough to protect their workers rights and pay conditions such as the SDA.

Action:

1. National Union of Students as a body will run more campaigns surrounding the importance of industrial action and joining your union.
2. National Union of Students will stand against any and all attacks on workers with snap action rallies, national welfare days of action, and lobbying where appropriate.

Moved: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

UNION 3.45: Sharing is caring, share the GST

Preamble:

1. The Horizontal Fiscal Equalisation policy our National GST pooled and divided between states and territories.
2. Western Australia is a lucky state in which its land is full of valuable resources in which can be dug up, shipped out making WA a large amount of revenue.
3. The HFE looks to provide a safety net to states in which cannot produce the same amount of revenue.
4. HFE means that no matter the state you live in you can have an equal standard of health care and education.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the HFE to enable all states to access to equal revenue.
2. NUS will fight any campaign to have any state get an advantage over other state.
3. NUS oppose the notion that Western Australia is entitled to its fair share of GST revenue as it already receives it through mining royalties.

Action:

1. NUS will call on the Federal Government to oppose any changes to the HFE.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Nathan Croft (NUS General Secretary)

UNION 3.46: Join your union week!

Preamble:

1. Union membership across Australia is declining. NUS needs to do more to encourage the benefits to students about why they should join their trade union.
2. Students and particularly international students are often the victims of wage theft.
3. The decline of weekend penalty has and will have an adverse effect on students who study full-time and have to rely on penalty rates.

Platform:

1. NUS supports all students being a member of their relevant trade union.
2. NUS notes the success of having trade unions on campus to encourage students to join.
3. NUS opposes scabs who do not wish to join their union, or join fake registered corporations who have no bargaining power such as RAFFWU.

Action:

1. The 2018 welfare officer will join campus reps and unions to have stalls at their campuses encouraging students to join their union.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

Seconded: Jordan Mumford (Uni SA President)

UNION 3.47: No to Longer Trading Hours

Preamble:

1. In South Australia, big retail outlets need to close at 5pm on weekends and most stores close on Public Holidays.
2. The South Australian Liberal opposition has committed that if elected, they will allow big supermarkets to open 7 days a week from midnight to 9pm, including most public holidays.
3. These changes to the trading hours of large retail establishments is being led by big retailers who are seeking to further increase their market share at the expense of smaller retailers, producers and workers.
4. Previous expansions of retail trading hours has not increased the total number of hours of work available, but has instead cannibalised sales at other times of the week, meaning that these hours are simply

redistributed. The opportunity to work will be shifted from normal working hours toward unsociable working hours. This means students will have less time to spend on their study, or with their families.

Platform:

1. The NUS opposes further liberalising retail trading hours.
2. The NUS commends the work done by the SDA in informing the public about the negative impact of the deregulation of retail trading hours.
3. The NUS commends the state Labor government for its continued opposition to deregulating trading hours.
4. The NUS condemns the South Australian Liberal party for putting the interests of big business above that of workers and their families.

Action

1. The 2018 General Secretary will write to the SDA to thank them for their continued support for student workers.

Moved: Jordan Mumford (UniSA Delegate)

Seconded: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

UNION 3.48: Universal Student Unionism

Preamble:

1. 10 years on - Voluntary Student Unionism is still causing detrimental effects to student organisations around the country. Under the current SSAF based funding, student unions are forced to negotiate with universities for money to fund their campaigns and services. This forces student unions to work with universities, when they should be able to work as organisations completely separate from university scrutiny. A return to universal student unionism is integral to creating an environment where student associations are able to better afford to represent and provide services to their members. Student unions were gutted under the Liberal government implementation of Voluntary Student Unionism and its up to the students to demand its reversal.

Platform:

1. NUS Affirms its support for Universal Unionism and recognizes that VSU has been detrimental to student unions
2. NUS opposes VSU and commits to working towards a long term goal of Universal Student Unionism (USU).

3. NUS commits to providing ongoing support to both affiliated and non affiliated student organisations and student representatives in relation to SSAF and student control over student affairs.

Action:

1. The 2018 NUS National President, National General Secretary, National Education Officer and other NUS Office bearers provide ongoing support, information and assistance, including suggested models of best practice where required, renegotiating their campus SSAF agreements with their respective universities in 2018
2. The 2018 NUS Education officer will coordinate a campaign on both the reversal of Voluntary Student Unionism and NUS's demand for Universal Student Unionism

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Education

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EDU 4.1: Solidarity with TAFE students

Preamble

1. As a student union, it's vitally important that we show solidarity with all students, not just those that go to university. The statistics show that TAFE students traditionally come from lower SES backgrounds, and then quickly move into the workforce if not already within. TAFE students can greatly benefit for union support for issues that affect them the greatest, such as TAFE cuts and privatisation.
2. Solidarity with TAFE students not only engages them with unions and the benefit to joining your union, but also creates a deeper relationship with TAFE students, and means greater contribution to the movement.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the importance of TAFE students and how they can and do contribute to the National Union of students and broader society.
2. NUS acknowledges the importance of creating stronger relationships with TAFE students and campuses.

Action:

1. The National Education Officer and National Small and Regional Officer will work to establish collectives at each TAFE campus where possible.
2. The National Education Officer and National Small and Regional Officer will engage TAFE students through NUS stalls at respective TAFE's.

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

EDU 4.2: GONSKI 2.0

Preamble:

1. Gonski 2.0 has been lauded by the liberals as a funding increase of \$23.5 billion over 10 years, with supposedly the greatest share going to the "schools that need it most". However this is \$22 billion less than the plan under the previous Labor government and Queensland public schools alone will be \$300 million worse off than under Labor's original plan. The announcement of Gonski 2.0 also came days after the Liberal's plan to gut university funding by \$2.8 billion a year and increase university fees by 7.5%.

2. While the media devoted much coverage to the aspects of the scheme that will that slow funding increases to 350 Catholic and independent schools and cut funding to 24 private schools, the private school sector as a whole will again win big from the new arrangement. Caulfield Grammar in Melbourne's south-east, which charges fees of \$29,000 a year, will be \$34.8 million better off over the next decade. The King's School in Parramatta, which charges \$34,000 a year, would receive \$19.3 million in additional funds by 2027. Scots College in Malcolm Turnbull's electorate of Wentworth would receive an additional \$10 million over the same period.
3. On top of this, there are strong indications that funding that public schools receive will come with strings attached. The Government's Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes manifesto, published in 2016, argued for the expansion of the current standardised testing regime and the introduction of performance pay.
4. The Liberals also want NAPLAN-style literacy and numeracy tests for every single year of school and phonics tests for year one students. Precedent virtually guarantees that the results of such tests would be used to tie funding to student performance.
5. These issues have always been present in the Gonski scheme. Even before the advent of Gonski 2.0, schools had been worse off in two of the first three years of the scheme being rolled out.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes cuts to overall funding for education and calls for a genuine increase in government funding to public schools.
2. NUS opposes any attacks on higher education funding and recognises that increasing funding to primary and secondary as well as higher education sectors are not mutually exclusive.
3. NUS opposes any attempt to impose arbitrary standards on teaching and student outcomes to determine funding.
4. NUS recognises Labor's complicity in introducing attacks and cutbacks on education.

Action:

1. NUS will continue to campaign against attacks on education and ultimately for free education.
2. NUS will respond to any funding cuts to education with sustained action and protest campaigning.

Moved: Lauren Saunders (National LGBTI Officer)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith Delegate)

EDU 4.3: Don't charge for enabling courses- keep them free!

Preamble:

1. Enabling courses are important for giving many students the confidence and ability to undertake an undergraduate degree and begin studying at university. They particularly help students of low socioeconomic backgrounds and those from oppressed groups.
2. Furthermore, enabling courses are a low cost, at only \$30 million dollars nationally. This has not stopped the federal government from proposing that students pay for this themselves. The reform seeks to charge students fees of up to \$3271 for enabling courses.
3. The reform would be an overwhelming obstacle for many students from oppressed groups and would deter many from studying. This will be particularly detrimental due to the fact that it will impact some of those most disadvantaged people in the country including indigenous and disabled students, who are some of the most likely to require these courses.
4. Education is a right, not a privilege and this reform can only be considered as a further attack on students.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the right for all students to have the highest possible quality of education, regardless of their background.
2. NUS acknowledges that this reform is an attack on students, particularly those from oppressed groups.

Action:

1. NUS condemns the Liberal government's higher education reform package which will charge students for enabling courses.
2. NUS includes this demand within the education campaign for the following year.

Moved: Tom Auld (Adelaide)

Seconded: Elliott Downes (La Trobe)

EDU 4.4: Stop Neoliberal attacks at Melbourne University

Preamble:

1. Melbourne University has been pushing a number of cuts and reforms onto student and staff for a number of years now and is looking to implement further cuts under the guise of "flexibility"

2. Much of these attacks come under the ambiguous and vague proposals circulated under the name "Flexible Academic Programming" (FlexAP)
3. FlexAp has suggested trimesters, larger classroom sizes, later classes, and further withering away of staff conditions.
4. Under the FlexAP a trialling process of "blended learning" has been implemented and maintained in many subjects, with most learning content being forced online and many tutorials turning into seminars of up to 50 students.
5. These cuts to academic quality is also connected to further attacks on academic integrity and freedom with the introductory trials of CADMUS
6. CADMUS is a google docs styled program that tracks and monitors typing of students for plagiarism and other discrepancies
7. It is a violation of the academic process and a further intrusion on behalf of the administration, forcing students to be connected to the internet at anytime of writing and adding further stress to students conditions.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the FlexAP in it's entirety and calls for complete transparency from the University of Melbourne Administration
2. NUS rejects the excuses of flexibility when workers and students rights are under attack
3. NUS supports the rights of students and staff against an intrusive and authoritarian University administration and opposes the introduction of cadmus or any similar program at any university.

Action:

1. NUS calls on the University of Melbourne Student Union to take up a public campaign against these ongoing attacks and will work alongside them to create the broadest, most successful campaign possible.
2. NUS will support action and campaigns on the campus and will publicly promote any action that is taken up.
3. The 2017 NUS Education officer will run a public campaign against these campus specific cuts, recognising the impact this will have on education nationally
4. The NUS education officer will publicly oppose any implementation of the FlexAp or similar attacks and will include opposition to restructures in public campaigns run

Moved: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

EDU 4.5: Make Education Free Again: the Education Department in 2018

Preamble:

1. 2017 has seen the Liberals continue their assault on higher education. The Federal Budget introduced several attacks on university students, including a 7.5% fee increase, \$2.8 billion funding cuts, and lowering the HECS repayment threshold to \$42,000 a year. These come on top of cuts passed in the Omnibus Bill in 2016, as well as the conversion of Start-Up Scholarships into loans, and changes to the indexation of grants and government assistance which have left students worse off. Higher education has become more expensive than it has ever been in Australia, while the quality of education is declining.
2. This situation is forecast to get worse. National student debt quadrupled from \$12 billion in June 2006 to \$48 billion in June 2016, and is projected to reach almost \$200 billion in 2025. The Liberals maintain their aim of fee deregulation, with Simon Birmingham saying that deregulation has been deferred and not defeated.
3. Attacks on education have been part of a broader war on young people being waged by the government. Penalty rates have been cut, while welfare has been reduced and welfare recipients demonised and persecuted. Housing prices and rent continue to rise. Youth unemployment is increasing while young people constitute one of the most vulnerable and exploited sections of the workforce, with only 7% of under-25s members of a union. On top of this, massive TAFE funding cuts led to a drop in enrolments of 200,000 in 2015 alone.
4. On a campus level, Vice-Chancellors across the country continue to pursue an agenda of cuts and corporate restructuring, to the detriment of students. This has included the phasing out of lectures, increases in class sizes, course cuts, staff cuts, and the restructuring of degrees, among much else.
5. Universal free tertiary education could easily be funded in Australia. The government is currently proposing \$65 billion in corporate tax cuts, and 2017 has been a boom year for big business. The 50 richest corporations have doubled their profits, amounting to an extra \$60 billion in dividends, while Australia's richest individual, Gina Rinehart, doubled her personal wealth to almost \$22 billion. This money could easily be used to fund free universal higher education, as well as a substantially improved welfare system.
6. NUS has demonstrated that it can play a vital role in fighting for quality, accessible education over the past few years. Prior to the release of the 2014 budget the "Abbott and Pyne: Hands Off Our Education" campaign mobilised hundreds of students against the new Liberal government. This put NUS in a strong position when fee deregulation was announced and the budget was responded to with large street demonstrations of thousands of students and smaller stunts targeting Liberal politicians.

The campaign drew wide media coverage and public support, and with public opinion swung against fee deregulation was twice defeated in the senate. This is a template for a successful campaign.

7. This year unions have also demonstrated the vital role they can play in fighting for issues of social justice. The campaign work of trade unions, along with NUS, played an enormous role in organising the mass YES campaign during the plebiscite on marriage equality, mobilising tens of thousands of people around the country in what has been the biggest social justice campaign in recent history. As a representative of students across Australia, NUS has a responsibility to play an ongoing role in campaigns for social justice.
8. The key to successful campaigns, whether against fee deregulation or in support of marriage equality, is activism. Leafleting, postering, setting up stalls, and making announcements in lectures, were key to the defeat of deregulation in 2014. Continuing to organise through activism will be crucial to NUS campaigns in the coming year.
9. NUS needs to remain on the front foot in fighting for student rights. We are already faced with an education system that had billions of dollars of funding cut under the Howard government, while fees have more than quadrupled in the last 20 years. While responding to government attacks, NUS also needs to continue to continue to raise its voice assertively in support of free education and more funding for universities.

Platform:

1. NUS commits to continuing the campaign against the Liberal government and their attacks on higher education and student welfare.
2. NUS commits to fighting for increased government funding for education.
3. NUS commits to campaigning against the Liberal government's war on young people.
4. NUS condemns Vice Chancellors across the country who have introduced cuts to staff and courses, and who have played a disgraceful role as key backers of the Liberal party in their attempts to further the neoliberal restructuring of universities.
5. NUS stands unequivocally for free education as the only funding model that ensures higher education remains accessible to students from all financial backgrounds.
6. NUS recognises that some form of fee deregulation continues to remain on the agenda of the Liberal party and of the Vice Chancellors, and that the temporary deferment of full fee deregulation does not mean that it is defeated.
7. NUS recognises the importance of campaigning for social justice, and that such campaigns are within the domain of the National Education Officer.

8. NUS acknowledges the critical importance of protest politics in past victories and commits to a protest based campaign in response to future attacks.
9. NUS commits to working with student activists who continue to fight for an equitable education system.
10. NUS considers all attacks on student welfare to be attacks on the educational opportunities of students, and within the domain of the National Education Officer

Action:

1. The National Education Officer will lead a protest-based campaign against the Liberal government. This campaign will not only react to cuts and fee increases but will demand an increase of funding for education
2. The National Education Officer will produce and make available a fact sheet outlining the current approach of the Liberal government towards higher education and student welfare.
3. The National Education Officer will also campaign against funding cuts, restructures and other attacks by state governments and Vice Chancellors and will support state or campus-based initiatives to oppose such attacks.
4. While the campaign should be lead by the National Education Officer it should also be a priority of all other national and state office bearers, and they should endeavour to produce material specific to their departments (e.g. how cuts to student welfare will disproportionately impact women, LGBTI students).
5. The campaign in 2018 will include:
 - a. The organisation of cross-campus street marches and demonstrations.
 - b. Promotional material including but not limited to posters, leaflets, t-shirts, stickers and online graphics to be ready and distributed to campuses in time for enrolment weeks and orientation activities.
 - c. Publicity for the campaign on the NUS website, on all NUS social media and at all forums and events.
 - d. Paid advertising on social media and in relevant print media.
 - e. Media releases to announce any actions, and in response to any further comments by Simon Birmingham or other Liberal ministers regarding higher education and student welfare.
 - f. Opportunities for activists across the country to discuss the campaign, such as phone link ups and social media organising, but primarily at the 2017 Education Conference.
 - g. The National Education Officer communicating with campus EAGs and state networks to discuss the campaign.
 - h. Working with other organisations such as the NTEU and GetUp!

- i. Drawing connections between campus-specific campaigns and federal policy.
- j. Targeting Vice Chancellors, particularly on campuses where they are proposing cuts to staff and/or courses. This will include:
 - i. Organising protests on a campus level against local cuts and the Vice Chancellors introducing them.
 - ii. Publishing material outlining Vice Chancellors positions on federal policy, their salaries and bonuses, and any proposed campus cuts.
 - iii. The National Education Officer communicating with campus EAGs to help organise and produce materials against their Vice Chancellor.

6. The National Education Officer will organise the first National Day of Action for the year for 21st of March in semester one, and will have materials available early in the New Year.
7. The National Education Officer will be on the lookout for opportunities to protest against Liberal ministers or any other relevant targets, and will monitor the events calendars of senior Government Ministers so opportunities are not missed.
8. The National Education Officer will work with the National Welfare Officer to incorporate attacks on student welfare, such as the Government's robo-debt recovery program, into the campaign.
9. The National Education Officer will work with other National Office Bearers to aide them in developing department-specific material
10. The National Education Officer will play an active role in campaigning in support of issues of social justice.
11. The National Education Officer and the National President will ensure that the Education Conference which takes place in July is used as a forum to seriously workshop and build upon the education campaign. The conference will also be used to discuss other issues and campaigns ranging from anti-racist to LGBTI rights struggles. These campaigns should be integrated and participated in by student education activists.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

Seconded: Eleanor Morley (University of Sydney)

EDU 4.6: The Education Campaign in 2017

Preamble:

1. Simon Birmingham and the Liberal party attempted to introduce reforms to the higher education sector that would have hindered young people's ability to go to university.
2. The Higher Education Amendment bill included a plethora of attacks including:
 - a. Lowering the HECs repayment threshold to \$42,000
 - b. Increasing the cost of education by 7.5%
 - c. A \$2.8billion funding cut to universities.
3. The Liberals have been attempting to deregulate and attack higher education since Abbott's ill fated 2014 budget. Due to the large and vibrant student campaign and the massive popular opposition to the budget and its measures, the attacks were voted down.
4. Since then the Liberals have looked for ways to introduce small attacks that will open the path for further cuts and restructures.
5. Life for students is already difficult, with the inadequate welfare, lack of job opportunities and an exorbitant cost of living. University used to be free in Australia, and it would only cost an extra \$8billion per year to fund free education today.
6. In 2017 the NUS education department ran a campaign to 'Make Education Free Again'
7. This campaign called for the reintroduction of free education
8. Campus based issues were also able to be campaigned around under the MEFA banner, such as the demonstrations against trimesters at UNSW, the FlexAp at Melbourne Uni and the Murdoch EBA decision.
9. Having Make Education Free again allowed NUS to campaign to students and build the profile of NUS before the government announced what attacks they would be introducing. NUS and affiliate organisations held successful demonstrations in the 1st semester, which across the country attracted many students. These demonstrations were centered around the call for free education, as well as responding to issues such as the Centrelink 'robodebt' scandal, showing that NUS departments can work well together to protest against the government attacks.
10. When Birmingham announced the latest round of attacks, the education department was immediately able to respond. Snap actions against politicians happened all around the country, and large demonstrations were called. The demonstration in Brisbane was the largest they've had since Tony Abbott announced fee-deregulation.
11. The demonstrations combined with the last three years of education activism has meant that the Liberals are unable to pass their education attacks through the senate.
12. It's been the ongoing student movement which has meant that students aren't paying even more for their degrees. This places much importance

on there being an ongoing student movement into the future as it is clear the government is going to continue pushing in the hopes that it can introduce more neoliberal attacks on higher education.

13. The MEFA campaign demonstrated that NUS can fight for positive changes in students lives, not just against attacks introduced by the government.

Platform:

1. NUS endorses a reintroduction of free education. There's more than enough money in the Australian economy to provide free education to all university students in Australia.
2. NUS is committed to standing against attacks from the government, as well as fighting for more welfare, more housing support and for free education. A union must fight for the improvement of its members conditions, not just stop attacks.
3. NUS recognises that student protest and mobilisations have been the key factor in the Liberals failure to introduce more neoliberal attacks onto the higher education sector.
4. The Liberals will keep pushing to increase the cost of education, and cut funding so it is vital that NUS continues to draw students into a street movement against such attacks.

Action:

1. The NUS education officer will continue the Make Education Free campaign into 2018
2. This campaign will include, but not limited to:
 - a. A demonstration each semester in each city
 - b. Online material
 - c. Posters and leaflets to be distributed promptly
 - d. Actions against MPs where possible
3. The NUS education officer will work with other NUS officers to promote campaigns relating to the general war on young people.
4. NUS will continue to fight for free education.
5. The NUS education officer will provide assistance to campus education officers to fight against campus based attacks.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

Seconded: Eleanor Morley (University of Sydney)

EDU 4.7: Higher Education cuts since Howard

Preamble:

1. Between 1996 and 2007 the Howard Liberal government consistently attacked higher education. Howard cut more than \$5 billion from higher education, increased HECS by up to 168 per cent, introduced domestic up-front fees, and banned the collection of student union fees through VSU, which saw the collapse of several student unions nationally and the chronic underfunding of others.
2. Each government post-Howard has continued the trend of trying to cut funding to higher education.
3. The Rudd government elected in 2007 deregulated university places, moving towards a demand driven funding model. Increasing student numbers without a corresponding funding increase meant a heavier workload for staff and lower quality education for students.
4. In October 2012 the Gillard government cut \$1 billion from higher education.
5. In April 2013, the Gillard government announced a further \$2.3 billion worth of cuts to higher education, as well as scrapping the discount on up-front HECS payments and transforming Start-Up Scholarships into loans repayable to the government.
6. In 2014, the Abbott government, with education minister Christopher Pyne, continued to support Labor's proposal of \$2.3 billion cuts, as well as proposing to expand the "demand-driven system" into full university fee deregulation. In 2016, with the cooperation of the ALP, the government was able to pass Gillard's proposal to turn the start-up scholarship into a loan, which constituted nearly \$1 billion of cuts.
7. In 2016, the Turnbull government proposed \$2 billion worth of cuts to higher education.
8. In 2017, Education Minister Simon Birmingham proposed fee increases of 7.5% and a funding cut of \$2.8 billion from higher education.
9. The result of decades of funding cuts is that students are paying more than ever before for a worse quality of education. There has been a further entrenchment of a two-tiered university system, where students from richer backgrounds can front up fees at sandstone universities, while working class and poor students attend universities crippled by a lack of resources due to underfunding.
10. Vice-Chancellors have used funding cuts as a pretext for introducing restructures that boost profits by attacking students and staff. These include the 'Melbourne Model', trimesters at UNSW and Griffith University, the shift to online learning, vicious staff cuts at campuses such as USYD and Victoria University amongst others, as well as raising fees outright.

11. The federal government's cuts have repeatedly failed to pass through the senate on the back foot of student mobilisations, however are continually proposing renewed attacks.
12. In lieu of a fight back from student organisations, Vice Chancellors across the country have been able to get away with restructures and attacks.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that cutting higher education is a longstanding project of successive governments, who have not backed down from the project of privatising universities.
2. NUS recognises that Vice-Chancellors use government funding cuts as a pretext to introduce measures that increase the cost and burden of education for students.
3. NUS supports activist campaigns against federal and campus attacks.
4. NUS recognises that considering this history students should expect further attacks, and mobilising students on and off campus is the main way we can put serious pressure on the Liberal government and vice-chancellors.

Action:

1. The NUS Education Officer will continue to organise campaigns against the Liberal Party's proposals to cut higher education funding and raise fees.
2. This will mean actively engaging with national student organisations to build a strong campaign, through having regular stalls, printing materials and communicating with Education Action Groups or similar bodies nationally.
3. The NUS Education Officer will support on-campus initiatives to fend off restructures such as trimesters, recognising that on-campus changes are part of the overall assault on higher education. This will mean advertising events and liaising with activists involved to provide resources if needed and when possible.
4. NUS will continue to cooperate with the NTEU and other unions in building campaigns and demonstrations.

Moved: Tom Gilchrist (UniSa)

Seconded: Madeleine Powell (UNSW)

EDU 4.8: Gronski funding

Preamble:

1. Labor's original Gonski school funding scheme of 2013 would have left public schools worse off by \$21 million in 2014-15 and \$136 million in 2015-16
2. This year, the Liberal Government's 'Gonski 2.0' school funding plan slashes another \$22 billion from public schools
3. Both schemes devote hundreds of millions in extra funding to independent and catholic schools
4. The Liberal's Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes manifesto recommends further NAPLAN style standardised testing which is already being used to justify funding cuts to underfunded schools and to penalise teachers
5. In 2017 the Greens agreed to a compromise with the Liberal's that would cut billions from school funding
6. This comes in a context where public schools are in need of large funding increases

Platform:

1. NUS opposes Gonski and the even worse 'Gonski 2.0'
2. NUS demands fully funded, free, and accessible education at all levels. Specifically, NUS demands a funding increase to public schools, and opposes the funding of private schools altogether.
3. NUS opposes dealing with Liberals

Action:

1. NUS will organise active campaigns against cuts to public education funding
2. NUS will produce media releases and will attend events to support trade union opposition by the AEU and any other unions to the defunding of public education

Moved: Clare Francis (Curtin)

Seconded: Athulya Jancy Benny (RMIT)

EDU 4.9: Weapons companies off our campus! Melbourne University, scrap your deal with Lockheed Martin

Preamble:

1. University administrations in Australia consistently prioritise the interests of business and governments over the interests of students and the general population. This is reflected in the increasingly overt links between corporations and higher education institutions, which funnel public money into parasitic industries such as marketing, finance and military research. Students and taxpayers are expected to fund projects that benefit only the elite, without any consultation whatsoever. The privatisation of the sector is further entrenched as corporations, rather than governments, provide funding and infrastructure to universities.
2. The current collaboration between Melbourne University, Lockheed Martin and the Defence Science Institute is one particularly objectionable example of this trend. Under this arrangement, private defence contractor Lockheed Martin (LM) will directly fund research programs carried out by the University. The University will also make use of LM's \$13 million STELaRLab research facility. By entering into deals of this type, Vice Chancellors knowingly undermine the independence of their staff's research and help funnel public funds and student fees into weapons development.
3. Lockheed Martin is complicit in war crimes and genocide. Apache helicopters and drones equipped with LM's Hellfire Missiles were used against Gazans during Operation Cast Lead. Recent airstrikes on Yemeni schools and hospitals have also used LM technology. LM has contracts with the Australian and Israeli militaries on f-35 fighter jets and combat training operations. They collect and process surveillance data for agencies such as the CIA, NSA and FBI.
4. The implications of such a deal are well-known to key figures within higher education, despite overtures to harmless 'growth and innovation'. Opening the STELaRLab this August was former Education Minister Christopher Pyne, now Minister for the Defence Industry. Pyne said the deal "will make Australia a better ally to the US... more capable of projecting our power in the region and being a regional power that is standing up for the values that our countries believe in". Iven Mareels, Dean of the Melbourne School of Engineering said he was "looking forward to joining with Lockheed Martin... in support of the significant defence effort presently underway in Australia". The School of Engineering will receive \$750 million from the University over the next 10 years to encourage "increased engagement and collaboration with our industry partners".

- There is a precedent for student unions condemning this partnership, with UMSU Students' Council passing a motion in August 2016 condemning the University's "complicity in death and destruction".

Platform:

- NUS rejects the privatisation of universities and condemns Vice Chancellors who engage in deals with private firms, guaranteeing them subsidised access to and control over research.
- NUS condemns the allocation of student fees and public funding to support the imperialist ventures of the Australian government and its allies.
- NUS calls for universities to divest from all arms manufacturers.
- NUS specifically demands that Melbourne University terminate its current deal with Lockheed Martin.
- NUS condemns Lockheed Martin and the Australian government as purveyors of mass violence.
- NUS stands in solidarity with those suffering and resisting military assault, as well as ordinary citizens whose standard of living is depressed by the siphoning of funds away from public services.

Action:

- The NUS National Education Officer will produce and publicise materials condemning the relationships between private firms and universities, particularly those engaged in military research at Melbourne University, RMIT and the ANU.
- The NUS National Education Officer will support in all possible ways campaigns against the corporatisation of universities and for publicly funded higher education.
- NUS will endorse and give active support to campus-level campaigns against Lockheed Martin's collaboration with Melbourne University. This support should include printing, utilizing its social media, sending representatives to events and passing motions of support.

Moved: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Shania Khan (University of Melbourne)

EDU 4.10: No Trimesters at UNSW

Preamble:

- Since the reintroduction of student fees in the 1980s by the Labor Government and the subsequent 3 decades of neoliberalism, the university sector has been cemented as a money making machine. This has been reflected in the massive restructures being rolled out across the country. At UNSW this restructure is in the form of trimesters or the UNSW3+ plan.
- The UNSW3+ plan is one of the worst attacks on students and staff in decades. It involves condensing 13-week units into 10 weeks with 3 terms fit into one year, meaning the time spent completing our courses is condensed: a 3 year course becomes 2 years. Same content, same assessment load, same fees, but in a shorter block of time.
- The NTEU has reported that where the trimester model has been introduced at other unis "union members report significant impacts such as workload and administration increases for academic and professional staff, less time to compile and release results, units having to be re-designed, and shorter timeframes for delivering content, responding to and counselling students, and assignment and exam marking". It will result in the churning of students through low quality degrees that stay at the same high price.
- Trimesters are incompatible with centrelink in relation to full time requirements as well as the start up loans, which will still only be available twice yearly - not at the beginning of a new trimester - significantly reducing the total amount received by students to ease the burden of purchasing supplies and textbooks.
- The NTEU predicts that at least 400 jobs will be cut. This is the biggest staff cut in UNSW history. More than 150 staff have already been told their jobs are gone, and the restructure is not slated to begin officially until 2019.
- The university is using the new model to overhaul staff conditions, increasing casualisation and intensification of workloads, as well as entrenching a strict division between teaching and research roles that will likely create 2 tiers of employment and undermine pay and conditions.

Platform:

- NUS opposes campus restructures and recognises that in the current context of cuts and the neoliberalisation of higher education that campus restructures are an attack that need to be opposed.
- NUS opposes the introduction of trimesters at UNSW including all the measures in the intermediate period aimed at ensuring the success of introducing the UNSW3+ model such as, but not limited to, the overhaul of administrative staff and the cutting of courses.

Action:

1. NUS will support actions at UNSW against trimesters and will give sustained support to the campaign, including through providing resources.
2. NUS will work with the NTEU in opposing trimesters and the consequent attacks on staff and the union itself.
3. NUS recognises that UNSW management are not on the side of students and staff so will maintain a position of opposition to them.

Moved: Madeleine Powell (UNSW)

Seconded: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

EDU 4.11: Student Resources and Staff on the Chopping Block at the University of Sydney

Preamble:

1. In 2015 USYD Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence and his management team announced a new 'Strategic Plan'. This plan for a restructure of USYD is a reaffirmed and strengthened commitment to the neoliberalisation of higher education.
2. The restructure primarily entails a series of cuts to staff, resources, and services at USYD that are a way of 'streamlining' operations in order to make education worse for students and to make more money for university management.
3. USYD management have placed the university's staff squarely on the chopping block. USYD management have been consistently hesitant to articulate exactly how many jobs they're planning to axe, in fear of provoking a response, but recent events have confirmed USYD's desires to cut jobs. In December 2016, one hundred research staff members were told their jobs would be made redundant, and earlier this year dozens of administrative staff were told the same. And at EBA bargaining this year between the NTEU and management, job security was something management were the most hardline against. This all confirms that USYD management believe their staff are totally expendable. For USYD, staff aren't human beings putting their lives into making the university run - rather, they're a nuisance who's paychecks get in the way of profits, and so as many as possible should be cut.
4. We've also seen cuts to student services and resources. As indicated in USYD's plans, they're in the process of cutting the 122 degrees they once had down to just 20. And they're cutting 10 faculties down to 6. Cutting down degrees and faculties means less options, variety, and less chance to pursue specialised interests that students have. But this

streamlining of faculties is also used as a justification to cut staff. And once faculties are streamlined, services that used to offer specialised information and resources for students of one degree are now lumped in with thousands of other students doing different subjects. This means more work in the hands of fewer staff, and subsequently less comprehensive and resourced responses for students trying to get through their degree.

5. All of these cuts add up to a worse quality of education for students. As their staff are cut, resources like the time and work of their teachers, and administrative services that could help them, are axed. And of course these cuts also means hundreds of people that have given years of work to this institution could be out on the street, left without any income, at a moment's notice.
6. One other thing the university is trying to cut, is the presence of the NTEU on campus. USYD have tried to push the union offices off campus in the past, and recently campus security have been confiscating union materials in an act of intimidation sanctioned by management.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises a consensus exists amongst universities across the country and the federal government, that sees universities as businesses run for profit
2. NUS recognises the neoliberal consensus on higher education means a worse quality of education at a higher cost for students
3. NUS condemns sees all cuts to staff and student services, degrees, and faculties as being unjustifiable, and only a move in the interest of profiteering management

Action:

1. NUS will support campaigns coming out of USyd to fight against the cuts faced on their campus
2. NUS will continue a national campaign against federal cuts to university funding, and against corporatised universities

Moved: Lily Campbell (University of Sydney)

Seconded: Eleanor Morley (University of Sydney)

EDU 4.12: SWOTVAC IS FOR STUDYING

Preamble:

1. Study Without Teachers Vacation (SWOTVAC) traditionally existed so that students can study for their upcoming exams, in an ever changing progressive world, we need to preserve traditions. SWOTVAC is an essential period for students to prepare for exams.
2. Conversely, exam time is a period for exams and assignments. Mixing SWOTVAC and exam time together, is the equivalent of mixing church and state; these should be kept SEPARATE. Combining SWOTVAC and exams together also adds to an increase in stress on a demographic that is already suffering from mental health issues.
3. IT'S TIME universities stopped putting unnecessary pressures on students and start respecting that SWOTVAC is for studying and exam period is for exams/assignments.

Platform:

1. NUS recognizes that exams are a stressful time for the student body. This time needs to be spent focusing on these exams rather than on assignments due during SWOTVAC periods.
2. NUS recognizes that SWOTVAC is an essential part for the learning of students, and should be kept free so that students can study for exams.

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare Officer and Education Officer will put together a petition that will oppose the combining of SWOTVAC and exam period.
2. The NUS Welfare Officer and Education Officer will write to the Vice Chancellors, lobbying against the merging of SWOTVAC period and exam period.
3. The NUS Welfare and Education Officers will work collaboratively to ensure on campus support with Student Unions around Australia to ensure the seamless transition of SWOTVAC and exam times to separate dates.

Moved: Jake Cripps (La Trobe University, President)

Seconder: Michael Iroeche (La Trobe University, President Elect)

EDU 4.13: Making Blended Learning Great Again

Preamble:

1. Blended learning is an increasing academic delivery method across university started at Deakin University. It is used as a way of delivering education in a 21st century manner with a combination of both online learning, assessments as well as face to face learning. There has been a surge in online delivery of subjects causing there to be a reduced need for lecturers and tutors in university institutions. Similarly blended learning has the same effect on staffing numbers within university institutions.
2. Students are charged the same for blended learning subjects as a full time contact subject which results in students having less academic hours with lecturers and tutors in their subjects.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that blended learning subjects should be lower in price than subjects which involve full time contact. This is due to there being less contact hours with such subjects.
2. NUS understands that there is a need for diversity in learning methods however they should not comprise the learning capability of students.
3. NUS understands that increased blended learning has lead to university staff casualisation and staffing cuts.

Action:

1. NUS proposes that blended learning subjects should be lower in price than subjects which involve full time contact. This is due to there being less contact hours with such subjects.
2. The NUS Education Officer will liaise with campus office bearers to support them in lobbying their university to reduce pricing and reliance on the online aspect of blended learning.
3. NUS will write to the Vice Chancellors to conduct a review on the effectiveness and reliability of blending learning.
4. NUS will write to the Minister of Education and Vice Chancellors opposing the increased casualisation of university lecturers and tutors due to the increased reliance on blended learning.

Moved: Jake Cripps (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Lois Villar (La Trobe University)

EDU 4.14: Reduce heavily weighted exams and assessments

Preamble:

1. There are many courses in universities that often have assessments or exams that are worth over 50% of a student's grades
2. It is ridiculous to expect students to be marked for a subject, based on their performance on only two assessments, which often results in students failing a subject due to not passing highly weighted assessments.
3. An increasing number of subjects especially in Law or Business degrees follow a similar pattern.

Platform:

1. NUS recognizes that it is impractical for student's grades and ability to pass a subject to be solely weighted on one piece of assessment.
2. NUS recognizes that students are often more harshly marked on assessments that are worth a large amount of their grades.
3. NUS recognizes that students are more likely to fail a subject if there are assessments which are highly weighted and that these assessments tend to add more unneeded pressure on students.
4. NUS recognizes that when the subject load is split over multiple assessments, students tend to perform better.

Action:

1. NUS Education Officer, in collaboration with campus Presidents, will help campus representatives to lobby their universities to reduce the amount of weighting of particular tasks in subjects.
2. NUS Education Officer, in collaboration with campus Presidents and Education Officers will help lobby universities to not have assessments which are worth more than 50% as these can be stressful for students to undertake, and are ineffective in producing accurate results.
3. NUS Education Officer, in collaboration with campus Presidents, will help lobby universities and faculties to have a fair spread of assessments which provide students with a fair method to pass their subjects.

Moved: Annabelle Romano (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Jake Cripps (La Trobe University)

EDU 4.15: NUS Supports Graduate Engineering Jobs

Preamble:

1. As a vital part of a graduates degree, universities have partnered with large engineering firms such as BAE Systems to offer students internships.
2. Several groups on campus, however have been campaigning against graduate jobs and internships especially in the defence industry.
3. NUS as an organisation that represents students and student issues also supports all and any opportunities for students to gain internships to further their education.

Platform:

1. The NUS supports Universities partnering with large engineering firms such as BAE systems to offer graduate jobs.
2. The NUS condemns any group that would seek to reduce the number of graduate internships and jobs available.

Action:

1. The NUS supports strong university industry partnerships at our universities to support strong employment outcomes for students.

Moved: Samuel Roberts (SSU Delegate)

Seconded: James Kerr Nelson (RUSU Delegate)

EDU 4.16: Jumping over hurdles

Preamble:

1. Hurdle assessments at university are becoming increasingly used as a way for tutors and lecturers to ensure students get a certain percentage to pass a subject.
2. Regardless if the student has already passed the subject by having the right amount of marks, if they have not passed the hurdle requirement of that subject, they will fail the subject, unfairly.
3. Hurdle requirements are an additional strain and burden on the student's ability to do well in a subject, especially combined with highly weighted assessments.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that hurdle tasks are unnecessary way of making sure students pass a subject.
2. NUS recognises that hurdle tasks also create additional stress on students which affect their studying and how well they do in that subject.

Action:

1. NUS will write to the Minister of Education opposing hurdle tasks in university subjects.
2. NUS along with willing Student Unions will lobby Vice-Chancellors to remove hurdle tasks.
3. NUS condemns the use of hurdles tasks as a means for tutors and lecturers to ensure students pass the subject.

Moved: Jake Cripps (La Trobe Delegate)

Seconded: Jean-Marc Kurban (Deakin Delegate)

EDU 4.17: EDUCATION: Improving EdCon**Preamble**

1. EdCon is an important fixture in the NUS calendar. For many students, it's their first contact with NUS. But it's clearly in need of improvement.
2. First and foremost, we need more sessions on the actual details of education policy – assessment, pedagogy, development and teaching issues.
3. EdCon is an important place to learn how to organise, but we need to make sure that the focus on education remains clear. And we need to make sure EdCon is about more than just the Go8.
4. Welfare at EdCon is important. Part of that means continuing the work done this year to include a Welfare section in EdCon. EdCon can be a great place for the student movement to further its Welfare goals, and the National Education and Welfare Officers should work closely together here.
5. We also need to improve the general welfare situation at EdCon – it's no secret that EdCon every year faces equity breaches, big and small. We need a stronger general equity procedure for EdCon and other NUS conferences. That includes increasing group interaction, and continuing to boost cross-factional workshops.
6. And we need to ensure that the mechanics of EdCon continue to run smoothly. EdCon should be as affordable and accessible, and as well

run, as possible. And EdCon should be a hub for producing resources for the whole country – producing videos for some EdCon sessions could be a great way to do that.

Platform

1. NUS believes in improving EdCon, including in its policy and education focus.
2. NUS believes in maintaining welfare at EdCON.
3. NUS is committed to ensuring the conference runs smoothly and is accessible to all students.

Action

1. The National Education Officer will aim to improve EdCon next year.
2. The National Education Officer will ensure EdCon holds more sessions on the actual details of education policy – assessment, pedagogy, development and teaching issues.
3. The National Education Officer and National Welfare Officer will work together both in terms of including a Welfare section in EdCon again, and developing a better general welfare situation a stronger general equity procedure.
4. The National Education Officer will ensure videos are produced for some EdCon sessions.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

EDU 4.18: EDUCATION: A National Education Audit**Preamble**

1. The NUS Quality Survey is an important tool in the NUS's push to improve higher education. But it should be part of something bigger.
2. Over the next one or two years, the NUS Education Office should conduct a National Education Audit, in partnership with campuses.
3. To improve data, the National Education Office should consider conducting some scientific surveys too, potentially in collaboration with sympathetic university staff members in statistics and research fields. That would provide the opportunity to get a true compass on the state of education in Australia, with potential to grab serious media and university attention.

Action

1. The National Education Officer will develop a National Education Audit. This audit will be conducted scientifically and identify the range of education and learning representation situations at universities, looking at everything from quality of online learning to fair assessment.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

EDU 4.19: EDUCATION: A new approach to grassroots organising**Preamble:**

1. NUS don't have the resources of most other peak bodies – money for expensive broadcast and print advertising, or to hire professional PR or lobbying staff.
2. What NUS do have is potential people power – out there in the over one million Australian students. Successive generations of National Education Officers have tapped into that – but there's so much more potential than is utilised.
3. The way people get involved in a movement is when they have opportunities to take on meaningful and defined roles. Many of the best student unions and representative organisations are the ones that do that. They might give students opportunities to be representatives on university boards, or to take on certain communications, policy or organising roles on public affairs issues.
4. Supporting these structures means that the National Education Office can tap into a much larger pool of people. A pool that includes people working up and down university bodies. And a pool of people with communications and policy skills that can support the National Office.

Platform

1. NUS believes we need to look at a new model of organising based on delegated responsibilities.
2. NUS believes the National Education Office should be supporting campus Education Officers in adopting the kinds of programs and structures – where there are meaningful roles for all in university boards, faculty representation and public affairs groups.
3. NUS believes in particular, students should be able to provide their specialist expertise to campus Education Departments and action groups – on everything from PR to policy organising.

Action

1. The National Education Officer will support and drive a new model of grassroots organising on campuses, where all unions offer opportunities for students to take on delegated positions of responsibility in Education Departments, on both academic affairs and public affairs front.
2. The National Education Officer will aim to make this the basis for a much bigger, more vibrant and more supportive national education group – with a much more diverse Facebook group and more voices at new monthly national education linkups.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

EDU 4.20: EDUCATION: Building the tools to mobilise students**Preamble:**

1. A national peak body needs to be able to reach its constituents. But currently, the NUS is limited in its ability to do this.
2. That outreach ability must include direct outreach – through things like email newsletters and social media. But it also needs to stretch to targeted outreach, where certain contact can be made to certain groups of students.

Platform

1. NUS believes it needs to develop new tools, from new email newsletters to new CRM tools, to improve both direct and targeted outreach.

Action

1. Over the next year, the National Education Office will examine the potential outreach tools it can use and implement, and present a report to the next NUS Education Conference in 2017.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

EDU 4.21: EDUCATION: Proactive activism, not just responsive activism

Preamble:

1. Over the last decades, the student movement has achieved some great things. It has fought various attacks on student rights and the quality of education. It has fought discrimination and bigotry, and has made both society and universities a better place for millions of people.
2. Despite this, on many aspects, life on many fronts for students has gotten worse. Student fees have kept rising and rising. For many, going to university is less affordable and accessible than it would have been in the past. Funding to higher education has consistently been short in some areas, harming both education and equality.
3. It's time the NUS did more not just to successfully stop attacks on students, but also to have more impact on proactive education change. Big issues, like higher funding and more student representatives on university councils, need to be part of that.
4. Student unionists have talked for years about putting textbooks on HECS – let's make that front and centre in our campaign, starting with a push for a NZ-style ancillary cost support scheme.

Platform:

1. NUS resolves to do more in the field of proactive education activism.
2. NUS believes that long term change requires long term, consistent, campaigns.
3. NUS believes in developing a roadmap that gets us closer to our goal of education genuinely being accessible to all, and free of the financial inequality that current plagues it.

Action:

1. The National Education Officer will launch two proactive education campaigns next year. These will be flexible enough to be highly responsive to new attacks on education, but also to deliver a long-term push for better conditions, not just more of the same. These campaigns will run not just for a year, but for three years. Each of these campaigns will come with an NUS Education Platform for them.
2. One campaign will focus on education quality and pedagogy issues, and another on education fairness and fees issues, with the two campaigns intersecting.
3. In particular, the National Education Officer will make front and centre a goal of cutting student ancillary costs to \$0, starting by making sure students face no upfront ancillary costs.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (University of Melbourne Student Union)

Seconded: Ella Shi (University of Melbourne Student Union)

EDU 4.22: EDUCATION: More Supps, more (chance of) Success! Why Supplementary assessments matter.

Preamble:

1. Supplementary offer many students who just miss out another chance on passing their units. This prevents the extension of degrees and extra course fees. As many students fail an assignment(or hand it in late) due to circumstances beyond their control, supplementary exams may make the difference.
2. However, rules regarding supplementary exams vary wildly across university campuses, with many of them arbitrarily applied by staff members. Students deserve a consistent approach from universities and their staff.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that any unit, where practicable, should offer a supplementary assessment.
2. NUS believes that the rules around supplementary assessments should be as transparent as possible.
3. Where practicable, supplementary exams should be held as soon as possible after the release of results.

Action:

1. The NUS education officer, in conjunction with the NUS disabilities officer, will assist affiliated student unions in lobbying their universities in order to achieve platform points 1, 2 and 3.

Moved: Lewis Whittaker (WA State Branch President)

Seconded: Palak Mittal (Edith Cowan University)

EDU 4.23: Affordable Printing on Campus now!

Preamble:

1. Many universities still require hard copies of assignments to be handed in, or notes that the students are expected to print before every class. Students often have to pay for this printing out of pocket, and with many hundreds of pages printed every year, the costs quickly add up.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that no student should have to pay to print required course materials or assignments.
2. NUS believes that affiliated student unions should provide a low-cost printing option to students for basic printing where possible.
3. NUS believes that assignments should be handed in online wherever practicable.

Action:

1. The NUS education officer will assist affiliated student unions in lobbying their university to implement platform points 1 and 2.

Moved: Palak Mittal (Edith Cowan University)

Seconded: Lewis Whittaker (WA State Branch President)

EDU 4.24: Every Cent is Sacred - Reduce Incidental Fees!

Preamble:

1. In addition to course fees and SSAF, students in a variety of degrees are often required to pay up to \$1500 in incidental fees - on uniforms, stethoscopes, medical procedures, training and more.
2. These fees are often not deferrable, unlike SSAF and course fees, leaving students with low disposable income needing to spend large amounts of money at the start of semester.
3. Whilst not perfect, the HECS system allows many students equitable access to higher education through interest free loans on course and SSAF fees, but these extra incidental fees are not eligible to be deferred.

Platform:

1. The NUS believes that incidental fees are an extra burden on students who are already struggling.
2. The NUS believes that all or a portion of a domestic student's incidental fees should be deferrable to HECS under the current fee system

3. The NUS believes that universities should work to reduce incidental fees and extra course costs as much as possible

Action:

1. The National Union of Students shall engage with Universities, in conjunction with the relevant campus student unions, to lobby universities to reduce or subsidise the costs of incidental fees
2. The National Union of Students will push the federal government to make incidental fees deferrable under HECS.

Proposed: Dylan Heywood (Curtin University)

Seconded: Conrad Hogg (The University of Western Australia)

EDU 4.25: NUS supports enabling programs

Preamble:

1. The 2017 Federal Budget proposal planned to scrap a loading in which universities receive funding support to allow Australian university students to access enabling programs or preparatory courses at no cost. This would have meant that instead of students being able to access a fee-free enabling pathway, students accessing enabling programs or preparatory courses would have had to contribute up to \$3,271 in HECS-HELP payments.
2. Furthermore, the Federal Government had planned to cap enabling student places, meaning that universities and private colleges would be competing for them in three-year tenders.
3. In South Australia, UniSA College has been a vital free-free enabling pathway program for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with disabilities and mature age students, with 85% of college students coming from equity backgrounds.
4. While the Federal Government's higher education package has failed to get through parliament, the NUS must oppose any future attacks on enabling programs at universities.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises the value of enabling programs to students from equity backgrounds.
2. The NUS opposes any Federal Government attempts to halt funding to enabling programs at Australian universities.

Actions:

1. The NUS will actively oppose any moves by the Federal Government to cut funding for enabling programs.
2. The NUS will work with Student Associations and Campus Education Officers to lobby the Federal Government in opposition to any proposed funding cuts for enabling programs.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.26: Support our Postgrad students!**Preamble:**

1. Postgraduate students can currently access Commonwealth Supported places from the Government to aid in their studies. The proposed axing of Commonwealth Supported places for Masters by Coursework programs would have made postgraduate study inaccessible for many students who rely on the program to achieve their desired career outcome.
2. The Government's proposed scholarship model was of little consolation with unclear criteria and there inevitable limits to scholarship places. The proposal led to students and university management considering the viability of postgraduate study and wondering what this would mean for students seeking higher degree tertiary qualifications.
3. Multiple career pathways require students to hold a Masters by Coursework degree to be qualified in their field, such as Teaching, Architecture, Psychology, and Sonography just to name a few. A scholarship model would make these fields among others inaccessible for those unable to pay up-front postgraduate costs, or those unable to receive a scholarship.
4. While the Federal Government's higher education package has failed to get through parliament, the NUS must oppose any future attacks on cutting funding support for postgraduate study at Australian universities.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the value of postgraduate study in learning outcomes and career employability.
2. NUS opposes any cuts to funding support for postgraduate study.

Actions:

1. The NUS will actively oppose any future moves to cut funding support for postgraduate study.
2. The NUS will work with campus Education Officers to lobby the Federal Government to oppose any cuts for postgraduate study.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.27: Stop Trimesters!**Preamble:**

1. Across Australian universities, there has been a move towards implementing trimester systems in schools and faculties. This has often been forced onto students in top-down decisions made by university management at the dismay of students.
2. The trimester system at UniSA in particular in the Law and Business Schools has led to an array of concerns including:
3. Increased pressure on students to finalise assessments, as well as a lack of feedback on assessments from tutors and lecturers under increasing time pressures
4. A move towards increased online assessment, especially in a 'Week Zero' system prior to the commencement of semesters
5. Required readings in 'Week Zero' prior to semester and during SWOTVAC due to the limited time in the trimester system to fulfil course content
6. Forcing students to drop to part-time study due to the increased time pressure, removing their eligibility for Centrelink support
7. The lack of support for students studying across different schools in degrees with both a trimester system and a traditional two-term semester system
8. There is ongoing feedback from students that the trimester system simply does not support students in completing their studies, puts their emotional and financial well-being at risk, and places risk on staff teaching conditions that affects student learning outcomes.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the trimester system at Australian universities.
2. NUS recognises the value of supporting students in their study that puts their educational, mental and financial well-being at the centre.

Actions:

1. The NUS Education Officer will campaign against the trimester system at Australian universities through petitioning, letter-writing and incorporating into National Days of Action.
2. The NUS Education Officer will work with campus Education Officers and Student Associations to lobby university management in opposition to the trimester system.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.28: End the corporatisation of Australian universities, value the Arts and Political Sciences!**Preamble:**

1. Under the vision of the neoliberal agenda, Australian universities are increasingly becoming highly corporatised money-making machines, in which the value of academia and especially the Arts and Political Sciences is being de-prioritised in higher education.
2. “Innovation and efficiency” programs translate to cuts and restructures with little to no consultation with the students who are either accumulating thousands of dollars in debt, or up-front payments for international students, mean that under the neoliberal agenda we are seeing a dip in quality of education.
3. Recent cuts and restructures at UniSA through a ‘Discipline Clusters Project’ that have led to the discontinuation of International Relations raise concerns about the value of the Arts and Political Sciences. Students including those in their first year have been told their degrees have been cut and they must now access course replacements in business or sociology, or either cross-institutional study or exchange, in order to complete their degree. This is of particular concern as business courses are \$500 more in cost than politics courses, forcing students to pay more for courses they do not want.
4. While cuts and restructures are continually being painted by university management as positive outcomes of the student experience, universities are continuously failing to consult with students at the onset of any changes or decisions being made, as has happened at UniSA.
5. Universities are continuing to treat students as passive recipients of education, rather than putting students at the centre of decisions affecting their education.

Platform:

1. The NUS notes with concern that higher education providers are devaluing the place of the Arts and Political Sciences in tertiary education.
2. The NUS opposes the de-prioritisation of the Arts and Political Sciences at Australian universities.
3. The NUS recognises that any decisions that impact upon student’s education must have meaningful student involvement through the entirety of any strategy, project or initiative.
4. The NUS opposes campus restructures that negatively impact students and staff.

Actions:

1. The NUS Education Officer will work with campus Education Officers and Student Associations to campaign against campus restructures and course cuts.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.29: Education isn’t casual, support workers’ rights!**Preamble:**

1. Nationally, universities are seeing a shift towards online learning, casualisation of staff, and a marketing push towards international students who pay upfront costs or higher tuition fees than domestic students.
2. With the ongoing corporatisation of Australian universities, each year more staff across the country face the loss of their jobs. From restructures, the scrapping of enterprise agreements, moves towards 12 month contract, and casual contracts with no guaranteed hours, all negatively impact the ability of staff to give students the high quality education that universities claim to offer.
3. In 2016 the National Tertiary Education campaigned against sessional staff models, particularly in South Australia. This is a model in which staff such as tutors and other casual academics are paid for their tutorial or lecture time, but not for preparation, outside hours or over-time. This suggests a lack in support for quality teaching and learning conditions for both staff and students.
4. Furthermore, online learning and casualisation of staff are intrinsically linked. In a model in which staff are being casualised and courses are

being pushed online, students are lacking the support that they need to access invaluable face-to-face time, which impacts on the quality of their education.

5. In the context of a higher education movement lacking funding and support from the Federal Government, universities are seeing cuts, restructures, and a move towards online learning at the expense of face-to-face contact time and casualisation of staff.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that a lack of job security creates an unneeded source of stress for staff, and uncertainty for students, especially Higher Degree Research students who face the loss of supervisors before the completion of their studies.
2. The NUS opposes further moves from Australian universities to casualise staff and put sessional staff on contracts.
3. The NUS supports the calls of the NTEU advocating for an independent audit of Australian universities casual and sessional staff contracts.

Actions:

1. The NUS will work closely with the NTEU to highlight the seriousness of the effect of staff cuts to students.
2. The NUS Education Officer will work with the NTEU to call on Australian universities to conduct independent audits of its teaching and learning conditions for casual and sessional staff.

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.30: Student Governance at Australian Universities

Preamble:

1. International initiatives across the United Kingdom, Ireland and New Zealand have focused on the idea of student governance across decision-making bodies and course-change committees at tertiary education providers.
2. In the post Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) environment in Australia, universities lack student representation across many of the key decision making bodies.
3. Recent national initiatives regarding 'Students As Partners' led by Professor Sally Varnham of the University of Technology Sydney has

seen a series of conferences, workshops and roundtable discussions coming to our cities and towns to discuss the idea of student partnership.

4. While there are legitimate concerns surrounding the potential for 'student partnerships' to become another tokenistic strategy led by Australian universities, it is in the best interests of Student Representatives and Associations to ensure that any move towards better representation for students is meaningful and genuine.
5. Increasing the level of student representation and involvement in university governance will ensure that student representatives and student unions are connected to the strategies, initiatives and potential cuts and restructures at Australian universities, meaning they will be better placed to engage in advocacy, lobbying, negotiating or campaigning on behalf of the student population.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises the importance of student representation and involvement in university governance as being vital to carry out our roles as activists.
2. The NUS opposes any moves by university management or the Federal Government to reduce the level of student representation at Australian universities.

Action:

1. The NUS will work with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) in ensuring student representation in university governance is increased and protected across Australian universities.

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.31: Supporting Student Partnership

Preamble:

1. Professor Sally Varnham from UTS was granted an office of teaching and learning fellowship on the subject of creating a National Framework for Student Partnership in University Decision-making and Governance.
2. This fellowship is based upon the work of Student Partnership being undertaken in Europe, particularly Scotland and Ireland.
3. Professor Varnham has produced a set of partnership principles which were produced to a symposium in Sydney in September.

Platform:

1. NUS stands for students having as much participation possible in the decision making at University.
2. NUS endorses the principles of Student Partnership produced by Professor Sally Varnham of UTS.
3. NUS does not support student 'representatives' who are appointed by University Management or University Governing Bodies.
4. NUS believes that student partnership can only be facilitated by the democratic election of student representatives and a student run Student Union.

Action:

1. The National President will seek to lobby TEQSA to create Student Partnership as part of the Higher Education Standards.
2. The National President will support Campus President's that seek to implement Student Partnership at their University.
3. The NUS will publicly endorse student partnership.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (Curtin University)

Seconded: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders University)

EDU 4.32: No to Blended Learning

Preamble:

1. Governments and Vice Chancellors in Australia are launching an attack on properly funded, accessible higher education. They want to see universities prioritise lucrative research over teaching and learning. Government cuts provide a justification for Vice Chancellors to cut teaching and professional staff while engaging in deals with private corporations to fund research.

2. The introduction of 'blended learning' models into Australian universities is part of this overall trend. Blended learning aims to transfer all or parts of a course online. This cuts costs because it 'deskills' staff (lowers their wages) and means the university does not have to provide suitable learning spaces for students. The centralised, online production of course content means that universities do not have to pay academic staff for teaching roles - they can simply re-use lectures and notes that are already online. Casuals are then employed on piece-rates to supervise and mark online assessments. The role of academic staff in teaching is then reduced to that of a course co-ordinator, ostensibly freeing them up to hit ever-higher research targets for the university. However, simultaneous cuts to professional staff in these institutions mean academic staff are performing unpaid administration and student support tasks outside of their job description. The motivations of the administrations are clear: La Trobe's 2015 'Future Ready Refresh' paper adopted the targets "Double the total research income on 2011 baseline" and "increase revenue per staff dollars". Of course, students face the same cost regardless of budget savings for the university.
3. Regardless of the abstract merits of technological advance in universities, the implementation of blended learning is a cornerstone of the current assault on higher education. It is a cost-cutting technique used to justify attacks on staff and to sugarcoat the decline in quality of education at these institutions. Universities no longer prioritise publicly funded, face-to-face education. Instead they seek to cut teaching costs in order to invest more in research and business partnerships.
4. Impact on students: the NTEU's 2014 Online Casuals Teaching survey found that only 8.9% of students preferred online teaching to face-to-face interaction. The higher rates of attrition for online students reflect a dissatisfaction with blended learning models. In 2012 Swinburne University introduced blended learning as part of a restructure that threatened over 200 jobs. First year dropouts there increased to 28% the following year. In an article published for the 2017 Australian University Review, Andrea Dodo-Balu recorded a 61% dropout rate in a compulsory Open Universities subject offered by major universities. These numbers challenge claims that online learning increases access to disadvantaged students. Students who undertake subjects online are not offered on-campus academic support or face-to-face counselling. Overworked and underpaid online teaching staff are unable to address the needs of every student in their expanded cohorts. Isolation and a lack of support are surely deterrents, not incentives, for disadvantaged students to continue study. In fact the example of the US model shows us that the trajectory here is towards entrenching disadvantage, not alleviating it. Online courses which cut costs for university administrations (and could hypothetically be offered to students at a

lower cost) are no substitute for properly funded, well-staffed, face-to-face education.

5. Impact on staff: the introduction of blended learning across Australian universities has gone hand-in-hand with attacks on staff at all levels. The general trends have been addressed in Preamble 2. Huge savings are made through deskilling, non-payment and casualisation. The NTEU's Online Casuals Teaching survey reveals some extremely concerning practices used by administrations in the implementation of blended learning models:
 - a. Unpaid work: Almost all respondents (94%) said that when they worked between 2 and 8 hours they were only paid for 1 or 2 hours' work. One tutor said "I do extensive online marking... It's disappointing that the University does not pay for the time needed for downloading, saving, marking and then uploading these assignments. Plus a lot of time there is internet problems, computer issues etc. which the university is not concerned about."
 - b. Cost of technology: Casuals are expected to pay for various aspects of online teaching that have been shifted onto them by administrations through the implementation of blended learning. Over 80% of respondents said they used their own computer when working on online subjects, and 83% paid for their own internet access. Less than 1% of respondents said their employer reimbursed or subsidised these costs.
 - c. Intellectual property: The NTEU also has concerns about the intellectual property rights of staff who create online content. Whereas staff are paid to write content for traditional courses, over 70% said they were not compensated for online course creation. Less than 5% of respondents said they owned the copyright to the content they created.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the current attacks on higher education. This includes any attempts to reduce funding, undermine staff wages and conditions, or deprioritise teaching and learning as the central functions of the university.
2. NUS condemns blended learning, recognising that these initiatives are part and parcel of the drive to cut costs at universities.
3. NUS rejects the argument that blended learning in its current form has a positive impact on student experience. NUS recognises the particularly negative implications that blended learning has for disadvantaged students on the whole.
4. NUS does not see a counterposition between the interests of staff in students in relation to blended learning.

5. NUS stands in solidarity with the National Tertiary Education Union and its members who have lost jobs, wages and experience because of the introduction of blended learning.

Action:

1. The NUS National Education Officer will produce and publicise materials documenting the negative impacts of blended learning on staff and students.
2. The NUS National Education Officer will encourage and support in any way State and campus Education Officers in producing locally targeted materials on blended learning.
3. The NUS National Education Officer and campus Education Officers will express solidarity with staff in any campaigns addressing aspects of blended learning. Staff concerns will not be counterposed to the 'convenience' of online learning for students.
4. NUS and its member organisations will endorse and give active support to student campaigns or actions against blended learning. This should include printing, social media, motions of support, press releases and so on.
5. NUS will incorporate its criticisms of blended learning into its ongoing campaign against the neoliberalisation of higher education.

Moved: Priya De (Griffith)

Seconded: Tom Auld (Adelaide)

EDU 4.33: Improving the ratio of students: uni management on committees that report to Academic Boards/Senates.

Preamble

1. All academic policy comes through committees that report to academic board and governing councils.
2. Student participation in these committees provides opportunities for student unions to be informed, participate in the discussion, and importantly provides scope for students to create and recommend policy.
3. Student participation simultaneously provides opportunities to raise concerns or block measures that will impact negatively on students.
4. Even when students are unable to block harmful policies on committees, committee participation allows students to identify these harmful decisions early on, and organise campaigns against them, such

as the 2015 Adelaide University campaign to save the Centre of Aboriginal Studies in Music.

5. Even when universities lock out students from participating in the decision making process, student participation in these committees can prove to be an invaluable tool in identifying threats to student
6. Since the passage of VSU, universities have moved away from collaborative approaches to governance to a consultation model, where students are asked to complete surveys or participate in focus groups as if they are consumers in a market. In doing so, universities are able to minimise and control student input into decision making processes whilst claiming to have engaged students.
7. The introduction of the Higher Education Standards Framework in 2017 by the Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) will be the first federal framework identifying student partnerships and engagements in committees as an educational standard stating:
 - a. "6.1.4 (Governance and Accountability: Corporate Governance): The governing body takes steps to develop and maintain an institutional environment in which freedom of intellectual inquiry is upheld and protected, students and staff are treated equitably, the wellbeing of students and staff is fostered, informed decision making by students is supported and students have opportunities to participate in the deliberative and decision making processes of the higher education provider.'
 - b. (Governance and Accountability: Academic Governance): 'Students have opportunities to participate in academic governance.'" 8. The TEQSA framework has prompted a number of projects across the tertiary education sector to look at the future of student engagement and representation, whilst simultaneously universities across Australia are lobbying to decrease or abolish student representation on governing bodies.
8. NUS must be adequately prepared to participate and organise around any moves prompted by the sector wide TEQSA framework building process.

Platform:

1. NUS affirms student representation and participation in the university structure is essential to a university community.
2. NUS believes that, where possible, student representatives should make up 50% of committees that report to immediate subcommittees of university governing bodies.
3. NUS further believes that student representatives on university committees should either be elected concurrently, ideally close to

regular campus student organisation elections, or be appointed by the campus student organisation.

Actions:

1. The NUS Education Officer will engage campus Presidents to conduct an audit of student representation on university committees, including information on the number and type of representatives on each committee, the committee's relative organisational position to the governing body of the university and any other committees campus Presidents identify as a priority in trying to get student representation on.
2. NUS will make submissions to the relevant organisations and inquiries to advocate for further student participation in university structures in line with NUS' position.
3. The NUS Education Officer will work with student organisations to develop campus specific strategies with short and long term goals set towards achieving greater student representation on university committees.
4. NUS will campaign for regular reviews led by both staff and student representatives at each university of their existing student engagement and representatives practices.

Moved: Abby Stapleton (NUS Womens Officer) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide University SRC)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

EDU 4.34: Neoliberalisation of our University Council

Preamble

1. University governing bodies serve as a cross-section of a University where elected academic and professional staff and student representatives made out a significant proportion of these bodies and had significant influence in the decision making of Universities.
2. Representation on university governing bodies has been crucial to ensuring university governance is based on the quality and accessibility of the public good universities provide rather than merely seeking profits.
3. Across Australia, universities have lobbied their respective state governments to legislate smaller governing bodies comprised densely of university management and external stakeholders, with a small minority of staff and student representatives, if any.
4. These management and external stakeholders seek to make universities into a profitable enterprise, which is not the objective of a university.
5. Organisations such as Universities Australia have relentlessly agitated for and encouraged their members to pursue an agenda to cut staff and student representatives on governing bodies. Staff and union representatives are continually told by universities that their presence on governing bodies is a conflict of interest and are excluded from most university discussions and decisions.
6. Nationwide campaigns have been made to renegotiate University Acts with state governments in order to radically decrease or even eliminate the number elected members of these councils in their pursuit of augmenting universities into corporate businesses.
7. Furthermore unethical practices and a high degree of secrecy have been incorporated into University Councils; agendas and reports are kept confidential, observers are often refused entry at meetings without a rigorous vetting process prior, and in some extreme cases members are strictly prohibited from contacting other council members.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns any attempt to reduce the number of professional or academic staff, union officials, or students on University Council.
2. NUS believes that any University decision making body must be transparent to keep the university community aware and involved in its decisions.
3. NUS believes any University Council should be a cross-section of its community, and governance should be approached from a position that views university education and research as a public good, not a corporate business.
4. NUS believes that students and staff do not have a conflict of interest on these decision making bodies.

5. NUS acknowledges the historical trend of the neoliberalisation of University Governing Bodies and believes there needs to be a national response to such a broad, high degree issue.

Action:

1. NUS will investigate the possibility of establishing a NUS peer training program which connects students sitting on University governing bodies across Australia.
2. The NUS Education officer will produce and provide workshops and materials to be shared amongst elected students sitting on governing university bodies across Australia.
3. NUS will prepare a report on the historical changes to governing university bodies, with recommendations of future campaigns NUS can run to fight the neoliberalisation of our university councils, to be made available to campus student organisations at Education Conference 2017.

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide University SRC)

Seconded: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

EDU 4.35: Save our TAFE system!

Preamble:

1. Vocational training sector experts are calling on urgent government intervention due to the decline of the quality of our TAFE system, claiming it is reaching a severe tipping point.
2. Funding reductions, successive cuts and restructures, as well as campus closures, of Australia's TAFE system has led to a drop in enrolment of 25% in the past five years.
3. The level of TAFE's share of educating publicly funding students has declined dramatically between 2009 and 2015, going from 81% to 50%. In Victoria it has dropped to as low as 34%. In contrast, the level of students educated from private providers increased from 15% to 46% in the 2009-2015 period.
4. State Governments have responded by saying they are unable to continue funding "expensive" courses, subject to alleged low enrolments, due to a lack of Federal Commonwealth funding.

Platform:

1. The NUS opposes successive Federal Government cuts on the TAFE system.
2. The NUS calls for a fully-funded TAFE system that can adequately support students wanting to obtain employment in the trade industry.

Action:

1. The NUS Education Officer will work with the Australian Education Union to campaign around cuts to TAFE.
2. The NUS Education Officer will conduct an audit of the level of student representation across the TAFE sector and work to support the increase of student representation where it can.
3. The NUS Education Officer will make a concerted effort to engage with TAFE students and collect petitions on issues that affect them including cuts to funding to the TAFE sector.

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.36: NUS calls for increased investment in our Higher Education Sector**Preamble:**

1. The 2017 OECD 'Education at a Glance Report' has ranked Australia's public investment into higher education in the bottom four of the world's advanced economies. This puts Australia at 30th of 34th nations. 0.7 of Australia's GDP is spent on investment into higher education. In contrast, private investment into Australia's tertiary education is double that of the national OECD average of 0.5%, sitting at 1.1%.
2. Furthermore, Australian students are paying the sixth highest fees in the world as a percentage of Australia's national income.
3. Successive conservative governments have only attempted to cut more public investment in the Australian tertiary education sector, with the 2017 Federal Budget proposing to cut 2.8 billion dollars in funding, and attempting to charge students more by increasing fees by 7% and forcing students to pay back their debts at a HECS repayment threshold of \$42,000. While these budget proposals have failed to pass the Australian parliament, students must still be vigilant about further attacks on public investment into education.
4. The successive funding cuts of Australian universities are meaning that they are falling in international rankings, with universities in Hong Kong

and China beginning to overtake some Australian universities as a result of the higher levels of public investment into their tertiary education sector.

5. Comparatively, we are spending 32.6 billion dollars a year on defence, while education and welfare gets pushed aside. Politicians pay-packets and travel expenses continue to increase in the thousands, while two thirds of students are living below the poverty line. Multinational companies get millions of dollars of tax exemptions, while university students can barely afford to buy their textbooks.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises that it is in the national interest of Australia's future to invest in higher education fully.
2. The NUS notes with concern the cultural attitude and political climate that has led to successive budget cuts of Australian universities, putting the value of our education at risk.
3. The NUS will continue to oppose further proposals from the Federal Government to cut higher education funding and increase fees on students.

Actions:

1. The NUS will continue to campaign against any proposed funding cuts, increase of fees or financial pressure on students.
2. The NUS will lobby all political parties to oppose public funding cuts to higher education, and rather put increased investment into the tertiary education sector.

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.37: Education is intersectional, towards campaigning for all students**Preamble:**

1. While funding cuts and moves to make education more inaccessible affect everyone, cuts to higher education mean that low socioeconomic and working class students, students from diverse sexualities, genders, ethnicities, religions abilities who are already disproportionately disadvantaged will be further impacted negatively.
2. A lack of funding will mean that these students will take even longer to pay off their HECS debt and face a greater pay gap in the workforce.

- Where there are cuts to funding, services for students of diverse backgrounds will suffer severely. This means that the structural barriers that make it more difficult for people to study at university are compounded by the lack of support. Extra support is needed for students of diverse backgrounds through dedicated units, emergency supports and assistance.

Platform:

- NUS recognises the structural oppressions that students from a variety of backgrounds face in accessing education, that significantly hamper their ability to engage in tertiary education.

Actions:

- The NUS Education Officer will ensure their campaigns are intersectional by working with other National Office Bearers to highlight the different structural oppressions students face.

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.38: Fund our Research!

Preamble:

- PhD students and researchers at Australian universities are impacted by a variety of issues including the casualisation of the workforce, corporatisation of universities, job insecurity and increased competition for funding that can sometimes lead to a drop in research quality. PhD students are also expected to spend extended periods of time applying for private research grants as a result of the lack of public funding.
- According to research from Edith Cowan University, the move towards corporatisation has led to a competitive and high pressure work environment that has given rise to increased workplace bullying.
- Federal Government funding cuts to research, such as cuts to the Sustainable Research Excellence (SRE) scheme of almost \$650 million between 2011 and 2017, put at risk moves to develop well-funded, quality research at Australian universities.
- According to Universities Australia, 85% of public funding of universities is allocated to teaching and learning costs, with 15% of other allocated in other areas including research.

- Universities are funded by the Australian Government through a dual system of competitive research grants and research block grants. However, competitive research grants do not fund indirect costs of research such as salaries, infrastructure, insurance, equipment and energy sources.
- According to a 2009 report to the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, universities had to cover an additional 85 cents per dollar cost to fully fund their research projects. Universities Australia estimates that in 2014 universities had to cover a \$1 billion gap to carry out research projects that the Federal Government had provided them grants for.

Platform:

- The NUS recognises that when universities are not fully funded to support research, this significantly impacts on the learning experience for HDR and PhD students.
- The NUS stands for a system of higher education in which research is fully funded by the Federal Government.
- The NUS recognises the value of a fully publicly funded research system to benefit the public and social good.
- The NUS supports improved working, researching and studying conditions for HDR and PhD students, as well as supervisors and researchers.

Action:

- The NUS will incorporate research funding into their Education campaigns as a vital part of public investment into higher education.
- The NUS will work with the NTEU to lobby the Federal Government for increased public funding into research at Australian universities.

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.39: Expect an Election

Preamble:

1. As the peak representative body for undergraduate students in higher education, the National Union of Students (NUS) has regularly lobbied state and federal governments to influence and improve higher education policy.
2. Nick Xenophon in a meeting with the National Tertiary Education Union warned that with the dual citizen saga on course to shutdown federal government, Australians should anticipate an election in the first half of 2018.
3. Since 2014 three consecutive austerity reforms to higher education have failed. The Coalition's fee deregulation, funding cuts, greater student debts and the neoliberalisation of our education have all been rejected by the Australian public.
4. While the Australian public rejected these changes, universities have been neglected and have come to terms with the deep-rooted challenges of the demand driven system.
5. Graduate opportunities have diminished as a reflection of our dysfunctional higher education system. A 2017 report from the Flinders National Institute for Labor Studies has shown that graduate opportunities have steadily declined since the introduction of partial, then full, deregulation of university places.
6. Attrition rates have also reached record levels, as universities pursue efficiency over productivity in the demand driven free market they infest.
7. It is expected that a change in government would revitalise policies that foster a high quality, equitable and accessible Australian higher education system.
8. Students are fully aware we have a dysfunctional and chronically underfunded higher education system. In order to invoke change it's imperative these students are enrolled to vote, and that they are aware what political parties positions on higher education issues are.
9. In 2017 there are over one million domestic students enrolled in Australian universities, which when united, could sway the direction of key electorates across the country for candidates who value higher education. This was demonstrated in the 2017 UK General Election, where the force of young people challenged austerity measures.
10. The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) estimates that while 90,000 people enrolled in the leadup to the marriage equality plebiscite, there are still up to 1.8 million Australians aged between 18-24 who are not currently enrolled to vote.
11. Australians have been clear in distinguishing what they do not want; the Coalition's vision for higher education. It is imperative Australians, and

specifically students, are able to make informed decisions in an election on the issues that matter most.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges that a change from the current Coalition government would revitalise discussions for a quality higher education system. However NUS acknowledges a change in government would not guarantee improvements in the lives of students.
2. NUS acknowledges that its responsibility to students in a federal election is to influence higher education policy to guarantee the best possible conditions for students in higher education.
3. NUS believes that its values and principles outlined in a federal election campaign must reflect those of students across the country.
4. NUS believes in the importance of students having comprehensive understandings of parties policies, and importantly, the impact these policies will have on higher education and their own student experience.
5. NUS believes that all young Australians should be enrolled to vote, and have their voices heard in a federal election.
6. NUS encourages students to exercise their vote for candidates who share the vision of students in the direction of higher education.
7. NUS believes in an equitable and accessible higher education system.

Action:

1. That the NUS president, with the support of the NUS office-bearing team, will design and coordinate an election campaign following the announcement of a 2018 federal election.
2. The election campaign will employ four main tactics:
 - a. Enrollment drives and a students pledge to higher education.
 - b. Orientation week student survey.
 - c. A Students Higher Education Reform Bill 2018 (aka NUS Election Manifesto)
 - d. Lobbying with key bodies and mass student demonstration.
3. That the NUS works with affiliate campuses, education and other youth organisations to promote and facilitate the as many young Australians enrolling in the lead up to a potential 2018 federal election.
4. The NUS President and NUS Education Officer will coordinate and distribute enrollment drive packs to all affiliate campuses for orientation week. These packs will include AEC supporting materials, and a student's guide to running enrollment stalls.
5. The NUS will further develop a campaign asking students to pledge their votes in a 2018 federal election to candidates and political parties that support a student vision of an equitable, and accessible high quality education..
6. The NUS President and NUS General Secretary will be responsible for developing a database, registering students who pledge their votes to

higher education during orientation week, and regular communication and social media tactics will be employed to keep students invested in the campaign.

7. The NUS President and NUS General Secretary will also be responsible in developing a survey for students in orientation week to assess student priorities in higher education.
8. The survey results will then be used to develop a Students Higher Education Reform Package 2018 (aka NUS Election Manifesto), a document of values and principles that students want in higher education in 2018.
9. The NUS Election Manifesto will be sent out to affiliate campuses, and the NUS office-bearing team will support student unions running stalls, leafleting, organising stunts and demonstrations on campuses to encourage more students to make the NUS pledge to vote for candidates who share students values in higher education.
10. NUS will use social media tools to promote an online presence of the campaign. A NUS election campaign video will be developed to encourage students to sign up to the campaign, and pledge their vote in support of students.
11. The NUS President and NUS General Secretary will then meet and present the NUS Election Manifesto with sitting members, and candidates in the upcoming federal election, urging them to commit to a student's vision of higher education.
12. A week in advance of the federal election, the NUS President and NUS General Secretary will be responsible for sending a summary of responses from candidates to registered students who made the pledge. This will ensure that Australians can make informed decisions and vote in favor of students.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide University SRC)

Seconded: Sophie Johnston (NUS President)

EDU 4.40: 2017 Higher Education Reform Package - Incompatible with Higher Education

Preamble:

1. Simon Birmingham introduced his education reform package on May day 2018. This is the third higher education reform proposed by the Coalition government since 2014.
2. The proposed reforms follow a Coalition trend of decreasing federal expenditure on higher education, while introducing neoliberal outcome

based funding models which would significantly inhibit the right Australians have to enjoy a high quality, equitable and accessible higher education system.

3. The package proposed increasing student contributions to an average of 46% of degree costs, which would see the cost of a four-year degree for graduates increased between \$2000-\$3600, which would introduce \$50k degrees.
4. A series of studies by Universities Australia into equity in higher education indicate that since 2001, socially advantaged students are three times more likely to attend university than students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds. As university fees increase, students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds will be the first to be priced out of higher education.
5. The reform package also proposed a 2.5% efficiency dividend, which equates to a \$2.8 Billion cut to university funding.
6. This efficiency dividend has been rationalised under false pretences. The previous capital grant scheme, which funded a majority of university infrastructure and educational resources ceased in 2014. Universities have since been directed by the federal government to fund their capital needs through their own surpluses. Painting university surpluses as a result of excess funding is therefore absurd.
7. For example, Adelaide University under the proposed legislation would experience a \$9.2 million dollar decrease in funding in 2018, as a result of the efficiency dividend. Adelaide University has produced small scale surpluses as a result of the recommendations made by the 2014 Higher Education Infrastructure Working Group, indicating universities that wish to expand infrastructure must develop healthy surpluses. Cutting almost \$10 million from Adelaide University in 2018 would have compromised the quality of education provided, as additional strain is placed on the university to both fund learning expenses in addition to developing surpluses for future infrastructure projects.
8. University funding has continually been cut as a budget saving measure, and the higher education sector as a whole has contributed \$3.9Bn in budget repairs since 2011/12.
9. The proposed higher education reform package also encompassed several restructures in the allocation of commonwealth supported funding that would threaten quality, most notably, the proposed changes to postgraduate coursework placements.
10. Currently potential postgraduate coursework students apply to universities directly, and the proposed changes would see potential coursework students apply directly to the government, who then delegate students to institutions. This is effectively the demand driven system for postgraduate coursework students, and while it has the potential to improve accessibility, we can't guarantee the response from universities.

11. In the words of former Minister of State for Education during the Blair ministry; universities left alone in the free market will operate like illegal cartels.
12. The proposed reform package also introduced upfront fees to enabling courses and sub-degree programs. Enabling courses promote accessibility for students in the sector and the proposed introduction of up to \$3271 in upfront fees would disproportionately affect students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.
13. A recent review into the pathways to higher education identified that approximately 50% of students enrolled in enabling courses are from equity groups, and that students from marginalised groups who completed an enabling program in the lead up to their bachelor will significantly outperform those who entered their bachelor degree directly.
14. The proposed changes to enabling and sub-degree programs would save the federal government \$30 million annually, which compared to the simultaneous billions of dollars of proposed cuts, is minimal, and an attack on those most vulnerable.
15. The reform package introduced the system of performance based funding to Australian universities, with 7.5% of each university's commonwealth grant funding moved to a contestable pool tied to university performance. This commonwealth grant funding would be reallocated in 2.5% increments.
16. While the Coalition has been extremely unclear what measures performance based funding would be tied to, similar neoliberal policies in the UK and US have tied funding to student attrition rates, graduate employment and student satisfaction.
17. Short-term employment measures such as the Australian Graduate Survey (AGS) as a measure of success will disproportionately impact universities in states with high unemployment and youth unemployment rates.
18. For example, South Australia has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country of approximately 7%, this would negatively impact the amount of Commonwealth funding South Australian Universities receive, despite unemployment rates far outside the scope of what universities can manage or control.
19. Student attrition rates as a performance based metric is also flawed, as it compromises decisions students make which will impact them for the rest of their working lives.
20. The changing nature of the student body also means that students are more likely than ever before to enter and exit higher education. Universities are enrolling mature age and non-High school leavers in significant numbers, and these students are likely to balance study with work commitments - taking variable study loads that have little to do with university itself.
21. For Universities that fail to reach the negotiated benchmarks, the punitive element of performance contingent resourcing means their funding for the year will be cut by up to 7.5% as they try and achieve the next year's benchmarks, with reduced resources. Universities will have less funding available to identify and address issues with academic communities, and are then far less likely to achieve future benchmarks and indicators of success.
22. Most notably, Simon Birmingham's Higher Education Reform Package proposed lowering the HELP repayment threshold to \$42k, and attach threshold indexation to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from the current average weekly incomes.
23. In principle, graduates repay HELP debts because their tertiary qualification works to provide more opportunities and higher incomes. Asking graduates to repay debt and incomes below the Australian average suggests repayment is purely a budget revenue measure, contrary to the intended purpose, where graduates contribute once they receive a private benefit in the form of above average incomes and additional opportunities.
24. At \$42k, graduates would be paying back fees at 20% above the Australian minimum wage, and significantly below the Australian average yearly earnings of \$60k.
25. A recent study of the Flinders National Institute of Labour Studies indicates graduate opportunities have been decreasing steadily since 2008. Between 2008 and 2014, the proportion of new graduates in full-time employment has continued to decrease from 58.6% for 2008 graduates, to 39.4% in 2014.
26. Marginalised groups would have suffered the most under the proposed income repayment threshold for graduates. An additional 200,000 Australians would have been pulled into the repayment pool, of which two-thirds of those will be women on below-average incomes.
27. The National Foundation for the Australian Women's report 'Gender lens on the Budget' has identified women earning below the national average would be paying an effective marginal tax rate of up to 100%.
28. The lowering of repayment thresholds, changes to Medicare levy and family tax benefit (A) will disproportionately affect women. Graduates earning \$51k, whom are primarily women, will have less disposable income than someone earning \$32k.
29. Furthermore the Consumer Price Index traditionally increases at a slower rate than average weekly incomes, which means the gap between average Australian incomes and the minimum income repayment threshold will expand, and graduates repay their HELP loans proportionally closer to the Henderson poverty line.
30. Simon Birmingham's Higher Education Reform Package was rejected by the senate on the 19th of October, this is the third reform package of the liberals that has been rejected.

- Campaigns run by tertiary groups such as NUS and the NTEU significantly altered public perception of these reforms, and reflects the importance of student unionism and direct action in higher education.

Platform:

- NUS believes that no aspect of the so-called Higher Education Reform Package is salvageable and that the proposals need be rejected outright.
- NUS acknowledges that the HELP repayment system already works as an invisible barrier of entry for potential university students, and acknowledges that student debts of \$50k can discourage potential students, particularly those from low socioeconomic status backgrounds.
- NUS acknowledges that increased student debts will burden this generation of graduates. Tertiary qualifications are heralded as a necessity for employment in the modern economy, but the private benefit for qualifications has continually been decreasing.
- NUS opposes any increase to tuition or ancillary fees for students.
- NUS acknowledges that an efficiency dividend that reduces any commonwealth funding will directly affect the quality of the resources which Australian university students can access.
- NUS believes that increases in student contributions don't equate to additional funding or quality for universities, and will not offset the proposed cut in university operating costs. Instead, NUS believes it is a tax hike on those attending or who have attended university.
- NUS acknowledges that demand driven systems in higher education have the potential to improve accessibility, however universities seeking fat profits will always seek efficiency over productivity.
- NUS believes it's inequitable that socially advantaged students who enter directly through high school should negate the costs of enabling courses in their pursuit for higher education.
- NUS believes that Australian higher education must promote and prioritise equity and accessibility through retaining existing funding arrangements for enabling courses.
- NUS believes that performance based funding is incompatible with the principles of creating and maintaining an equitable and accessible higher education sector in Australia.
- NUS believes that any attempt by the coalition to introduce performance based funding will perpetuate a two-tier university system, and in principle should be rejected.
- NUS believes that state unemployment rates should not inhibit a universities Commonwealth Supported Funding.
- NUS believes that students need an environment where flexibility is promoted, and where changing degree does not have an adverse affect on their universities commonwealth funding. NUS believes that student attrition as a funding indicator promotes a culture of students locked

into degrees they've commenced irrespective to their personal interests and demand of labour.

- NUS believes that repayment thresholds must uphold the principle of equality, and any changes to repayment must consider the strain placed on marginalised groups.
- NUS believes indexation of minimum income repayment thresholds should in the long term work to close the gap between average yearly incomes and minimum repayment thresholds. NUS believes indexation must therefore be attached to the slower increasing average weekly incomes, if exist at all.

Action:

- That the NUS President seek the support of Universities Australia, the NTEU, and other relevant sector groups to form a broad coalition of support for a review into Australia's higher education system.
- That the NUS Education Officer will design and coordinate campaigns in response to any federal changes that leave students worse off.
- That NUS continue to provide summarised and student facing reports to affiliate campuses on any proposed federal changes to higher education.

Moved: Abby Stapleton (NUS Womens Officer) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide University SRC)

Seconded: Sophie Johnston (NUS President)

EDU 4.41: Education Conference

Preamble:

- The National Union of Students facilitates a broad national network of student activists and representatives.
- To be effective as an organisation, it is important to take as many opportunities as possible to bring the student movement together and meaningfully engage in debate and discussion around issues in higher education.

Platform:

- Higher education in Australia is currently facing an uncertain future with proposed sector reforms currently in limbo and Education Conference is key to empowering the student voice at this time.
- Education Conference will provide an opportunity for students from across the nation to come together and debate higher education issues. Speakers from the higher education sector will host keynote addresses

and panel discussions around topics relevant to the student movement, and the pressing issues and changes facing higher education.

3. Education Conference will be a forum in which students can reflect on the first semester campaign and help shape the direction of NUS for the second half of 2018 through a conference resolution session.
4. Students will have the opportunity to share skills and campaign tips with other attendees through workshops at Education Conference.

Action:

1. The National Executive will open expressions of interest for affiliate organisations to host Education Conference on their campuses. After a period of consultation, the National Executive will determine the host organisation for Education Conference.
2. The National Education Officer, in conjunction with the National President, will be responsible for soliciting expressions of interest from member organisations. EOIs should include a detailed outline of the particular member organisation's suitability to host the conference, a funding proposal and should also include a proposed set of aims and objectives for the conference and a detailed plan of proposed activities.
3. The National Union of Students affirms its commitment to ensuring full access for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. As such, grants for travel, accommodation and registration expenses will be awarded to students from low SES, regional and indigenous backgrounds.
4. The National President, Education Officer and conference organisers will seek funding from within the higher education sector to ensure that a quality conference can be held at minimum expense to attendees.
5. Special considerations to host the conference should be given to affiliate but not necessarily accredited organisations so to demonstrate the power of the NUS in the hope that organisation may accredit.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate) on behalf of Dom Cradick (ANUSA)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide University SRC)

EDU 4.42: Defend Student and Staff Representation on University Councils

Preamble:

1. Legislation has passed South Australian State Parliament that decreases the number of elected staff and student representatives on University Councils at Adelaide and Flinders University.
2. Across Australia, universities have lobbied their respective state governments to legislate smaller governing bodies comprised densely of university management and external stakeholders, with a small minority of staff and student representatives, if any.
3. University senior management and external stakeholders have only one goal on University Council: to corporatise universities and fatten university profits at the expense of a quality education for students.
4. Furthermore, transparency of University Councils is increasingly limited: agendas and reports are kept confidential with little exception, observers are often refused entry at meetings without a rigorous vetting process prior, and in some extreme cases council members are strictly prohibited from contacting other council members.
5. The changes have reduced university councils from 21 members (11 elected, and 10 appointed), to 16 members (6 elected, 10 appointed) and would disproportionately cut the number of elected staff and students on council.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the principle that students and staff should be involved at the heart of university decision-making processes.
2. NUS condemns the move by the South Australian State Government to reduce elected student and staff positions on University Councils at the University of Adelaide and Flinders University.

Action:

1. The NUS President and NUS Education officer will work with key stakeholders to call on the South Australian State Government to reconsider the legislation that cut student and staff representation.
2. The NUS Education officer will support affiliates and help facilitate campaigns should staff and student representation on University Councils be threatened in any other state.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide University SRC)

Seconded: Jordon O'Reilly (FUSA Delegate)

EDU 4.43: Student Start-Up Loans Suckkkk

Preamble:

1. Many young people face financial burden and hardship upon starting university. The added costs of moving out of home, high levels of rent and food costs and purchasing expensive supplies needed for university all put students at a massive disadvantage in their education. Despite the help of Youth allowance and Rent assistance, these students are still forced to live in poor conditions that are, more often than not, qualified as poverty standards. The Start-Up scholarship didn't solve these financial problems, but they provided a much needed relief to students who were doing it tough. The move to Start-Up Loans has forced these students back into these unfair conditions or be forced to add over \$2000 to their HECs debt per year. This move has made Youth Allowance unmanageable for students and is causing damaging effects on their welfare, mental health and education outcomes. These students deserve financial help from the welfare system without adding thousands of dollars onto already high levels of debt because assisting students in getting a quality education is an investment in our country's future.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the financial stress caused by the change from Start-Up Scholarships to Start-Up Loans
2. NUS actively opposes any increase on student debts and supports the reinstatements of Start-Up Scholarships

Action:

1. NUS will campaign against this change and any other increase to HEC's debts, at National Days of Action and on respective campuses as part of a national campaign against attacks on students and higher education.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.44: Pay to take an exam? Lol No thanks

Preamble:

1. In order to be considered for a number of higher education courses, students are required to sit an entrance exam. Most of these exams require students to pay an upfront fee, ranging from \$180 (LSAT) to

\$470 (GAMSAT). The cost of sitting these exams is an added financial burden to students who are already facing financial hardship, which ultimately deters students from pursuing these study paths and restricts their choice of courses.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges that upfront fees for entrance exams are an added barrier to accessing higher education
2. NUS recognises that the cost of sitting these exams is a significant amount for many students to pay out of pocket
3. NUS advocates for greater accessibility to courses requiring an entrance exam

Action:

1. The NUS Education Officer will work with campus Education Officers to demand university management to subsidise the costs of entrance exams, taking away the burden of cost from students.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

EDU 4.45: Say NO to Cadmus

Preamble:

1. Cadmus is a program similar to Google Docs that tracks students as they type assignments and is designed to highlight instances of contract cheating (where somebody writes essays on your behalf).
2. However, this program will be collecting personal data such as keystroke data and your location, breaching the privacy of students. Cadmus is intrusive and creates additional anxiety in students, presuming that all students are out to cheat.
3. The introduction of Cadmus will also limit the ability of students to work in ways that feel natural for them. For example, if you wrote your essay elsewhere and then copy and pasted it or rewrote it into Cadmus your essay could be marked as deviant and be investigated by the University.
4. Additionally, if you do not have regular internet access you are not able to log onto the Cadmus system. There are also issues surrounding those who require assistive technologies to complete assignments. These are clear equity issues with the Cadmus program that the

University is overlooking in its single minded approach to curbing contract cheating.

5. The University of Melbourne is determined to implement the Cadmus program, regardless of the valid concerns raised by students. After trials completed in 2016 and 2017, the University is introducing a wider-scope pilot scheme for some 2018 classes.
6. Cadmus was developed in the Melbourne Uni Accelerator Program, and as a result the University stands to gain financially from the implementation and subsequent sale of the Cadmus technology.

Platform:

1. That the National Union of Students believes that the tracking of students' personal data in an attempt to reduce levels of cheating is overly invasive, and the Cadmus program has multiple accessibility issues that have not been addressed during the trial stages of the program at the University of Melbourne.
2. That the National Union of Students believes that universities should be striving to increase, not decrease, the accessibility of assignments. No program should be introduced at universities that will reduce the equity of education.

Action:

1. The National Union of Students Education Officer for 2018 will work with student unions in the fight against invasive anti-cheating measures.

Moved: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Alice Smith (UMSU)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University) on behalf of Hannah Buchan (UMSU)

EDU 4.46: OECD please

Preamble:

1. Higher education funding is constantly under attack, especially by Liberal governments. Higher education levels within the population provide great benefits including higher tax revenue, benefiting the wider population.
2. Currently Australia ranks near the bottom of the OECD countries in terms of investment in higher education. In 2013 Australia spent 0.7% of GDP on higher education compared to an OECD average of 1.13%.
3. This lack of public funding for higher education leads to universities cutting corners and slashing teaching budgets as well as staff levels.
4. This meagre level of funding reduces the quality of education for students through less contact with qualified teaching staff and limited academic support.

Platform:

1. That the National Union of Students believes that increases in higher education funding are desperately needed to maintain and increase equal access to tertiary education.
2. That the National Union of Students believes that higher education should be fully publicly funded and not reliant on student contributions. Further, it believes that education is a public good that contributes greatly to economy and should therefore be strongly encouraged through easy access.
3. That the National Union of Students believes that Australian higher education funding should be increased to the OECD average as a percentage of GDP at a minimum in order to have quality tertiary education in this country.

Action:

1. The National Union of Students will campaign and lobby the Federal government to increase higher education funding to at least the OECD average as a percentage of GDP.
2. This should also involve working with the National Tertiary Education Union to fight back against higher education cuts and push for increased funding.

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive) on behalf of Alice Smith (UMSU)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University) on behalf of Molly Willmott (UMSU)

EDU 4.47: Education: Fighting Staff cuts at Flinders University

Preamble:

1. The Flinders University 2025 agenda is the strategic plan written by the Vice Chancellor Colin Stirling
2. Apart of the 2025 agenda has introduced a Professional Service Project which looks to drastically cut staff from the university
3. Colin Sitrling has used the excuse that Flinders University pays higher than the national average cents per dollar on the pay roll.
4. Staff EAP levels are at an all-time high.
5. These staff cuts have also seen a decline in staff to student ratios.

Platform:

1. That NUS stands in solidarity with the NTEU and Flinders University Student Association in trying to fight these cuts
2. That NUS supports every student's right to high quality, affordable education.
3. NUS objects any staff cut that will have an impact on quality of education
4. NUS believes that during significant change periods within universities more should be done to support students.

Action

1. The 2018 NUS President and Education Officer will work closely with FUSA to support affected staff.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

Seconded: Jason Byrne (S&R officer)

EDU 4.48: Consulting students in restructures

Preamble:

1. Earlier this year, the University of South Australia announced that it was discontinuing its International Relations degree from 2018/19 onwards, and encouraged currently enrolled students to enrol in Business courses to replace their International Relations topics. Since Business courses are Band 3 courses, as opposed to the International Relations courses which are Band 1, some students could face increases in fees of \$548 per course. Alternatively, the University suggested students take up cross-institutional study, which creates further financial barriers for these students.

2. During this process there was a lack of appropriate consultation, with student consultation workshops being held during November and December of 2016, during which many students were studying for exams, or on holidays, and the University only communicated the changes 24 hours before enrolments.
3. Since the changes, there has been a marked drop in teaching quality due to demoralised staff, as well as several members of staff being made redundant.
4. The process around these changes did not meaningfully engage students, and went against the University's own processes for decision making.

Platform:

1. The NUS acknowledges that due to budget constraints due to government cuts, as well as ensuring courses remain relevant, that universities will increasingly look to restructure courses.
2. The NUS supports course restructures that are in the best interest of staff and students, with meaningful consultation throughout the restructure process.
3. The NUS opposes universities restructuring courses which negatively impact on the learning conditions of students, and that do not adequately consult students throughout the process.

Action:

1. The 2018 Education Officer will work with student unions to ensure that any course restructures are in the best interests of students, and meaningfully engage with students throughout the process.

Moved: Jordan Mumford (UniSA Delegate)

Seconded: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

EDU 4.49: Trimesters disaster for students and staff

Preamble:

1. Universities around the country are pushing to implement a trimester system to boost 'efficiency' by pushing more students through universities faster.
2. Implementing trimesters means cutting holidays and condensing academic terms. In the eyes of university management, it is productive to operate classes and charge fees for the whole year, instead of having empty classrooms during a three-month summer break.
3. Trimesters are a massive attack on academic staff, who are required to squeeze more course content into a shorter academic period, with less time to prepare, and with no commensurate increase in pay.
4. Trimesters disproportionately hurt students from a low-SES background. The extra stress of a shorter academic period without breaks makes it more difficult for students to engage in part-time work to support themselves. Many students rely on full-time work during the summer holiday period to save up for the following university year.
5. In 2017 trimesters were fully implemented across all Griffith University campuses in Queensland, without any prior student consultation. More than 1300 students signed a petition against trimesters. Students report feeling more stressed and overwhelmed. One respondent to a survey about the impact of trimesters wrote: "I cant breathe. Im going to have to defer. The workload is too much. My output is at a lesser quality now."
6. Trimesters have been a pretext to roll out course cuts, department mergers, getting rid of student support services and a massive overhaul of the IT system which will involve abolishing all physical computer labs across Griffith campuses. All of this will mean job cuts.
7. UNSW announced in late 2016 their intention to implement trimesters – UNSW 3+ by 2019.
8. This would involve condensing 13-week units into ten weeks. The university is using this model to overhaul staff conditions, increasing casualisation and cutting a predicted 400 jobs.
9. Students receiving a Centrelink youth allowance will be required to increase their study load by 50 per cent or face having their payments cut.
10. Hundreds of students protested trimesters at UNSW and the NTEU opposes the initiative.
11. At UTS, where trimesters have been implemented, a Department of Education survey of 178000 tertiary students found that UTS students are the most dissatisfied in the country.
12. At the University of New England, the NTEU, alongside the Student's Association, launched a campaign in 2017 against the 'trimesterisation'

of universities, on the grounds that trimesters had increased student and staff stress whilst reducing the overall quality of education.

13. Universities around the country are hankering to implement trimesters. Sydney University management is reducing the length of each semester from 13 to 12 weeks. In the University of Queensland's 2017 white paper, trimesters were the only concrete proposal.
14. In the context of funding cuts, fee increases, course cuts, staff cuts and a shift to online learning – trimesters mean students will be paying more for a worse quality of education.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes all university attempts to implement trimesters, considering this system a way for university administrations to boost profits at the expense of the quality of education and staff working conditions.
2. NUS supports students across the country who have shown their opposition to trimesters, through protests, petitions and on-campus stunts.
3. NUS supports the NTEU, who have spoken out about the impact of trimesters and are facing job losses, casualisations and expectation of more output.
4. NUS recognises that a strong student and staff campaign against university administrations is needed to prevent more universities implementing this destructive system.

Action:

1. The NUS Education Officer will actively support all student and staff campaigns initiated against trimesters. This will mean providing material support through designing and printing leaflets, communicating with campus activists, and advertising events.
2. The NUS Education Officer will show solidarity with the NTEU, recognising that both students and staff are in the firing line with trimesters.
3. The NUS Education Officer will incorporate trimesters into national campaigns against federal education cuts, recognising that both campus and federal attacks on universities are part of the neoliberal project of corporatizing universities.

Moved: Caitlin Egloff-Barr (Curtin)

Seconded: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

Welfare

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WELFARE 5.1: Make no mistake our SSAF will never be safe.

Preamble:

1. After the introduction of VSU under the Howard Government many students unions were forced to wind up due to lack of funding.
2. Thanks to the Gillard Labor government, we were able to introduce the Student Services and Amenities fee which looks to help provide funding for Student associations and unions to run events and initiatives for students.
3. This year there has been two attempts by conservative senators to remove the SSAF, both were lucky to have past however the concerning point is Education minister Simon Birmingham voted in favour on the second vote.

Platform:

1. NUS will always defend the SSAF.
2. NUS will always look at ways to improve the SSAF.
3. NUS recognises the important role the SSAF has in funding our student associations and unions.

Action:

1. The 2018 NUS National officer bearers will all lobby cross benchers and major parties to support the use of the SSAF.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders University)

Seconded: Jason Byrne (National S&R Officer)

WELFARE 5.2: Paying more for less / A N G R Y R E A C T S O N L Y

Preamble:

1. Education minister Simon Birmingham announced measures in this year's budget to try and cut the repayment threshold of University degrees from \$42,000 to close to the minimum wage.
2. This along with the cuts to higher education funding means that students would be forced to pay more for less.
3. This also means that University students will have to pay back their degrees sooner.
4. The reform packages will affect students who drop out of university and go on to work in areas such as retail, hospitality full time

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the Liberal Governments Higher Education reform package in its entirety.
2. NUS welcomes those University vice-chancellors who have opposed the package but also notes with concern that some Vice-Chancellors are doing this due to the hit to their investment projects and not at the defence of students.
3. NUS notes that affect that reducing the repayment threshold will have on the welfare of students.
4. NUS thanks the Australian Labor Party and cross benchers for defending the attacks on students by this government.

Action:

1. The 2018 National President and 2018 National Welfare officer will continue to lobby the major and minor parties to support students.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders)

Seconded: Jordan Mumford (UniSA)

WELFARE 5.3: Financial Wellbeing Workshops

Preamble:

1. Financial Wellbeing is defined in the 2017 report '*Exploring Financial Wellbeing in the Australian Context*' as 'Financial wellbeing is when a person is able to meet expenses and has some money left over, is in control of their finances and feels financially secure, now and in the future.'
2. A student's financial wellbeing is an issue that is quite often overlooked in Australia and its Universities. Young Australian's are often raised with only basic levels of financial literacy through primary and secondary education.
3. This is not ideal considering people's personal finances consume most of their life and learning about finances while students are young is the most important time to learn and succeed with money.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the importance of financial education for the prevalence of a young person's financial wellbeing throughout life.

2. NUS supports an increase to union run financial wellbeing training to teach young people about financial management.
3. NUS recognises the importance of financial literacy in wealth creation and on mental and financial wellbeing.

Action:

1. NUS calls on universities to develop a seminar guide for students to attend during O-Week in order to educate students on how to properly manage finances. This includes developing savings, investing money in stocks and bonds, clearing debts, managing superannuation, avoiding credit cards and choosing the right banks.
2. NUS calls on student unions to run financial wellbeing seminars to educate students about how to properly manage finances, this includes; developing a savings, investing money in stocks and bonds, clearing debts, managing superannuation, avoiding credit cards and choosing the right bank.
3. NUS will work with ME Bank, a low fee bank with strong ties to the union movement and superannuation funds, to help educate students of how to properly manage funds and how to select a low fee bank with a emphasis on savings.

Moved: Jean-Marc Kurban (Deakin University)

Seconded: Lois Villar (La Trobe University)

WELFARE 5.4: No More Delays! Pay Up!

Preamble:

1. This year it was revealed that for many Australian university students, crucial student support payments from Centrelink were delayed by up to four months. This has been prevalent for at least the last four years and has led to many students being unable to access the funds necessary to survive, let alone be successful at university.
2. The 2016 Federal Budget consisted of a further \$80 million of funding cuts, with 810 staff being cut.
3. In addition, the rate of unanswered calls to the Department of Human Services has skyrocketed to 20 million per year, largely as a result of a lack of staff.
4. The 2016 National Welfare Officer campaigned against these cuts and the delay in students receiving income support by running the Stop the Pay Delay survey.

Platform

1. NUS urges the Federal Government to reverse their damaging Centrelink staff cuts, and to increase full time support staff.
2. NUS recognises the vital importance that student support payments have on ensuring students can survive and cope with university study adequately.

Action

1. The 2017 National Welfare Officer will continue to develop a relationship with the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) to address funding cuts and pay delays, using the data from the 2016 Stop the Pay Delay Survey and the 2016 Student Wellbeing Survey.
2. The 2017 National Welfare Officer will seek the assistance of the CPSU to produce a joint submission to Federal Parliament, directing increased funding for the Department of Human Services and income support.
3. The 2017 National Welfare Officer will run a campaign to address the cuts to income support and the inadequate rate of income support for young people. This campaign will also allow students the opportunity to tell their Centrelink ‘horror stories’

Moved: Ella Gvildys (RMIT Delegate)

Seconded: Jake Cripps (La Trobe Delegate)

WELFARE 5.5: “Experience” doesn’t put food on the table – an end to unpaid internships

Preamble:

1. The rate of unpaid internships has been on the rise for years in Australia, in fact, many students believe it is essential to have experience in unpaid internships in order to be ‘competitive’ in the job field.
2. According to the Fair Work Ombudsman, those that are in an ‘employment relationship’ are entitled to minimum wage, national employment standards and the terms of any applicable award. However, many students are unaware that they are in an employment relationship, as they don’t understand this specific term.
3. According to the Ombudsman, an employment relationship can be defined in a variety of ways. For example, if they are tasked with productive tasks (rather than just observation, learning, training, or skill development), this can be seen as an ‘employment relationship’.
4. Other examples of definers can be who’s being benefitted (if it’s the company it’s an employment relationship), if it’s tasks that would

normally be done by paid employees, and the length of the 'internship' According to the ABC, more than half a million internships were unlawful between 2011 and 2016.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that unpaid internships can lead students into increased debt throughout their time at university
2. NUS recognizes that the reliance on unpaid internships in society and in business systematically disadvantages lower income students who do not have the financial ability to work for free, and further increases the socio-economic divide in Australia
3. NUS believes that the increased reliance on unpaid internships, and thus unpaid labour potentially reduces paid positions in companies, and affects the starting salaries within industries throughout Australia.

Action:

1. NUS will create a briefing in order to inform students of their rights as Interns, and the damage that unpaid internships does to society and university degrees, similar to the briefing released by the UK NUS in November 2011
2. NUS will work with campus unions and provide materials on how to engage with students about internships.
3. NUS will continue to work with unions to ensure that the most benefits can be achieved to the most amount of people while fighting to get rid of unpaid and unfair internships
4. NUS will also engage with the fair work ombudsman to discuss how to best combat unpaid internships, and ensure all students are aware of their rights as interns.

Moved: Pat Callanan (MSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

WELFARE 5.6: Stop Wage Theft on Campus

Preamble:

1. Wage theft on Campuses is now endemic and often students are exploited, in particular international students.
2. We've seen cases in which students receive well below the minimum wage and often work long hours without mandated breaks.
3. Two in five people received their lowest rate of pay while working in cafes, restaurants and takeaway food outlets. Almost a third of these workers were paid \$12 per hour or less.
4. Students already have it tough supporting themselves through University, they do not need to be further exploited.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges that students, in particular international students, are exploited for their work and deserve to be paid appropriately for the work they do.
2. NUS acknowledges that this is a fight we shouldn't do ourselves and should engage with Student Unions and relevant trade unions to fight this epidemic.
3. NUS also notes that students should have 100% pay at 18 and thanks hardworking trade unions such as the SDA for making it happen.

Action:

1. The NUS and in particular the National Welfare Officer should conduct a campaign based around Wage Theft on campuses around Australia.
2. The NUS and its Officers work with all relevant trade unions in order to prevent the exploitation of students.

Moved: Nick Douros (ACT State Branch President)

Seconded: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders University Student Union Delegate)

WELFARE 5.7: Compulsory Youth Mental Health First Aid training for Office Bearers

Preamble:

1. It has been noted that mental health issues among youth are on the rise due to increased stress levels, growing workloads and financial constraints. Moreover, it has been observed that at any event or workspace there is a generally a designated First Aid Officer present, but a trained Youth Mental Health Officer is rarely there.

2. Additionally, the ability to recognise mental health issues, assess situations, determine crisis levels, and administer Mental Health First Aid, is invaluable and a necessity in tertiary education, as students spend the majority of their time either on campus or on studies elsewhere.
3. Lastly, issues of mental health are highly sensitive matters and manifest differently in different people; hence there needs to be a certain minimum standard of mental health awareness by the office bearers that interact with such students.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that students experience a wide range of stressors and mental health issues that can present differently to older people, and therefore specific training as to how to manage these issues in a First Aid situation is necessary.
2. NUS urges Australian Student Unions to make available, and compulsory, Youth Mental Health First Aid training for all Office Bearers.

Action:

1. The National Welfare Officer will write to all Australian Student Unions, urging them to make available for all Office Bearers Youth Mental Health First Aid training.
2. The National Welfare Officer will communicate a plan of action to regional Welfare Officers elucidating how they will engage respective staff members to set up and run the above Youth First Aid training.

Mover: Ella Gvildys (RUSU)

Seconder: Aditya Sharma (RUSU)

WELFARE 5.8: Why do we pay for photocopied course readers?

Preamble:

1. Photocopied course readers contain copies of materials from a variety of sources; and can cost more than \$50
2. The cost of copyright and printing is normally well under the cost of the course readers.
3. It is often mandatory to buy course readers to pass the course. This forces students to spend money on course readers when 67% of students live below the poverty line and 17% of students regularly go without food or other necessities. This means that some students are forced to choose between having the materials necessary for academic success, and eating or paying rent.

4. Because of student poverty, Centrelink's \$1,300 loan for text books is often used to pay for food, clothing, rent or other necessities.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises that overpriced readers are an excuse for universities to further profit from student poverty
2. The NUS supports free access to all required information and course readers.
3. The NUS demands that the cost of education be paid for by the university, not by students. This includes all information needed to pass the course.

Action:

1. The NUS education and welfare officers will support campaigns against universities charging for course readers.
2. The NUS education and welfare officers will support student unions in their campaigns against their own universities charging students for course readers.

Moved: Tom Auld (Adelaide)

Seconded: Madeleine Powell (UNSW)

WELFARE 5.9: No compulsory cashless Welfare.

Preamble:

1. The Abbott government introduced a scheme in 2013 that established trial sites for a "Cashless welfare card" which aimed to reduce the ability for welfare recipients to spend their payments on drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and gambling.
2. While seeming to address a serious institutional problem in its intention, this policy is part of a broader demonisation of welfare recipients and has limited practical value. Unlike more successful initiatives such as "Dry communities" which are initiated voluntarily by communities, the cashless welfare card is compulsory in trial sites, almost all of which have high indigenous populations.
3. NUS should oppose this policy being forced on communities while keeping open the option for individual voluntary participation and for communities to vote themselves into the scheme.

Platform:

1. NUS rejects the demonisation of welfare recipients pursued by the Abbott-Turnbull Government in the form of the cashless welfare card.
2. NUS recognises that tackling substance abuse and problem gambling in welfare dependant communities requires more thought through policy and shouldn't involve limiting economic self-determination.
3. NUS supports the cashless welfare card being an opt in system available to individuals and communities as one of the tools available to tackle substance abuse problems in welfare dependant individuals and communities.

Action:

1. NUS will write to the Minister and Shadow Minister for Human Services, expressing our view on this issue.
2. NUS will issue a public statement expressing its opposition to the Cashless Welfare Card.

Moved: Taylor Ficarra (University of Technology Sydney)

Seconded: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

WELFARE 5.10: Un-fare Travel Allowances**Preamble:**

1. Students that are currently receiving Youth Allowance or other forms of Government welfare payments are eligible to claim the costs of their travel to and from their home address during the year. This can include travel at the beginning of the year, the middle of the year, and returning home for the holiday period.
2. Centrelink will cover the upfront cost of travelling via airplane, coach or train, however, it does not allow pre-booking or pre-paying the final stages of transport which may include busses or taxis. Students are struggling with rising costs of living, cuts to Centrelink payments and the threat of increased HECS thresholds; often they cannot afford to be reimbursed for this final stage of transport. Students are frequently reliant on student unions and organisations to fund travel through scholarships and loans. This travel allowance is especially important during financially draining times, such as after exams.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the struggle that students face when organising transport to and from university.

2. NUS understands that students are often required to take multiple forms of transport, especially regional students, to reach their destination.
3. NUS recognises that students face financial difficulty of income and welfare payments.

Action:

1. NUS will advocate for students to be able to pre-pay for all modes of transport to their home; especially the final stages of a trip, such as local bus or taxi.
2. NUS will lobby the Government and Department of Human Services to extend pre-pay travel to final stage travel.
3. The NUS Welfare Officer will work with student unions to ensure that students can find information about Centrelink Travel Allowances from their relevant student organisation.

Moved: Jake Cripps (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Annabelle Romano (La Trobe University)

WELFARE 5.11: Bringing Medication into Education**Preamble:**

1. Medical and health access is important to the health and wellbeing of all students on campus. It is important for students to have appropriate and affordable access to clinics and medical centres on campus. This adversely affects regional campuses where there is already a limited amount of healthcare that is available to residents of regional areas. Having medical centres on campus promotes medical professionals and students staying in the regional areas to alleviate healthcare pressures on communities, hence stopping students from having to move from the regions to the city.
2. It also adds the benefit of universities that provide health science degrees for students to be able to conduct their placement, or work in the centres or clinics. Healthcare and the health and wellbeing of students should be the top priority of university staff and administration and having these medical centres or clinics aid universities in making sure that they are providing appropriate and affordable healthcare for students.
3. International students can also benefit from this as they do not have the option of bulk billing their medical appointments which causes them to be very costly and adds to financial burdens and pressures that this community faces.

Platform

1. NUS recognises the importance of providing medical services in universities, especially to regional universities that may or may not have access to sufficient medical services.
2. NUS understands that there may be emergency circumstances where students may have to access medical services.
3. NUS believes that the provision of medical services in all Australian universities is imperative to and directly linked to the success of students in universities.
4. NUS understands that there may be circumstances where students are not able to acquire the medical services they need due to financial constraints.
5. NUS recognises the great benefit that providing medical clinics could have towards the study of health sciences and university research. This could also provide vital experience for students studying health sciences.

Action

1. NUS Welfare Officer will conduct a survey into medical clinic providers on campus.
2. NUS Welfare Officer will conduct a survey into how the lack of medical services on campus are affecting students and their ability to perform in university.
3. NUS will advocate for universities to implement medical clinics catered towards university students and staff.

Moved: Michael Iroche (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Lois Villar (La Trobe University)

WELFARE 5.12: Please Sir May I Have Some More

Preamble:

1. Currently Centrelink payments such as Newstart, Austudy and Youth Allowance are significantly lower than living cost associated with studying. Meaning that those most affected in particular university students, due to their reliance on welfare services to be able to study full time. These services need to meet a certain living requirement for students to be able to survive.
2. In most circumstances welfare payments do not meet the living costs and financial pressures students have to face while studying. This not only adds financial burden but also adds social pressure on students

when this class of people have many more pressures in their day to day lives.

3. The minimum cost of living in Australia is approximately \$385 dollars per week, this on average over \$100 less than the amount paid for Renters Assistance and Youth Allowance combined.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the current state of welfare payments and the affect it has on students in Australia.
2. NUS supports an increase in welfare services for the most vulnerable in Australia.
3. NUS condemns the Liberal Government in not funding a provide welfare services that meet the living costs associated with study.
4. NUS recognises the immense financial pressure put on university students in Australia.
5. NUS understand that living costs are rising in australia and welfare supplements should mirror this

Action:

1. NUS will lobby the federal Human Services Minister to provide more funding for welfare services
2. NUS will conduct a national survey looking at the cost of living in comparison to welfare services provided to students
3. NUS will petition and collect signatures and create a national campaign to increase welfare services provided to students

Moved: Michael Iroche (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Jake Cripps (La Trobe University)

WELFARE 5.13: Increased Counselling Services

Preamble:

1. Currently, due to federal government legislation, the number of free counselling services is capped to a maximum of 10 sessions per calendar year. For students that require more counselling services, they are forced to pay out of pocket. The increased financial cost, inadequate services and long wait times only add to the mental and financial burden of students.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that current counselling services provided by universities is inadequate.
2. NUS understands that the reforming of these services will alleviate the financial and mental burden on students.
3. NUS condemns the underfunding of counselling services, capping of counselling appointments and long wait times.

Action:

1. NUS proposes that the number of counsellors be increased at university to help reduce the wait time for counselling services to a maximum of 2 weeks.
2. NUS will work with universities and student unions into reforming of counselling services.
3. NUS proposes that the Federal Government and Universities provide more funding to counselling services whereas the minimum of number of counselling services exceeds the current 10 sessions.
4. NUS proposes that the Federal Government and Universities provide more funding to counselling services whereas counselling services are able to introduce and facilitate group counselling sessions.

Moved: Jake Cripps (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Lois Villar (La Trobe University)

WELFARE 5.14: Student Union's Running Student Advocacy Services:**Preamble:**

1. Student advocacy is a vital service not only to universities, but to students. A strong Student Advocacy Service can often be the difference between a student failing and a student flourishing in their degree.
2. Perchance a prime example of this is in the *RMIT Student Union (RUSU) Quarterly Report* where it details that 302 cases were handled and executed by RUSU Student Rights Officers in the Second Quarter of their financial year. That's 302 students who had free and independent help at University.
3. Labor Senator the Hon. Chris Evans detailed in his *Student Services, Amenities, Representation and Advocacy Guidelines* that all Higher Education Providers (HEP) that are established under the *Higher Education Support Act, 2003* must provide an independent advocacy service.
4. Usually, Student Union's/Associations around the country run their student advocacy services. However, some HEP, like Swinburne Student

Union (SSU), do not receive the funding to provide independent advocacy. Instead this falls onto the Swinburne Student Life, which is a whole owned subsidiary of Swinburne University - barely 'independent'.

Platform:

1. NUS endorses independent, free advocacy for students and hold the position that Student Unions are the only qualified body to run these services.
2. NUS condemns Universities that do not allow/provide the relevant funding for Student Union's/Associations to run independent Advocacy Service.

Action:

1. NUS Welfare Officer will run a campaign supporting this policy and encouraging Universities to let Student Unions/Associations run Advocacy Services.
2. NUS Welfare Officer and General Secretary will devise a report with testimonies, statistics and case work that supports this policy and educates Campus Presidents on how they can lobby their University heads into taking control of their campus Advocacy Services.
3. NUS Welfare Officer, General Secretary and President will lobby relevant State and Federal Ministers as well as campus VC's to increase the funding towards independent student advocacy services.
4. NUS Gen Sec and Welfare Officer lobby the federal government to change the legislation to say that Student Advocacy *must* be run independently

Moved: Michael Iroeché (La Trobe)

Seconded: Jake Cripps (La Trobe)

WELFARE 5.15: Postgraduate Student Transport Concessions**Preamble:**

1. Currently, Postgraduate students are not eligible for public transport concessions, and as such must pay double that of their Undergraduate counterparts. In Victoria for example, a single tram, bus or train journey into or out of the CBD costs \$2.05 on a concession, and \$4.10 full fare. Over the course of an academic year, this will cost Postgraduate students approximately an additional \$750, and that's assuming they live within the metropolitan area.
2. Many Postgraduate students rely upon their grants funding and/or Centrelink to sustain themselves financially, therefore they are entirely

reliant on their status as a student, and as such it is bizarre that they are not entitled to the same benefits of other students.

3. The additional transport costs incurred by Postgraduate students is not adequately justified for students with the same workload, and often living circumstances, as Undergraduate students, and therefore their ineligibility is fundamentally unfair.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that Postgraduate students that are studying full-time should be eligible for public transport concessions, provided all other criteria are met.
2. NUS believes that the current restriction on Postgraduate students acquiring transport concessions is unfair and will refuse to support any attempt to restrict students from accessing concessions.
3. NUS urges all State and Territory governments to reverse the ineligibility of Postgraduate students for public transport concessions.

Action:

1. NUS shall write to the national Minister for Transport Darren Chester MP, and all relevant State and Territory Transport Ministers urging them to lift ineligibility for Postgraduate students accessing public transport concessions.
2. NUS will coordinate with CAPA to organise a joint campaign in accordance with the above platform.

Moved: James Kerr-Nelson (RMIT Delegate)

Seconded: Jake Cripps (La Trobe Delegate)

WELFARE 5.16: Counselling for students on placement/internship

Preamble:

1. Almost all the courses such as Youth work, Social work, psychology etc require a compulsory placement to complete their courses, and more than 90% of the times it is unpaid and very rigorous. All this is supposed to be done while continuing studies and also working other jobs to feed yourself which can lead to a lot of stress for students. On top of all this the way these students are treated and represented at work is not satisfactory for their mental and physical well-being.
2. 35% of 2167 students who participated in a recent survey reported that they had to reduce the hours of paid work in order to continue their placement, 24% had to quit their paid work in order to continue their

placement and 51% found themselves with additional financial burden because of placement.

3. Teachers for relevant courses don't complete regular visits to work places or ask the students and their supervisor about the progress and their well-being.

Platform:

1. That NUS will ensure free counselling to students who have been affected mentally and psychologically.
2. That NUS will campaign to universities for a compulsory visit by course coordinators or teachers.

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare Officer will act to ensure that the Australian Universities provide appropriate level and free support to students on placement or pursuing internships.
2. The NUS Education Officer will act to ensure that the Australian Universities make it compulsory for the course coordinators or the course teachers to pay regular visits to students on placement or those pursuing internships.
3. The NUS will create a pamphlet detailing to students their rights at work during placement or internships.

Moved: Aditya Sharma (RMIT)

Seconded: Sam Roberts (Swinburne)

WELFARE 5.17: Centrelink for all students

Preamble:

1. The 2017 budget included measures that restrict the welfare of young people including pushing 22-24 year olds onto Youth Allowance rather than Newstart and the introduction of a 4 week waiting period for Youth Allowance recipients.
2. Restrictions to accessing Youth Allowance and Newstart such as the Cuts to Centrelink staff has resulted in increasing phone wait-times and understaffed Centrelink offices making accessing payments more difficult.
3. Centrelink recipients are often demonised as bludgers, as deliberately fostered by the government in measures such as the introduction of random drug testing for recipients of Newstart and Youth Allowance.

4. Most university students in Australia have to work while studying. The rate of students working while studying at university is the second highest in the OECD. International students in particular are often forced into hyper-exploitative work due to visa limitations, as demonstrated by the 7/11 scandal.
5. Lower Centrelink payments and decreasing accessibility to Centrelink payments disadvantages working class students who have to work to meet basic needs while studying.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the changes in the 2017 budget which restrict access to welfare including the 4 week waiting period for Youth Allowance, drug testing for Youth Allowance and Newstart and pushing 22-24 year olds onto Youth Allowance rather than Newstart.
2. NUS supports the right of part-time students to access welfare without having to search for a job.
3. NUS opposes the increased difficulty of proving independency for Youth Allowance and opposes restrictions on Youth Allowance payments based on parental dependency.
4. NUS opposes the demonization of welfare recipients.
5. NUS supports industrial action taken by Centrelink workers to improve their pay and conditions.

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare department will campaign against any future restrictions on welfare outlining their opposition including through media releases, petitions and protests.
2. The NUS Welfare department will campaign for higher and more accessible welfare payments.

Moved: Caitlin Egloff-Barr (Curtin)

Seconded: Nick Reich (UMSU)

WELFARE 5.18: Youth Employment and Underemployment

Preamble:

1. The youth unemployment rate rose this year to 13.5%, and underemployment to 18%, the highest levels in 40 years. This is the reality for young people in Australia who are facing an uncertain future thanks to the corrosion of social welfare, housing unaffordability, and an unstable job market. There has been an increase of insecure and non-permanent jobs due to the casualisation of the workforce and the degradation of basic workers rights through attacks on trade unions. Australia has been far from immune to the impacts of neoliberalism, with young people now far more likely to be trapped in underpaid casual and part time work than ever before.
2. It is clear that current government policy of reducing funding to higher education (including TAFE), a reduction in available VET courses, cutbacks to welfare payments, the scrapping of penalty rates and more are not aimed at improving the situation for youth in Australia, but rather for further entrenching inequality and keeping young people locked in a cycle of un and underemployment.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the right of everyone to have access to safe, secure and well-paid employment.
2. NUS supports increases in funding for higher education and social welfare services.
3. NUS supports the right of unemployed university students and graduates to have access to income support payments.
4. NUS opposes the cuts to penalty rates and other measures that ensure young people do not have secure well paid work.

Action:

1. NUS and the National Welfare Officers will campaign against attacks on the higher education sector, social welfare, and social services to aid unemployed students, and will campaign for an increase in funding and accessibility in these areas.
2. NUS and the National Welfare Officer will work with relevant trade unions to fight for improvements in education, social welfare and job security, wages and working conditions.
3. NUS will fight any and all attacks on young workers and students through sustained activist campaigning.

Moved: Chris DP (NUS Queer)

Seconded: Nick Reich (UMSU)

WELFARE 5.19: Stop Work for the Dole/PaTH

Preamble:

1. Access to Centrelink has continued to become increasingly difficult, with those whom are able to attain access facing long waiting periods, as well as facing government offensives on the rights of Centrelink recipients.
2. The Australian Government has continued to pursue its agenda of denigrating unemployed people and those whom rely upon welfare support, in an effort to punish the poor while exploiting those whom are unable to find employment.
3. Work for the Dole constitutes a government program of exploitative low-cost mandatory labour, with participants engaging in unpaid, menial and often humiliating work, with the program effectively provisioning public funding to private firms while detracting from welfare recipients' abilities to find employment.
4. The government's Youth Jobs PaTH program has constituted a program of cheap labour, with participants effectively being payed miniscule wages, with the program resulting in less than half of all participants finding employment.
5. The obligations associated with Newstart payments and other welfare programs can be impossible to meet, especially for those whom have significant disabilities.
6. Regional Work for the Dole programs, such as the Liberal government's Community Development Program, primarily target Indigenous people with racist conditions of longer working hours and allocation of fines.
7. Centrelink recipients engaging in Work for the Dole programs are denied the rights afforded to workers under the Fair Work act, and are payed substantially less compared to comparable work performed under conditions of regular employment.
8. Work for the Dole degrades a person's evaluation of their own self-worth, which acts as a justification for the government's attacks on social welfare and service provision, while reinforcing the idea of the poor as being 'undeserving' of social support.
9. Consequentially, Work for the Dole programs apply a downward pressure on an already low rate of wage growth, while undercutting minimum standards of wages and conditions and providing firms with an opportunity for exploitation.
10. Extensions of Work for the Dole programs have accompanied a political vilification of the poor and the unemployed, used as a justification for reductions in government welfare expenditure, despite unemployment payments being below the poverty line and insufficient for basic needs.

Platform:

1. NUS supports a discontinuation of Work for the Dole programs, recognising that these programs target vulnerable people for the purpose of exploitation.
2. NUS understands that Work for the Dole is not a solution to unemployment, and instead undermines the wages and conditions of all workers.
3. NUS supports the provision of employment policy that guarantees the workplace and personal rights of workers, guaranteeing equal rights to trade union representation and equal wages and conditions compared to equivalent regular employment.
4. NUS supports the expansion of social support for students, the unemployed, and all others whom require welfare support.
5. NUS condemns the Liberal government's continued vilification of welfare recipients, and supports the right of welfare recipients to be free from exploitation and from any invasive or otherwise unnecessary procedures associated with welfare support.

Action:

1. The 2018 National Welfare Officer will campaign against Work for the Dole programs, advocating for the discontinuation of government programs that compel welfare recipients to work as a condition of welfare support.
2. The 2018 National Welfare Officer will participate in and promote campaigns that oppose exploitation and denigration of recipients of welfare support.
3. The 2018 National Welfare Officer will continue to inform students regarding their rights as potential or current recipients of welfare support.
4. The 2018 National Welfare Officer will develop associations with trade unions active in campaigns against welfare cuts and work for the dole programs.

Moved: Chris di Pasquale (National LGBTI Officer)

Seconded: Lauren Saunders (National LGBTI Officer)

WELFARE 5.20: How to fight the war on young people

Preamble:

1. Young people in Australia are facing unprecedented attacks on their quality of life.
2. These attacks are coming in many forms.
3. The Liberals are committed to attacking the education system by introducing a lower HECs repayment threshold and increasing the cost of education.
4. The cost of housing is extraordinarily expensive, with the cost of housing rising at a far larger rate compared with wages. Renting in the eastern cities is also difficult for young people, as rent can cost between \$30,000 and \$45,000 per year, more than the entire years wages for someone earning the minimum wage. For those on centrelink or the minimum wage, only 1% of housing in the entire country is affordable. 14% of Australians are in housing need and unable to access the housing market or on a position of rent stress, and that figure is set to rise by 80% by 2025.
5. Welfare for students is barely enough to survive on. In the Whitlam years the student payment was 75% of the poverty line, now the payments are around \$290 per fortnight, which is barely enough to pay rent and live one's life.
6. The government's PaTH program will result in young people being forced into low paying work and will have a downward effect on all wages as businesses will be able to pay very little for workers, rather than employing people for at least the minimum wage.
7. The recent cuts to penalty rates in retail and hospitality industries will disproportionately affect young people, as they are clustered in these industries. The cuts to penalty rates can be the difference between being able to buy food for the week and going hungry.
8. Statistics on the cost of living are startling, more than 66 per cent of students report being worried about their financial situation, 17 per cent of students regularly go without food or other necessities, 50 per cent of students are in a personal budget deficit, 25 per cent of employed students work more than 20 hours per week.
9. The nature of the Australian economy means that the government is constantly looking for ways to attack young people and workers in order to free up money for the rich and for businesses. An IMF report showed that wealth inequality was growing at its highest rate in Australia.
10. The combined attacks on education, welfare and housing affordability has resulted in an untenable situation for young people.
11. NUS has helped organise protest campaigns in the past that have pushed back against attacks to education. These campaigns have included protest marches involving thousands of students, and have defeated fee deregulation and this year stopped the government from

introducing a higher education amendment bill that would increase the cost of education and lower the HECs repayment threshold.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the war on students forces students into poverty and precarious living.
2. NUS opposes any attempt to introduce legislation that would further attack young people.
3. NUS recognises that protest campaigns have been the most effective tool in pushing against anti-student, anti-young people legislation.
4. NUS commits to launching campaigns that seek to stop and push against cuts to education, welfare and housing.

Action:

1. NUS will continue to campaign against the War on Young People.
2. This campaign will include marches in the major cities and on campuses that mobilise students, calling for more funding to welfare, against cuts to education and for more support for young people to afford rent.
3. The education and welfare departments will work together to promote the campaign against the war on young people.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS Education)

Seconded: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

WELFARE 5.21: Stand Up for Penalty Rates

Preamble:

1. On 23rd February 2017 the Fair Work Commission decided in favour of cutting Sunday and public holiday penalty rates for hospitality, restaurant, retail, fast food and pharmacy workers.
2. This has been described as the biggest wage cut since the Great Depression, affecting 500 000 workers who will lose up to \$6000 per year. It enables the transfer of wealth from the poorest workers to their bosses while inequality in Australia the highest it's been in 75 years.
3. This decision represents a longstanding desire of Australian bosses to cut penalty rates. Their determination to so is evidenced by repeated submissions by industry groups and the Productivity Commission to the FWC in favour of penalty rates cuts, as well as removal of penalty rates in illegal enterprise agreements negotiated with large employers like Coles, Hungry Jacks, etc. Millions of workers, for instance in nursing, emergency services, and construction, who currently receive penalty rates will be opened to attack because of this decision.
4. The Liberal government remains committed to enforcing the will of Australian bosses, initiating the FWC investigation into cutting penalty rates and implementing its decision. Liberals have justified cuts to penalty rates with extreme anti-worker arguments: "Youth unemployment has been rising and, particularly in the hospitality industry, penalty rates are an issue. Lower penalty rates would create more opportunities for young people in that sector." – Angus Taylor, October 7 2015
5. Penalty rates remain extremely popular among Australian workers. Polls in 2013 and 2015 showed 81% support.
6. Despite this the ALP has not provided an intransigent commitment to opposing a cut to penalty rates, instead arguing for the duration of the FWC investigation that they would accept whatever decision it came to: "I've said that I will accept the independent tribunal. While Sunday rates should not be cut "just like that", it was ultimately up to the commission." – Bill Shorten, April 26 2016. Shorten has since flipped on this position after realising how unpopular losing penalty rates is, however has failed to provide a concrete plan for reversing the decision.
7. This decision once again demonstrates the political role of the Fair Work Commission as a bosses' court designed to suppress class struggle against attacks on workers while disguising the bosses' offensive in a shroud of impartial neutrality. Shorten's deference to Fair Work is unsurprising given the Labor party is responsible for its creation and almost always refuses to criticise its decisions.

8. If there is to be a successful challenge to future attacks on penalty rates, it will have to come from a union movement that conceives of itself as an independent fighting organisation prepared to use its industrial power to challenge the bosses' and government offensive. The Federal Court's decision in October to uphold Fair Work's initial ruling demonstrates the limitations of unions relying on a purely legalistic challenge to secure workers' rights. To succeed, they will have to separate their fortunes from institution like Fair Work and Federal Court that consistently rule against the interests of workers.
9. Therefore, it is disappointing that there has been no organised response from unions focusing on an industrial or protest campaign. Despite widespread anger towards the penalty rates cut, there have been no rallies or industrial actions called specifically against it.

Platform:

1. NUS affirms its support for Sunday and public holiday rates.
2. NUS condemns the Fair Work Commission's February 23 decision to cut penalty rates.
3. NUS condemns the Liberal government's implementation of the Fair Work Commission's decision to cut penalty rates.
4. NUS supports the opposition to the penalty rates cuts expressed by the ALP and Sally McManus on behalf of the ACTU.
5. NUS calls on the ALP to commit to introducing legislation to defend penalty rates, in line with the Greens' proposed legislation.
6. NUS supports all propositions of industrial actions from unions opposing penalty rates cuts.

Action:

1. That NUS will use its resources and direct its office bearers to actively take part in any actions opposing penalty rate cuts.
2. NUS will inform students about their respective unions and encourage them to join those unions.
3. NUS will create its own protest campaign against penalty rates focused on mobilising students in protests, promoting any protests or campaigns organised by the ACTU or affiliate unions against the cuts, and encouraging students to join their unions.

Moved: Elliott Downes (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Belle Gibson (La Trobe University)

WELFARE 5.22: Against government attacks on the homeless

Preamble:

1. Australian governments are engaged in a vicious three-pronged attack on the homeless.
2. Public housing is under attack. The Victorian state government plans to demolish up to 11 public housing estates and sell the land to developers, while in NSW whole apartment blocks are slowly evacuated of residents as councils refuse to reoccupy vacated homes.
3. Private housing, meanwhile, is increasingly unaffordable. Policies designed to favour wealthy investors, such as capital gains tax reductions and negative gearing, have created an artificial scarcity of affordable housing and driven up rent. 80,000 housing units lay empty in Melbourne, mostly investment properties. The Australia Institute estimates that \$7.7 billion is withheld from tax revenue because of these policies, with 56 percent going to the top 10 percent of income households and 67 percent going to the top 20 percent. These billions could be used to fund public housing.
4. So while houses lay empty and billions slosh around in the bank accounts of the wealthy, rates of homelessness are soaring. More than 100,000 people are homeless in Australia on any given night. A record 279,000 people attempted to access homelessness services in 2015-16, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Every day hundreds of these requests are not met. In Melbourne, the mid-winter biennial street count, when council workers walk streets at 4am, indicates that rough sleeping is up 74 percent from 2014.
5. Anyone with a shred of humanity would respond with support and sympathy. Australian governments have responded with a campaign of persecution and demonisation.
6. The Victorian police have evicted and forcibly removed homeless people from Melbourne's CBD. Housing Minister Martin Foley and Chief Commissioner Graham Ashton have spread vicious lies that rough sleepers are pretending or choosing to be homeless. Calling the homeless "disgusting" and "an ugly sight", calls were made for new police powers to disperse rough sleepers. The allegedly left wing Dan Andrews government is singing from the songbook of the News Limited's Herald Sun.
7. Melbourne City councillors were happy to oblige the state government, voting to allow police to confiscate, sell or destroy unattended property, while the definition of illegal camping was broadened to encompass any rough sleeper. When legal checks held up the laws, Melbourne City Council signed a protocol with Victoria Police, which involves police more actively targeting people begging.
8. In New South Wales premier Gladys Berejiklian commented that the sight of Sydney's homeless camping out in Martin Place made her feel

"completely uncomfortable", and has sought to bring in new laws to give the state government the power to by-pass the City of Sydney and send in police to dismantle the homeless camp in Martin Place.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that governments targeting the homeless are barbaric and inhumane.
2. NUS calls for a reversal of all anti-homeless laws.
3. NUS condemns state police forces and governments for their attacks on the homeless.
4. NUS condemns the mainstream press for their propaganda campaign against the homeless.
5. NUS calls for an expansion of public housing.
6. NUS calls for an end to government policies designed to benefit the wealthy which create an artificial scarcity of housing.

Action:

1. NUS will support campaigns and protests in support of the homeless and against government persecution.
2. NUS will support campaigns in support of public housing and against government cuts to housing.

Moved: Elliott Downes (La Trobe)

Seconded: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

WELFARE 5.23: Defend Public Housing, No to privatisation!

Preamble:

1. In Australia, almost 200,000 people are on the waiting list for public housing, and many more live in housing left in unsafe and neglected conditions.
2. Public housing has been gutted consistently under Labor and Liberal governments in Victoria leaving public tenants in overcrowded, run down houses, many with dangerous conditions such as mould or other maintenance issues.
3. The Victorian Labor government is planning to demolish up to 11 public housing estates within the inner cities and suburbs of Melbourne.
4. Under the Public Housing Renewal Program the Andrews government will open up previously public inner city land to private developers under the label "social housing".
5. This "social mixing" strategy has been used to justify privatisation in other public housing estates in Melbourne such as Carlton, which as a

result has seen higher rates of segregation leaving the families in the social housing forced to enter second rate entrances and fenced off from their well off neighbours.

6. The number of social houses is also ambiguous and will mean that the strain on public housing will increase tenfold as more people are pushed onto the waiting list.
7. Social housing is not the same as public housing and any residents that are able to be re settled in the renovated area will be left to non-government housing associations. This gives tenants far less rights and security.
8. These developments also mean that hundred of current tenants will be removed from their homes, including many families who will be permanently displaced if these remodelings take place. As most of this remodeling will consist of 1-2 bedroom apartments in an attempt to fit with the inner city demands of the private market.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the Victorian Labor government's attack on public housing.
2. NUS condemns the further privatisation of public housing and recognises the effects of neoliberalism and gentrification within the service.
3. NUS stands with public housing residents against the Victorian Labor government to see further funding put into livable, quality, and public housing services, free of private interest.

Action:

1. NUS will support and show presence at any public demonstration called by public housing tenants or community campaign groups regarding these attacks
2. NUS will take a public stand against the Andrews government's policy and campaign for public housing to remain public.
3. NUS will maintain a principled position in support of those fighting for their rights to decent public housing and against gentrification throughout the entire year and will publicly pressure the Andrews government into keeping public housing public.

Moved: Athulya Jancy Benny (RUSU)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (UMSU)

WELFARE 5.24: Transport for Students to University Open Days

Preamble:

1. Many students have neither access to their own car, nor the ability to rely upon someone else to drive them to university Open Days, particularly those from rural and regional areas, or from where there is otherwise a lack of feasible public transport options. It's important that students from all areas, not just the inner suburbs, are exposed to a University setting. This ensures they can witness firsthand the potential benefits of engaging in Higher Education. This facilitates and encourages more students to undertake Higher Education and will foster a more prosperous, educated and equitable society.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students encourages the collaboration between high schools and universities to provide free transport to Universities to promote the opportunities delivered by Higher Education.

Action:

1. The National Education Officer and the National Welfare Officer will engage with the respective leaders of the Department of Education in each State and Territory and encourage this to happen at every high school in the nation.
2. Campus office bearers will engage with their university to encourage collaboration with local, regional and rural schools to increase Open Day attendances and lead to increased access to Higher Education.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

WELFARE 5.25: Bring back Student Start Up Scholarships

Preamble:

1. The Student Start Up Scholarship ended for all students on 1 July 2017. It was replaced by the Student Start Up Loan for eligible students.
2. Many students are currently living in poor conditions that qualify as poverty. Australian students in the 21st century should not be living below the poverty line. We need to find ways to better support these students.
3. Our welfare system goes a small way in recognising that we need to help these students financially. However, it should not be through a loan

system but through a system that understands that assisting students in getting a quality education now is an investment in the future economy of Australia.

4. The \$1035 dollar payment, paid twice over a year over the course of both semesters helped students pay for textbooks, university car parking fees, other course materials, and the general cost of living as a student. The loss of this start-up scholarship does just what the name says, takes away the government support of a start-up to young australians.
5. As it stands, welfare payments hardly keep up with the ever-increasing cost of living and rent. Students are now forced to either add to their already daunting HECS debt or risk having to change how they live day-to-day to cope with the cost of everyday life.
6. This has been seen by the government as a budget “saving”, a message to students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds that they are viewed as a costly burden on the government, and that the government does not value supporting them. Students from these lower socio-economic backgrounds now must choose between an increasingly precarious and casualised workforce, or going into a costly university degree, especially ones such as law and medicine with expensive course materials and exams.
7. This change attacks poorer students and those who are forced to relocate to attend university. From the government, the message is clear, if you can’t afford to attend university, they don’t care.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises that investment in a student’s education is an investment that will pay itself back two-fold into the economy.
2. The NUS actively supports scholarships for lower socioeconomic students as an investment and condemns any action by the government to turn scholarships into loans.

Action:

1. NUS’s welfare officer will lobby victorian and federal ministers to push for a reversion of the Student Start Up loan to a scholarship.
2. NUS’s welfare officer will actively push for better investment in education and more welfare support for lower socioeconomic students.

Moved: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

WELFARE 5.26: Affordability of University NRAS Accommodation

Preamble:

1. In 2008, the Rudd Government commenced the National Rent Affordability Scheme; an initiative that provides a financial incentive to builders of rental properties in order to stimulate growth in the rental market. Among the major users of the program are universities, who have built thousands of on-campus accommodation units under the policy.
2. Despite a requirement that properties built under NRAS must be offered for rent at a price 20% below market rental rates for the area, universities currently charge weekly rental rates between \$210 - \$270 for one bedroom studio apartments. These apartments are typically no larger than 20m², significantly higher than comparable share house accommodation in similar areas.
3. The market rental rate under NRAS is determined by comparing like forms of accommodation, meaning that universities must only compete with for-profit private accommodation providers offering similar single bedroom studio apartments for rent in the same geographical area. This allows universities to offer apartments cheaper than corporate conglomerates, but significantly more expensive than accommodation in the area generally.
4. With the current rate of Youth Allowance and Rent Assistance combined less than the amount necessary to rent on-campus NRAS accommodation (let alone other living expenses), the current determination of market rental rate used by NRAS disproportionately affects young people seeking to live on campus.
5. The determination of market rental rate should be changed for NRAS accommodation built on university campuses to include general residential accommodation (on a “per room” basis for properties of more than one bedroom) of a similar quality to require universities to charge rental below the true market rental rate.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the overarching issues of a lack of affordable housing options for young adults, especially those studying.
2. NUS recognises the unaffordability of NRAS accommodation on university campuses, particularly in the context of the level of student income support currently provided to tertiary students.
3. NUS supports the for the market rental rate determination for NRAS accommodation built on university campuses to be extended to all residential accommodation of a similar quality.

Action:

1. The National Union of Students calls on the government to instigate a review into the National Rent Affordability Scheme Regulations 2008, with a view to ensuring that market value rent is determined by considering all residential accommodation in the geographical area of a similar quality, rather than just single person dwellings.
2. NUS will utilise rallies, especially around welfare issues, to highlight the need for better and more affordable housing for young people and students.

Moved: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

WELFARE 5.27: Lifting Students out of Poverty**Preamble:**

1. According to the Universities Australia 2012 report, two thirds of students are living below the poverty line. Many students are missing meals and going without the basic necessities.
2. Young people are also more vulnerable to falling into homelessness. According to a report from Mission Australia in 2017, those under 25 accounted for 50% of homeless people in Australia, with 200,000 people on public housing waiting lists. There are currently 44,000 young people without a place to sleep.
3. Successive cuts to Federal funding for welfare services has meant that services such as Centrelink are chronically underfunded, meaning that it is easier for young people to fall into poverty or homelessness.
4. Welfare payments have failed to keep up with the times. The base rate for Newstart Allowance hasn't risen in real terms since 1994, instead being indexed to the CPI rather than to average earnings.
5. Coupled with increasingly rigid eligibility and compliance requirements, an ever more competitive employment market, and expenses not faced by previous generations has entrenched poverty among university students.
6. Often at times universities and Student Associations have had to step in to provide services for students where the government has not, such as offering a variety of welfare programs on campus including Centrelink services or resources, emergency grants programs, food or sanitary packs, or free breakfast services.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that poverty and homelessness has a severe impact on student's lives, particularly in concerning housing and nutrition.
2. NUS recognises the role that Student Associations play in supporting students with vital services where the Government has failed to support students.

Action:

1. NUS continues to campaign against student poverty and youth homelessness.
2. NUS calls upon the Federal Government to raise the rate of ABSTUDY, Austudy, Newstart Allowance, and Youth Allowance by at least \$100 per fortnight.
3. The NUS Welfare Officer will work with campus Welfare Officers to continue to expand the availability of welfare services through Student Associations such as emergency grants programs, Centrelink services on campus, food or sanitary packs, or free breakfast services.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

WELFARE 5.28: Expanding Emergency & Critical Loans/Grants.**Preamble:**

1. Most universities and student organisations provide emergency financial assistance to students in order to prevent individual financial difficulties locking students out of their right to an accessible tertiary education.
2. Emergency loans and grants are critical to students and are a source of great relief in stressful periods to assist in paying essentials such as accommodation and food.
3. The 2015 NUS Penalty Rates Submission notes:
 - a. One in five first year students drop out or defer their studies, and that 44% of those students cite financial reasons as very important in their decision.
 - b. Existing student Commonwealth income support arrangements leave students significantly below acceptable standards of living, a single student in a share house receiving maximum Youth Allowance and Rent assistance is 50% below the Henderson Poverty Line.
 - c. University students who are predominately casual workers have suffered the most with the Fair Work Commission's decision to gut penalty rates in 2017.

4. The last nation-wide review into student finances was conducted in 2012, where 1 in 3 students lived below the Henderson poverty line, and 1 in 5 would regularly skip meals citing financial reasons. With cuts to penalty rates, attacks on income support and the introduction of the demand driven system, it can only be assumed that these statistics have exacerbated.
5. Many of these existing loan & grant services haven't seen increases since the introduction of VSU, while the cost of living increases regularly.
6. There is currently no measure to identify what these loan and grant caps should be in order to adequately address financial hardships.

Platform:

1. NUS affirms that economic disadvantage should not be a barrier to education.
2. NUS calls for the provision of emergency financial aid, in line with contemporary living costs, at all Australian universities.
3. NUS acknowledges the importance of research and understanding of students finances.

Action:

1. NUS will support campus campaigns to increase emergency student loans and grants.
2. The NUS Welfare Officer will support campus welfare officers in lobbying and campaigning for increased emergency loans and grants relative to the Henderson Poverty Line.
3. The NUS Welfare Officer will work with the NUS Research Officer to survey student organisations and relevant research to establish a minimum standard for emergency financial aid in universities.
4. The NUS Welfare Officer will work with key stakeholders to initiate a nation-wide review into student finances.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide)

Seconded: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate)

WELFARE 5.29: Internalise those hidden fees!

Preamble:

1. Tuition fees have been contentious since they were first introduced almost four decades ago. Successive governments have increased the ratio of student to government contributions to the cost of studying.

2. In a series of surveys conducted by the Monash Student Association, 62% of students said they remain unable to afford their essential living and study expenses. This reality is reflected by Universities Australia's own data indicating that 2/3 of students live below the poverty line.
3. While HECS-HELP allows students to defer payment of their tuition fees until they earn higher incomes, recent attempts to reform the scheme demonstrate that myriad forces within the parliament believe middle to lower income students ought to be priced out of a university education.
4. While the current Education Minister claims students pay 42% of the cost of their degrees, many fees and charges remain hidden from official measures.
5. Hidden course fees represent in-semester charges that students must pay to participate in their unit. They include the cost of field trips, software, lab coats and goggles, printing services, musical accompanists, sheet music and to an extent, textbooks.
6. Hidden course fees are faculty and unit-specific however they all add disproportionately to the cost of studying and reduces the ability of many lower income, women, queer and disabled students to participate in their degree.
7. As these fees are essential to unit participation and are non-deferrable. Students must either pay up or risk failing and repeating subjects, adding heavily to already ballooning household debt.

Platform:

1. The NUS stresses that the high cost of tertiary education exacerbates socio-economic division.
2. The NUS condemns the Federal Government for the use of flawed metrics in their failed attempts to reform higher education.
3. The NUS calls for tuition fees to represent the total amount charged to students and believes additional fees should not be levied throughout the semester.
4. The NUS calls on universities to internalise hidden course fees into tuition fees so that students do not have to choose between attending a \$250 field trip and paying rent.
5. The NUS calls on universities to publish all hidden course fees before students are required to enrol in their units.

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare Officer will confront Simon Birmingham over his exploitative, base ideology and his outrageous haircut.
2. The NUS Welfare Officer will lobby university management and faculty deans to internalise hidden course fees into tuition fees
3. Affiliated student organisations will allocate SSAF-funding towards the establishment of bursary programs that help students afford hidden course fees.

Moved: Adriana Mells (National Executive)

Seconded: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

WELFARE 5.30: We contest wage theft**Preamble:**

1. Wage theft in the hospitality industry is rife, with a recent survey finding that up to 77% of workers have had their wages stolen. This can take the form of not paying penalty rates, unpaid overtime, not paying super and underpayment of hourly wages.
2. This exploitation is happening in some of our biggest name restaurants, like those belonging to George Calombaris, but is by no means limited to hospitality, with wage theft prevalent in all industries young people work in.
3. This wage theft can leave many young people struggling to survive under the poverty line, and especially affects those with visa restrictions such as international students.
4. The rise of precarious employment has left young people even more open to exploitation and wage theft. However, if an employer is found to be stealing with young people's wages they simply have to pay it back. And this relies on the employer ever being caught.
5. In order to stamp out wage theft criminal punishments for stealing of wages must be introduced so employers stop treating underpayment as a business model rather than a criminal offence.

Platform:

1. That the National Union of Students believes that all workers deserve the receive correct wages regardless of age or industry and should be promoting the welfare of young workers as a core element of the Union.
2. That the National Union of Students believes that wage theft should be criminalised and harsh punishments introduced to curb the prevalence of wage theft.

Action

1. The National Union of Students Welfare Officer will create a campaign regarding the criminalisation of wage theft and highlighting the exploitation that young people endure in the uncertain labour market.
2. The National Union of Students Welfare also will also create a campaign informing young people of their rights at work and work with other organisations such as CISA to address the issues faced by those in particularly vulnerable communities.
3. In addition the National Union of Students will lobby Federal members of parliament to change the laws regarding wage theft and the ease with which employers can exploit young people.

Moved: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University) on behalf of Alice Smith (Melbourne)

Seconded: Adriana Mells (National Executive) on behalf of Molly Willmott (Melbourne)

WELFARE 5.31: No Welfare Demonisation**Preamble:**

1. In 2017 the Liberal government revealed its budget which outlined a new process of defining eligible welfare recipients. Treasurer Scott Morrison said that "The best way to get your welfare budget under control is to get Australians off welfare and into work." His solution to this was to present random invasive drug tests to welfare recipients in order to decrease government spending.
2. The government cited the previously high welfare budget as a need for the policy change, and introduced a 'crackdown' on those who supposedly abuse the welfare system for use of narcotics. The new framework introduces a new demerit point system.
3. This new framework would randomly generate a select number of welfare recipients who would be subject to a drug test. If a welfare recipient repeatedly fails this drug test, they will be stripped from their payments. Furthermore, if a welfare recipient does not attend the drug test they will accumulate demerit points, which will also lead to a cutback of payments.
4. The new policy framework is meant to save money from the welfare sector, but does this by demonising welfare recipients. Drug tests in exchange for welfare are an infringement on an individual's right to privacy as the policy assumes the worst of those most in need. Furthermore, stripping payments from recipients who have substance abuse problems is not a solution. Loss of payments disproportionately

affects those who are in most need of aid. These losses of payments will only increase the gap between social classes.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises the need for those in aid receiving an equitable amount of welfare, and that the policy in its current state is a means of degrading recipients.
2. The National Union of Students believes that drug testing welfare recipients is invasive and demeaning.

Action:

1. The 2018 National Union of Students Welfare officer will conduct a campaign against drug testing of welfare recipients.
2. The Welfare officer, along with the welfare campaign will lobby Federal Ministers to ensure drug testing of welfare volunteers is abolished.

Moved: Adrianna Mells (National Executive) on behalf of Hannah Buchan (Melbourne)

Seconded: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Alice Smith (Melbourne)

WELFARE 5.32: Affordable cafeteria at the University (uproot capitalism / campus socialism)

Preamble:

1. It can be very expensive for students, especially those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those on youth allowance, to afford a meal and drinks in the university food court.
2. Cafes at university campuses overwhelmingly have profit oriented business models and do not meet the needs of students.
3. We must urge all university authorities to open service oriented affordable cafeterias that would charge students only the cost (not cost+profit+surplus value) of the meal and drinks in their campuses.
4. NUS notes that it is a common practice in many public universities overseas where students can eat in university run cafeterias half the price of the restaurants or shops outside or inside the campus

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises the need of affordable food for students, especially in light of the student poverty rate.

Action:

1. NUS would run a substantial campaign in collaboration with student unions in universities nationwide to achieve the goal of an 'affordable feed' for students in the campus without having to go starving or half starving most of the days.

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Bir Khan (Melbourne)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Alice Smith (Melbourne)

WELFARE 5.33: Drug Testing Kits NOW

Preamble:

1. Drug use happens. The use of recreational drugs is occurring at high levels within the student body and actively dismissing it is leading uninformed, dangerous drug use.
2. Australia has dirty drugs. Recreational drugs (i.e ecstasy, MDMA, etc) are often cut with dangerous impurities (i.e glass) or harder, more addictive drugs (i.e methamphetamines). Users are often unaware of the purity of the drugs they have bought, meaning that they are often using drugs that are more dangerous, and have more lasting effects, than thought at the time of use.
3. This is a matter of safety. There has been a spate of overdoses and deaths due to this issue, and while we cannot stop students from buying drugs, we can inform them of what they are taking. Information booklets and pill testing kits are best means of doing this.
4. Drug testing kits are cheap, and gives users a reading on the purity of the drugs they are taking. This, coupled with information booklets surrounding the effects of these drugs and important contact numbers means that users are informed of their actions and how to respond if something goes wrong. These things must be provided to students by student unions as a means of prevention and enhancing student welfare. We should not be punishing or shunning drug users, rather, we should be reducing harm and supporting ways to make an inevitable action safer.
5. The University of Melbourne Student Union has taken the platform that drug testing kits and information are the best way of keeping students safe in this issue. However, there have been issues of self-incrimination and organisational responsibility if something were to occur. This, however, does not take away from the fact that it is the best means of curbing overdose and untimely death in the student body.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that the safe, informed, use of illicit drugs is paramount to student welfare
2. NUS does not endorse the use of illicit drugs by students, but understands that it is occurring within the student body, and that its use should be as safe and informed as possible
3. NUS believes that the most substantial way to do this is through accessible drug testing kits provided at no to little cost by student organisations
4. NUS supports moves by student and youth organisations, namely its member organisations, in making drug use safer and more informed

Action:

1. The national welfare officer, in conjunction with the national president, will issue a media release calling for the implementation of drug testing kits and information booklets at out universities as a matter of student safety
2. Aforementioned national office bearers will seek assistance and support from organisations, such as the SSDP and like organisations, to shape and roll out a campaign on harm reduction to our member organisations.
3. NUS will work in conjunction with its members to push for the implementation of drug testing kits and information booklets to be available at member organisations.

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Molly Willmott (Melbourne)

Seconded: Adriana Mells (National Executive) on behalf of Alice Smith (Melbourne)

WELFARE 5.34: Stopping cuts to counselling**Preamble:**

1. In 2016, Monash University Health Services triggered a “spill and fill” of the positions of counsellors at the clinics on both the Clayton and Caulfield campuses. Existing counsellors were asked to re-apply for their positions.
2. Contracted psychologists and counsellors have filled the same roles; however contracted psychologists invoice the University per appointment. Appointments are booked back-to-back during workdays leaving little time to fulfil other important functions such as preparing letters and documentation for students, or liaising with staff across the University.

3. Students only have access to psychologist if they are paying fees in full, subsidised by Medicare, or by way of a Mental Health Care Plan implemented by a General Practitioner.
4. Counsellors provide non-committal advice on any feelings or issues they are having, and ways to move forward, advice to students from backgrounds that stigmatise mental illness, students who just need some support from someone who understands the rigours of university and can offer advice, advice and support on university documentation, advice and support about getting help on campus, advice to help a friend in need, student who need support through a stressful university process, and students who need support for a 'bump in the road'.
5. The cuts to trained staff will place the burden on to student unions, particularly student rights services, Queer, Women’s, Disabilities and Carers, and Welfare departments.
6. This is only news at Monash University, however this is a worrying trend that could be endemic among Australian universities.
7. The NTEU is in full support of the staff and as such will be campaigning against this.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises the importance of mental health support in the form of counselling programs.
2. The National Union of Students understands that access to a psychologist is limited to many students and not specific to their current situation.

Action:

1. That the National Union of Students actively support the NTEU campaign against the cuts to Monash counselling services, and by extension cuts to other university.
2. That the National Union of Students actively promote mental health programs as part of student support services.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate) on behalf of Mark Pace (Adelaide)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

WELFARE 5.35: Safe houses

Preamble:

1. Homelessness can affect students for a wide variety of reasons. Students may become homeless due to domestic and family violence, breakdown of relationships, financial hardship, and many other circumstances. There are also structural factors which cause homelessness, including poverty, social inequality and youth unemployment. Due to employment insecurity young people are less likely to have savings to draw on in case of emergency. Three quarters of young people who present to specialist homelessness services for assistance have a government pension or allowance as their main source of income.¹ Youth wages range from one third to two thirds of the adult minimum wage¹ and are often insufficient to keep young people out of poverty.²
2. Young women are at a higher risk of homelessness - young women aged 15-24 have the highest rate of assistance from Specialist Homelessness Services, and domestic violence and sexual assault are the main reason for needing help. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are much more likely to experience homelessness, at a rate of 487 per 10,000 compared to 49 per 10,000 in the Australian population, meaning young Aboriginal people also have a higher likelihood. Queer students are at significantly higher risk of homelessness. Youth from non-English speaking backgrounds are six times more likely to become homeless. Youth with mental illness experience homelessness at higher rates than the broader population, as do youth in rural and regional communities.
3. 25% of those who are homeless in Australia are between the ages of 12 and 25.
4. Homelessness impacts on students' study and students are more likely to drop out of university.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students believes that all students have the right to affordable, accessible and stable accommodation.
2. The NUS acknowledges that there is a serious need for emergency housing for students with high and rampant rates of homelessness alongside risk factors financial disadvantage, insecure work and insecure housing.

Action:

1. The National Welfare Officer will run a national campaign for emergency housing for students, facilitated with campus Welfare Officers to be run at each university.

2. The National Welfare Officer will work alongside homelessness organisations to campaign, advocate and provide resources to students for emergency housing.

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Adriana Mells (National Executive)

WELFARE 5.36: Improved welfare services to students at universities (e.g. affordable food/clothing/support)

Preamble:

1. The financial disadvantage that students experience places significant pressures on basic material needs. Housing costs, study material costs and transportation costs often mean students have to take money away from other vital expenses, including food and clothing. Centrelink support is often insufficient to enable students to meet these basic costs.
2. Students have a right to the ability to meet basic material needs. Therefore, welfare services are critical to ensure students have access to food and clothing while they complete their tertiary studies.

Platform:

1. The NUS acknowledges that many students face difficulty in providing for their own, most basic needs, including access to regular food, clothing, and other services.
2. The NUS believes that universities should provide greater support to ensure students are able to meet basic needs while undertaking their tertiary studies.

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare Officer will run a campaign for increased funding for university services and support for students for basic needs
2. The NUS Welfare Officer will work with affiliate Welfare Officers of different campuses to campaign individual universities to improve services for students to meet basic need.
3. The NUS Welfare Officer will work with affiliate Welfare Officers on improving services that each student union can provide to service basic student needs

Moved: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

WELFARE 5.37: Let us Live, Newstart!

Preamble:

1. Centrelink allowances are falling short of the minimum income required to sustain a basic standard of living. As course fees continue to rise, youth struggle desperately to make ends meet, and students are living in poverty.
2. A research paper compiled by UNSW's Social Policy Research Centre (SPRC) called the New Budget Standards for Low-Paid and Unemployed Australians Report demonstrates a minimum income for healthy living that ensures both material and social needs are met.
3. According to the report, whilst \$433.70 sufficiently covers the cost of a week's worth of living for a single adult, welfare payments do not exceed \$337.70. This leaves recipients to make up an additional \$96 to cover basic expenses.
4. This gap is particularly difficult to bridge for students, who are required to meet the demands of study and struggle to find casual or part time work. They incur additional costs associated with their studies, and often rely on income support to survive.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises the budget standards that ensure a basic standard of living as outlined in the SPRC's report.
2. The NUS stresses the particular difficulty that students face in sustaining a basic standard of living, and the tendency for students to rely on welfare payments whilst obtaining their accreditation. Furthermore, the NUS emphasises the increased risk for students to live below the poverty line.
3. The NUS joins other advocacy groups, such as the Australian Council of Social Services, and calls on the Government to increase the Newstart allowance to meet the minimum income for healthy living (\$433.70 per week) and alleviate the dire levels of poverty prevalent among the student population.

Action:

1. The 2018 NUS Welfare Officer will work with advocacy groups, such as the Australian Council of Social Services, and lobby the federal government to raise welfare payments in line with budget standard measurements outlined in the SPRC's report.
2. The NUS Welfare Officer will work with affiliate Welfare Officers on various campuses to run local campaigns that draw attention to student poverty, and the need to increase welfare payments and support to students throughout their time at university.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

Seconded: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate)

WELFARE 5.38: The Rules Are Broken - Protect Our Penalty Rates

Preamble:

1. The ACTU has labelled it the "the biggest mass wage cut since the Great Depression".
2. 2017 has seen the Fair Work Commission hand down cuts to penalty rates for some of the poorest paid workers in Australia. The decision will eventually come to affect nearly half a million workers in fast food, retail and hospitality. Workers who are predominantly young and find their rights infringed upon will now also be facing losses of up to \$6,000 a year.
3. The Fair Work Commission ruled that the cuts will effect Sunday and public holiday penalty rates for full-time and part-time workers in the hospitality, retail and fast-food industries.
4. The Liberal Party government who promised "jobs and growth" threw their full support behind these changes and blocked every attempt to remedy the cuts in Federal Parliament.
5. Although the SDA launched legal action in response to the penalty rates cuts, it feels the fight was quickly deserted by the SDA with a renowned history for letting down their members with dodgy EBA's. The SDA claims to have a long and proud history of fighting for and achieving good pay and working conditions for its members, but there is very little to prove this true.
6. The decision sets an alarming precedent for the future of penalty rates for all workers, and the future of workers rights.

Platform:

1. The NUS supports penalty rates and good working conditions for all workers.
2. The NUS acknowledges the financial pressures already facing students and why it is so important to take a strong stance on wage cuts.
3. The NUS condemns the Fair Work Commission's decision to cut penalty rates of hospitality, retail and fast-food industries and pharmacy workers, and condemns any future attacks that may be made on penalty rates.
4. The NUS acknowledges that the SDA has not done enough to protect their workers.

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare Officer will continue to promote awareness of workers rights by distributing materials to campuses and students.
2. The NUS will stand against any and all attacks on workers with snap action rally's, national welfare days of action, and lobbying campaigns.

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

WELFARE 5.39: Special Consideration**Preamble:**

1. Life is full of surprises, and not all of them are pleasant. When tragic events, illness, and injury occur, Universities provide a way for students to get special consideration for assignments and exams that may be missed or not completed on time. However, the process of doing can often be complex, difficult and alienating. This is concerning as student's undergoing this process may already be under significant stress, illness or trauma. For example, survivors of sexual assault may have to repeatedly apply to several different subjects and lecturers, requiring them to recount traumatic experiences multiple times.
2. Whether consideration is granted or not is often entirely at the whim of the lecturer or course coordinator, with no clear way to appeal an unfair decision. The amount of time or leniency given may be inconsistent from subject to subject. Many special consideration systems also require documentation to be provided within a short time frame. This can prove hard for some students who are unable to see a doctor or psychologist who fully understands their situation in time, if they are able to provide documentation at all.
3. The most common reason people seek leave is due to mental health issues. Despite this, many universities are inadequate in providing longer term support for students that are struggling. This results in a higher number of dropouts, particularly from students who already face significant barriers to entry into Tertiary education. Students that are culturally and linguistically diverse, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, or from a rural or low socioeconomic background are more likely to have mental health issues. This also applies to students that are women, disabled, or identify as LGBTQI+.

Platform:

1. The NUS acknowledges that student's university careers may be affected by unforeseen events, and universities should be flexible in supporting student's needs during times of duress.
2. The NUS understands that University students suffering from poor mental health may be unable to complete assignments or exams at a feasible time.
3. The NUS understands that special consideration systems can often be complex, difficult and alienating
4. The NUS recognizes that pressures students face are felt more harshly by students from marginalised groups such as those low-socioeconomic status, culturally and linguistically diverse and rural students, creating further barriers for groups already underrepresented in Tertiary education.
5. When students apply for special consideration due to mental health problems, Universities should not just respond by allowing an extension but follow up on the student's health and direct them to appropriate services if need be

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare Officer will work with affiliated Student Unions and campus Welfare Officers, Academic Board/Senate members, and other relevant student representatives to collect information establish how different Universities deal with special considerations.
2. The NUS Welfare Officer will collate a list of best practice measures for special consideration systems. This information will then be disseminated to campus representatives to assist in their campaigning.
3. The NUS Welfare department will campaign for greater mental health services at universities and from student unions, and for universities to actively follow up on students who have applied for special consideration due to mental illness.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

Seconded: Adriana Mells (National Executive)

WELFARE 5.40: Emergency/Short-Term and Crisis Accommodation

Preamble

1. Very few universities in Australia offer on campus Short-Term and Crisis, or Emergency Accommodation. While larger universities such as UNSW and USyd offer on campus emergency housing for more than one - two days at a time, many other universities only help students get in contact with hostels, which isn't an appropriate position to put students in, particularly if it is only for one or two days, or the student has to pay for it themselves
2. Students should not be expected to complete university levels of work while facing immediate crisis that can come from being homeless, especially if they are also facing issues to do with abuse, domestic violence, homophobia/transphobia/queerphobia, mental health or a myriad of different intersectional issues.
3. In 2008 the Australian Human Rights Commission released a publication entitled "Homelessness is a Human Right", which found that Indigenous people, Women, Children and Young people, People with Mental Illnesses, and Refugees and Asylum Seekers are the most impacted by homelessness, and that homelessness is in fact a human rights issue, and impedes the access to a variety of different rights. Statistics from 2008 found that almost half of the homeless people are aged under 24. It should be noted however, the most recent search into homelessness in young people and children done by the Australian Human Rights Commission occurred in 1989.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that everyone should have access to a quality education, regardless of their home situation
2. NUS recognises that students who face issues related to homelessness have a much more difficult time maintaining their university workload.
3. NUS also recognises that many students do not reach out for help when they find themselves homeless due to stigma, or feelings of shame.

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare officer will work with Campus office bearers to introduce mandatory crisis accommodation that lasts up to two weeks to all NUS affiliated
2. NUS will lobby the Australian government to enforce substantial and appropriate emergency housing at all government funded universities, as part of the requirement to receive commonwealth backed funding.
3. NUS will reach out to the Australian Human Rights Commission and work with them to engage with Youth and University student homelessness, in order to bring attention to this issue.

Moved: Adriana Mells (National Executive)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

WELFARE 5.41: Drug Usage is a Medical Problem not a Criminal One

Preamble:

1. Drug usage has always been high among students.
2. Australian drug laws punish drug users for what is a medical problem not a criminal one.
3. Drugs such as Marijuana have been legalised already in several states in the USA and medical Marijuana trials are underway in different states in Australia.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises that addiction is a medical problem not a criminal one.
2. The National Union of Students supports the full legalisation of Marijuana.
3. The National Union of Students supports the decriminalisation of the usage of other currently illegal narcotics.
4. The National Union of Students believes that drug addicts should be treated medically not locked up.

Action:

1. The National Welfare Officer will run a campaign in 2018 calling for the legalisation of Marijuana and decriminalisation of the use other drugs in Australia and its States and Territories.
2. The National Union of Students will produce submissions to any government inquiries into the legalisation or decriminalisation of narcotics.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (Curtin University)

Seconded: Dylan Heywood (Curtin University)

WELFARE 5.42: Combating Wage Theft

Preamble:

1. Wage theft occurs when employers do not pay workers according to the law. Examples of wage theft include paying less than minimum wage, not paying workers overtime, not allowing workers to take meal and rest breaks, requiring off the clock work, or taking workers tips.
2. This rampant underpayment of workers has been and continues to occur in cafes, restaurants in university towns and retail chains including 7-Eleven, Pizza Hut, Dominos, Caltex and Bakers Delight. In some instances at 7-Eleven, workers have been receiving less than half the basic award rate.

Platform:

1. The NUS supports calls from other union leaders that wage theft is a serious crime, and that bosses should be jailed for stealing wages from their employees.
2. The NUS supports campaigns such as the SDA's 24-Seven helpline, as well as other union campaigns that encourage workers to come forward with their claims of wage theft.
3. The NUS encourages all student workers to join their union to ensure that they are protected in their workplaces.

Action:

1. The 2018 Welfare Officer will run an educational campaign about wage theft, and encourage students to join their relevant union.
2. The 2018 Welfare Officer will work with campus unions to give unions access to campuses as a means to more effectively engage with student workers on this issue.

Moved: Jordan Mumford (UniSA Delegate)

Seconded: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

WELFARE 5.43: Affordable housing for students

Preamble:

1. The 2017 NUS and Anglicare report found that an overwhelming majority of students found that Government income support such as youth allowance and AusStudy do not adequately cover the cost of living and studying

2. Students from low-ses backgrounds were less likely to be able to receive family support and therefore faced higher financial stress.
3. On-campus living found they are paying too much and not receiving inferior accommodation
4. Students who live in off-campus private rentals often face higher rent and large bonds which means it's much hard to find quality well maintained rentals

Platform:

1. NUS supports that Government income support needs to be raised in order to beneficially support those from low ses backgrounds and to lower the stress related to financial hardship.
2. NUS believes that Universities should stop using on campus living arrangements to profit off of students and making it hard for them to study.
3. NUS notes the concern around Centrelink hold and wait times.

Action:

1. NUS will campaign to raise the Government income support amounts.
2. NUS welfare officer will undertake an audit into campus and off campus living prices and lobby universities to lower the costs of these services.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders University)

Seconded: Jill Molloy (NUS Welfare Officer)

WELFARE 5.44: Protecting Penalty Rates

Preamble:

1. Earlier this year, the Fair Work Commission handed down their decision to reduce the weekend and public holiday penalty rates of workers covered by the hospitality, retail, fast food and pharmacy awards.
2. This cut is estimated to negatively affect the take home pay of some 800,000 already low-paid workers.
3. A report from the University of South Australia found that the cuts to penalty rates will disproportionately impact young people, showing that nearly 40% of young people rely on penalty rates to make ends meet. This means students will have to accept a pay cut, or they will have to work more hours for the same pay, which will see them spend less time with their families and on their study commitments.

Platform:

1. The NUS opposes these cuts to penalty rates which will see the pay of student workers go backwards.
2. The NUS acknowledges the work of the work of unions such as United Voice and the SDA for running strong campaigns to protect penalty rates.
3. The NUS calls on the Federal Government to reverse the decision of the Fair Work Commission.
4. The NUS calls on the Federal Government and Federal Opposition to amend the Fair Work Act so that no workers are able to be worse off as a result of their decisions.

Action:

1. The 2018 Welfare Officer will continue to engage and promote the campaign to protect penalty rates.
2. The 2018 Welfare Officer will lobby the Federal Government and key cross bench members of parliament to join the Federal Opposition in reversing the cuts to penalty rates.

Moved: Jordan Mumford (UniSA Delegate)

Seconded: Aidan Johnson (Adelaide Uni)

WELFARE 5.45: 100% Pay at 18 Campaign**Preamble:**

1. Junior rates are part of many Australian industrial awards. They mean that workers in many industries aged under 21 are paid less for doing the same job as someone slightly older.
2. Junior rates are set in line with age. Typically, 18 year olds are paid 70% of the adult rate, at 19 they get 80% and at 20 the rate payable is 90% of the adult rate.
3. Many education and welfare issues associated with students stem from their poor financial situation.
4. Achieving full pay at 18 would improve the financial situation of many students.

Platform:

1. The NUS supports the SDA's '100% Pay at 18' campaign, and notes that due to campaigning from the SDA, workers covered by the retail award are now paid the full adult rate from the age of 20.

Action:

1. The 2018 Welfare Officer will work with the SDA to see how the NUS can work with them on this campaign.

Moved: Jordan Mumford (UniSA Delegate)

Seconded: Aidan Johnson (Adelaide Uni)

WELFARE 5.46: Free Breakfast on Campus**Preamble:**

1. Student poverty is becoming increasingly prevalent, with more than 66 per cent of students report being worried about their financial situation, and a further 17 per cent of students regularly go without food or other necessities.
2. Nutrition levels and financial insecurity can severely impact a student's ability to study and can be detrimental to the mental health of students.
3. Many universities currently provide no free breakfast option for students, or only offer partially subsidised or infrequent services.

Platform:

1. The NUS understands the seriousness of the issue of student poverty and understands that as the peak representative body for students, the NUS must work to address this issue by all means necessary.
2. The NUS supports free breakfast options on Australian university campuses as a means to work towards addressing this serious issue.

Action:

1. The 2018 Welfare Officer will work with campus welfare officers, collectives and other student groups and organisations to work to implement free breakfast options on all Australian university campuses.

Moved: Jordan Mumford (UniSA Delegate)

Seconded: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

WELFARE 5.47: Stop Putting Pineapple on Pizza

Preamble:

1. The first documented evidence of pizza was in 997 A.D.
2. Pizza is the perfect example of multiculturalism and how food can bring people together
3. Pizza is an affordable and diverse food for students.
4. The growing trend of “Hawaiian pizza” however is a blight on all the things pizza represents.

Platform:

1. That NUS support a Pizza Harm reduction method of dealing with Pineapple on Pizza.
2. NUS recognises the vital threat pineapple on pizza has to pizza culture everywhere.
3. NUS will make sure that it bans pineapple on pizza from any meal served or provided by the national union.

Action:

1. The 2018 NUS Welfare Officer and National President will lobby the Australian Government to ban the Production and Sale of Pineapple on pizza
2. NUS will ensure that all affiliated campuses ban the pineapple on pizza on all events and initiatives.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Nathan Croft (NUS General Secretary)

WELFARE 5.48: Party Smart this O'Week.

Preamble:

1. O'Weeks provide NUS with a great opportunity to speak to new students and make them aware about the issues that NUS fights for.
2. However common practice O'Week parties can have a higher chance of getting out of hand, incidents such as alcohol related violence, drink spiking, sexual harassment and assault.
3. It's important that are able to feel safe on campus and at University events.
4. NUS should play a role in making people aware of the risks of drugs and alcohol.

Platform:

1. NUS Recognises that Universities and campus organisations have a duty of care to students at University events.
2. NUS believes that every student has the right to feel safe at campus run events regardless of alcohol and drug consumption.
3. NUS proudly supports a Students Right to party.
4. NUS recognises the need for all students but particularly during O'Week, students should be made aware of grievance or reporting procedures of the university.
5. NUS believes that more should be done by universities to make al first responders and university staff are trained to adequately deal with student complaints.

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare officer will roll out a stay safe at O'Week 2018 campaign for Student Associations/Unions to run during O'Week along with information about how you can make a report, the effects of drug and alcohol.
2. NUS will encourage all students to party hard, party smart at O'Week.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders University)

Seconded: Valerie Song (UWS)

WELFARE 5.49: Wellbeing survey 2.0

Preamble:

1. The 2016 Welfare officer rolled out on of NUS most comprehensive and detailed reports on student wellbeing.
2. NUS committed to rerunning this survey in the future to track the growing impact on students wellbeing.
3. The report had several key findings (too many to lists but here's a few): 67% of young adults rated their mental health as “fair” or “poor”. 65% reported high or very high psychological distress. 27% of respondents had accessed on-campus counselling services and 24% rated their experience as negative. Only 1.6% reported that no symptoms of mental health problems impacted their study.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the great work of the 2016 and 2017 Welfare officers in completing the survey.

2. NUS understand the importance of being able track the impact of student wellbeing and be able to address areas in which areas need more focus.
3. NUS believes that Universities need to do more to address the issues affecting Students.

Action:

1. The 2018 welfare officer will launch another NUS Wellbeing Survey to help track and measure trends affecting students.
2. All NUS affiliated campuses will conduct events and stalls to encourage students to take part in the survey.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders University)

Seconded: Kathryn Venning (Flinders University)

WELFARE 5.50: Let's get cookin

Preamble:

1. It's time that the NUS cook book finally happens.
2. Students are often faced with balancing the need to eat with paying rent, purchasing textbooks and other costs. This means that often students will survive on an extremely tasty but unhealthy diet of Mi-Goreng and Redbull especially when study commitments have to compete with work/social commitments and sleep.
3. Often most students aren't aware of ways to cook cheap, quick nutritious meals.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that all students should have access to food which is healthy and nutritious.
2. NUS recognises that fast food and other unhealthy meals can often be cheaper and easy meals for students to access.
3. NUS believes that it should play a role in educating students on the ways to access cheap affordable meals.
4. NUS believes that students should be informed about how to get welfare assistance packages.
5. NUS encourages all student unions to provide welfare and emergency food packages to all it's students.
6. NUS notes pineapple on pizza will not be a meal option.

Action:

1. The NUS welfare will produce an online cookbook for all students to access.
2. The NUS welfare officer will meet with students, experts in the area of nutrition, healthy eating and cooking on the cheap.
3. The NUS welfare officer will offer a campus specific copy for each of the affiliated campuses which will include how students can access welfare and emergency food packages from their student union or closest support service.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders University)

Seconded: Jason Byrne (National Small and Regional Officer)

WELFARE 5.51: Let's get Physical

Preamble:

1. It can be very hard for University students to factor enough time for 30 minutes of exercise per day.
2. Exercise why not only helping you improve your physical health is great for mental health.
3. Often it can be hard for Students to afford the high cost of gym memberships.

Platform:

1. NUS notes the important part that physical exercise can play in improving mental and physical health.
2. NUS encourages it's affiliates to run free exercise classes to allow students the opportunity to exercise.
3. NUS notes that some people may not be able to take part in physical exercise and should offer other opportunity to those who cannot.

Action:

1. The 2018 Welfare officer will encourage all student unions to run exercise classes on campus.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

Seconded: Kathryn Venning (Flinders Uni)

WELFARE 5.52: Head Space on Every Campus.

Preamble:

1. Stress and mental ill health is becoming a growing and serious epidemic on our university campuses.
2. 67% of students listed their mental health as poor or fair in the NUS well being survey
3. 24% of young people who had access university operated counselling services had a negative experience.
4. Universities should be a place where students can feel supported and feel like they have access to the resources they need in order to maintain their mental and physical wellbeing
5. Universities are in a unique positions in which thousands of people access their campuses and can reduce the barriers for access mental health services.

Platform:

1. NUS supports removing barriers for access to mental health services for students.
2. NUS supports every student having access to a quality mental health service on their campus.
3. NUS believes that universities need to do more to adequately fund mental health services on campus.

Action:

1. NUS welfare officer will lobby Universities Australia, and headspace to introduce a headspace center on every campus.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

Seconded: Ashley Sutherland (Flinders Uni)

WELFARE 5.53: Build they will come. The need for cheap, reliable, and accessible public transport to university campuses

Preamble:

1. In 2019 the South Australian State Government will finalise its Darlington road upgrade which will include the extension of the Tonsley train line to Flinders University.
2. This upgrade will mean that students between the city and flinders uni will have better, cheaper and more direct transport to Flinders University.

3. The project has one fault in that due to the giant hill that Flinders is built on, passengers will need to travel to the nearby medical centre and find other ways to the top of the hill. NUS should encourage that state government and University to commit to building the sky rail project which would transport students from the bottom of the hill to the top.

Platform:

1. NUS supports reliable, cheap and accessible transport options for students to travel to and from university safely.
2. NUS notes the great work by Flinders University 2016 Education Officer and 2016 welfare officer to lobby Department of Infrastructure and transport, as well as state government advisors to extend the train line.
3. NUS however will oppose any form of private rail being developed and believes that if a sky rails is to be built it should be owned and operated by the state government.

Action:

1. The 2017 Welfare officer will write to the state minister encouraging that all future transport needs be accessible, reliable and affordable to all students.

Moved: Kathryn Venning (Flinders Uni)

Seconded: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders Uni)

WELFARE 5.54: Concessions for Part time students!

Preamble:

1. Fulltime students are able to have access to discounted concession rates on things such as events, public transport, insurance, health care and other services.
2. Often part time students who have to balance study load, part time work and out of home living expenses also struggle to make ends meet. Part-time students are also often mature age students, young parents, or those who a transitioning from other work areas into higher education.
3. Currently in most state and territories only full time students have access to concession rates.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the financial burden that can be placed on part-time students

2. NUS supports the need for part-time students to be eligible for concessions.

Action:

1. The 2018 welfare officer will lobby the government to increase student concessions to part time students.

Moved: Jordon O'Reilly (Flinders University)

Seconded: Jason Byrne (National S&R Officer)

WELFARE 5.55: Big Steps Campaign

Preamble

2. Child care in Australia is a \$12 billion dollar industry, employing over 170, 000 workers. Despite rising rates and fees for parents, early educators are some of the worst paid in the country, many earning only \$20/hr.
3. 95% of those employed in the sector are women, so on top of the standard challenges public sector workers face in the neoliberal era, the sexist stereotypes of child care being 'women's work', unskilled, and not comparable to other education sectors prevail and reinforce their poor wages. This was summarised in Liberal Democrat Senator David Leyonhjelm's comments bemoaning the rise in wages in the industry since the introduction of Certificate IIIs because "the job they were doing — you know, wiping noses and stopping the kids from killing each other".
4. United Voice covers early educators and for the last 5 years have been running the 'Big Steps' campaign, highlighting the plight of child care workers, campaigning for higher wages, and taking industrial action to that effect. This has seen some reforms and wage increases won, but the campaign continues
5. This year, to mark International Working Women's Day, over 1000 early educators walked off the job and held public rallies demanding the federal government fund a wage increase in the sector. Then, on the 7th of September, more than 3000 workers stopped work at 3:20pm, the time from which they would be working for free if they were earning the medium income, and took to the streets with families, supporters, and other unionists.

Platform:

1. NUS believes early educators deserve decent wages for the skilled work they perform.

2. NUS understands the unwillingness of federal governments to provide decent services and budget for adequate wages the source of early educators problems.
3. NUS opposes the sexist stereotypes which permeate women dominated industries, and stand on the side of workers fighting back against these ideas and solidarity with their campaign for equal pay.

Action:

1. NUS condemns the dismal wages successive governments have set for early educators and those employed in the childcare sector.
2. NUS will continue to support United Voice's Big Steps campaign by producing press releases, promoting and attending rallies and industrial actions, and publishing public statements for support.
3. NUS calls on the federal government to fully nationalise the child care industry, granting early educators wages comparable to those being demanded by workers in other education sectors, and relieving the high rates for parents.

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith)

WELFARE 5.56: Expand the bulk billing system

Preamble

1. In February 2017, Malcolm Turnbull claimed that bulk-billing rates are at record levels. In fact, bulk-billing rates had fallen in the previous quarter, while one in three patients are not bulk billed for all their GP visits.
2. A large number of health services are not listed in the Medicare Benefits Schedule, which means they are not covered by bulk billing. These include ambulance services, most dental procedures, most physiotherapy services, and pharmaceuticals.
3. Furthermore, those services which are listed on the Medicare Benefits Schedule are subject to the discretion of the healthcare provider, who can choose not to allow patients to bulk bill them.
4. This results in important health services being highly inaccessible for people from poorer backgrounds. Reflecting this, Australians living in the lowest socioeconomic areas live on average three years less, and are 1.6 times more likely to have multiple chronic illnesses, than those living in the highest socioeconomic areas.
5. In certain sections of the country bulk billing GPs and procedures are even more inaccessible. In the ACT only 55.6% of GP visits are bulk-billed.

6. The bulk billing system could easily be massively expanded in Australia. The government has set aside over \$100 billion for military contracts and corporate tax cuts. Furthermore, corporate taxation has stagnated or decreased since the early 1980s, while many large companies avoid paying any taxes. This wealth could be used to expand services provided by bulk billing.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the expansion of bulk billing services listed under the Medicare Benefits Schedule.
2. NUS supports Government investment into the creation of new healthcare providers which provide bulk billing services.
3. NUS opposes bulk billing services being provided at the discretion of the healthcare provider and calls for all services listed under the Medicare Benefits Schedule to be universally provided at no cost to the patient.

Action:

1. NUS will campaign for the expansion of services provided by bulk billing.
2. NUS will campaign for greater funding into the healthcare sector and for that funding to be directed towards the creation of more bulk billing healthcare providers.

Moved: Chris DiPasquale (National LGBTI Officer)

Seconded: Anneke Demanuele (National Education Officer)

Women's

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WOMEN 6.1: Working With the NTEU on safety on campus

Preamble:

1. What was evident in the 2017 Change the Course report into sexual harassment and violence is that such issues are at all levels of the university. It's an issue, that like the student body, affects all and is allowed to continue in a toxic culture. Assault and harassment is occurring in classrooms, in libraries, in all facets of our campus, meaning that this is as much of a staff issue as student. Staff are also often subject to disclosures and are often ill-equipped to respond. As such, it is vital that we are supporting them.
2. University staff can also be students. It's important that we are representing them on multiple levels and creating a network between staff and students to push for a collectivist, widespread, and grassroots cultural shift.
3. It is vital that we engage the NTEU in our activism for many reasons. Firstly, supporting our staff means supporting our students. Together we can push for change through more avenues, and have a bigger voice. Secondly, just as we need to change our culture within the student body, we need to change a toxic culture within our university staff. Various reports have highlighted a problem of harassment and assault by staff members to other staff members and students. We need to work with the NTEU in saying that this is not okay, and these issues must be fought by everyone, from staff to student.
4. Ultimately, staff issues are student issues, and vice versa, and as such we must be united when we fight this.

Platform:

1. That NUS believes that engaging with staff on issues of sexual assault and harassment is vital in pushing for cultural shift
2. That NUS believes it is the responsibility of all those on campus to act on these issues

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will campaign with the NTEU to actively engage the staff in making classrooms and teaching spaces safer
2. That NUS Women's will collaborate with the NTEU on a campaign to educate and support university staff on issues of harassment and assault, and encourage staff members to become actively involved in the campaign

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Molly Willmott (Melbourne)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

WOMEN 6.2: Training our Student Reps to Respond to Harassment and Assault

Preamble:

1. Student representatives often become unofficial, untrained, first responders to cases of sexual assault and harassment. While it is our job to represent these students, we are not trained to deal with these issues. It is not best practice for both the representative or survivor for a student representative to deal with cases of sexual violence, with it leading to the improper dealing with cases.
2. What we can do, however, is make sure that our student organisations in their entirety are trained in the tools to respond. The introduction of consent, vicarious trauma, and bystander training means student representatives know tools of prevention, what to do with a case, and how to best respond. It is a small, structural change that could change the outcome of cases and our student union's interaction with this issue.
3. It is also a matter of self-care for student representatives. The effects of disclosure can seriously impact with the mental health of representatives and the ability to do their jobs. We must make sure that all parties in such cases are supported in order to achieve the best possible outcome
4. It is also important that this training is not only given to women's officers. A case can arise at any time, at any time, within any department, so it is vital that such trainings are a whole of union initiative that is extended to all volunteers and staff who interact with students through our student unions. These trainings need to be done by off-campus front-line services who not only have the expertise, but the legal capacity to share tools and processes.

Platform:

1. That NUS believes it to be vital for all aspects of student unions to be informed in how to deal with cases of assault and harassment
2. That NUS believes that the issues of sexual harassment and assault bare a great impact on student representatives and that all representatives, not only women's officers, must be trained to properly deal with omissions.
3. That NUS strongly recommends that this training must be undertaken by outside, front-line groups to ensure that it is dealt with properly for both the survivor and the representative receiving a disclosure

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Office will work with campus organisations to introduce consent, vicarious trauma, and bystander training to all student representatives as a part of their individual organisation's induction

2. That the NUS Women's Office will work with the Presidents of campus organisations to implement a strategy that means that volunteers, coordinators, staff and other student union services are also trained in such issues and how to respond.
3. That the NUS Women's Officer will provide incoming student organisations with a contact list of organisations to run such trainings, as well as a list of other campuses that are doing such trainings.

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Molly Willmott (Melbourne)

Seconded: Adriana Mellis (National Executive)

WOMEN 6.3: NO TEA FOR ME

Preamble:

1. Unfortunately sexual harassment and assault are more common at university than it should be. It is imperative that action be taken to educate students around sexual consent.
2. A compulsory consent module should be enacted across all universities for all students which must be completed before completing each year and enrolling in the next/graduation. Sexual assault on colleges is more prevalent than on the rest of a campus therefore targeted workshops and modules are recommended for those students.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns sexual assault and harassment on all university campuses and anywhere else it occurs.
2. NUS recognises and supports the victims of sexual assault and harassment on university campuses and anywhere else it occurs.
3. NUS understands the need for immediate action and education for university students Australia wide.
4. NUS recognises the need for specific college and/or sexual consent workshops for university students.

Action:

1. NUS Women's Officer in conjunction with other NUS and Campus Office Bearers will lobby universities to implement consent modules every year for all students.
2. NUS will research and create a basic module based off current university sexual consent modules for universities to use as a starting point.
3. NUS proposes that such modules be compulsory to complete on a yearly basis or graduation and yearly grades will be withheld.

4. NUS Women's Officer in conjunction with campus office bearers will help create workshops and modules for students living both on and off college throughout their degree.

Moved: Annabelle Romano (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Lily Xia (RMIT University)

WOMEN 6.4: Domestic Violence Leave

Preamble:

1. The Department of Families, Housing and Community Affairs found that just under half a million Australian women reported that they had experienced physical or sexual violence or sexual assault in the past 12 months. With statistics only getting worse as we discover more than a million women had experienced physical or sexual assault by their male current or ex-partner since the age of 15 (some women may be counted twice if they experienced both physical and sexual assault). 64% of women who experienced physical assault and 81.1% of women who experienced sexual assault still did not report it to police. The proportion of women aged between 18 and 34 who reported experiencing physical violence has decreased but the proportion of women who reported experiencing physical violence after 45 increased over the same period. The percentage of women who reported that their children had witnessed partner-related violence either from a current or ex-partner was lower than in 1996.
2. The union movement is currently fighting for domestic violence leave for in all workplaces. This is an incredibly important campaign, especially when we look at the statistics, and the odds of it either happening to you, or to someone you know. Time is so valuable to domestic violence survivors as they relocate, and establish new safe lives away from their abusers. Without paid leave, women are more susceptible to suffering mental illness, and falling into poverty conditions.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the Victorian Trades Hall Council Endorsed Model Family Violence Clause. Specifically that:
 - a. General Principle
 - b. The employer recognises that employees sometimes face situations of violence or abuse in their personal life that may affect their attendance or performance at work.
 - c. Therefore, the VTHC is committed to providing support to staff that experience family violence.

2. NUS supports rallies and lobbying towards helping the movement for paid domestic violence leave.

Action

1. The NUS Women's officer will engage in the ASU's campaign for paid domestic violence leave.
2. The NUS Women's officer will organise students to attend relevant rallies and support the campaign.
3. NUS as a whole will support the campaign at relevant rallies, and through engaging other women's and union organisations as a tool for both rallies and lobbying.

Moved: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Crossin (La Trobe University)

WOMEN 6.5: Struggling to Care: Access to Education and Training for Young Adult Carers

Preamble:

1. For a large amount of students aged between 18 – 25 attaining a career and an education is often a lot more difficult due to their responsibilities as carers.
2. NUS does not currently address in any capacity, the difficulties faced by students who are also primary and secondary carers.
3. As a result of their caring responsibilities, many young adult carers live below the poverty line and experience high levels of disadvantage in educational institutions.

Platform:

1. That NUS recognises the unsubstantiated difficulties experienced by young adult carers and the difficulties this presents to students who need to act as primary or secondary carers whilst undertaking tertiary education.
2. That NUS calls for an increase in the Carer Allowance which currently sits at \$123.50 a fortnight
3. That NUS supports students who are charged with the immense responsibility of becoming primary or secondary carers.

Action:

1. That the relevant NUS office bearers work in conjunction with each other to run a campaign during National Carers Week (October 16 – 22)

based around promoting awareness of the issues that Young Carers often face.

2. That this campaign will focus on students who are primary or secondary carers and the outstanding issues existent within the Carer Allowance
3. That the relevant office bearers will travel and visit different campuses across the nation to bring awareness to this campaign

Moved: Peyton Garnsey-Roberts (University of Newcastle)

Seconded: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.6: My Feminism will be Intersectional or it will be bulls*: Women's Policy needs Intersectionality.**

Preamble:

1. Ethnically and culturally diverse women, indigenous women, women with disabilities, sexually diverse women, Tran's women and women from low socioeconomic statuses face exclusive and additional challenges.
2. In addition to exclusive challenges, the marginalisation that women face is augmented when faced with different intersections of identity.
3. Women with disabilities are more likely to experience domestic violence while indigenous women experience higher and more severe rates of violence than other women. The gender pay gap for indigenous and hispanic women is also far greater. LGBTIQ women are not only more likely to experience depression; they also experience more difficulty accessing appropriate services.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the need for the student movement to develop more intersectional and less exclusive gender-related policies.
2. NUS recognizes that women from certain minorities experience more and different forms and manners of marginalisation.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will be responsible for actively engaging more specifically intersectional policies and campaigns for women
2. The NUS Women's Department will seek to engage with organisations and campaigns that target, on a deeply intersectional level, the complexity of challenges that women face.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.7: We need a fair Childcare system for mothers

Preamble:

1. Affordable and accessible early education is crucially important for parents, particularly women and students.
2. Women, particularly single mothers who need to balance parental responsibilities with study commitments are particularly at risk of being adversely affected both academically and financially if they do not have access to affordable childcare.

Platform:

1. NUS fully supports the fight for affordable, accessible and quality early education.
2. NUS recognises that an early education system that's fair will help close the gender wage gap and support women to increase their participation in the workforce. As well as ensuring women who are studying can be adequately supported in their academic lives.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will aim to run a campaign that creates awareness around the difficulties faced by single mothers and single parents who are also students.
2. The NUS Women's Officer will write to the Minister and Shadow Minister for Women, Minister and the Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Development, to ask them to prioritise affordable child care, particularly for students.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Peyton Garnsey-Roberts (University of Newcastle)

WOMEN 6.8: Women on Boards

Preamble:

1. Currently, the number of women sitting on government and private boards is increasing, but very slowly. This can be due to the obstacles such as requiring prior board experience, which can be a hurdle for women.
2. A report released by the government in 2015 showed that on 361 boards, only 39.1% of these positions are held by women. This was down from 41.7% in 2013

3. The gender balance of Chair and Deputy Chair roles was even more surprising, with only 30% of positions being held by women.
4. In 2016, the Australian Institute of Company Directors' report into ASX 200 companies reveals that women now make up 23.6 per cent of directors, compared to a little over 8 per cent in 2009.
5. The report suggests that Australia can do better, but that businesses are finally getting the message for gender diversity.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises how significant equal representation is on government boards, and engagement of women on private boards.
2. NUS supports Labor's target of 50 per cent representation of women on all Australian Government boards.
3. NUS supports working more closely with the ASX to engage more women on private boards

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will look at establishing a working relationship with the ASX in order to develop strategies and campaigns to better engage more women on private boards and in leadership positions.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.9: Rural Women's General Practice Service (RWGPS) program

Preamble:

1. People living in rural areas tend to have shorter life expectancy and are at higher risk of suffering from illnesses or diseases, than those that live in metropolitan areas. People living in rural areas often do not have the same access or opportunities to good health services as those living in the bigger cities.
2. Women in rural areas of Australia are often adversely affected by this lack of access.
3. The RWGPS program looks to improve access in rural areas to primary health care services, particularly for women who have little to no access to female GPs. It aims to do this by facilitating the travel of female GPs to rural communities.
4. This service is bulk-billed and no fees are charged for any service including pathology costs.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the difficulties women in rural communities face when accessing health care
2. NUS recognises the great value that services like the Rural Women's General Practice Service (RWGPS) provides for women in rural areas
3. NUS believes in the appropriate consideration for the provision of other health services to remote communities.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will campaign for the provision of other health services to women in remote communities, particularly inquiring into certain regional university campuses and their access to adequate health services.

Moved: Peyton Garnsey-Roberts (University of Newcastle)

Seconded: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.10: End Healthcare Austerity**Preamble:**

1. A pap smear is a medical screening test required for early detection of the incurable illness cervical cancer. It also is able to detect results for other sexually transmitted infections and is a vital part of a woman's health routine. There are two forms of this test available to Australian women; the traditional out-dated Pap test, and the newer technology LBC (liquid-based cytology). Both tests are performed the same way, however, LBC tests are scientifically acknowledged as a significantly more effective screening.
2. The current Liberal-National Government's cuts to Medicare have resulted in the only available bulk billed pap smear tests are the out dated pap tests, and exclude the more accurate LBC tests. This means that lower SES women are more at risk than women who can afford the LBC screening.
3. Furthermore, further cuts to health mean that women will only able to receive bulk billed pap screening every 5 years, as opposed to the recommended 12-24 months.
4. These health cuts not only show that the Government does not prioritise Australians' health, but it shows that the Government does not prioritise half of the Australian population's health due to their sex.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes discriminating cuts to health.
2. NUS supports early detection methods for incurable diseases, such as cervical cancer.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will write to Malcolm Turnbull, the Health Minister, and the Shadow Health Minister, in order to ask the Government to stop cutting essential funding from women's health procedures.
2. The NUS Women's Officer will lobby for bulk billed LBC screening every 2 years for every Australian woman.

Moved: Peyton Garnsey-Roberts (University of Newcastle)

Seconded: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.11: NUS Condemns the Tampon Tax**Preamble:**

1. When the GST was legislated a number of essentials were deemed exempt from tax. These included: sunscreen, some medications and condoms.
2. Sanitary items were not listed, apparently as an oversight of the legislators.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the removal of GST on sanitary items.
2. NUS calls on the Turnbull Government and Liberal Premiers to join them and commit to removing GST from sanitary items.

Action

1. NUS Women's Officer will write Opposition Treasurer Chris Bowen reaffirming our position and encouraging him to continue lobbying for the removal of the tax.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Peyton Garnsey-Roberts (University of Newcastle)

WOMEN 6.12: Supporting Women in STEM

Preamble:

1. The majority of the fastest growing occupations require some sort of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) knowledge and skills.
2. Women in STEM degrees are highly underrepresented. Women only represent 20% of engineering and related technologies enrolments and 14% of information technology enrolments. This later becomes overtly reflective in technologically based workforces.
3. Supporting women in STEM subjects is inherently valuable in ensuring women break into STEM industry and are able to earn higher incomes.
4. The Liberals continue to ignore this issue while boasting their plan of an “innovative and agile Australia”.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the great lack of women involved and enrolled in STEM degrees
2. NUS understands the importance of supporting and assisting women in order to ensure they are able to break into STEM industries
3. NUS condemns Malcolm Turnbull and the LNP for their lack of action on this issue

Action:

1. The NUS Education Officers will write to Opposition Leader, the Hon. Bill Shorten, Shadow Minister for Education, the Hon. Tanya Plibersek, and Shadow Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Senator the Hon. Kim Carr, to express support for Labor’s plan for women in STEM and to encourage them to place more pressure on the Coalition Government.

Moved: Peyton Garnsey-Roberts (University of Newcastle)

Seconded: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.13: Supporting Women in Sports

Preamble:

1. The level of public interest in women’s sports often impacts the amount of media attention it receives.
2. According to the Australian Sports Commission, only 7% of non-news programmes on TV regard women in sport.

3. The great achievements of Australian sportswomen are being openly denied airtime and are not recognised in the same way that their male counterparts are. Our female athletes deserve the recognition and same opportunities.
4. Better coverage means our sportswomen will see equality in pay, corporate sponsorship and fan support.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the importance of recognising the achievements of women in sport
2. NUS understands that women in sport are not often afforded the same opportunities as their male counterparts and their achievements are less celebrated
3. NUS supports the commitment made by Federal Labor to the ABC to increase coverage of women’s sport in Australia on both television and digital platforms.
4. NUS commends and encourages women’s sporting teams on University campuses and encourages more female students to get involved in sports on campus.

Action:

1. NUS will write to the Minister and the Shadow Minister for Sport and express their support for better coverage of women’s sports on free to air TV
2. The NUS Women's Department will reach out to women's sporting teams on University campuses in order to establish a more collaborative relationship to later to run an awareness campaign surrounding recruitment and engagement of more students in women's sporting teams.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Beatrice Tan (University of Technology Sydney)

WOMEN 6.14: NUS stands against Domestic Violence: Supporting ‘We Won’t Wait’ and joining the Union Fight for Survivors of DV & Sexual Assault.

Preamble:

1. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, one in three women in Australia have experienced physical and/or sexual violence perpetrated by someone known to them.
2. Over the span of 12 months, on average, one woman is killed every week by a current or former partner.

3. Domestic and family violence is one of the primary causes of homelessness of women and youth.
4. 10 days paid DV leave can give people experiencing domestic violence an invaluable safety net as they try to get the help they need to protect themselves and their families.
5. Whilst Australian unions were the first in the world to secure paid DV leave through enterprise bargaining five years ago, the majority of employers still refuse to grant it.
6. In 2016 the ACTU and ASU, built the “We Won’t Wait: End Domestic Violence” campaign for DV leave become enshrined in all modern awards. Unions are demanding that Federal Parliament legislate to make 10 days paid DV leave available to all workers in the National Employment Standards (NES) of the Fair Work Act.
7. Many young women students and young people of other genders experience DFV first or second hand, with DFV disproportionately impacting upon those who are indigenous, low SES, queer, of colour, have a disability, and from migrant populations.
8. Many Liberal state and federal governments have widely slashed funding for women’s shelters and crisis accommodation, community legal services, and other support organisations.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns violence against women in any and all its forms.
2. NUS believes women and students experiencing DV and family violence shouldn’t have to choose between being able to financially support themselves and keep themselves safe.
3. NUS believes that women and students should have access to ten days paid DV leave, and it should be a universal right for all workers.
4. NUS understands the importance of women and people experiencing DV being able to access specialised support services which should remain in public hands.
5. NUS strongly supports the Australian Unions campaign “We Won't Wait: End Domestic Violence”; the ASU “No Profit from Rape” campaign to save 1800 Respect, and other union-lead campaigns in support of services and mechanisms for people affected by DV or sexual assault.

Action:

1. NUS will support and encourage the above campaigns including by helping to build contingents for protests and sharing any petitions produced by the organisers of the campaigns.
2. NUS will write a letter addressed to all relevant ministers and shadow ministers to call on the Government to support the introduction of 10 days paid DV leave.

3. NUS will also encourage them to fully support survivors of DV and sexual assault by encouraging them to deliver adequate funding for specialised services.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.15: Not My Minister: Michaelia Cash

Preamble:

1. Federal Minister for Women Michaelia Cash is not a fair representative for women and students who are women.
2. Minister Cash has publicly disagreed with the concept of domestic violence leave. This is detrimental to students because students who experience domestic violence would benefit from policies such as these.
3. Minister Cash has not been fulfilling the duties associated to her role as the Minister for Women, notably cancelling a meeting with her state and territory counterparts planned to discuss potential domestic violence leave legislation, arguing there were “no matters requiring ministerial decision”.
4. Senator Cash shamefully targeted unions like The Australian Workers Union and her office leaked information to the press before it did to the Australian Federal Police.

Platform:

1. Senator Michaelia Cash is not fit to be the Federal Minister for Women as she is not fulfilling the duties of her role, and not representing the views of her electorate. Students are negatively affected by her ineffectiveness in the role.
2. Senator Cash has proven she is not to be trusted with information that is pertinent to investigations being conducted by the AFP.

Action:

1. NUS will communicate this position to Senator Michaelia Cash.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.16: Sexual Assault on Campus

Preamble:

1. Sexual assault on campus is a prevalent issue that many women experience during their time at university.
2. University management bodies are often afraid to acknowledge sexual assault happens on campus due to potential public of student backlash. This means that sexual assault committed on university campuses often goes unaddressed, leaving many victims without justice.
3. Many Australian university do not explicitly have one central and public reporting mechanism for students who experience sexual assault on campus. Such a reporting mechanism is a crucial step for universities to address this issue for the wellbeing and care if their students.

Platform:

1. NUS universally condemns sexual harassment and assault under any and all circumstances
2. NUS promotes the establishment of centralised and public reporting systems of sexual assault on campus by universities.

Action:

1. NUS National Office Bearers will lobby universities on this platform.
2. The National Women's Officer will run a campaign supporting this platform.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.17: What a strange contraception.

Preamble:

1. Contraceptives are an important resource for students and all students should have equal access to contraceptives if they chose to access them.
2. The accessibility of contraceptives for university students can vary on their socioeconomic statuses, sexuality or other varying factors.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that all women should have equal access and the choice to use contraceptives
2. NUS understands the value that can be placed on certain student run organisations providing said contraceptives for free

Action:

1. The National Women's officer will encourage other women's officers, collectives and institutions to provide contraceptives in women's spaces on their campuses.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.18: Women's Officer Handbook

Preamble:

1. Women's organising on campuses is at an all-time high, these organising collectives provide support for women, survivors and those that have been marginalised by misogyny or white supremacy.
2. There are many women's collectives across the country that are underfunded and under resourced - these collectives require support from NUS.

Platform:

1. That NUS recognises the inherent value of women's organising collectives on university campuses
2. That NUS supports women's collectives in their activities on campus by providing much needed support and resources to run campaigns and effectively organise on campus.
3. NUS understands the difficulties women in leadership face and will work to ensure this difficulty is lessened by providing assistance with institutional knowledge and resources.
4. NUS acknowledges the importance of skill and knowledge sharing in supporting women and their collectives.

Action:

1. That the women's office bearer of NUS update and redistribute a 'Women's Officer Handbook' that will contain key resources of use as well as various contacts.
2. That this handbook will be actively redistributed to women's officers across the country in affiliated organisations.

Moved: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.19: Not One Woman Left Behind

Preamble:

Historically migrant women have been considered more frequently in terms of the government's population-building goals and ethnic affairs policies have rarely ever been orientated towards the needs of migrant women as workers

Migrant women are often some of the most undervalued members of the Australian workforce

Migrant women are often exploited rather than empowered due to a lack of understanding of labour laws and less knowledge of the English language.

Platform:

NUS recognises the great work of organisations like Asian Women at Work who fight to empower Asian Migrant Women through the provision of resources and assistance. This assistance is invaluable as it empowers migrant women to speak out and take action to advocate for fair and lawful rights in their workplaces.

NUS understands the intense institutional difficulties faced by migrant women in Australian workplaces. Often forcing women from migrant backgrounds to take on low paying jobs with unsafe working conditions.

Action:

NUS will write to organisations like Asian Women at Work and thank them for their tireless work and advocacy on behalf of women who often do not have a voice and often do not feel they have a choice but to work in an exploitative workplace.

NUS will aim to seek out and assist organisations like Asian Women at Work. Advocating and supporting any campaigns targeted towards young female migrant workers.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.20: Equal Pay Day is not Equal Pay Day for Women of Colour

Preamble:

1. Equal Pay Day is the day dedicated to raising awareness of the gender pay gap, it normally falls in April. The date often is supposed to symbolise how far into the year women must work to earn what men earned in the previous year, the exact date varies both by year and by country
2. Women of colour are still considerably lagging behind in wage growth, in comparison to white women, white men and men of colour.
3. White women still earn an average of 77c to every man's dollar, African American women earn a lower 64c and Hispanic women earn a meager 56c.
4. Gender equality will not be a reality until all women can benefit from gender pay equality.

Platform:

1. That NUS recognises that gender equality and the end of the pay gap has not yet occurred.
2. NUS understands that the celebration of 'Equal Pay Day' must be with the firm knowledge that there is a lot more work to do.
3. That NUS understands that women of colour are disproportionately affected by the gender pay gap.
4. NUS will not accept the gender pay gap myth that the fight for gender equality is rapidly approaching a successful end.

Action

1. That NUS will run a campus by campus awareness campaign to ensure that when 'Equal Pay Day' is celebrated in Australia, students are aware of the disproportionate ways in which women of colour are affected by the gender pay gap.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

WOMEN 6.21: Put A Cork In It - More Accessible Sanitary Items

Preamble:

1. Tampons and other sanitary items are essential item for menstrual cycle hygiene. They are often inaccessible and expensive on campus. It is important that these sanitary items are available at all times for students who need them. Student's are over paying lots of money for items which are necessity - it's time to put a cork in it!
2. Airports, shopping centres and bars have addressed this issue by providing sanitary dispensers, which are accessible at monetary value. While this is a fantastic idea, higher education institutions need to be taking progressive measures to ensure their students have access to these basic hygienic needs.

Platform

1. NUS recognises the importance of having hygienic products accessible to whoever may need them.
2. NUS understands that the financial pressures of students who have to buy these products.
3. NUS recognises that tampons, pads, and other sanitary items are a necessity not a luxury and should be viewed as so.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will run a campaign encouraging Universities and Student Unions to install free sanitary dispensers (similar to the airport ones, but free).
2. The NUS Women's Officer will conduct a report to give campus women's officers which includes:
 - a. The cost of installing sanitary item dispensers.
 - b. Where Student Union's can get tampons for free.
 - c. And anything else they may deem relevant.

Moved: Annabelle Romano (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Lois Villar (La Trobe University)

WOMEN 6.22: Fighting Misogynists On Campus: protesting The Red Pill

Preamble:

1. In May this year at USyd, the hard right campus clubs BROsOc, Students for Liberty and the Conservative Club organised a screening of the documentary The Red Pill.
2. The Red Pill is a documentary that looks favourably on the Men's Rights Activism movement. Men's Rights Activists (MRAs) are obviously sexist, misogynistic bigots who believe any step towards equality for women is equivalent to the oppression of the male population. They represent the hard ideological right. The presidency of Donald Trump was a boost of confidence to the far right everywhere, and it is not a coincidence that a few months after Trump's presidency begins that a screening of a pro MRA film is held on a campus.
3. The Red Pill screening event was another example of the growing confidence, organisation, and activity of the far right on campuses across Australia. It is also not a coincidence that it is at the University of Sydney that this event was held. It is consistently at the richest, typically sandstone, most prestigious universities that the far right have shown their presence. It is the wealthier sections of society that make up the base of the far right, and universities like USyd are a home to the sons and daughters of some of Australia's wealthiest.
4. Members of Socialist Alternative initiated a counter-protest event, and worked with a coalition of activists across USyd to pull off the counter-protest on the night. The principle behind the counter-protest was to not let the presence and organised meet-up of far-right bigots and sexists go ahead on campus without any criticism. And the goal of the counter-protest was to counter the vile messages of sexism and bigotry on the part of the far-right, with progressive messages of arguments for equality and anti-sexism. This was achieved exceptionally successfully on the night of the screening. Dozens of student activists chanted and gave speeches right outside the event, condemning the ongoing sexism in society, and rebuking the presence of men in 'Feminism is Cancer' t-shirts and 'Make America Great Again' hats.
5. While far-right organisers of the screening, and Triple J's Tom Tilley, whined about the counter-protest trampling the right to free speech - the counter-protest was a testament to the political right to free speech. Protesting and arguing against active sexism and bigotry is exactly how free speech should be used, and getting as many people out to join protests against the far-right is the best way to achieve this.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises we live in a climate where the far right is growing and racism and sexism continue to pervade society

2. NUS recognises that counter-protests to far right events that include as many left wing people as possible, and confront the presence of the far right with a left wing presence, are effective and positive actions

Action:

1. NUS will support counter-protests to far right events, and print materials for the counter-protest event if requested

Moved: Eleanor Morley (USyd)

Seconded: Lily Campbell (USyd)

WOMEN 6.23: Free child care on campus

Preamble:

1. The cost of childcare is a massive financial burden on working class women in Australia. It can cost up to \$36,800 a year after government subsidy to access day-long childcare in Melbourne. This financial strain primarily affects working class women and reinforces the systematic sexism and gender inequality women have to face regarding work rights as it results in many women being coerced financially to leave work and stay home to take care of their children. These impacts are exacerbated on university campuses. It is absurd to expect mothers to study while dedicating tens of thousands of dollars every year just to childcare. Childcare services barely exists on campuses and when they do they are usually inaccessible to poor and working class students. This barrier also contributes to locking working class women out of University purely for not being rich. Childcare was universally provided at many universities in Australia to all students in the past when the question of women's right to education was taken seriously and student unions fought around the issue.

Platform:

1. NUS is committed to fighting sexism and gender inequality and defending women's right to getting an education.

Action:

1. That NUS commits to running a serious campaign to protest the existing sexist childcare system on campuses and broader society and to achieve a free and universal childcare on university campuses.

Moved: Eleanor Morley (USyd)

Seconded: Lily Campbell (USyd)

WOMEN 6.24: Hillary Clinton and why power feminism isn't the answer to women's oppression

Preamble:

1. The gender pay gap in many countries around the world is, at present, the highest it has been in recorded history.
2. In addition to this, in both the US and Australia states exist in which abortion is on the criminal code, and in which women's control over their own bodies is restricted by the state.
3. These are just two examples of the way in which women are oppressed the world over, an oppression which student unionists must be committed to fighting. Taking this question seriously requires considerable discussion of what strategies can take women's rights forwards and successfully drive forwards the struggle for women's rights.
4. Hillary Clinton's run for the presidential US presidential election in 2016 was touted by some as holding the potential for a step forwards in the struggle against women's oppression. In addition, the idea that having women in positions of power will benefit women in general, for example having women CEOs or politicians, is one which is often referred to on university campuses. The key arguments that applied to Hillary Clinton and the presidential race were
5. That, as a woman, Hillary Clinton would be support 'women's issues', for example the gender pay gap, access to abortion, access to contraception and to cheaper sanitary products.
6. That having a woman elected as president would encourage other young women to imagine that one day they would be able to be in a similar position, and to hold loftier aspirations. Seeing a woman president would compel them to reject some of the more common aspects of women's oppression such as being socialised to be submissive and the gender pay gap.
7. These arguments are incorrect, as they ignore class divisions in society. Working class women do not face an increasing gender pay gap because society holds reactionary ideas about women, or because politicians and bosses are largely men. The gender pay gap exists because it is a mechanism for increasing profits. Because of this, it is enforced by women bosses just as much as by male bosses. Women bosses and CEOs make a profit from paying women less than men, and driving all wages down, as well as by keeping women from organising effectively in unions. Having more women in these roles does not affect the oppression of the women in these workplaces, or at a societal level. Instead, it just means there are a couple more women bosses & CEOs to actively enforce women's oppression.
8. Women politicians, just as much as male politicians, share an interest with bosses in keeping business profitable. Women politicians push for

business profitability at the expense of the living conditions of women workers, and are compelled to do this to maintain a competitive economy. Historically, countries operating under women leaders (for example Australia under Gillard) have not seen a reversal in the gender pay gap but an increase in disparity.

9. The importance of this class divide extends into other aspects of women's oppression, including easy access to abortion and contraception. For wealthy women (including Clinton) these things are already accessible. They have no interest in making them cheaper or easier to access. It matters little to them whether working class women are able to access them, and there is no reason to expect that any of these aspects of women's oppression will be lessened by having more women in parliament or congress.
10. In the 2016 presidential race, Clinton campaigned on the slogan that America was already great. For her, this was true. But try telling it to the millions of working class women who struggle to pay their bills or mortgage and are forced to work multiple casual jobs. Instead of offering anything to these people, Clinton opposed their demand for a \$15 minimum wage. Try telling the woman brutalised in the invasion of Iraq that America is great. Clinton crossed party lines in 2002 and voted to support the use of military force against them. Being a woman changed nothing about any of this.
11. Instead of fighting for more women to become part of the same layer in society that is responsible for the oppression of the vast majority of women, we should fight against this layer of people all together. Instead of fighting for more women bosses, we should fight against the gender pay gap which afflicts women workers and is used to drag men's wages down. Instead of fighting for more women politicians, we should fight against any attempts to curtail access to abortion, IVF, contraception- this means fighting against women politicians, for example Julia Gillard who pushed through cuts to the single parent payment. Instead of allowing women in power to get away with attacks on the vast majority by lauding them, we must participate alongside working class women and men against them.

Platform:

1. NUS is committed to actively fighting against women's oppression
2. NUS rejects the idea that the election of Hillary Clinton would have been a step forwards for women
3. NUS rejects power feminism as a strategy for combatting women's oppression
4. NUS instead looks to mass actions such as the Washington Women's March against Trump, and to industrial action, as a strategy for fighting for women's rights

Action:

1. NUS will actively take up the battle for women's rights by calling demonstrations around questions such as equal wages, access to contraception and abortion, and other similar issues
2. NUS will support any left wing protests or activism for women's rights
3. NUS will support any industrial action which pushes forwards wages and conditions in recognition that low wages and poor working conditions are a considerable factor in the continuing oppression of women

Moved: Emma Norton (UWA)

Seconded: Lily Campbell (USyd)

WOMEN 6.25: Back to the Backyard? No Way!

Preamble:

1. Every year, the anti-abortion group Family Life Australia celebrates the 'Day of the Unborn Child' in an attempt to gain support for a right-wing sexist agenda. On March 26 this year, members of the group gathered at St. Mary's Cathedral in the Sydney CBD to mark the day and to shame women who choose for whatever reason to have an abortion.
2. However, in New South Wales this annual gathering is not a protest against any law that stipulates a woman's right to abortion, for the simple reason that there isn't one. Abortion in the state is still in a legal grey area, with laws in place to prosecute women who choose to have an abortion, as well as the providers of abortion services. A government fact sheet baldly states that women "are not entitled to abortion on demand", that is, without serious medical justification. Earlier this year, the NSW premier Gladys Berejiklian promoted staunchly anti-choice Liberal Tanya Davies to the post of Women's Minister. This comes just a few years after the 2013 attempt to pass a 'foetal personhood' law that passed through the lower house, due to the insistence of both Liberal and Labor parties on a 'conscience vote' on the issue.
3. This state of affairs is even worse in Queensland, where abortion is legally considered a serious offence with a penalty of up to seven years in prison. The lack of legal protections of women's reproductive rights enforce a negative stigma around the procedure. In this climate, abortions can be difficult to access and can cost hundreds of dollars.
4. Despite 'feminism' being in the Australian mainstream and proclaimed by central figures in parliamentary politics such as Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and much of the Labor Party, women's rights and even reproductive rights have a long way to go in the country. Moreover, hard conservative positions on women's rights have been

somewhat legitimised with the ascension of Donald Trump in the US and his assault on organisations that discuss abortion access. With figures like Tony Abbott and Cory Bernardi, however, it's clear that 1950s-style misogyny has never gone out of political fashion for the Australian ruling class.

5. A successful counter-protest to the 'Day of the Unborn Child' rally was organised by student activists from across Sydney. Around 200 protesters gathered outside the church to contest the message coming from Family Life Australia.
6. This counter-protest put what is the majority political position in Australia, that is support for a woman's right to choose. The pro-lifers were forced to hold their rally behind the church, an illustration of the divide between mass support for reproductive rights and the conservative minority who wish to take it away.

Platform:

1. NUS fully supports the reproductive rights of women to have safe and free abortions at any stage during pregnancy.
2. NUS demands that abortion should be struck off the criminal code in NSW and QLD and in particular that the Labor party in each state hold a binding position for abortion rights.
3. NUS supports demonstrations seeking to counter the sexism of anti-abortion groups such as Family Life Australia, as an important part of the fight for women's rights that is ongoing in Australia.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Department will protest any events which seek to oppose a woman's right to choose
2. The NUS Women's Department will search for opportunities to protest against anti-choice groups
3. The NUS Women's Department will give resources to these demonstrations and publicly promote them through social media and press releases.

Moved: Emma Norton (UWA)

Seconded: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

WOMEN 6.26: Free Access to Pads and Tampons

Preamble:

1. For many women, euphemistically-termed 'feminine hygiene products' are a necessity of life. Pads, tampons, menstrual cups and other forms of period hygiene are required to participate in public life, including work and study. However, women are expected to fund their access to these products privately rather than having access to them whenever they need.
2. Recent calls to remove the GST from pads and tampons have been welcome. However, this can go a lot further. Currently there are companies that profit from the commodification of this basic need. This also means that women without the means to afford pads and tampons have to go without, as if these are luxury products rather than essential. Pads and tampons should be available freely through health services.

Platform:

1. NUS demands that the government fund free access to pads and tampons.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Department will publicise the issue of free access to pads and tampons wherever applicable, for example, through social media, in press releases and in other publications provided by NUS.

Moved: Shania Khan (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

WOMEN 6.27: Trumps Attacks on Women's Healthcare

Preamble:

1. The Trump administration seeks to undermine the rights of working class women at every opportunity. The latest attack on health care will disproportionately affect the lives of poor and working class women, reinforcing structural oppression.
2. Trump's changes to two regulations that allow any employer that claims a religious or moral objection to opt out of its obligations under the Affordable Care Act (ACA)'s "contraceptive mandate" that otherwise requires employers to offer access to birth control as part of employees health care plans.
3. This new policy allows virtually any employer or university to decide to yank contraception coverage from their employees or students.
4. 62.4 Million women in the USA access health care provided under the ACA.
5. A survey commissioned by the Planned Parenthood Action Fund found that: 55 percent of women aged between 18-34 had difficulty paying for birth control. By 2014, after the law took effect, fewer than 4 percent of American women had to open their wallets.
6. Those hardest hit by this policy will be poor women and women of color. According to a survey, 51 percent of African-American women ages 18 to 34 said they have had trouble purchasing birth control, and cost can be one of the most significant barriers for women in getting health care. In addition, these women too often suffer higher rates of chronic conditions because of systemic barriers to care.
7. Trump has emboldened Republican politicians to wage state-level legislative attacks on women's reproductive rights and has also given confidence to right-wing activists that target and harass women who use abortion clinics?

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the Trump administration's attacks on working class women set a dangerous international precedent to allow bosses and governments to take away the basic rights of working class women to access healthcare and have a say over their lives.
2. NUS opposes all barriers to Women accessing health care. These attacks are another way the Trump administration is undermining the already vastly underfunding public healthcare system.
3. NUS supports the resistance to Trump's draconian attacks on women and attests that these attacks are neither moral nor religious but another way of of privatizing health care in the USA.
4. NUS opposes the Trump administration giving bosses power over their employee's decisions.

5. NUS believes that access to fully funded health care is a right not a privilege to those who can afford it.

Action:

1. NUS will publish statements on its facebook page supporting protests and strikes opposing Trump's attacks
2. NUS will promote and support any demonstrations organised in Australia opposing these attacks
3. NUS will promote and support actions against attacks upon women's health care by the Australian Government

Moved: Shania Khan (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

WOMEN 6.28: The Women's March in Australia

Preamble:

1. Following the election of Republican Donald Trump in the United States of America, mass women's marches took place across the world in recognition that the election of a deeply right wing president would see a renewed assault upon women's rights. The biggest march saw 500,000 people take to the streets of Washington DC in protest. The protests were a defiant stand for women's rights, and demonstrators also took up issues of racism, police brutality and immigrant's rights.
2. In the face of decades of constraints upon access to abortion and contraception, as well as an increasing gender pay gap under both Democrat and Republican governments, these mass mobilisations ensured that Trump's presidency began amid a defiant struggle around the question of women's rights and against sexism.
3. In Australia, Women's Marches were organised in Melbourne and other cities in order to both show international solidarity and to fight against constraints upon women's rights in our own country. When left wing struggles take place in other countries, it is incumbent upon us to show solidarity with these. The mobilisations in Australia and around the world gave strength and confidence to activists in the USA.
4. In Australia, women's rights must be fought for. The gender pay gap continues to increase, and both major political parties have demonstrated their willingness to attack the ability of workers to organise in industries which are often women-dominated, including retail, hospitality, schools and hospitals. In addition, both Liberal and Labour have shown their reactionary approach to women in their

refusal to take abortion off the criminal code in QLD. This demonstrates the necessity of mass public pressure to win women's rights.

Platform:

1. NUS stands against Donald Trump and the right's attacks upon women's rights
2. NUS stands in solidarity with and supports demonstrations for women's rights both in the USA and in other countries
3. NUS recognises the necessity of protest movements in Australia against our own reactionary political establishment
4. NUS sees public, combative, activist campaigns as the key strategy for taking on women's rights.

Action:

1. NUS will actively look for opportunities to relate to mass sentiment against the oppression of women by both sides of parliament and by bosses, and will organise protests on this basis
2. NUS will promote and support demonstrations against the oppression of women, and will actively encourage students to participate in these

Moved: Shania Khan (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Athulya Jancy Benny (RMIT)

WOMEN 6.29: The Sexist Nature Of Birmingham's Education Cuts

Preamble:

1. Given that female university students are already disadvantaged within the higher education system, any regressive education 'reforms' invariably have a disproportionate impact on women. Already, women in Australia holding a bachelor degree earn on average just 58% of what men with a bachelor degree earn over a lifetime, due to a combination of the general gender pay gap (22.4 per cent or \$26,527 less than men on average, as of November 2017);(1) work interruptions due to childbirth and childcare; and the fact that women are more highly concentrated in casualized work.
2. This sexist dynamic is certainly present in the attacks outlined in education minister Simon Birmingham's higher education policy in the 2017 federal budget, as confirmed in a report by the National Foundation for the Australian Women—the Turnbull government's proposal to lower the HECS repayment threshold from \$55,000 to \$42,000 would lead to greater hardship for women graduates, as a whopping 62 percent of the additional 180,000 graduates who would be

required to start paying back their debts are women.(2) Furthermore, the federal government's proposed \$2.3 billion funding cut would almost certainly result in cuts to vital student support services, further compounding the economic stress placed on women students. Worryingly, these economic barriers could have the effect of discouraging working class and poor women from pursuing higher education.

Platform:

1. NUS doubly condemns the federal government's proposed attacks on higher education on the basis that they are not only anti-student, but also, sexist.

Action:

1. The national women's office in 2018 will link up with the education department to fight against the federal government's attacks on education, by mobilizing for the national days of action, producing rally promotional material that highlights the sexist nature of the education cuts, and encouraging women's departments around the country to do the same.

Moved: Emma Norton (UWA)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (UniMelb)

(1)"Men out-earn women by more than \$26,500: WGEA 2017 gender pay gap report", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 November 2017, available at: "<http://www.smh.com.au/business/workplace-relations/men-outearn-women-by-more-than-26500-wgea-2017-gender-pay-gap-report-20171114-gzl5jj.html>

(2)"Proposed Changes to HECS/HELP Repayment Will Be Particularly Harsh on Women", *Pro Bono Australia*, 25 May 2017, available at: <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2017/05/proposed-changes-hecs-help-repayment-will-particularly-harsh-women/>

WOMEN 6.30: Equal Pay for women now!

Preamble

1. On average women working full time in Australia will receive 17.3% less pay than men.
2. In Western Australia this figure increases, with a pay gap of just under 25%.
3. This figure jumps to 35% when part-time and casual work is included.
4. These economic inequalities accumulate over a woman's lifetime, with the gender pay gap increasing after age 20, and steadily increasing to 21% after age 45.
5. This makes it harder for women to retire and increases the reliance of poor and working-class women on pitiful welfare and other people to survive.
6. Women are undervalued in many industries, with female dominated industries having the lowest pay rates.
7. Women are therefore more likely to leave the workforce or work less hours in order to perform unpaid domestic labour and childcare.
8. All this is happening despite the fact that women are outnumbering men in Australian universities. Women attending university are feeling the attacks on education and welfare by the Liberal government even more acutely under these conditions.
9. The Liberal government has slashed Sunday penalty rates for retail and hospitality workers, which makes it more difficult for women to survive economically while at university.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges that the gender pay gap is putting an economic strain on women, and that this strain hinders the ability of women to pay for childcare, work fulltime, and seek higher education.
2. NUS recognises that employers and the government have perpetuated and benefitted from paying women less, and that this institutional sexism and discrimination towards women reinforces the structural oppression of women.
3. NUS condemns the attacks on education and Sunday penalty rates which are further adding to the financial burden and oppression that women face in the workplace.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will fight for equal pay for all women, and run campaigns and protests in opposition to all attacks by the Liberal government which directly affect this issue.
2. NUS condemns the attacks from the Liberal government on welfare and penalty rates and will challenge any attempt to defund essential services for women in the workplace or at university.

Moved: Emma Norton (UWA)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (UniMelb)

WOMEN 6.31: Supporting the Campaign for Abortion in QLD (Shame on QLD Labor)

Preamble:

1. Abortion is a right, and is a medical procedure that is vital to healthcare for women, or people capable of being pregnant.
2. In 2017, it is still illegal to perform or receive an abortion in QLD. It is a part of the criminal code, and carries a seven year prison sentence for both the person seeking an abortion, and the doctor performing the procedure (and can be as lengthy as fourteen years).
3. The criminal code has contained abortion since 1889, and it has been described by the QLD council of civil liberties as, "antiquated and draconian".
4. The illegality of abortion has a disproportionate impact on women and pregnant people from oppressed groups, especially Indigenous, low SES, children, and people living in rural areas.
5. Children By Choice reports that there are only two private clinics the entire state of QLD which are licensed to perform an abortion on persons under fourteen years old. As the law makes it very difficult to use the public system, this means that many young pregnant people seeking an abortion are seriously challenged in accessing appropriate healthcare.
6. In one case, a twelve-year old was forced to go through the Supreme Court to be allowed access to the procedure, despite several suicide attempts.
7. Up to 80% of Queenslanders support decriminalising abortion, according to most reliable polls.
8. The Women's Abortion Rights campaign has held consistent rallies to pressure MPs to pass legislation to decriminalise the bill. They have had success in mobilising hundreds at several demonstrations in 2016 and 2017. These have been vital to raising awareness, gaining media attention, and increasing the pressure on politicians to decriminalise abortion.
9. Independent MP Rob Pyne introduced two private members bills at the beginning of this year, including one to decriminalise abortion in QLD.
10. Despite Jackie Trad, a Labor MP, speaking at the rallies held by the Abortion Rights Campaign, QLD Labor acted to block the bill from being heard in the QLD Parliament. If the party had bound to vote "yes", the bill would have passed.

11. Labor instead promised to, “modernise,” QLD’s abortion laws in the event that they won the state election. Anastasia Palaszczuk, despite being the premier, has not followed through on this promise.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the right to abortion.
2. NUS is committed to fighting for reproductive justice and women’s rights. NUS is opposed to sexism, and the way that women and pregnant people are discriminated against in access to vital aspects of their healthcare.
3. NUS acknowledges the vital role that a vibrant activist campaign has had in gaining attention and increasing the pressure on the QLD state parliament to address the criminalisation of abortion.
4. NUS acknowledges that rallies are an inclusive way of introducing more people to activism, are empowering for the people involved in them, and are vital in shifting public opinion.

Action:

1. NUS condemn the QLD Labor government for a) refusing to bind to pass the bill proposed by Rob Pyne, and b) failing to carry out their election promise of decriminalising abortion in the event of a state Labor government.
2. The NUS Women’s Officer will assist in campaigns for abortion rights and reproductive justice, and play a leading role in mobilising students to defend abortion rights. This involves;
3. Creating and distributing material related to rallies, demonstrations and events in support of abortion rights. Materials includes leaflets, posters, etc.
4. Sending out press releases to assist in the building and exposure of these events.
5. Running and organising stalls amongst students to assist in the building efforts of activist campaigns.
6. NUS endorses the Women’s Abortion Rights campaign.
7. NUS commits to supporting the campaign for reproductive justice in QLD.

Moved: Kim Collett (Griffith)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith)

WOMEN 6.32: Women hurt by Centrelink cruelty

Preamble:

1. Women disproportionately suffer from Centrelink’s poverty wages and cruel application processes.
2. 94.7% of people receiving single parent payments are women. This in itself indicates the overwhelming burden women continue to face for the costs and responsibilities of childcare.
3. The maximum possible allowance for sole parents stands at 57% of the poverty line for somebody with only one dependant.
4. The Howard government reduced the payment for sole parents once their child turned eight, and made it a requirement that a single parent must engage in 15 hours of work per week once their youngest child turned six.
5. In 2013, the Gillard government announced that recipients of the single-parent allowance will be transferred to Newstart after their youngest child had turned eight. This amounts to a pay cut of between \$85-\$110 per week. 40 000 people have already received this pay cut, the majority of whom are women.
6. At the time, Labor’s Minister for Families Jenny Macklin justified this change as encouraging the participation of women in the workforce. The flexibility necessary to juggle childcare responsibilities means it is difficult for women with children to find employment. Available jobs tends to be low paid, insecure and highly casualised. The Australian Council of Social Services in their official evaluation of the 2006 Welfare to Work program found that dropping parents to lower payments in no way increased their employment prospects. Rather, it increases the economic burden on parents, by cutting their pay when their child reaches the arbitrary age of eight and is by no means independent.
7. Centrelink assistance for childcare is laughably inadequate. The average cost of child care in Australia is estimated at \$101.62 per day; whilst the maximum child care benefit allowable by Centrelink is \$205.00 across a 50 hour week.
8. There are negligible options for women to receive help from Centrelink in crisis situations.
9. Women seeking assistance from Centrelink due to leaving an abusive relationship, or preventing an abusive partner from returning to their home, are eligible for a paltry one-off payment of half their fortnightly rate.
10. The reporting requirements for Centrelink are punitive and intrusive; women who do not report every change in their relationship status to Centrelink face their payments being cut off, given a debt notice or being taken to court.
11. Successive governments consistently demonize welfare recipients; creating ever tightening regulations, reducing allowances, and

automating Centrelink services to make the process of receiving payments more alienating. While increasing the burden on single parents, the government is pushing forward with measures to boost business profits such as cutting the corporate tax rate.

12. Since the cut to single parent payments was introduced, Melbourne's House, Income and Labor Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) report showed that child poverty in single parent families has increased from 18% to 23%.
13. Sole parents are overrepresented amongst the homeless, accounting for 85% of those seeking emergency help through the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), 91.5% of whom are women.
14. The inadequacies of Centrelink make it more difficult for women – particularly mothers from low-socio economic backgrounds – to live in safety and be economically and socially independent, entrenching the disadvantage women face generally. This information shows the government would rather save money than improve women's lives.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that Centrelink services fail women, and the government is condemning many women to poverty and homelessness
2. NUS recognises that the inadequacies of Centrelink contribute to the structural disadvantage women face at home and in the workforce
3. NUS condemns any government moves to increase the cost of social services – education, healthcare, public transport and so on – recognising that these changes will disproportionately make life harder for women
4. NUS supports all campaigns against attacks on welfare and to improve social services by the Liberal Government, recognising that these are women's and students issues

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will actively support all campaigns against attacks to Centrelink, recognising that women need a better welfare system.

Moved: Kim Collett (Griffith)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith)

WOMEN 6.33: Cuts to education hurt women

Preamble:

1. The Turnbull government's proposals to cut funding to higher education, raise university fees and lower the HECS repayment threshold will disproportionately hurt women graduates.
2. Women are overrepresented in insecure, lower paid positions and face overwhelming responsibility for childcare. Increase in the cost of social services, like higher education, exacerbates women's inequality.
3. If the HECS repayment threshold is lowered from \$54 000 per annum to \$42 000, 62 per cent of those in the lower income bracket will be women. Research conducted by the National Foundation for Australian Women found that if the HECS repayment threshold was lowered, a female graduate earning \$50 000 per year would have less disposable income than someone earning \$32 000 per year.
4. Despite women comprising more than half of all students, according to the 2017 Workplace Gender Equality Agency report, the gender pay gap for recent graduates stands at 9.4 per cent favouring males. In 2011, women made up only 28% of graduates from higher paying STEM fields, whilst being overrepresented in Humanities degree with the lowest median starting graduate salary of all disciplines at just over \$40 000 per year.
5. If cuts to higher education got through, women would have to pay higher fees for a longer time at a lower income.
6. These proposals come alongside other measures from the Turnbull government that will make life harder for women. Changes such as increasing the Medicare levy and decreasing Family Tax Benefit A will disproportionately hurt women.
7. Cuts to higher education, in conjunction with other attacks, will make it more likely for women to live in poverty and harder for women to be financially secure and independent.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the Turnbull government's anti-woman budget, recognising that raising the cost of higher education will disproportionately hurt women.
2. NUS recognises that female graduates experience gender-based discrimination in the workforce, as evident in the lower pay women can expect.
3. NUS recognises that fighting higher education cuts and other austerity measures from the Turnbull government is an anti-sexist project that we need to stop women's lives from getting harder and worse.

4. NUS recognises that fighting to lower the costs of education and accessibility of social services is an anti-sexist project that will improve the lives of women.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will actively build campaigns to fight higher education cuts, recognising that a strong student campaign is needed to resist women's oppression.
2. The NUS Women's Officer will commit to organising demonstrations by printing leaflets and posters, staffing information stalls, make lecture announcements, writing and distributing press releases, mobilising students to attend and if necessary organising transport to facilitate attendance.
3. The NUS Women's Officer will support campus based actions against fee increases and course cuts in conjunction with organising federal campaigns.
4. The NUS Women's Officer will work with the NTEU and other unions in organising against higher education cuts, as these changes will affect staff and workers as well as students.

Moved: Emma Norton (UWA)

Seconded: Athulya Jancy Benny (RMIT)

WOMEN 6.34: Women workers and the penalty rates cut

Preamble:

1. The cut to penalty rates is one of the biggest attacks on working class people in recent decades. The ACTU estimates that this will affect up to one million workers in some of the lowest paid jobs in the country. The Fair Work Commission's decision could cost many low paid workers up to \$6000 annually. The Liberal government have been instrumental in pushing this cut with Employment Minister Michaelia claiming that the cuts are "fair" and "should be supported by the public".
2. This will particularly affect workers of oppressed groups. Women workers are some of the most heavily exploited workers in Australian society. On average, they earn up to 17% less than their male counterparts, a gap which is intensified in low paid and part time work. In addition to the pay gap, while women perform a disproportionate amount of domestic work, they engage in much less paid work. This further accentuates the effect that this cut will have on women as they work part time more often. To put that into a broader context, more than a fifth of all Australian workers are women working part time. In

regards to retail work, 56 percent of the workers are women and in hospitality, 54.3 percent are.

3. These cuts to penalty rates will worsen the lives of working class women who occupy part time retail and hospitality positions and will further the oppression of women in society in general.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the need to fight for the rights of oppressed groups in society, including working women.
2. NUS recognises that this cut to penalty rates will drastically affect the lives of working class women and must be reversed.

Action:

1. NUS condemns the Fair Work Commission's decision to cut Sunday and public holiday penalty rates for retail, hospitality and pharmacy workers.
2. NUS expresses solidarity with trade unions fighting against the cuts and will be involved wherever possible to push the fight forward.

Moved: TBC (Pending attendance)

Seconded: TBC (Pending attendance)

WOMEN 6.35: Michaelia Cash: Enemy No.1 of Working Women

Preamble:

1. The AWU has recently experienced a number of raids performed by the AFP, where paperwork and files were stolen and read in an attempt to bust 'union corruption'. This was orchestrated out of the office of Liberal Employment Minister Michaelia Cash. Right wing columnist Miranda Devine applauded Michaelia Cash's disgusting attack on unions, hailing her as a strong woman.
2. But better livelihoods and rights for women have never been won by relying on politicians. In Australia it has been the union movement that has historically been responsible for the biggest improvements in the livelihoods of women. From equal pay to the right to work to better and safer working conditions, it's been union struggle that has won gains for women in this country.
3. The Liberals and the bosses have been on an ongoing hard offensive against the union movement recently, seen through things like the slashing of penalty rates, trashing EBAs like at Murdoch Uni, and the Streets workers 46% pay cut. And this is all bad news for women, who are disproportionately affected by cuts like these.

4. But while working class women are facing increasingly tough times, ruling class women like Gina Rinehart, Julie Bishop, and Michaelia Cash have never had it better. Michaelia Cash has been orchestrating offensives out of the Turnbull government for years now to attack unions and ensure more money is cut from the incomes of working class people to go straight to the rich. A movement for women's rights cannot be one that welcomes women like Michaelia Cash, who make a living out of grinding the lives and interests of ordinary Australians, disproportionately women, into the dirt. Workers of all genders have an interest in fighting together against the bosses, and it's when this has been realised and played out in militant union action that gains have been won.

Platform:

1. The NUS stands in solidarity with unions across Australia as they face a torrent of attacks from the government.
2. NUS recognises stronger unions are a step forward for women's rights.
3. The rights of women are falling, this is due to ruling class women such as Michaelia Cash attacking unions.
4. NUS recognises the role of ruling class women in worsening the rights and conditions for working class women.

Actions:

1. The NUS will support active union campaigns that fight for workers rights.
2. The NUS will fund materials for rallies that are fighting for the rights of women.
3. The NUS will support and send contingencies to march, protest and rally alongside unions.
4. The NUS will condemn any attacks on unions

Moved: Melinda Suter (UMSU)

Seconded: Athulya Jancy Benny (RMIT)

WOMEN 6.36: Access to IVF:

Preamble:

1. Tens of thousands of women in Australia make use of fertility treatments such as in vitro fertilisation (IVF) each year. In vitro fertilisation (IVF) is relied upon by women who would otherwise be incapable of conceiving, for various reasons. This includes women who choose to have children later in life, and women with medical conditions

that impact upon their fertility. As such, access to IVF treatments is an essential aspect of guaranteeing women reproductive rights.

2. Such treatments are primarily provided by the private sector and run to a very high cost, with patients only receiving a partial Medicare rebate. The high costs of IVF form a prohibitive barrier to women accessing these treatments. The limited Medicare rebate under the current scheme leaves an out of pocket cost of some thousands of dollars for each round of treatment.
3. This leaves a system where wealthier patients are able to access IVF treatments with as much frequency as needed, while most women are priced out of the system and are either unable to access the treatments they need or are forced into difficult financial circumstances by the cost burden.

Platform:

1. NUS supports reproductive rights.
2. NUS supports a publicly funded and accessible health system.
3. NUS supports free and accessible IVF.
4. NUS recognises that supporting a woman's right to choose means meaning campaigning for women to have equal access to abortion as well as fertility treatments.

Action:

1. The National Women's Officer will campaign for free and fully funded IVF treatment options.

Moved: Melinda Suter (UMSU)

Seconded: Athulya Jancy Benny (RMIT)

WOMEN 6.37: International Women's Day

Preamble:

1. International Women's day is a significant date in the fight against women's oppression and in working class history.
2. The day has its origins in the labour movement. It was first established as International Working Women's Day, to celebrate the fight of women workers for their liberation as a part of the class struggle.
3. It has been marked by many significant days of protest and strike action. It was an important rallying point for women fighting for suffrage rights in the early twentieth century, and it was women workers striking and demonstrating for bread and for peace on the day which sparked the Russian Revolution of 1917.

4. This year, after the huge Women’s Marches against Trump which mobilised half a million in Washington alone, an international women’s strike was called. The strike was called on International Women’s day, and drew on the day’s militant traditions. The strike committee advocated a “feminism of the 99%” which aimed not for “a world where women become CEOs [but] a world where there are no CEOs, and wealth is redistributed equally.”

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the significance of International Women’s day as a day of protests, strikes and other political actions to fight for women’s rights.
2. NUS recognises the crucial role that women have played in the class struggle throughout history, and that to get rid of sexism, we have to fight against the oppressive structures of capitalism which systematically maintain sexism. This will require mass demonstrations and strikes of women workers. At nearly 50 % of the global workforce, their industrial power is a significant force.

Action:

1. NUS supports the calling of demonstrations on International Women’s Day which stand in its working class tradition – against the institutions of women’s oppression such as the gender pay gap.

Moved: Melinda Suter (UMSU)

Seconded: Athulya Jancy Benny (RMIT)

WOMEN 6.38: Responding to the Respect. Now. Always Campaign

Preamble:

1. The Australian Human Rights Commission’s national report into sexual assault and harassment on university campuses (Change the Course), released in August 2017, highlighted the scope and seriousness of the safety threat to students posed by sexual assault and harassment, and the urgent need for action. Universities Australia has pledged to take action as part of its Respect. Now. Always. campaign, and released a 10-point action plan in response to the survey, as well as establishing a temporary National University Support Line offering specialist counselling services. Whilst these measures are welcome, there are widespread concerns from activist groups, student unions and women’s officers that these measures are simply designed to deflect media

attention, and will not result in the long-term change that is so desperately needed.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that sexual assault and harassment are widespread nationally, and have the potential to affect every student on every campus
2. NUS rejects the idea that it is the responsibility of victims to prevent violence, or that it is acceptable for any student to study in fear of violence
3. NUS believes that it is the responsibility of universities to prevent sexual assault and harassment on campus, and that they should be held accountable now and always for failing to protect students
4. NUS believes that it is crucial to promote the AHRC survey and to include this valuable data when educating students on this issue
5. NUS believes that trans women, women of colour, LGBT women, and indigenous
6. women are more likely to experience sexual assault and harassment, and to have their studies adversely impacted as a result of this violence
7. NUS believes that there are specific institutional boundaries that deter victims
8. from reporting incidences of violence and harassment, and that universities across
9. Australia perpetuate this through insufficient reporting mechanisms that must be urgently improved

Action:

1. National Conference directs the NUS National Women’s Officer to:
 - a. Hold Universities Australia, and all its members, accountable for the results of the Change the Course survey, and for complying with the 10 recommendations made
 - b. Demand specific information from each university as to how they plan to change university culture and improve reporting pathways, and by what mechanisms. This should include specific plans for students who study off-campus or on placements, as they are disconnected from the mainstream university community and hence find reporting incidents particularly difficult
 - c. Demand that the National University Support Line, due to cease operation on the 30th of November 2017, be replaced with a permanently funded hotline that has the support of the RDVSA and advocacy groups

- d. Launch a national campaign to demand the expansion and increased funding of counselling services on campus, and the increased accessibility of these services to those who study off-campus or on placement
- e. Expand education of students, particularly first-year students, on consent and sexual assault/harassment in partnership with universities. This education should be evidence based, and in line with programs endorsed by advocacy organisations, such as the Full Stop Foundation's 'Sex, Safety and Respect' program.

Moved: Ella Shi (UMSU)

Seconded: Megan Lee (UWA Guild)

WOMEN 6.39: Including Non-Binary people in the conversation

Preamble:

1. Non-Binary and Non-Gender Conforming (NB) individuals are often shunned from women's spaces because they do not fit into the binary norms presented in society. Many NB people find themselves deeply uncomfortable in these spaces even though they are also oppressed by the patriarchy, and gender norms enforced by it.
2. It is further difficult for AMAB people (Assigned Male at Birth), because for a variety of reasons they may be cis-passing, and feel ostracised and completely unwelcome in these spaces, regardless of the fact that they too are affected and oppressed by the patriarchy
3. AFAB people (Assigned Female at Birth) also often find themselves uncomfortable in these spaces as well, because, while they have directly experienced the patriarchy, their gender is often forgotten and dismissed, especially if they are more fem/femme identifying.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises Non-Binary and Gender-Non Conforming as valid genders
2. NUS recognises the difficulties that Non-Binary people can have, particularly in regards to acceptance from all aspects of community
3. NUS recognises that the best way to have a quality education, and the best way to have access to education is when students are comfortable at university. This is particularly important when students are participating in activist groups such as women's collectives.

Action:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will work Directly with the NUS Queer Officer to investigate the best ways to make Women's spaces more welcoming to Non-Binary People
2. The NUS Women's officer will create posters and fliers that are to be handed out to universities for their women's spaces to show that non-binary people are welcome.
3. The NUS Women's officer will remind all Women's officers on a campus level through their emails, people oppressed by the patriarchy
4. The NUS Women's officer is to remind all Women's officers on a campus level through their emails of the importance of pronouns, and use of 'pronoun rounds' at the beginning of meetings

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

WOMEN 6.40: End to the Tampon Tax

Preamble:

1. GST (Goods and Services Tax) is currently not eligible to be applied to items that are considered 'necessary item'. However under this definition of a 'necessary item' includes products such as condoms and lubricants, while Tampons, Pads, and Pantyliners are considered 'luxury goods'
2. According to the 2016 Census held by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, there are currently more women identifying people in Australia than there are men, and a majority of them undergo menstruation.
3. For many people, menstruation is a necessary part of life, and it should not be a luxury

Platform:

1. NUS Acknowledges that not all women undergo menstruation for a number of reasons, and also acknowledges that one does not need to be a female to undergo menstruation.
2. NUS recognises that this extra tax that people who menstruate have to pay contributes to the systematic oppression of women, and does nothing to end the continued cycle of poverty that many of these people face.
3. NUS congratulates previous activists in their fight to end this unfair extra tax

Action:

1. NUS condemns both the Labor and Liberal Party for voting down the proposed amendment to remove GST from sanitary products

2. The NUS Women's officer will continue to lobby government to remove GST from sanitary products and remove their classification of "luxury goods"

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

WOMEN 6.41: It's Time To End Domestic Violence

Preamble:

1. 1 in 5 women in Australia experience domestic violence by an intimate partner. Women aged 16-24 are four times more likely to experience DV than the general population. This includes abuse that is physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, financial or otherwise. These figures increase if you identify across an intersection of sexuality, ethnicity, gender identity (TSGD), or faith. This age group overlaps with female-identifying persons attending university, TAFE or other tertiary education, so it is pivotal that advocacy on campus in this area occurs.
2. The Federal Government has established a national curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships and domestic violence, but this has received limited funding and tangible action in terms of roll-out across the country, and comes amid the context of cuts to funding women's shelters and women's legal aid.
3. Services for female-identifying students on campus experiencing domestic violence are either chronically underfunded, or simply nonexistent, with a lack of specialised trauma trained counsellors or dedicated trauma or triage teams across the board. This is despite evidence of domestic violence incidents happening on campus.
4. Despite concerted campaign efforts by the ACTU for a minimum 10 days paid domestic violence leave, we are still not seeing this realised in Federal legislation. Young women in particular who often rely on casual or part-time work are particularly vulnerable if they are not protected in the workplace or by financial support.
5. Furthermore, there still remains overtones in society about victim-blaming women when dialogue about domestic violence takes place, particularly in condemning "women who stay". Education and awareness around this issue must advocate that survivors are adequately supported both legally and economically, and combat the social stigma that persists. The overwhelming social, economic, legal, emotional and psychological barriers and trauma that surrounds fleeing an abusive partner must be recognised.
6. Often instances of emotional or psychological abuse are still not treated with the severity that they deserve. More must be done to ensure that all abuse is recognised as abhorrent and for the detrimental impact that

emotional and psychological abuse can have on someone, particularly in terms of mental health effects and conditions such as PTSD.

7. While the dialogue has come a long way, the conversation and actions must shift away from tones of victim-blaming and minimising the effects of abuse, to one of recognising and supporting survivors of domestic violence, and finding ways to empower women whether through dedicated programs, national campaigns and/or lobbying for increased funding towards services supporting women, whether that be on campus, in the workplace, or otherwise.

Platform:

1. The NUS stands by students who are impacted by the detrimental effects of domestic violence and will work to support them in their advocacy campaigns.
2. The NUS calls on the Federal Government to roll-out the National Curriculum surrounding respectful relationships in a timely manner and encourages an expansion of the program with increased funding.
3. The NUS calls on the Federal Government to couple their awareness advertising campaign with dedicated, increased funding towards women's shelters, women's legal aid and domestic violence call centres and charities, as well as trauma services on campus.
4. The NUS commends the campaign from the Australian Council of Trade Unions for guaranteed 10 days domestic violence leave.

Actions:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will incorporate into their advocacy campaigns moves to support those experiencing domestic violence. This will include:
 - a. Working with the ACTU regarding their guaranteed 10 days paid domestic violence leave campaign
 - b. Petitioning for increased trauma services on campus for those experiencing domestic violence
 - c. Lobbying to Federal Government to increase funding for services for those experiencing domestic violence such as trauma services on campus, shelter's, legal aid, call centres and charities

Moved: Kate Riggall (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

WOMEN 6.42: Women's work is everyone's work!

Preamble:

1. The Gender Pay Gap is an issue that continues to disadvantage women in the workforce. In particular, early childcare educators are paid one third of less than those teaching children just a few years older than them. Because it is a care industry dominated by women, their work is appallingly undervalued.
2. On Wednesday 8th March, International Women's Day, early childcare educators walked off the job as part of the United Voice Big Steps campaign. The walk offs took place at 3.20pm, which represented the time women in Australia effectively start working for free because of the persistent gender pay imbalance. The collective efforts of committed educators from United Voice made this the biggest educator walk off in Australian history.
3. Early childcare educators are paid around \$20 per hour. They deserve professional pay which is comparable to those working in non-female dominated industries with comparable qualifications.

Platform:

1. NUS commends the United Voice Big Steps Campaign, and congratulates educators who participated in the walk offs on March 8.
2. NUS stands in solidarity with early childcare educators who walked off the job, and supports their continued fight for professional pay.
3. NUS condemns the Federal Government's inaction on the gender pay gap, and in particular on early childhood educator pay, and calls on the Federal Government to support professional pay for educators.

Actions:

1. The NUS Women's Officer will work with United Voice and other unions in supporting campaigns for gender equal pay.

Moved: Kate Riggall (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

WOMEN 6.43: Towards Breaking the Silence and Ending Sexual Violence

Preamble:

1. In 2017, the Australian Human Rights Commission released their Change The Course report, from a survey of more than 30,000 students across

Australia. It shows that universities are failing survivors and students, and that they must take action on sexual assault and harassment.

2. For decades now survivors and student activists have been fighting to have their voices heard in the fight against sexual violence on and off campus. The national report shows that 51% of university students have experienced sexual harassment in 2016, and 6.9% have experienced sexual assault in 2015/16. Nationally these statistics increase for those sitting across intersections of sexuality, gender identity, ethnicity, ability or faith. Due to rampant social stigma, and a Universities Australia that sought to tightly control the survey itself, these figures could be drastically under-reporting the reality of the situation.
3. The 2016 NUS Talk About It survey found that 72% of students had experienced some form of sexual violence.
4. Despite survivors and activists advocating for decades now for action on sexual violence, there are still currently no standardised models for reporting mechanisms, specialised support services, or trauma and consent training. There is also little to no legislation that universities are bound to comply to in these areas.
5. 2018 will be an important year for advocates in this area. While universities never had any excuse to ignore and belittle survivors and activists, now they have no capacity to do so. Universities must take meaningful and genuine action for reform. Student activists must ensure universities do not become complacent in their actions through a series of mapping, working groups and talk.
6. The UNSW Australian Human Rights Centre has released their report On Safe Ground detailing best practice internationally and nationally in this area.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises that universities must be a safe and respectful place in order for students to complete their studies successfully.
2. The NUS condemns universities for not taking earlier action on the issue of sexual violence on their campuses.
3. The NUS calls on universities to reform their institutions in a meaningful and genuine way to tackle the issue of sexual violence on campus.
4. The NUS commends the work of End Rape On Campus Australia in their work on this issue.
5. The NUS endorses the Australian Human Rights Centre's 'On Safe Ground' report as good practice on this issue.

Actions:

1. The 2018 NUS Women's Officer will continue to advocate on the issue of sexual violence on campus and work with campus Women's Officers to ensure that universities take meaningful and genuine action.

2. The 2018 NUS Women's Officer will run a campaign to prevent sexual assault and sexual harassment at universities.
3. The 2018 NUS Women's Officer will work with campus women's officers, activists and women's representatives to coordinate a national response.

Moved: Kate Riggall (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Abby Stapleton (NUS Women's Officer)

WOMEN 6.44: More Student Representatives on University Working Groups

Preamble:

1. This year saw the release of the AHRC Change the Course report into sexual assault and harassment at universities. The release of this has come after decades of student campaigning on this issue, with student representatives becoming an intrinsic factor into the report being undertaken.
2. Student organisations are often the first-place cases are reported, and have the most interaction with survivors and student advocates on this issue. Student unions are unofficial front-line services, and have extensive experience on this issue just through their representational role. They often have the best knowledge of the pitfalls of universities, and have crucial insight into what needs to change.
3. The voices of student representatives are, therefore, a massive resource to universities who are aiming to change the culture of their universities for the better. If universities want to make lasting, organisation-wide change, student representatives must be in every conversation made in regard to this issue
4. It is also vital for our student organisations that we are in these meetings. Our student organisations have the most interaction with the student body, and, therefore, have a role to play in this epidemic. If the university truly wants a culture change, there must be a relationship between all arms of university life.

Platform:

1. That NUS believes that student representatives must interact with universities on issues of sexual misconduct and violence to ensure a well-rounded, inclusive implementation of positive strategies
2. That NUS believes that these student voices should be acknowledged, formalised, continuing at the university management level in regards to this issue

Action:

1. The National Women's Officer will lobby universities Australia to increase the amount, and in specific universities, introduce formal and recognised student representation on relevant university safety on campus working groups and networks
2. The National Women's Office will provide all organisations with information regarding how universities are interacting with student representatives

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Molly Willmott (Melbourne)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

WOMEN 6.45: Safety on Campus Progress Report

Preamble:

1. The change the course report this year highlighted an issue known to student representatives for decades, that there is a culture of sexual harassment and assault on Australian campuses that universities have been sweeping under the rug.
2. It is clear that universities have not done enough on the issue, nor enough for survivors. In fact, universities have demonstrated actions that go against its students. Whether that be in the neoliberal conglomeration of vital frontline university services, or a failure to act on cases at all levels of campus life.
3. The change the course report gave us leverage. NUS and its members have never had this amount of power to change the conversation, and we must act on this continually in years to come to push universities to shift cultural attitudes. We must be pressuring our universities to not only adopt the report's recommendations, but take steps beyond that to truly stamp out this culture.
4. We need to be reminding universities that this is an immediate issue, and that they cannot undertake superficial actions that hold no tangible power to shift culture. We must be loud and we must be critical, especially next year as the effects of the report are still being felt.

Platform:

1. That NUS believes that the issue of sexual misconduct and violence on campus must be acted on by universities in a timely and effective manner
2. That NUS believes that we must continue to push universities on this issue until there is a tangible, positive culture shift

Action:

1. The National Women's Office, in conjunction with the president, will collate a report into what universities have done/are doing to curb sexual misconduct and violence on campus
2. This report will highlight and rate the response of universities, and will also detail organisations that are lacking in action, the steps of student organisations internally, and aim to produce recommendations on how universities should proceed in the eyes of student representatives and front-line organisations
3. In doing this, NUS will not only seek help from campus student organisations, but help from other organisations and groups to write this report. These organisations are, but are not limited to, NTEU, CASA, EROC, The Hunting Ground, CAPA, and CISA
4. This will coincide with the one year anniversary of the AHRC Change the Course survey release

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive) on behalf of Molly Willmott (Melbourne)

Seconded: Abby Stapleton (NUS Womens Officer)

WOMEN 6.46: A Women's Day of Action**Preamble:**

1. The Change the Course report highlighted a nation epidemic of sexual assault and harassment at all levels of our universities. It is widespread, it is a culture that is ingrained in our institutions, and it must be stopped.
2. While universities have begun taking action, grassroots campaigning is still vital in ensuring that promises and recommendations are delivered. There needs to be a continual presence of student activists in this process. We need to be pressuring our universities from all angles to deliver, and we need to make sure that the student body remains engaged and angry in regard to the issue.
3. We need to be running actions publically to ensure that our message continues to be heard, universities must be held to account in the streets.

Platform:

1. That NUS believes that issues of safety on campus must continue to be acted on by both universities and student organisations
2. That NUS believes that activism plays a vital role in this change, and the public perception of these issues and must be nationwide and public

Action:

1. The National Women's Officer, in conjunction with campus women's/equality or like officers, will mobilise national actions that coincide with the one year anniversary of the Change the Course Report
2. In the lead up to these actions, the National Women's Office will disseminate a report regarding what universities have done (or not done) in regard to safety on campus in the response to the Change the Course Report
3. The National Women's Officer will call for the support of the NTEU, CAPA, CISA and relevant community organisations (i.e EROC, CASA, The Hunting Ground) in this action, and work with them to promote it.

Moved: Abby Stapleton (NUS Womens Officer) on behalf of Molly Willmott (Melbourne)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

WOMEN 6.47: Sisters doin' it for themselves**Preamble:**

1. While all students are subject to difficulties during their studies, women in particular are faced with additional disadvantages of harassment, assault and discrimination based on their gender.
2. In the majority of cases, significant gaps in university services and support are filled by student unions that already struggle to address the needs of students.
3. The presence of autonomous departments in student unions to address the specific needs of students is critical, and women's officers continue to contribute to safety and advocacy for women at universities.
4. Autonomous women's officers are usually the first point of contact for students to ask for assistance, making a significant impact on the experience of women who are already in a vulnerable position.
5. Autonomous women's officers and their networks built through autonomous collectives are an invaluable asset to students and student unions in combating the disadvantages women face and providing support.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students acknowledges the vital contribution of autonomous women's officers in providing a safe and inclusive student community.
2. NUS believes that the institution of an autonomous women's officer at every student organisation is a key way to address the specific needs of women on campuses.

3. NUS acknowledges the value of well-funded and well-resourced women's departments through which autonomous women's officers can run widespread and impactful campaigns.
4. NUS recognises the significant and ongoing contribution of autonomous women's officers in supporting women students on campuses.
5. NUS compels students unions without autonomous women's officers to mobilise collectives and networks to establish a women's department.

Action:

1. The 2018 Women's Officer endorses the institution of autonomous women's officers in all student unions, and will work with established collectives, campus affiliates and state branches to assist.
2. The NUS women's department will continue to strive for representation, advocacy and adequate resourcing for all campus women's departments.
3. The NUS Women's Officer will support campus women's officers and affiliates in lobbying universities for more substantial SSAF allocations.

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

WOMEN 6.48: AA, Captain

Preamble:

1. NUS aspires to create an inclusive and tolerant university culture for all students through adopting progressive policies. NUS should encourage all student organisations around the country to implement affirmative action policies, which would involve 50% of leadership positions being filled by students who identify as women.
2. While there is a high level of misogyny and sexism in society, women in Australia have more opportunities and access to higher education than ever before. Despite this, the representation of women in senior leadership positions is strikingly unequal with men outnumbering women in both the public and private sectors, as well in both houses of parliament.
3. Women are graduating from university at a higher rate than men, however they are still being locked out of the higher levels of the work force. An example of this is in the fact that women only make up 21% of directorships on ASX 200 boards.
4. Women even avoid applying themselves to areas and sectors with so little female representation.

5. Student organisations across Australia have a role to play in setting a standard for women's representation, though many do not meet the bar.
6. Women at universities need to be represented in their student organisations. In striving to do this we set an expectation of equal representation in other aspects of their lives, or after they have left university.
7. The introduction of an AA policy would promote the active engagement of women in student organisations and in the student movement.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the importance of creating an inclusive and tolerant university culture for all students.
2. NUS acknowledges the significance in implementing affirmative action policy to set an example of equal representation in leadership positions.
3. NUS recognises the entrenched misogyny present in the workforce culture and acknowledges that women do not adequately make up half of the working population at all levels as a result.
4. NUS believes that all student organisations should implement an affirmative action policy to set an example of equal representation in leadership positions.

Action:

1. The 2018 National Women's Officer will work with women's officers nationwide to encourage affiliated campuses to introduce affirmative action policy within their student representative roles.
2. Within all campaigns, the 2018 National Women's Officer will work to actively include as many women in the student movement as possible.

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

WOMEN 6.49: Universities are not our allies

Preamble

1. This year NUS has faced a significant amount of resistance from Universities Australia in implementing meaningful reform on university campuses.
2. Universities have been complicit in covering up incidents of sexual assault or denying ever knowing about a report. As a result survivors have been driven to drop out of university.

3. In many cases higher up university administrators have written staff and perpetrators letters of recommendations to be used as a case goes to trial. This happened during the trial of rapist Douglas Steele.
4. Universities have forever denied the existence of sexual assault and even with the release of the AHRC survey still deny that there is a problem, choosing to promote the lesser percentages pertaining to on campus incidents despite the fact that a university's duty of care extends to off campus events.
5. Universities will always seek to protect their branding and reputation above all else.
6. In the process leading up to the release of the AHRC survey on August 1st representatives from Universities Australia and university management actively sought to sabotage the design of the survey to ensure artificially low percentages.
7. In the lead up to the survey UA attempted to:
 - a. Have the survey release during student exams
 - b. Prevent student representatives from being briefed while Vice Chancellors received the report a week early. This was a clear attempt to make sure we were unprepared
 - c. Prevent NUS from being briefed
 - d. Prevent the campus specific reports from being released to the public
 - e. Poach the work of experts and researchers
 - f. Design the survey in a way which prevented students who had been assaulted off campus from participating
8. Universities Australia were only prevented from doing the above because NUS, End Rape on Campus and numerous student activists work together to instigate public outrage and pressure UA and the AHRC to change their actions.
9. Whilst there have been several individual occasions where student representatives have worked well with university management to achieve successful safety wins for students, as a whole Universities Australia actively seek to silence survivors and prevent reform. When pressured by UA university management will always fall into line.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges that when it comes to sexual assault and harassment on campus universities play a major role in allowing it to happen.
2. NUS condemns Universities Australia for covering up incidents of sexual assault and supporting rapists.
3. NUS acknowledges that Universities Australia will always fundamentally stand against reform which prioritises the needs of survivors.
4. NUS needs to work separately to Universities Australia in devising a campaign against sexual assault. Any collaboration between UA and NUS only betrays survivors and harms the movement.

5. NUS condemns Universities Australia's '10 point plan' as many of the recommendations listed are either stolen from others or out of touch with the needs of students.

Action:

1. In 2018 NUS will continue to work with End Rape on Campus to combat sexual assault and university inaction.
2. The 2018 NUS Women's Officer will run a yearly campaign to prevent sexual assault and harassment on and off campus.
3. The 2018 NUS Women's Officer will not seek to collaborate with Universities Australia as doing so would betray the very real experiences of university inaction for many survivors.
4. The 2018 NUS Women's Officer will work to ensure that any actions or campaigns made to preventing sexual assault and safety on campus are survivor centric.
5. The 2018 NUS Women's Officer will work with campus activists/student representatives/women's officer to formulate a national response.

Moved: Abby Stapleton (NUS Women's Officer)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

WOMEN 6.50: Stop sexual assault and harassment by staff at flinders uni.

Preamble:

1. Human rights commission did a nationwide survey in 2016 on sexual assault on campus.
2. The report found that over half of University students have experienced sexual harassment either going to or from University, at University or at a University event.
3. Residential college grounds and events showed particularly high numbers of sexual harassment and assault.
4. Almost a third of assaults occurred on University grounds.
5. At Flinders Uni in particular the highest amount of perpetrators particularly were members of staff.

Platform:

1. The NUS support survivors of sexual assault on campus
2. The NUS calls for compulsory consent training for all students
3. The NUS supports eliminating sexual assault and harassment on campus
4. The NUS condemns universities for being slow and unwilling in the past to end sexual assault and harassment.

Action:

1. The NUS women's officer will help coordinate between campuses on what their unis are doing and oversee the sharing of information between campuses.

Moved: Kathryn Venning (Flinders Uni)

Seconded: Olivia Savvas (Adelaide Uni)

Queer/LGBTIQA

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QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.1: Safe Schools

Preamble:

1. The Safer Schools program is one that was introduced in 2010 to Victorian schools, however in 2016 the federal government decided not to renew funding for it. Due to this by 2017 NSW, ACT, QLD and SA have ceased to be involved with the program, and created their own program, the Victorian Education department has taken control of it, and 54 schools in WA, NT and Tas have been nominated to participate in the Safer Schools Program
2. This program is focused on encouraging safe and inclusive schools for LGBTQIA+ kids. It allows teachers to pick and choose the programs they want to include, which allow them to tailor it specifically to each school, however it doesn't fit specifically into any school curriculum in any state.

Platform:

1. NUS is invested in the education of all students, regardless of sexual orientation, and gender identity.
2. NUS recognises the fact that safe, inclusive schools allow for the best quality education.

Action:

1. The NUS education department stands in solidarity of inclusive education regardless of one's gender or sexuality
2. NUS supports the involvement of the Victorian Education Department to include the safer schools program into the entirety of the Victorian education curriculum

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kirra Jackson (UTS)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.2: An End to Heteronormative and Queer-Phobic Sex Education

Preamble:

1. Education on sexual health has made great strides within the past years, however it is still largely heteronormative, and in most cases, young people are not educated on queer sexual health.
2. This lack of education can lead to many sexual health problems due to a lack of awareness and understanding as seen by the rate at which queer

women (WSW) use protection during sex. This ranges from 3.5% to 14.3% depending on their relationship status and is significantly lower than that of heterosexual women.

3. A lack of education not only endangers the health of queer students but also contributes to the othering of queer people and supports a culture where heterosexuality and cisgenderness is considered the norm.
4. Currently within the curriculum for people that are training to become teachers, there is a distinct lack of education focusing on how to teach sexual education that isn't heteronormative, particularly with the current debate surrounding the Safer Schools Program

Platform:

1. NUS is invested in the education of all students, regardless of sexual orientation, and gender identity.
2. NUS recognises the importance of accurate queer sexual health education.
3. NUS acknowledges that not all people that identify under the queer umbrella, want to be involved in sexual activities, and encourages the education of this fact as well.

Action:

1. NUS will continue to lobby educational institutions for more inclusive sexual health programs, as well as an investigation into the inclusiveness within the curriculum
2. The NUS Education Officer will investigate the inclusiveness of the curriculum for teaching degrees, particularly in regards to queer-ness.
3. The NUS Education and Queer Department will write a press release that supports more inclusive sexual health education in schools.
4. NUS will call on the Department of Education to improve training facilities for teachers to help teach students about queer sexual health in a positive manner.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kirra Jackson (UTS)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.3: It gets better campaign

Preamble:

1. Equality and freedom from discrimination are fundamental human rights that belong to all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or because they are intersex.
2. LGBTI students in Australia still experience discrimination, harassment and hostility in many parts of everyday life; in public, at work and study, accessing health and other services and securing proper recognition of their sex in official documents
3. NUS is not currently doing enough to address or recognise the very real concerns surrounding LGBTI mental health issues. Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people are three times more likely to experience depression compared to the broader population.

Platform:

1. That the NUS LGBTI officer/s run a campaign to promote the greater mental health of LGBTI students who currently face disproportionate levels discrimination and inequality.
2. That NUS recognises the difficulties LGBTI students face in being constantly harassed and bullied because of their sexuality or gender identity.
3. That NUS promotes the importance of the various support networks that ensure LGBTI students have vital structures in place to help support them.

Action:

1. A campaign around the 'It Gets Better' Project will be run by the LGBTI officers with material to be distributed nationwide

Moved: Taylor Ficarra (University of Technology Sydney)

Seconded: Beatrice Tan (University of Technology Sydney)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.4: Compulsory Queer Specific Mental Health Training for Student Counsellors

Preamble:

1. While students have many common issues that they access student counselling for, there are many more issues that are queer specific.

2. Currently, even though there is queer specific mental health training available, it is not compulsory for student counsellors to undertake.
3. This puts queer students at a disadvantage as they repeatedly have to teach counsellors about queer issues and circumstances instead of receiving the help that they need.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that queer students can face a variety of different mental health issues that are not relevant to the majority of students, therefore specific training for these issues is necessary.
2. NUS urges the Minister for Health, as well as Australian University boards, to make queer specific mental health training available and mandatory for all student counsellors.

Action:

1. The National Queer Officer will write a letter to the Minister for Health urging them to make queer specific mental health training mandatory for all student counsellors.
2. The National Queer Officer will write to all Australian University boards urging them to make queer specific mental health training available to and mandatory for all student counsellors.

Moved: Jake Cripps (LTSU)

Seconded: Lily Xia (RUSU) on behalf of Courtney De Wan

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.5: Allyship Training for University Staff

Preamble:

1. Queer students face issues and hardships often not faced by other students. These include issues around discrimination, violence, and interpersonal relationships amongst other things.
2. Definitive data shows that queer youth within Australia often face larger instances of mental health issues and suicide.
3. There is a shortage of training that would help enable front-facing university staff understand and deal with these particular issues.
4. Allyship training is a special form of training available in some universities for staff that helps them: become familiar with the diversity of circumstances and identities, create cultures of respect and understanding, learn how to provide referrals and support for queer students, and becoming a visible ally for all queer staff and students.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that queer students face disproportionate levels of mental health issues, discrimination, and suicide
2. NUS believes it is important for queer students to have access to trained staff who have a full understanding of these issues and can provide relevant support
3. NUS believes that allyship training should be made available to all university staff

Action

1. The National Queer Officers will lobby universities to provide allyship training for all staff members.
2. The National Queer Officers will also lobby universities to mandate that allyship training will be compulsory for all university counselling staff.

Moved: Jake Cripps La Trobe Delegate

Seconded: Lily Xia (RUSU) on behalf of Courtney De Wan

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.6: Marriage equality campaign 2004–2017**Platform:**

1. When then-PM John Howard amended the Marriage Act in 2004 to exclude LGBTI couples, it was part of a broader program of assault on the rights of the oppressed: Howard started offshore detention of refugees, he had just launched wars in Afghanistan and Iran, he refused to apologise for the Stolen Generations and he was preparing to launch an all-out assault on workers through the WorkChoices IR legislation. Howard was a conservative culture warrior committed to undoing any progressive gain made through social movements of previous decades, including for LGBTI rights.
2. When the campaign against Howard's ban on marriage equality began in 2004, it was relatively small with demonstrations only garnering a few hundred at most. At the time, only around a third of the Australian population supported marriage equality, while the majority of the country opposed it.
3. Yet over time, this militant minority persisted in taking a stand, calling annual demonstrations in August on the anniversary of Howard's ban, as well as other actions and demonstrations in between. The rallies got larger and in 2009, rallies in Sydney and Melbourne drew 10,000 people each. The marriage equality campaign persisted in spite of the commitment by both the Liberal and Labor parties when in government to maintain the ban on marriage equality.

4. By 2011, after years of activist campaigning, the tide had turned in public opinion, with a majority of the population now registering support for marriage equality. This followed country after country around the world legislating for marriage equality, soon to leave Australia in the dust on this question.
5. While the campaign featured many groups and individuals of different persuasions, important groups driving the activist campaign such as Equal Love and Community Action Against Homophobia (CAAH) never compromised their activism and never sought a strategy of softening their politics or rhetoric in order to appease politicians. The activist campaign for marriage equality, of which the National Union of Students was a part, always sought to call vibrant, proud, public demonstrations that could involve the largest numbers of people.
6. While it was a campaign for marriage equality, participants always recognised that it was about more than that: it was about beating back oppression and beating back the right in society. Howard banned marriage equality because he was a homophobe, not because he thought queer people shouldn't buy into marriage as a bourgeois institution. Activists in the campaign, especially the thousands of young, high school students over the years who attended the rallies, recognised that the marriage equality campaign was a way that they could assert their identities and stand up to homophobia and transphobia.
7. The activist strategy of the campaign was vindicated when in 2017, upon the announcement of the marriage equality postal survey, it was the rallies called by activist bodies like Equal Love and CAAH, with the support of NUS, that were the largest rallies for LGBTI rights Australia has ever seen. These rallies marked a historic moment in the lives of thousands of LGBTI people around Australia and contributed to the significant margin by which the 'yes' vote won.

Platform:

1. NUS congratulates everyone who took part in the marriage equality campaign over the last 13 years, especially Equal Love in various cities and CAAH in Sydney, as well as the trade union movement, other LGBTI activist organisations and individual activists who fought what seemed for a time to be an uphill battle to not only shift public opinion on marriage equality, but also keep the issue alive and on the political agenda. The campaigners for marriage equality have been a thorn in the side of both political parties and for this, NUS congratulates them.
2. NUS commends the role of marriage equality campaigners in calling the largest demonstrations for LGBTI rights that Australia has ever seen and NUS stands proudly by its involvement in this historic campaign for equality and against oppression.
3. NUS recognises that the fight for LGBTI rights is not over and remains committed to the cause of LGBTI liberation. However, NUS recognises

that as far as first steps go, winning marriage equality is a pretty good one.

4. NUS in particular congratulates and commends the work of the NUS LGBTI Department who, from the moment that marriage equality was banned, committed itself to the fight to overturn it. The victory for our side is a vindication of the approach of NUS LGBTI not only to campaign on this question but to pursue a vibrant, activist strategy that could involve the greatest number of students.

Action:

1. NUS LGBTI Officers remain committed to defending marriage equality if the right attempt to undermine it in any way.
2. NUS LGBTI Officers recognise the activist strategy implemented by past LGBTI Officers to win marriage equality as a model for running campaigns and commit to implementing it in future.
3. NUS LGBTI recognise the importance of running activist campaigns around questions of social justice and remain committed to running them through the Department into next year.

Moved: Chris DP (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Anneke Demanuele (NUS Education OB)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.7: 'Yes' campaign 2017

Preamble:

1. In August 2017, Malcolm Turnbull imposed a postal survey on the population on the question of marriage equality as a last-ditch attempt to appease the hard right of the Liberal Party who wanted to delay progress on marriage equality, whatever the cost. This postal vote was in defiance of the (a) the majority of Australians who supported marriage equality and (b) the majority of Australians who opposed a plebiscite on the question.
2. Despite its unpopularity, the postal survey unleashed one of the most important mass campaigns for LGBTI rights that this country has ever seen. Every city featured a rally or demonstration that broke the record for that city's largest mobilisation in support of LGBTI rights: 20,000 in Melbourne, 10,000 in Brisbane, 3,000 in Canberra, 5,000 in Adelaide and 50,000 in Sydney.
3. Almost every institution in society, including the National Union of Students, played a significant role in calling demonstrations, running campaign stalls, phonebanking, running social media campaigns and

importantly, ensuring that the majority of the voting population actually cast their ballots.

4. One of the most important organisations to play a role in the 'yes' campaign was the trade union movement. From the beginning of the campaign, the union movement came out strong with its 'Equality is union business' slogan and accompanying publicity material. The trade unions' intervention into the campaign rested on the basic union principle of solidarity, 'touch one, touch all': if the government can get away with discriminating against LGBTI people, then it can get away with discrimination against any other group, including workers.
5. Though the hard-right in the Liberal Party and outside tried to get a 'no' campaign off the ground, the strength of the 'yes' campaign and the weakness of the 'no' side's arguments meant that we were able to push the bigots back. Their rallies failed to draw significant numbers and while their rhetoric became increasingly and desperately vile, it was less and less to do with the issue at hand, i.e. marriage equality.
6. The 'yes' campaign filtered through almost every aspect of life in Australia over the last couple of months and it's a testament to the activists in that campaign over the last 13 years that we have a 'yes' result today

Platform:

1. NUS stands proudly by its involvement in the 'yes' campaign for marriage equality, a truly mass campaign that has involved tens of thousands of people across the country in support of the rights of LGBTI people to live free of discrimination.
2. NUS commends everyone who took part in the campaign, in particular the hard work of those who ran the campus stalls to sign young people up to vote, those who organised the public rallies for marriage equality, those who held actions and community forums, those who called strangers to convince them to vote 'yes' and those who in whatever way they have over the last 13 years contributed to shifting public opinion in favour of marriage equality.
3. NUS recognises that this historic campaign has been one that has involved the most numbers of people in support of LGBTI rights that this country has ever seen. NUS recognises that the 'yes' campaign has been successful in beating back the bigots in this country and given many within the LGBTI community a newfound strength to assert our rights and take on the repressive right in society.
4. NUS particularly commends the involvement of the trade union movement in the 'yes' campaign, highlighting that this is a question of basic rights and the freedom to live a life without discrimination.

Action:

1. That NUS as a whole celebrate its role in winning marriage equality in Australia for years to come.
2. That, in the event that the right try in any way to undo marriage equality in Australia, the NUS LGBTI Officers commit to defending marriage equality and beating back the bigots once more.
3. That, in return for the solidarity shown to us by the trade union movement, NUS LGBTI Officers unconditionally offer their solidarity to the trade unions whenever they defend themselves from attack or struggle to advance the rights of their members and workers in Australia.

Moved: Chris DP (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Anneke Demanuele (NUS Education OB)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.8: The Importance of Protest in the Yes Campaign

Preamble:

1. There has been a sustained campaign for equal marriage rights in Australia since the government outlawed it in 2004 under Howard.
2. This campaign has consistently had a focus on street marches and protests to mobilise supporters of marriage equality, rather than an electoral focus.
3. The consistent mobilisations by activists has resulted in large demonstrations during key political moments, when marriage equality has been on the agenda. Notably, this includes;
4. 2009, when 8,000 marched in demonstrations across Australia, in the first sizable demonstration for marriage equality since the ban in 2004. It was spurred not only by the ongoing protest campaign for equal rights, but also international developments, and the majority of Australians stating support for marriage equality.
5. The campaign of ongoing protests was vital to the changing attitudes of Australians.
6. This massive stand set the stage for large demonstrations down the line.
7. The 2010 federal election saw a series of demonstrations which mobilised thousands for equal marriage rights that pressured Abbott and Gillard, and kept media attention on the issue for the duration of the year.
8. Although the ALP refused to amend its platform on marriage equality (after explicitly denying it in its platform in 2007), Cat Rose (of Community Action Against Homophobia) said that some Labor MPs would state support in private, but decline to publically support marriage equality, as the party was against it.

9. The 10,000 strong rally at the ALP's National Conference in 2011 successfully pressured the ALP to amend its platform to support marriage equality
10. Shamefully, however, the ALP decided not to bind on the issue, but rather to delay equality by allowing a conscience vote, to avoid angering the bigots within their ranks and to delay marriage equality.
11. Equal Love continued to organise protests consistently, culminating in the 2017 "Yes" campaign in the non-compulsory postal vote on marriage equality.
12. This saw unprecedented demonstrations, including a 55,000-strong march in Sydney, 15,000 people marching in Melbourne, and 10,000 in Brisbane, as well as rallies in Adelaide, Perth, Canberra, and even regional areas who were inspired by the enormous urban demonstrations.
13. This has resulted in an outstanding win for marriage equality, 78% of eligible voters participating, and with 61.6% support in the postal vote.
14. Every state and territory returned a majority "yes" vote.
15. There were only 17 electorates in all of Australia that had a majority "no" vote.
16. Tony Abbott's own electorate returned a 75% "yes" vote.
17. These results are incoceivable without the 13-year campaign of protests and demonstrations that preceded them.
18. The success of the rallies in the "Yes" campaign created a furore in the media, as well as amongst significant organisations, such as GetUp!, Australian Marriage Equality, trade unions and the ACTU, as well as support from the ALP and the Greens.
19. Further, the rallies succeeded in drowning out and delegitimising the bigoted forces in the "Coalition for Marriage," despite over eighty multi-million dollar organisations uniting behind it. This demonstrates how thousands of people on the streets are stronger than millions of dollars in ad campaigns.
20. Incredibly, 68% of those who received a survey ballot responded, making the postal survey for marriage equality a more voted-in non-compulsory vote than Brexit or the US election.

Platform:

1. NUS supports marriage equality. Marriage equality is a civil rights, and is an important part of combating homophobia and transphobia more broadly.
2. NUS recognises that the momentum generated by the marriage equality campaign must be maintained to push against homophobia and transphobia through continued mobilisations.
3. NUS recognises the centrality of the rallies to the campaign's success in mobilising for the "Yes" vote.

4. NUS recognises the integral work the LGBTI department has put into organising demonstrations across Australia for marriage equality this year.
5. NUS acknowledges the critical importance of sustained protests and demonstrations, even during period where the struggle is not at its peak. There can be no peak in struggle if there is no struggle.
6. Further, NUS acknowledges the importance of a visible, large protest campaign in changing public attitudes and perceptions of issues.
7. NUS acknowledges that its greatest asset is its membership, and our ability to mobilise on the streets is our strongest tool in combating oppression and influencing policy.

Action:

1. The NUS LGBTI Office will continue to organise an activist campaign to push for LGBTI rights and against homophobia and transphobia.
2. Rallies must continue to ensure not only a bill for marriage equality passes, but in the event that it is passed, discriminatory provisions are removed.
3. Rallies must continue to build on the gains of the campaign for marriage equality, to push for equality more broadly, especially as attacks continue on access to education, welfare, healthcare, housing, and other issues that disproportionately impact LGBTI people.
4. NUS will organise and support regular rallies for marriage equality and against homophobia and transphobia in an ongoing way moving in to 2018 and beyond.
5. NUS will continue to utilise resources to maximise attendance and visibility of protest campaign for Marriage Equality, and other protests against homophobia and transphobia.

Moved: Chris DP (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Shania Khan (UMSU)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.9: Yes' campaign in the workplace

Preamble:

1. The Liberal Party's non-compulsory non-binding postal survey on marriage equality represented another tactic to delay changing the law to allow same sex couples to marry, and was structured in such a way to disenfranchise young unregistered voters, encourage a sense of atomisation, and keep the process within a purely formalistic framework. All of this backfired on the Liberals. Instead we saw one of recent history's largest struggles for a basic civil right, the results of

which delivered a huge blow to the conservatives who dreamt up the plebiscite in the first place.

2. A decisive element in this was the eagerness of the union movement to take up the campaign encouraging a 'Yes' vote. The readiness for trade unions and workers in all industries, from white collar occupations to construction, was a driving force for the historically high level participation rate and majority yes vote.
3. In workplaces all around the country, union activists and delegates passed motions in support of the campaign, encouraged collective actions such as group photos, wearing 'Yes' badges, checking their enrollment status together, hanging 'Yes' poster and banners in their workplaces, and promoted the rallies for marriage equality. One notable instance was the flying of a rainbow flag on a large construction site in the inner suburbs of Melbourne.
4. This flourishing of activity cuts against the stereotype of workers, especially those in blue collar occupations, being backwards and socially conservative. After a strong lead given by activists and unions, the cause of civil rights and equality was taken up with enthusiasm in many workplaces.
5. The campaign also cuts against a common trope that workers are too apathetic to organise into activity, or too apolitical to greet wider political questions with any interest. Instead it proved that many workers readily took up activity for a fight they believed in and thought they could win, that workplaces and unions are legitimate spaces to introduce wider political issues to debate and support.

Platform:

1. NUS understands the 'Yes' campaign to be a model for social justice struggles and campaigns against inequality.
2. NUS stands with trade unions when they encourage members to actively campaign for political issues in the workplace

Action:

1. NUS congratulates union activists and workers for taking up the 'Yes' campaign and commends the countless actions taken in individual workplaces to promote the marriage equality campaign
2. NUS calls for unions to continue raising political issues in their workplaces, even if they're controversial.
3. NUS will continue to support workers taking up struggles for equality.

Moved: Priya De (Griffith)

Seconded: Emma Norton (UWA)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.10: NUS LGBTI Student Days of Action

Preamble:

1. Throughout the year the NUS LGBTI department organise Student Days of Action for Marriage Equality across the country. These happened both before and as part of the Yes campaign, including the “NUS says YES!—National Week of Action” that happened August 14-18.
2. These protests were promoted across the main university campuses and mobilised hundreds of students, playing an important role in the broader fight for a Yes vote and for marriage equality.
3. These protests and actions showed the potential for and importance of NUS and student unions mobilising students to take part in broader campaigns around social justice issues.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the importance of these Student Days of Action for Marriage Equality and LGBTI rights in establishing and maintaining a precedent that students participate in the fight for marriage equality.
2. NUS encourages further attempts to involve students in activism and protest around LGBTI rights.

Action:

1. The NUS LGBTI officers will organise further Student Days of Action around LGBTI rights.
2. The NUS LGBTI department will assist in mobilising students on university campuses to attend these demonstrations.
3. NUS seeks to organise Student Days of Action on campuses around other issues that impact student in higher education, as well as broader political issues.

Moved: Kim Collett (Griffith)

Seconded: Emma Norton (UWA)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.11: Being gay is not a crime

Preamble:

1. It is a little known fact these days that male homosexuality was criminalised in Australia as recently as 1997. Tasmania was the last state to decriminalise gay male sex after a sustained challenge from LGBTI activists. However, the reform bill was passed by only one vote, and Tasmania up to that point had the highest rate of imprisonment for

consensual gay male sex of anywhere in the world, and the longest sentence of 21 years.

2. Moreover, it was a twenty-two-year-long process from the first state to decriminalise gay sex (South Australia) to the last. In Victoria, where sodomy demanded the death penalty as late as 1949, its decriminalisation in 1980 was harried by a loosely-worded clause that saw police harassment of gay couples well into the decade. Despite Sydney having the largest gay population, for a two-year interval between adoption of anti-discrimination laws and the decriminalisation act, being gay was not legal grounds for dismissal but it was a jailable offence in NSW. In every case except for the NT (which could see which way the wind was blowing), it required sustained grassroots pressure to pass reform laws, which often failed multiple times before being adopted.
3. However, people who had been convicted under these laws for have consensual gay sex can still have these convictions on their records. These convictions show up on criminal records when people are applying for jobs (a repressive but increasingly common practice), which gives greater scope for discrimination and stigma towards gay people.
4. It was only this year in Queensland that historical convictions were expunged, and it was only in 2014 when the Victorian parliament passed the first such law. Originally, this was seen as a non-issue since minor incursions are considered ‘spent’ ten years on from conviction and therefore gay people are not legally obliged to disclose them. Victoria though did not have a ‘spent convictions’ allowance and so discrimination from past convictions could still have a great impact on gay men. Gay sex convictions could be revealed through a number of avenues, for example through teaching, bus, taxi, police, prison and health employment processes.
5. Expunging these convictions from the criminal record is an important step in recognising the historic injustice that gay people faced in Australia and is a testament to activist pressure on the backwards elite that still makes up a hefty part of the Australian ruling class. Similarly, the Victorian and Tasmanian governments’ apology to those convicted is a welcome step. In light of the recent campaign for marriage equality during the postal survey, it’s worth reflecting on the struggles of LGBTI people in the past. However, there are still many past convictions to be overturned in South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. It will take more pressure from activists for this to be achieved.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the significance of the expungement of convictions for homosexuality as a result of grassroots activist pressure.

2. NUS demands that all remaining historic convictions for consensual adult gay male sex be overturned without delay.

Action:

1. The NUS LGBTI Department will campaign for any remaining historic convictions for consensual adult gay male sex to be overturned.
2. The NUS LGBTI Department will draw attention where possible to the historic fight for gay rights in Australia and the continuing injustice towards LGBTI people.

Moved: Melinda Suter (UMSU)

Seconded: Elliott Downes (La Trobe)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.12: No Pride in Detention

Preamble:

1. There is a reason Trump looked at Turnbull whilst discussing refugees and said, 'you're worse than me'. Australia has reached global notoriety for its extreme and brutal refugee policy. Both parties, Labor and Liberal, insist on placing refugees in barbaric concentration camps, claiming it keeps Australia safe. By putting refugees in sordid camps, the Australian state is sending a clear message that asylum seekers are not welcome.
2. Earlier this year Malcolm Turnbull touted himself as the bastion of rationality, equality, and fairness when he gave vocal support to the 'Yes' vote for the marriage equality postal survey. There are a million and one ways the hypocrisy of Turnbull saying he stands for equality could be revealed. But one particularly glaring way is that while advocating for marriage equality, the Liberal government was overseeing the imprisonment of around 20 gay refugees in a country where homosexuality is illegal. But the fact alone that the government is more than happy to deny refugees asylum and instead lock them in offshore torture camps, is proof enough that Turnbull's talk of equality is bulls***. For the Liberals, and Labor too, refugees do not deserve an ounce of dignity, humanity, or the most basic of human rights.
3. Politicians recently have scrambled over themselves to prove how much they adore the LGBTI community. But the same semblance of respect and concern is not meted out to refugees. The Liberal party nor the Labor party have made one move towards undoing the torture that refugees face under Australia's immigration law. The politicians complicit and active in Australia's torturous refugee policy cannot be seen in any way to be friends or allies of the oppressed LGBTI

community. The governments that denied us marriage equality for so long, are the same ones that continued a staunch commitment to the most racist and barbaric of immigration policies. Our fight for equality for one group cannot be built at the expense of another. What good is a commitment to equal LGBTI civil rights, when they deny basic rights to others.

4. Solidarity has a proud traceable history in LGBTI movements of the past, and that must continue to be a principle of our fight today. We've just won marriage equality. Now that we've clawed one victory out of the hands of these opportunist, racist, politicians, let's fight for another to bring refugees here and let them stay.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises it has been a key priority of Australian governments for decades to deny refugees basic rights
2. NUS recognises the hypocrisy in the Liberal and Labor party who claim to care for LGBTI issues and stand for equality when their policy oversees the torture of LGBTI and straight refugees
3. NUS demands the refugees on Manus and Nauru be removed from their torture camps, flown here, and be settled in Australia.

Action:

1. NUS will campaign to end the torture of refugees and bring them here
2. The NUS will endorse protests for refugee rights
3. The NUS will provide material to build actions for refugee actions (posters, fliers, banners, etc)

Moved: Melinda Suter (UMSU)

Seconded: Elliott Downes (La Trobe)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.13: Lift the blood donor ban on gay men

Preamble:

1. Currently in Australia men who have had sexual contact with other men within the last 12 months cannot donate blood. This is regardless of practicing safe sex, getting tested regularly or if they are in monogamous relationships.
2. This ban is regulated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), and is implemented by the Australian Red Cross Blood Service. There are not the same restrictions for other donor agencies. For example the Organ and Tissue Authority say that sexual orientation is not a factor when donating organs, though medical history is considered.

3. The law was introduced in 1984 as a response to widespread fear around the AIDS crisis. At the time when health organisations and politicians had completely failed to recognise or acknowledge the threat that HIV placed early on. The blood donor ban was a political act designed to appear to be doing something about the AIDS crisis, while furthering homophobia rather than helping the oppressed.
4. Today there are less than 30,000 cases of HIV in Australia which is one of the lowest rates in the world.
5. The Red Cross has said “there is concern that deferral policies stigmatise groups of individuals as being 'unclean' and 'less worthy'.”
6. The 12 month deferral period is not required to test blood. There is technology which is able to detect STIs within weeks, and in no longer than three months.
7. The ban on gay men is perpetuating the stereotype that all gay sex is a health risk, and all heterosexual sex is safe. The waiting period is also unenforceable.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the ban on blood donation as a homophobic regulation
2. NUS opposes all forms of legal discrimination that LGBTI people face

Action:

1. NUS National LGBTI office bearers will continue to protest for LGBTI rights and full equality, including the right of gay men to donate blood.

Moved: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

Seconded: Elliott Downes (La Trobe)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.14: Preferred names policy

Preamble:

1. Many universities in Australia still lack a preferred name option in the process of enrolment
2. This has a negative impact on transgender students who are forced to have their deadname used during rollcalls and in student emails
3. Introducing a preferred name option in the enrolment process which can be changed at any time would be the most simple and respectful way for transgender students to be referred to be their name of choice

Platform:

1. NUS stands with and supports all transgender students as they partake in university study and beyond
2. NUS opposed systemic transphobia in all forms

Action:

1. NUS will determine which universities currently offer a preferred name option and make this public
2. NUS will work to ensure that those universities without a preferred name option incorporates one into their enrolment process and allow for students to change their name online at any time

Moved: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

Seconded: Shania Khan (UMSU)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.15: F* Milo Yiannopoulos’ Homophobia and Transphobia**

Preamble:

1. Gay alt-right serial bigot Milo Yiannopolous is a disgusting homophobe and transphobe
2. Milo has parroted some of the most grotesque homophobic slanders that are perpetrated in our society against LGBTI people. He has publicly linked homosexuality to pedophilia by describing child sexual abuse as a normal “coming of age” relationship “in the homosexual world.” In October 2015, Milo publicly stated on the Joe Regan podcast that he would ‘cure’ his homosexuality if he could. He referred to homosexuality as “aberrant” and “something mother nature does on the fringes.” In October 2017, he began selling T-shirts online bearing the slogan “Lesbians aren’t real” and his website stated that “Lesbians aren’t real, they are just (even more) confused straight women!” Another T-shirt sold by Milo has “STOP BEING GAY” emblazoned on it.
3. In October 2016, as part of his disgustingly named “Dangerous Faggot” tour, Milo delivered a transphobic rant at the University of Delaware where he claimed trans people were “gay men dressing up for attention” and “mentally ill.” He labelled them “mutilated trannies” who “can never be women, or men.” During the address, he encouraged support for anti-trans bathroom laws and for dropping the “T” from “LGBT”. He egged on his audience to “Never feel bad for mocking a transgender person... it is our job to point out their absurdity, to not make the problem worse by pretending they are normal.”
4. In the lead-up to his 2017 Australian speaking tour, Milo came out publicly in support of the No campaign against marriage equality and

claimed that the granting of marriage rights to LGBTI people would be an attack on “religious freedoms.”

5. Milo has employed his disingenuous concern for LGBTI people to drive vicious hatred against Muslims, stating in a 2016 interview that “as a gay man, I am terrified by the prospect of mass Muslim immigration” and described homophobia as “mainstream Muslim culture.” This rhetoric can only serve to divide and pit two oppressed groups against each other and undermine solidarity amongst the oppressed.
6. In every instance, Milo has proven himself to be an enemy of LGBTI people. His identity as a gay man has been used by himself and the far right more broadly, to obscure and deflect criticism away from their far right, racist and bigoted politics.
7. The vile politics of the alt right and the movement they are attempting to build aim to intensify oppression in our society and undermine collective solidarity amongst workers, students and the oppressed. For these reasons, Milo Yiannopolous and the alt right deserve nothing but contempt and active opposition from every union - including the National Union of Students.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students stands firmly opposed to all forms of bigotry.
2. The National Union of Students stands firmly opposed to homophobia and transphobia, regardless of the identity of those who perpetrate it.
3. The National Union of Students rejects and condemns the use of LGBTI issues to stoke Islamophobia and racism.
4. The National Union of Students defends the right to protest against bigotry.
5. The National Union of Students defends protests as an exercise of free speech.

Action:

1. Should Milo Yiannopolous return to Australia in the future, the National LGBTI Officers, the National Ethnocultural Officer and the National Womens’ Officer will collaborate with activists around the country to organise public demonstrations against Milo in every major city where he speaks.
2. These demonstrations against Milo Yiannopolous will be endorsed, promoted and supported by all departments of the National Union of Students and its State branches.
3. Should Milo return, the LGBTI Officers and the National President will issue joint press releases condemning Milo Yiannopolous’ bigotry and defending the right of students to protest against him.
4. The National Union of Students will endorse and support future protests against the alt-right in Australia.

Moved: Elliott Downes (La Trobe)

Seconded: Shania Khan (UMSU)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.16: Overturn Gay Panic Defence in South Australia

Preamble:

1. South Australia is now the only state in the country where the Gay Panic Defence can still be used in Court.
2. The Gay Panic Defence is a defence where the charge of murder can be downgraded to manslaughter, if it is claimed that the victim made homosexual advances on the murderer.
3. In 2016 an investigation into the NSW police force found that between the 1970s and 1990s, as many as 88 deaths in Sydney may have been homophobic hate murders. These cases were concluded to be suicides, accidents or left unsolved until the investigation. Most of these cases happened at “gay bashes” or places that men would go to meet other gay men, and all of them were not properly investigated by police. This reveals that the rate of homophobic hate crimes is likely to be far higher than previously thought.
4. The extent of the findings of the investigation in NSW shows that gay bashings that didn’t result in death would have been even more common, and that there was almost defiantly similar things happening in other states.
5. Homophobic hate crimes are also very underreported, because victims would be scared to go to the police. Homosexuality was illegal across Australia until South Australia was the first state to decriminalised it in 1975. It was still illegal in Tasmania until 1997. Not only did people fear being charged with homosexuality, but it was often the police themselves that were responsible for the bashings. This was the case for Alan Rosendale who was almost killed at a gay beat in Sydney in 1989. Another man saw the attack and copied down the number plate of the vehicle that the attackers drove, which was later shown to be an unmarked police car. Other reports show that it was common for groups of undercover police to go gay bashes to entrap and attack gay men.
6. Violence towards LGBTI is an ongoing problem. 62% of LGBTI people have experienced homophobic abuse, and 18% of LGBTI people have been physically attacked. Cases of homophobic abuse is also underreported because victims fear of experiencing further abuse if they complain. Homophobic abuse results in a suicide rate for LGBTI people that is 14 times higher than the suicide rate of the general population.

7. The last time the Gay Panic defence was successfully used was in 2010 by Jason Pearce and Richard Meerdrink. They were charged with manslaughter for beating Wayne Ruks to death after he hit on one of them.
8. The defence was last used in South Australia in the March 2017 in the retrial of Michael Lindsey, who stabbed Andrew Negre 25 times for being gay.
9. Violence towards LGBTI people has a long history of being reinforced and legitimised by the Australian state, and the Australian police. Gay Panic Defence continues this legacy of giving legal and moral cover for the worst forms of homophobic abuse.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises that someone hitting on you is not an excuse to murder them.
2. The NUS recognises that the Gay Panic Defence is a homophobic law, that justifies and excuses violence towards LGBTI people
3. The NUS calls on the government of South Australia to amend the legislation, to ensure that the defence cannot be used again.
4. The NUS opposes the Australian states role in legitimising and defending homophobic abuse.

Action:

1. The NUS LGBTI officers will support campaigns against the use of the Gay Panic Defence.
2. The NUS LGBTI officers will support progressive campaigns for LGBTI law reform.
3. The NUS LGBTI officers will support protests against the Gay Panic Defence, including calling demonstrations against it.

Moved: Elliott Downes (La Trobe)

Seconded: Lauren Saunders (NUS queer Ob)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.17: End LGBTI Homelessness Now!

Preamble:

1. Most students face precarious living conditions with a seriously inadequate welfare system, high unemployment, and increasing university fees. The Liberal's recent attacks to higher education and welfare exacerbate this.
2. LGBTI students are disproportionately affected by this. As a result of widespread homophobia and transphobia, LGBTI people are more likely to be kicked out of home or discriminated against at work.
3. Naturally, this translates into higher rates of homelessness among LGBTI people.
4. Key to undermining LGBTI oppression is fighting for increased funding to welfare, free and accessible education, and against workplace discrimination.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the Liberal's recent attacks on higher education and welfare.
2. NUS recognises how important increased welfare, education and housing services are to materially supporting LGBTI people.
3. NUS fights against any form of workplace discrimination against LGBTI people.

Action:

1. NUS LGBTI Office Bearers in 2017 will campaigns around issues relating to LGBTI homelessness.

Moved: Chris DP (NUS Queer ob)

Seconded: Lauren Saunders (NUS Queer ob)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.18: It's a YES! What now?

Preamble:

1. In light of the recent yes response (61.6%) it is clear that Australia wants marriage equality, showing that a positive and loving campaign can win over hate and discrimination. Unfortunately, and despite the outcome, this campaign wasn't won without suffering.
2. This unnecessary and non-binding postal survey hurt the LGBTQI community; forcing people to have painful and possibly harmful conversations with friends and family, facing broadcasted

discrimination, and even the mere fact that they had to prove to the entirety of Australia that queer is valid.

Platform:

1. NUS embraces and endorses the yes vote.
2. NUS understands that the process of the plebiscite was unnecessary and harmful to the LGBTQI community.

Action:

1. NUS takes a picture on conference floor to show solidarity with the LGBTQI community, to post on social media.
2. NUS calls upon all federal members of parliament to pass marriage equality legislation.
3. NUS calls on the 2018 NUS Queer Officers to fight for this change through protest and lobbying.
4. NUS recognises that this is a student issue and will ensure that all affiliated student unions are active in the fight for marriage equality.

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.19: That's not my name!

Preamble:

1. In universities across Australia it can still be a very difficult process to change your name and gender from what you initially stated upon application, or have it differ from what is written on your birth certificate.
2. This can be extremely damaging to those in the LGBTQI community who do not identify with what is stated on their birth certificates or the same way they did in the past.
3. It is time that universities take necessary steps in making preferred-name changes, and giving non-gender specific options when enrolling, as easy and stress free as possible, allowing students to make the changes they need without struggle, and without the necessity of physical changes to their birth certificate.

Platform:

1. NUS understands the importance of transgender, intersex, and non-binary people being recognised as who they are.

2. NUS recognises the importance of universities giving the option for name and gender changes for their students upon enrollment and at any point in their degree.

Action:

1. NUS will work alongside student unions to put pressure on universities who do not have a process in place for student's to change their names and gender identity.
2. NUS will run a campaign urging universities to make these changes without delay.

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.20: Don't forget the 'B' in LGBTQI

Preamble:

1. The LGBTQI community is meant to be a safe place for all who identify within it, yet all too often bisexual identifying people are considered "not gay enough" for queer spaces.
2. Bisexual people face discrimination within the queer community and outside of it, a problem that we should all recognise and be united on.
3. The biphobia that runs rampant within the LGBTQI community is not okay and is divisive where we should be united.
4. This is especially rampant within student life as the misconceptions of bisexuality cloud the validity of young people's sexual orientations and experiences.

Platform:

1. NUS understands that biphobia is legitimate and wrong and will not tolerate it in any space.
2. NUS recognises the struggles that bisexual identifying people experience inside and outside of the LGBTQI community.

Action:

1. The 2018 NUS Queer Officers will work alongside student union queer officers to ensure that their safe spaces are inclusive for all of those in the LGBTQI community.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.21: More colour more pride!

Preamble:

1. In this years pride month the city of Philadelphia in the USA added black and brown to the rainbow flag, flying it out the front of its City Hall. The reason behind it coming from the “More Color More Pride” campaign and it was to represent the inclusion of POC in the LGBTQI community.
2. The response to this was largely controversial with many people calling “reverse racism” and the extra colours unnecessary due to the flag already being a symbol of unity.
3. These responses have showed how there is still divisiveness and discrimination within the LGBTQI community itself.
4. The extra colours on the flag are meant as a push for people to start listening to the POC of the LGBTQI community and to understand their struggle and to listen and find a way to help eradicate these issues.

Platform:

1. NUS embraces and endorses the addition of the black and brown stripe on the rainbow flag.
2. NUS understands the struggles more widely faced by queer POC.
3. NUS supports an intersectional and inclusive approach to queer activism.

Action:

1. NUS will embrace the usage of the rainbow flag with the addition of the brown and black stripe.
2. NUS will support the “More Color More Pride” campaign being held by the Philadelphia Office of LGBT Affairs.
3. NUS will ensure that all campaigns run out of the LGBTQI department are intersectional, taking into account the specific disadvantage faced by queer POC and other marginalised groups within the queer community

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.22: You’re (dental dam)n fiinne.

Preamble:

1. With majority of safe sex education being targeted around penetrative sex there is often a lack of teaching into safe sex practises beyond that, such as how to protect yourself from STIs during acts of cunnilingus and anilingus.

2. The lack of safe sex with dental dams, especially in relationships between queer women, comes from the minimal amount of discussion ever had on the matter.
3. A stigma floats around the usage of dental dams claiming they’re “not sexy” and that because sex between queer women is “low-risk” for STIs there’s no point. But any risk for an STI is a risk people should be unwilling to take.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises and understands the importance that safe sex education and practices counter for all types of sexual relationships.

Action:

1. NUS works alongside queer and women's officers in student unions to have dental dams accessible in queer rooms and women’s rooms.
2. NUS actively promotes safe sex education for queer women.

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.23: Momentum: Where to next for Queer Activism?

Preamble:

1. The Marriage equality campaign pushed by Australian Marriage Equality and Trade unions have regained momentum in people understanding, recognising and fighting oppression faced by the queer community.
2. The fight is not yet over, however for the queer community - with many attitudes to still be changed about issues such as queer homelessness, gender identity, queer inclusion, queer abuse, queer sexual assault and more.
3. Despite some legal proceedings changing with Marriage equality - this change is largely symbolic. More Practical steps need to be taken to ensure that queer lives have access to the same opportunities as others.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that the Marriage equality campaign has shifted both the queer community and allies towards more militant forms of activism.
2. NUS recognises the momentum built by the Marriage equality campaign - and understands the importance of not losing this.

3. NUS recognises that there is still much to fight for in the queer activism space - and that the momentum of the Marriage equality campaign must be maintained to continue the fight for equality.

Action:

1. NUS will host a forum at Education Conference 2018 inviting prominent queer activists, MPs and advocacy groups to discuss the topic on where NUS should focus its resources regarding activism post Marriage equality.
2. NUS queer officers will offer workshops across the country with a list of opportunities drawn from the panel for students to get involved in.

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.24: Support our intersex and non-binary students!

Preamble:

1. Despite the Australian Human Rights Commission's work into improving the rights of people who have diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and intersex variations, this has not stopped such students facing the violation of their human rights at Australian universities.
2. Many queer students face discrimination and bullying to the extent that they are unable to complete their studies. Sadly, all too often students do not report incidents, resulting in there being no repercussions for perpetrators of such discrimination.
3. Transgender students should not be prevented from undertaking placements due to their gender identity.
4. Intersex and non-binary students should not be forced to choose between the options of male or female or not enrol at all.

Platform:

1. C3.2(a) of the NUS constitution states that one of the specific objects of the NUS is to work for the rights of all people to a quality education on an equal basis, and this is including intersex people.
2. NUS recognises that due to intersex people facing stigma, discrimination and harassment, it is difficult for them to have equal access to education.
3. NUS also recognises that intersex status is different to sexual orientation and gender identity, and has distinct human rights issues.

4. NUS supports the demands of the Malta Declaration (2013), a declaration also supported by OII Australia - Australia's peak organisation for intersex people.

Action:

1. NUS Queer Officers to raise awareness of the plight faced by non-binary and intersex students.
2. NUS support universities reviewing an update to online data forms and systems to enable options beyond male and female, especially students who are legally non-binary/intersex/intermediate/unspecified.
3. NUS work closely with OII Australia.

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.25: Train University Staff to Protect our Queer-Identifying Students

Preamble:

1. The Australian Human Rights Commission has found that queer-identifying people will face high levels of discrimination and abuse in their lifetime. It found that 6 in 10 will experience verbal homophobic abuse; 2 in 10 will experience physical homophobic abuse; 1 in 10 will experience other forms of homophobia and that rates for transgender men and women are significantly higher compared with the rest of the queer community.
2. Beyondblue found in their most recent report on LGBTI mental health that:
 - a. At least 36.2% of trans and 24.4% of gay, lesbian and bisexual Australians met the criteria for experiencing a major depressive episode (compared with 6.8% of the general population).
 - b. 59.3% of trans women alone experienced a major depressive episode.
 - c. Lesbian, gay and bisexual Australians are twice as likely to have a high/very high level of psychological distress as their heterosexual peers (18.2% compared with 9.2% of the general population).
 - d. 55% of LGBT women aged between 16 and 24 (compared with 18% of the general population) and 40% of LGBT men aged between 16 and 24 (compared with 7% of the general population) experience mental health conditions.

- e. Lesbian and gay-identifying individuals are 14 times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers, with rates increasing for bisexual-identifying individuals; 50% of transgender people have attempted suicide in their lifetime.
- 3. According to the Australian LGBTI guide, a majority of universities do not have specific policies protecting queer-identifying students from harassment, staff are not trained in how to respond to instances of harassment and discrimination, and there is a lack of queer-specific counselling services for students.

Platform:

- 1. NUS is the peak representative body that advocates for queer-identifying students through its Queer Department.
- 2. NUS recognises that universities must be a safe and inclusive space for everyone but in particular marginalised groups such as queer-identifying students.

Action:

- 1. The NUS Queer Department runs a national campaign to work with student unions, queer officers, queer collectives and other relevant students and student groups to ensure that university services are up to scratch in terms of specific stand-alone policy against harassment and discrimination; training for staff; and specific counselling services; and otherwise.
- 2. NUS works with organisations such as The Ally Network, Queer Collaborations and other relevant bodies in order to expand services for queer-identifying students.

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA delegate) on behalf of Kayla Dickeson (USASA President)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.26: Addressing Gender and Sexuality in Changing the Course

Preamble:

- 1. The 2017 AHRC Change the Course Survey found that queer students are massively affected by a culture of assault and harassment in our university.
- 2. The survey found that of survivors, 44% identified as bisexual and 38% identified as gay. It also found that 45% of those who student who identified as gender diverse were survivors of sexual violence. These are

staggering results compared to straight, cis students, with figure only being up to half as large.

- 3. This highlights a prevalence of sexual harassment and assault towards queer students, one that is often overlooked and underrepresented.
- 4. As such, as we move forward in campaigning for a safer university culture, we must include queer students.

Platform:

- 1. That NUS acknowledges that queer students are disproportionately affected by sexual harassment and violence
- 2. That NUS acknowledges that sexual violence and harassment is an intersectional issue that must be addressed within all groups
- 3. That NUS acknowledges that particular groups need to be represented in the discourse surrounding safety on campus as they are disproportionately affected

Action:

- 1. That the National Queer Office engage in the safety on campus campaign and maintain that it is representational to queer students
- 2. That the National Queer Office produce materials regarding issues of sexual harassment and assault towards and within the queer community, and disseminate information about queer-friendly front-line services to members

Moved: Natrydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.27: Thanking Generations of Queer Activists

Preamble:

- 1. This year has been rough for queer students. We had the postal survey on marriage equality, and the respectful debate that was promised when it started did not happen. While bigoted vitriol was flung at us, we were able to stay loud, stay proud and ran a successful campaign for a yes vote.
- 2. Because of this, we are incredibly close to marriage equality in this country. This is a monumental step in queer rights in Australia, but it is one that is on the back of decades of queer activists who must be acknowledged by this generation.
- 3. We still have so much to fight for, and as marriage equality takes steps towards legalisation, we must look further than marriage and continue

campaigning for equal rights in all areas for queer Australians. We must continue what older queers started and remain fighting.

Platform:

1. That NUS understands that the imminent passing of marriage equality could not have been done without generations of activism
2. That NUS understands that this activism must be acknowledged and paid respect to
3. That NUS support the progression of queer rights in future and understand that activism is vital to it.

Action:

1. That the 2017 National Conference unreservedly gives thanks to generations of queer activists, both within the student body and beyond, who fought for queer rights and made the imminent passing of marriage equality possible
2. That the 2017 National Conference pays respect to generations of queer activists who cannot celebrate the immanent legalisation of marriage equality, and other steps forward in queer rights, with us.
3. That the entirety of this motion be released via media release by the national president along with a re-affirmation of the national union of student's support of queer students and the progression of queer rights in future

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.28: NUS Contingent to the 40th Mardi Gras Parade!!

Preamble:

1. Students have always been at the forefront of the fight for queer rights, so it's only fitting that we be a part of the 40th anniversary of the protest that became the annual Sydney Mardi Gras parade.
2. We should have a chance to celebrate all that the queer rights movement has achieved, but also show that we're here for the long run in the fight for equal rights

Platform:

1. NUS support the open, and beautiful, expression of queerness in this country and its celebration
2. NUS affirm its commitment to progressing queer rights in this country

Action:

1. The National Queer Officers will endeavour to organise an NUS Contingent for the 40th annual Mardi Gras parade in Sydney as a celebration of all the student movement has achieved as part of the progression of queer rights in Australia

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.29: Collective Needs to Connect:

Preamble:

1. Queer collectives within universities are essential for representation of queer students within universities.
2. While many queer collective's work very closely with their student representative body, they can be autonomous from the SRC.
3. Due to this autonomy, many queer collectives may be unaware of NUS and campaigns run by the NUS Queer Department.

Platform:

1. NUS understands the importance of connecting with queer collectives on campus in order to accurately represent queer students
2. NUS commends the work of the National Queer Officers in previous years with their campaigns, particularly with their lack of engagement with campus level collectives, and it recognises that more work still needs to be done to connect with queer collectives and students.

Action:

1. That the National Queer Officers will directly reach out to campus queer officers across Australia, in order to create a connection that will strengthen the NUS Queer Department.
2. That the National Queer Officers will directly reach out to campus queer officers to explain what the NUS is and it's role as a representative body for students across Australia.
3. That the National Queer Officers keep queer collectives and officers up to date with everything that is happening within the NUS Queer

Department via monthly emails that extend until the end of their term as National Queer Officers.

4. That the National Queer Officers reach out to campus queer officers in order to help them facilitate their campus specific campaigns or tackle campus specific issues, at a minimum of once every six months.

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.30: Don't forget the I

Preamble:

1. Intersex people are born with physical sex characteristics that do not fit typical definitions for male or female bodies.
2. Intersex people across the world continue to face violations of their human rights, including in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.
3. Many universities across Australia lack policies that directly protect or directly support intersex students.
4. There is a distinct lack of information available for intersex students within most major universities.
5. There are specific human rights violations facing intersex people that are often erased, misunderstood and misrepresented, including by organisations that advocate for LGBTI rights.
6. In 2016, NUS accepted the Intersex Inclusion Policy as a part of the policies throughout the queer portfolio. Within this was the Recognition of the Malta Declaration, a declaration that is supported by OII Australia, that highlights the specific needs that Intersex People face, as well as the Human Rights Violations that people with intersex status face.

Platform:

1. NUS works for the rights of all people to a quality education on an equal basis- Including Intersex People.
2. NUS recognizes that due to stigma, discrimination and harassment around and towards intersex people, it is difficult for them to have equal access to education.
3. NUS also recognizes that intersex status is different from sexual orientation and gender identity, and thus gives rise to distinct human rights issues.
4. NUS supports the demands of the Malta Declaration (2013), a declaration that is

also supported by OII Australia, a national intersex organisation within Australia.

Action:

1. NUS directs the National Queer Officers to raise awareness of intersex issues within queer student organizations across Australia.
2. NUS encourages the National Queer Officers to work with intersex organizations across Australia, (including OII Australia) to further support for intersex students.
3. When referring to the term "LGBTI" (or any other similar acronyms, such as LGBTIQA), should not be synonyms with just same sex attraction and gender diversity, but instead references to "LGBTI" (or any other similar acronyms, such as LGBTIQA) and/or "intersex" should only be used where intersex people and their human rights issues have been included or considered in a substantive way.
4. NUS encourages all representative bodies that are a member of this organization to recognize the demands of the Malta Declaration (2013)

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.31: Men Menstruate! - Sanitary Bins in Mens Bathrooms

Preamble:

1. Trans students continue to face significant discrimination in Australia. Not only is having a lack of safe access to bathrooms that fit their gender a source of discomfort and distress for trans people, but so is access to bathrooms with appropriate facilities. One source of this is when trans men need access to sanitary bins or sanitary hygiene products if they are menstruating.
2. Trans men that don't have access to gender neutral bathrooms often have to invalidate their gender if they are on their periods in order to safely and hygienically dispose of sanitary products. When doing this they face risk of violence and harassment.
3. Trans men should have the ability to go to the bathroom that aligns with their assigned gender regardless of if they are menstruating.

Platform:

1. NUS believes in the right to safe bathroom access, and access to hygienic waste Solutions.

2. NUS recognises the positive impact that having access to bathrooms that both fit one's gender and fill their needs (such as access to sanitary bins) can create a positive and safe learning environment.

Action:

1. The NUS Queer Department collaborates with campus queer officers with the goal of adding at least one sanitary bin per male bathroom within their university.
2. The National Queer Officers will work to engage with universities in order to implement sanitary bins in men's bathrooms.
3. The NUS Queer Department will also encourage student unions to provide sanitary items within their offices, as well as within male bathrooms.
4. NUS condemns the use of the terms "feminine hygiene bins", "feminine sanitary bins", "feminine hygiene products" and "feminine sanitary products" (and all other similar descriptions) when describing these objects and suggest "sanitary product bins" or "hygiene products" in its place.

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

Seconded: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.32: We're Just Here to Pee - Gender-Neutral Bathrooms within Universities

Preamble:

1. When entering public spaces, trans and non-binary people have many issues to face that cause great discomfort and distress. One of these sources of distress comes from access to bathrooms that align with their gender. Trans and non-binary people face an increased threat of violence in gendered bathrooms, and often have to choose between their physical well-being and their mental health and wellbeing.
2. It is essential to have gender neutral bathrooms within universities in order to facilitate a safe learning environment for trans and non-binary students. It is highly encouraged that there be both gender-neutral disabled bathrooms as well as gender-neutral non-disabled bathrooms due to the stigma and belief that "transness" is a disability or a mental illness, while still recognising that there are trans and non-binary people that are disabled.
3. From 2013-2015 The NUS Queer Department participated in an awareness campaign (we're just here to pee) to address discrimination in bathrooms, as well as to put pressure on universities to implement

gender neutral bathrooms within universities. This campaign was widely successful and led to a variety of universities offering at least one gender neutral bathroom, however there is still more work to be done.

Platform:

1. NUS believes in the right to safe bathroom access and the right to access gender neutral bathrooms
2. NUS recognises that access to safe bathrooms that match people's gender creates a positive learning environment that fosters better mental health and safer, more accepting campuses.
3. NUS endorses the "We all need to pee" campaign that has been undertaken over the past several years.
4. NUS recognises the achievements of Queer officers that participated in this campaign.

Action:

1. NUS continues and expands this campaign in 2017 through collaboration with on campus queer departments and officers, queer collectives, and other relevant bodies.
2. NUS Queer Department will seek out queer organisations in order to share ideas and materials.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.33: We're "Equal." Now what?

Preamble:

1. In November of 2017, the Australian Public responded with a resounding yes vote in favor of allowing Same Sex Marriage in Australia. With this win, many people, allies in particular have been ecstatic over the fact that LGBTQ/Queer People will now be equal, however most people within this community will tell you that that's not the case.
2. LGBTQ People have higher rates of mental health issues, less access to appropriate mental health services, higher rates of suicide, higher rates of homelessness, lower levels of education, less access to safe sex, and are still more likely to be fired/or less likely to be hired than their straight counterparts.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that while a lot of effort has gone into the Same Sex Marriage Campaign, this is not the only issue that faces the queer community.
2. NUS believes in the importance of the continued fight for equality
3. NUS congratulates previous National Queer/LGBTQI office bearers in their fight for marriage equality, but also recognises that it isn't the only issue that affects people in these communities.

Action:

1. The NUS Queer/LGBTQI Officers will focus on something that affects a large amount of LGBTQI Identifying students
2. The NUS Queer/LGBTQI Officers will work with campus level collectives to ensure the most amount of students are benefited.
3. The NUS Queer/LGBTQI Officers will attempt to fulfil as many actions that are passed at the National Union Of Students Conference, rather than just focusing on one that (especially if that one thing already has a large amount of support

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.34: Pronouns matter**Preamble:**

1. For Trans and Non-Binary, the use of their pronouns is a way to show that they are accepted within a community and accepted within society
2. Unfortunately because of our heteronormative and cis-centric society, many people assume gender, which for many trans and non-binary people can lead to being misgendered.
3. When Trans and Non-Binary people are misgendered, whether accidentally or on purpose this can start to create a hostile environment, which directly impacts one's ability to access quality education

Platform

1. NUS believe in access to quality education regardless of one's gender.
2. NUS recognises the importance of recognising one's pronouns, and the inclusive environment this can create from all trans and non-binary people.
3. NUS recognises that non all trans or non-binary people are comfortable being out in a university setting, which is also very acceptable.

Action

1. The NUS Queer officers will compile a briefing on the importance of using a person's pronouns in an educational setting.
2. The NUS Queer Officers will create a brief training model for 'allies' in regards to pronouns, through a collaboration with trans-specific organisations, such as the gender center.
3. The NUS Queer Officers will work with Campus collectives to encourage schools to introduce an option box for pronouns when filling out university forms
4. All NUS affiliated organisations will bring all meetings with pronoun rounds in order to ensure that NUS is an accepting, welcoming and non-hostile environment.

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

QUEER/LGBTIQA 7.35: Criminalise Gay Conversion Therapy**Preamble:**

1. Gay conversion therapy has been used to terrorise, oppress, and destroy members of the LGTBIA community for generations.
2. Founded by Pentecostal Charismatic churches in America in the early 20th century, and popularised by evangelical sects across the world, conversion therapy is premised upon the idea that sexuality is not innate. Rather, according to practitioners, it can be chosen, shaped, and changed at will.
3. Early iterations of gay conversion therapy were based in psychiatric medicine, and included practices such as chemical castration, ice-pick lobotomy and electric shock treatment. Over time, these more extreme practices have faded out – chased away by the rise of the LGTBIA rights movement and advances in psychiatry.
4. In 2013, Exodus International, the largest umbrella organisation for gay conversion therapy in the world, closed down and issued an apology to all its members. Several jurisdictions in the United States and Canada have since banned the practise of conversion therapy on minors. Closer to home, the Andrews Labor government in Victoria is currently investigating the possibility of legislating against the practice.
5. Despite these advances, more insidious, and non-medical conversion therapy remains alive and well in Australia. In most cases, the therapy assumes the form of "counselling" run through a local church or church organisation. Although arguably less invasive than their predecessors, these therapies are exceptionally destructive and widespread.

6. All credible medical and psychological organisations in Australia who have formed policy regarding gay conversion therapy agree that it does not work and that it may cause long term damage in those subjected to it.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns any and all forms of counselling, non-medical intervention, and medical intervention intended to change a person's sexual orientation as inherently homophobic and grossly archaic. We recognise that this constitutes a form of abuse, especially in the case of minors.
2. NUS believes that practicing any and all forms of counselling, non-medical intervention, and medical intervention intended to change a person's sexual orientation should constitute a criminal offence, with more punitive punishments applied to those who practice on minors.

Action:

1. The NUS LGBTI/Queer Officers will campaign for the criminalisation of gay conversion therapy throughout Australia in 2018.

Moved: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

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ATSI 8.1: Establishment of the National Indigenous Student Network

Preamble

1. The National Union of Students is unfortunately failing to engage a large portion of Indigenous students
2. The establishment of a National Indigenous Student Network would effectively bring together Indigenous Students from across the country, whether they're in leadership positions on campus or not, to discuss on a National Forum important issues, ideas for campaigns and upcoming events.
3. This network would be in the form of a Facebook group as well as regular email updates, and will key in helping the NUS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer to organise campaigns effectively as well as there being a chance for cross-campus engagement.
4. The network would be managed by the NUS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer, but for it to be effective as it could be, they should immediately get in contact and encourage Indigenous Officers and Units to have their students and collectives join the group.

Platform

1. NUS supports the establishment of the National Indigenous Student Network to work on further engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students.

Action

1. The NUS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer of 2018 will create a Facebook Group called "National Indigenous Students Network"
2. The NUS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer of 2018 will contact Indigenous Officers and Units from across the country to encourage them to have their units and collectives join the Facebook Group and mailing list.

Moved: TBC (Pending attendance)

Seconded: TBC (Pending attendance)

ATSI 8.2: Engagement with Indigenous Units

Preamble

1. University Indigenous Units are an essential connection to Indigenous Students, and in some cases, they are the only connection as an SRC may have no Indigenous Officer position established.
2. NUS should be talking more with the Indigenous Units, as some university students won't be engaging with campaigns and events being held by the organisation.
3. It's important to have all voices heard in this organisation, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students should always be a voice that we don't ignore.
4. Bridging the gap between Indigenous Students and NUS should be a priority for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer so there is deeper engagement with students who aren't involved with student politics who have big ideas for Indigenous Student wellbeing and assistance, and engaging Indigenous Units is one way to do this.

Platform

1. NUS supports engagement with Indigenous Units as well as Indigenous Officers to close the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students and NUS.

Action

1. The NUS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer will further engage with university Indigenous Units to bring more Indigenous voices into the organisation.

Moved: TBC (Pending attendance)

Seconded: TBC (Pending attendance)

ATSI 8.3: Indigenous Student Success Program

Preamble

1. In the 2016 Budget, there was a policy to change the current programs and funding for ITAS (Indigenous Tutoring Assistance Scheme), CSP (Commonwealth Scholarship Programme) and ISP (Indigenous Support Programme) to the “Indigenous Student Success Program)
2. Details released in August/September 2016 showed that no funding would be lost under the new scheme as originally thought by student organisations - it will be instead be a structural change.
3. The structural change will hopefully mean that less money is returned to the government unlike previous years due to the old structure.
4. The new program means:
 1. The money allocated to Indigenous Units can be used under any of the umbrellas of ITAS, CSP and ISP.
 2. There aren't as many restrictions on ITAS - Honours and Postgraduate students will have access if needed (undergraduates will get priority) and undergraduates won't be limited to two hours a week per subject
 3. Money that currently isn't being used under the CSP will be redirected to the ISP and ITAS.
 4. Small and Regional Universities will receive more funding to support students.

Platform

1. NUS supports the structural change of the Indigenous Student Success Program
2. NUS will ensure universities are using this funding appropriately depending on the needs of the unit.

Action

1. The NUS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer will keep in contact with Indigenous Officers and students as to whether they feel their respective Indigenous units are effectively using their funding in the areas that are needed.
2. The NUS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer will continue to monitor any changes or cuts that may be made to this program and hold

the government to account if there are any cuts to Indigenous Education.

Moved: TBC (Pending attendance)

Seconded: TBC (Pending attendance)

ATSI 8.4: Welcome to Country at All NUS Events

Preamble

1. Welcome to Country is an important part of any event and NUS should ensure that there is a Welcome to Country at any gathering of the organisation.
2. Where a Welcome to Country can not be performed, an acknowledgement of country should be given.
3. Where possible, NUS Office Bearers should consider a Smoking Ceremony as part of the Welcome to Country - this ceremony is used as a way of cleansing and warding off bad spirits that may have been brought to the land.

Platform

1. NUS understands that a Welcome to Country is significant in acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land.
2. NUS will have a Welcome to Country, or Acknowledgement of Country at every event.

Action

1. NUS Office Bearers will ensure there is an Aboriginal Elder at any events held by NUS to give a Welcome to Country.
2. NUS Office Bearers will give an Acknowledgement of Country where an Elder is unable to be present
3. NUS Office Bearers will consider a Smoking Ceremony be included in the Welcome to Country where it is able to be held.

Moved: TBC (Pending attendance)

Seconded: TBC (Pending attendance)

ATSI 8.5: Stop the rollout of the Cashless Welfare Card

Preamble:

2. The usage of the Cashless Debit card, an outgrowth and extension of the racist intentions behind the Basics Card pioneered by the Howard government in the 2007 Northern Territory intervention, has been extended into the regions of Ceduna in South Australia and East Kimberly in Western Australia.
3. Legislation initiating a trial of the Cashless Debit card in certain communities was passed in 2015, with bipartisan support, by recommendation and extensive lobbying from mining magnate Andrew Forrest, among others
4. The communities it has been rolled out in have been remote, Indigenous communities, a glaringly racist and targeted attack on those communities
5. The Card is also set to be extended into the Goldfields region and the Federal Electorate of Hinkler
6. The Card quarantines 80% of a user's welfare payments and subjects the use of those payments to an exorbitant 80 page list of requirements.
7. The Basics Card, which only quarantines 50-70% of payments, currently covers over 20000 welfare recipients in Australia
8. The Cashless Debit card program victimises welfare recipients, particularly Indigenous welfare recipients, by imposing restrictive conditions on their spending, thereby publicly humiliating them as they shop and further ostracising them from their communities. This, in tangent with the ideological assaults on welfare recipients as a means of political justification for the program, seeks to cut all bonds of social solidarity between the mass of the Australian population and the indigenous community.
9. It is an assault on the autonomy of vulnerable people; an authoritarian imposition with no defensible pretext of compassion or anything other than social control

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the Cashless Debit card as an authoritarian means of social control
2. NUS stands in solidarity with welfare recipients, both indigenous and non-indigenous, currently being victimised by this program
3. NUS condemns both the LNP and the ALP for initiating the trial of the Cashless Debit Card

Action:

1. The NUS ATSI Officer will work with the NUS Welfare Officer to write a public statement opposing the Cashless Debit Card in its entirety,

strongly condemning the program's expansion and calling for its complete and immediate abolishment

2. The NUS ATSI Officer, working with the NUS Welfare Officer, will include a campaign against the Cashless Debit Card, combining media publicity, production of materials and activism, in the general campaigning work of the year

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Elliot Downes (La Trobe)

ATSI 8.6: Adani on Wangan and Jagalingou land? No Way!

Preamble:

1. The Wangan and Jagalingou peoples have had Native Title rights to the Galilee Basin in QLD since 2004.
2. In April 2015, the National Native Title Tribunal gave multinational Adani the right to mine coal in the area, something which would lead to significant destruction of the local environment as well as contributing to the warming of the planet. This was despite one of the traditional owners, Adrian Burragubba, holding deep opposition to the mine being used for mining. Adrian, along with other Wangan and Jagalingou people and elders, decided to fight the mine. Adrian said "If the Carmichael mine were to proceed it would take the heart out of the land." In February of 2017 Adrian had a breakthrough in the case against the mine, when the Federal Court found that a land use agreement was invalid without the signatures of all native title claimants. This meant that Adani did not legally have the right to build the mine in this area.
3. In response to this, the Government disgracefully introduced legislation to change Native Title laws so that Adani could build the mine.
4. This is a set piece example of the Australian Government changing the law in this country to favour mining companies over the traditional indigenous owners of land, and over the natural environment.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes Adani's Carmichael coal mine, as the resulting effects will destroy land, fauna and flora
2. NUS supports the Wangan and Jagalingou peoples in their struggle against the mine
3. NUS opposes the Government's decision to change the law to favour mining companies over indigenous land rights and the environment

Action:

1. NUS and its officers will actively support the campaign against Adani's Carmichael coal mine through social media, media releases, funding of campaign groups and materials
2. NUS directs its affiliated campus unions to actively oppose the mine and to participate in the #StopAdani campaign

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Emma Norton (UWA)

ATSI 8.7: Supporting councils moving Australia Day from 26th of January**Preamble:**

1. Recently, three Melbourne councils - Yarra, Darebin and Moreland – have taken the decision to stop referring to January 26 as Australia Day and replace their citizenship ceremony with an event that recognizes Indigenous culture. This is part of a growing acknowledgement that Australia Day is a nationalist celebration of British invasion and colonisation.
2. These decisions have promoted a conservative backlash from Malcolm Turnbull who claimed that “An attack on Australia Day is a repudiation of the values the day celebrates: freedom, a fair go, mateship and diversity.” These comments erase the history of dispossession and genocide Australia was founded on and denies the existence of racist policies that continue to target Aboriginal people today.
3. Turnbull agrees with the fascist far right on this question, who have stormed meetings of the Yarra and Moreland councils to intimidate councillors into reversing their decision.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people never ceded sovereignty of their land and that Australia Day celebrates the date that marks the beginning of colonisation and the oppression of Aboriginal people
2. NUS supports councils' decisions to stop celebrating Australia Day on January 26
3. NUS condemns Malcolm Turnbull's comments and the actions of fascist groups in response to the decisions

Action:

1. The 2017 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer will write a public statement supporting the councils' decision, and condemning Malcolm Turnbull's comments and the storming of council meetings by fascist groups
2. NUS will publicly support moves by other councils to no longer celebrate January 26 as Australia Day

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Nick Reich (UMSU)

ATSI 8.8: Stop changes to Native Title**Preamble:**

1. The federal government has moved to amend the Native Title Act to allow mining companies to use native land with the permission of as few as one claimant.
2. This is in response to a federal court ruling that stopped a \$1.3 billion deal in South West WA, when a group of Aboriginal native title claimants refused to sign the land over.
3. The claimants who refused to sign were selected to represent over 20,000 Aboriginal people who would be affected by the deal.
4. The government is looking to overturn the decision and set a precedent which would see native title rights, and all rights to country extinguished.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' land was stolen and never ceded, and is continually under attack from profit-driven governments and private businesses.
2. The NUS recognises that the Australian government wishes to appropriate the land from its traditional owners in the interest of profit, and with complete disregard for the will and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3. The NUS recognises that this attack is just one of the Australian government's many racist policies and agendas against Aboriginal people.

Action:

1. The NUS condemns the racist Australian government for their attacks on the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to determine what is done with their land.
2. The NUS supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in their fight for self-determination, and will run and support campaigns for these rights.

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (UMSU)

ATSI 8.9: Solidarity With Dylan Voller

Preamble:

1. Dylan Voller is a prime example of how the Australian justice system has failed Indigenous Australians. Dylan faced incredible mistreatment in both Alice Springs and Don Dale youth detention centre. The atrocities of Don Dale were reported by Four Corners in July of 2016, leading to mass outrage across the country. This prompted Malcolm Turnbull to introduce a Royal Commission into the mistreatment of youth in these detention centres.
2. Treatment in these "correctional" facilities are often damaging and lead to a lifetime of incarceration. Indigenous youth have been found to 25 times more likely to be put in youth correctional facilities than non-indigenous youth. Dylan Voller was also unlawfully arrested for expressing his right to protest in a rally against police brutality.
3. The Youth Detention Royal Commission found in November, 2017 that the "systematic failures" of Don Dale detention centre "were known and ignored at the highest levels." The report recommended the complete closure of this facility.
4. While we support many of the Royal Commission's findings, it must be noted that a Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody released a report in 1991 with 330 recommendations - all of which have been ignored by both Labor and Liberal governments. The incarceration rate of the Aboriginal community is higher now than it has ever been, as is the rate of Aboriginal deaths in custody. A Royal Commission is not enough - all youth detention facilities in all states and territories must be shutdown to end the ongoing and systematic abuse.

Platform:

1. NUS stands with Dylan Voller and other Indigenous youth that have been brutalised by the Australian legal system.

2. NUS stands for the Royal Commission's call to shut down Don Dale and other abusive youth correctional facilities.
3. NUS stands for the appropriate punishment of the officers involved in the atrocities at Don Dale, as well as the government departments overlooking its operation.
4. NUS recognises that incarcerating Aboriginal youth is one of the worst forms of state violence and racism in Australia.

Action:

1. NUS is to provide resources for rallies against police brutality and Aboriginal deaths in custody, as well as publicly support and share events on the NUS Facebook page.
2. The NUS ethno-cultural & ATSI officers will promote future demonstrations.

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS Queer OB)

Seconded: Kim Collett (Griffith)

ATSI 8.10: FIX THE DATA, CLOSE THE GAP!

Preamble:

1. Many of today's young children will not receive a 'fair go' in accessing equal education opportunities, for no other reasons than family background, demographic characteristics and geography. The most disadvantaged areas are Australia's remote regions spanning the northern territory, south Australia and western Australia, areas with large indigenous populations. An indigenous child is 40% less likely to finish high school and 60% less likely to go to university compared with a non-indigenous child.
2. Australia is failing its indigenous children, the national close the gap campaign is not truly national and it does not represent all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The closing the gap data on education targets is collectivised, only comparing individual states and territories. We must report as part of the closing of the gap education targets the remote communities standalone, their data and outcomes. These findings should be disaggregated so that the education crisis in our remote communities is not masked. If we do not disaggregate we discriminate.

Platform:

1. NUS supports disaggregating the National Close the Gap education target data

Action:

1. The 2017 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer will advocate for the disaggregation of the Close the Gap education targets data.

Moved: Kynesha Temple (Adelaide Delegate) on behalf of Bryda Nichols (Monash)

Seconded: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Jayden Crozier (Monash)

ATSI 8.11: Renaming university buildings**Preamble:**

1. Many university campuses around the country have buildings named after individuals who have historically caused pain for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The University of Melbourne and Monash have recently renamed buildings named after prominent figures involved in the eugenics movement.

Platform:

1. The NUS should encourage other universities to follow in these steps and rename buildings which carry the names of people who might cause anguish to ATSI students.

Action:

1. NUS ATSI Officer will encourage universities to change names of buildings when appropriate to do so.
2. NUS ATSI Officer will assist in any campaigns to rename university buildings at a campus level.

Moved: Kynesha Temple (Adelaide Delegate) on behalf of Jayden Crozier (Monash)

Seconded: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Bryda Nichols (Monash)

ATSI 8.12: More Indigenous scholarships**Preamble:**

1. Indigenous people are still underrepresented to a large extent in the tertiary education system.
2. Providing scholarships assists in encouraging indigenous students to attend university, particularly for those from rural or regional backgrounds.
3. Additionally, it is important that where scholarships are available, that indigenous students are aware and know the process for applying.

Platform:

1. NUS should be fighting for an increase in Indigenous scholarships as it is important to increase Indigenous representation and accessibility to higher education.

Action:

1. NUS ATSI Officer will advocate for more indigenous specific scholarships.
2. NUS will provide information on its website detailing for different universities the processes for applying of scholarships for indigenous students.

Moved: Kynesha Temple (Adelaide Delegate) on behalf of Jayden Crozier (Monash)

Seconded: Adriana Mells (National Executive) on behalf of Bryda Nichols (Monash)

Disabilities

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DISABILITIES 9.1: EVERYONE IS ABLED

Preamble:

1. Campuses should be accessible to all students. It is important that all students have appropriate access to services on campus, especially for those who have a disability. This includes appropriate lifts, ramps and other means of assisting students that need special access on campuses.
2. Having adequate access on university campuses is necessary as it makes them as inclusive as possible for people who have a disability this should have the constant support of university administration and staff. It is imperative that these services are available to all students is absolutely essential.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the importance of inclusivity and access on all university campuses
2. NUS recognises that having disability access on campuses is important as it creates an environments of inclusivity
3. NUS condemns any campus in Australia that does not have adequate disability access on their campuses.

Action:

1. NUS Disabilities Officer will lobby universities to conduct a review of their disability accessibility and inclusiveness
2. NUS Disabilities officers will support Campus Office Bearers in lobbying universities for more and proper disability access

Moved: Michael Iroche (La Trobe University)

Seconded: Annabelle Romano (La Trobe University)

DISABILITIES 9.2: Getting cooked can get a bit cooked

Preamble:

1. University culture and circumstances put students in a particularly vulnerable situation with regard to substance use problems.
2. These problems have profoundly negative effects throughout a student's university career. The repercussions of which, if not the problems themselves, may persist past a student's academic career.

Platform:

1. The NUS is committed to taking action to protect students from the effects of substance abuse disorders.
2. The NUS acknowledges that substance abuse is linked to a number of socio-economic factors, including other disabilities.
3. The NUS asserts that disabilities, including substance abuse disorders, are no mark against a person's personal worth, moral fibre, or so on and so forth.

Action:

1. The NUS will conduct research into the prevalence of substance abuse and distribute this research to unions at each campus.
2. The NUS will consider the necessity of campaigns to prevent and/or to ameliorate the effects of substance abuse.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (UMSU)

Seconded: Ella Shi (UMSU)

DISABILITIES 9.3: I am a person, not a horse; a med degree should differ from a vet course

Preamble:

1. Medicine, psychology, and a number of other courses today continue a history of teaching predominantly based on observation of disability.
2. Failure to incorporate experience of disability into teaching alienates graduates from people with disability, and students with disability from such courses.
3. The alienation of people with disability from fields governing disability impinges on broader societal progress.
4. Universities are largely dismissive of attempts to change subject structure at the campus level.

Platform:

1. The NUS supports the right of all students, including those with disability, to study subjects and courses with teaching pertaining to disability without being misrepresented by the subject's content.
2. The NUS asserts that contribution to fields of study should come from a broad and representative range of persons.
3. The NUS recognises that a unified approach - with pressure on faculties from a national as well as coordinated from a campus level - will more effectively express this platform than an uncoordinated campus-level only approach.

Action

1. The National Disabilities Officer will approach Universities Australia, as well as the University Chancellor's Council, in order to seek recognition that current teaching practices are insufficient as described.
2. The National Disabilities Officer will lobby for commitment from Universities Australia and the UCC to involve people with disability or organisations representing them in improving and developing subject content.
3. The National Disabilities Department will assist and coordinate campus Disability Departments to lobby faculties regarding this issue at a campus level.

Moved: Daniel Beratis (UMSU)

Seconded: Ella Shi (UMSU)

DISABILITIES 9.4: Support for Closed Captioning In Educational Settings**Preamble:**

1. Accessibility of learning materials is crucial to the learning experience of students
2. Many students with disabilities rely on lecture recordings for their studies, however the accessibility of the recordings can be improved via the implementation of closed captioning
3. Increased accessibility of lecture recordings via closed captioning will benefit a wide variety of students, not only those with disabilities, but also those who might have problems with understanding spoken English due to accents or other reasons

Platform:

1. The NUS believes in accessibility of learning materials for all students
2. The NUS supports the implementation of closed captioning for lecture recordings as a way of improving accessibility of learning materials

Action:

1. The National Disabilities Officer and National Education Officer will contact universities to ascertain what resources are available with respect to implementing closed captioning in lecture recordings
2. The NUS will work with universities in Australia to roll out closed captioning for lecture recordings
3. In cases where there are not lecture recordings the NUS will work with universities and student unions to lobby for them

4. The NUS will conduct research about additional steps universities can take to improve accessibility of materials and provide the resources to student unions

Moved: Daniel Beratis (UMSU)

Seconded: Ella Shi (UMSU)

DISABILITIES 9.5: Keep It Down Please!**Preamble:**

1. "Quiet hours", and "sensory-sensitive" events are commonly associated with the push for accessible events and services for autistic people specifically. There's actually a broad range of conditions - including fibromyalgia, sensory processing disorder, ADHD, and generalised anxiety disorder to name a few - that would cause a person to avoid, struggle with, or experience harm in sensory-unfriendly environments. In addition, Sensory-friendly periods should be considerate of auditory and visual sensitivities (not just "quiet").
2. Orientation days and similar early introductory experiences are valuable for students with disabilities as they create an opportunity to engage with campus culture and become a member of clubs, societies, and organisations, before individual students become disengaged with the student lifestyle. Students with disabilities experience ableism in everyday life and are uniquely disadvantaged in opportunities to create lasting and formative relationships with student groups. Orientation days also allow campus disability/accessibility departments to make themselves known and recruit members, enabling social and activist participation in the political spheres affecting disability as well as engagement with relevant events and services.
3. Many disabilities, including those that would cause a person to be sensory-sensitive (people with disabilities are often multiply disabled anyway), make it uniquely difficult to reliably get ready and mobile early in the morning.

Platform:

1. The NUS believes that all students regardless of ability should have the chance to engage with campus life
2. The NUS believes that student unions and universities should facilitate quiet hours to ensure sensory-sensitive periods take place at a reasonable time at the beginning of events - ideally half an hour long for events starting at 11am or later, or an hour for events before this time.

Action

1. The National Disabilities Officer shall engage with Universities, in conjunction with the relevant campus student unions, to push for sensory-sensitive periods during events and activities including but not limited to campus orientation events. This effort will include recommendations for the following:
2. Holding a half-hour long sensory-sensitive period for events starting at 11am, or an hour-long sensory-friendly period for events starting earlier - people with disabilities may encounter unexpected accessibility obstructions such as faulty lifts at train stations that make punctual attendance unreliable. Many disabilities, including those that would cause a person to be sensory-sensitive (people with disabilities are often multiply disabled anyway), make it uniquely difficult to reliably get ready and mobile early in the morning. Stallholders are prone to packing up and disengaging towards the end of orientation events, and sensory-friendly periods at the end of orientation activities may not actually enable access to the same clubs and organisations as those available to abled students earlier in the day.
3. For the sensory sensitive period, music should be off or very quiet, lights and attractions subdued, and promoters and clubs should be passive in their attempts to get attention from students.
4. Shade should be provided to students. A bright day can cause tactile and visual sensory overload from heat and sunlight, and somewhere to take reprieve can be helpful.
5. Space affected by the sensory-sensitive period should be marked with appropriate signage indicating that patrons should exercise courtesy and minimise unnecessary noise and flashing lights.

Moved: Dylan Heywood (Curtin University)

Seconded: Conrad Hogg (The University of Western Australia)

DISABILITIES 9.6: The NDIS is inadequate! Demand a better deal for people with disabilities**Preamble:**

1. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was, in theory, meant to aid disabled people in affording the care they need
2. In reality, the NDIS is under-resourced and its failures are used as an excuse to privatise the care of disabled people
3. NDIS assessments are often not conducted in person, providing insufficient information on how cases should be handled

4. The failures of the NDIS have real, grave consequences for people with disabilities

Platform:

1. NUS wants to make sure that students with disabilities are not burdened with stress and hardship as a result of NDIS troubles
2. NUS opposes the privatisation of national health services
3. NUS condemns the underfunding of the NDIS demands better-funded and structured public support services for people with disabilities

Action:

1. The 2018 NUS Disabilities Officer will run a campaign to demand that sufficient resources are devoted to disabled care and the NDIS, and that privatisation of the support services be stopped

Moved: Clare Francis (Curtin University)

Seconded: Lily Campbell (University of Sydney)

DISABILITIES 9.7: Protests are key to winning disability rights**Preamble:**

1. People with disabilities are discriminated against in a series of ways due to the profit motive that dictates decisions made by those in power under capitalism
2. Things like the privatisation of healthcare, welfare cuts, and immigration controls, all disproportionately affect people with disabilities
3. The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the latest attack on people with disabilities in Australia. Thousands of disability workers across Victoria and New South Wales have been forced into the private sector, driving down wages and conditions and leaving people with disabilities with worse quality care which is more difficult to access.
4. In response, the Public Sector Association (PSA) in NSW and the Health and Community Services Union (HACSU) in Victoria are currently involved in ongoing campaigns calling on their respective Premiers to reverse these decisions.
5. The campaign to stop the deportation of a Monash academic due to his son's autism lead students with disabilities to contact the MSA for the first time, to offer to speak at the protest, and saved a family from deportation. In Bolivia this year, people with disabilities held daily protests for over 60 days, marched for over 35 days to the government where they fought riot police and staged sit ins for the right to a monthly pension.

6. Politicians who are consciously stripping the rights and livelihoods of people with disabilities for profit have no reason to care what student lobbyists say. Forcing politicians to grant concessions requires a pressure that can push back against their profit motive. This requires the scale of protest that gets the media attention to win over the general public to the point that politicians are forced to grant concessions to save their own approval ratings, or better yet, strikes which cut off profit.

Platform:

1. NUS supports free, fully funded, and accessible healthcare and disability support services, and condemns the Victorian and New South Wales government's privatisations through the NDIS
2. NUS supports union campaigns to defend public disability services
3. NUS stands in opposition to immigration policies which discriminate based on disability, which form part of Australia's broader racist immigration system.
4. NUS rejects the argument that protests are ableist by those who defend lobbying. People with disabilities all over the world engage in and lead militant protests, whereas students lobbying politicians has never involved students with disabilities beyond the ranks of those already organised in student factions, nor won anything. NUS recognises that the anti deportation campaign at Monash shows how to both involve students with disabilities and win.

Action:

1. The disabilities department will organise active campaigns including protests against discrimination of people with disabilities.
2. NUS will produce media releases and will attend events to support trade union opposition to privatisation and job cuts in the disability sector

Moved: Tom Gilchrist (University of South Australia)

Seconded: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

DISABILITIES 9.8: Support our Campus Counselling Services!

Preamble;

1. Counselling is a vital service for students, who are increasingly placed under stressors not faced by previous generations.
2. At peak study times such as exam weeks, students are faced with waiting periods of more than a month.

3. To deal with such a high demand, counsellors are under pressure to cut sessions short by rushing, telling students to use services such as Beyond Blue, rather than respond to each student's unique needs.

Platform:

1. NUS supports prioritised funding for counselling and psychological services at universities.

Action:

1. NUS calls on all Australian Universities to ensure students have access to effective, high quality counselling services on-campus.

Moved: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

Seconded: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.9: Special Consideration for Mental Illnesses

Preamble:

1. Anxiety and depression are common invisible disabilities which are often disregarded in special consideration policy in university administrations and faculties.
2. Mental Illnesses such as but not limited to anxiety and depression severely impact academic performance of students in many different ways. This includes but is not limited to; the time needed to complete assessments, class attendance, concentration in classes and the personal impact of particular topic material.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students acknowledges the impact mental illnesses have on students.
2. The National Union of Students supports these students and acknowledges the need for special consideration in this circumstances.

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer will work with campus disability and welfare officers, and will lobby or campaign to universities to create policy on special considerations for students who suffer from anxiety and depression.
2. The National Disability officer will work with campus representatives to lobby or campaign universities to expand their special consideration

policies to include considerations for students with anxiety and depression.

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Nattydd Sigurthur (USASA Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.10: Expansion of Medicare Mental Health Care Plan

Preamble:

1. Medicare currently covers a maximum of 10 free or subsidised counselling sessions per year with a Mental Health Care Plan, which is subject to various different criteria.
2. According to a recent survey conducted by NUS and Headspace, a majority of students experience significantly high levels of stress, anxiety and/or depression. These things, among others, have the ability to greatly affect their academic performance.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students believes in unlimited counselling and other mental health services provided by Medicare. The National Union of Students acknowledges the financial hardships students often face and the struggle, both financially and emotionally, students face paying for expensive mental health care.
2. The National Union of Students believes that University Services should be expanded to include uncapped visits to campus mental health services.
3. The National Union of Students recognises the impact untreated mental health can have on students throughout their degrees and believes that all students should have access to mental health services.

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer will lobby the Federal Government, including the Federal Health Minister to expand Mental Health Services including the Mental Health Care Plan to uncapped the number of visits allowed for students.
2. The National Disability Officer will lobby or campaign universities to include uncapped mental health care services for all students.
3. The National Union of Students will write to the Federal Health Minister reiterating NUS's support and commitment to accessible mental health care and urging a review of the Mental Health Plan system

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.11: Student Carers

Preamble:

1. Student Carers are, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics are among some of the lowest scoring on national wellbeing and life satisfaction statistics.
2. Student carers are likely to experience many of the same barriers within higher education and university generally, academically, administratively and socially as students with disabilities and are subject to patchwork or sometimes no policy within universities designed to assist them

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises the disadvantages that student carers face while trying to navigate university and higher education.
2. The National Union of Students Recognises that the work student carers do contributes to the quality of life and wellbeing of those with chronic/debilitating illness or disability.

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer will engage with affiliated university campuses to determine whether universities meet the specific needs of student carers.
2. The National Disability Officer will work to help raise awareness of student carers among universities and ensure that the needs of student carers are having their needs met.

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.12: Making Protests More Accessible

Preamble:

1. Many Protests sponsored by NUS are typically only available and suitable for able-bodied folk. This means that students with accessibility issues are often forgotten, and are unable to participate, and thus lack the ability to engage with issues that directly affect them.
2. When protests are planned, it seems as if little has gone into the thought of those that are unable to stand for long periods of time, or those that are wheelchair bound.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the importance engaging with all students regardless of their accessibility needs, and understands the value of having a diverse range of students at all NUS sanctioned events.

Action:

1. The NUS Disabilities officer will create a checklist of items required for those with accessibility needs. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Wheelchair accessible areas of congression
 - b. Chairs available for those who need to sit
 - c. Quiet spaces for those that are overwhelmed by the crowd
 - d. Easy and quick access to bathrooms

Moved: Moved by Sarah Tynan (National Executive) on behalf of Kirra Jackson (UTS)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.13: Protests for Deaf and Hard Of Hearing People

Preamble:

1. Approximately 1 in 6 Australians are affected by hearing loss according to the Australian Network on Disabilities. This includes students and people that would like engage with NUS and Protests, however are sometimes unable to, due to this hearing loss.
2. Though there is no precise number of Australians that use AUSLAN, it is recognised as the official language in the Australian Deaf uCommunity
3. It is also recognised that in loud crowded areas, it is more difficult to understand speeches if one is hard of hearing, especially if they are further away from the front and unable to lip read from their position

4. Musicians and a variety of other public events have begun to embrace sign language in their presentation in order to be more accessible to all members of the community, it's about time the activist community does so too.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the importance of engaging the deaf and hard of hearing community, as there are students with hearing loss, that deserve to be engaged with these events.
2. NUS recognises the benefits of having diverse events with people of many different backgrounds and lived experiences, including those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Action:

1. NUS will begin to employ an AUSLAN interpreter at all NUS protests, and ensure that one is possible if requested at all other NUS sanctioned events.
2. NUS will also work with protest organisers to ensure there is a specific spot towards the front of the speeches during protests where people who are hard of hearing can stand in order to allow for easier lip reading.

Moved: Moved Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Kirra Jackson (UTS)

Seconded: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.14: Disability Representatives for all Student Associations

Preamble:

1. University Unions are created to represent all students and work in the best interest of them, regardless of their disability status.
2. While many unions are working to be more representative and accessible to people with disabilities, it is still important to note that there are many bodies that do not even have a disabilities collective, let alone representation for disabled students on councils.
3. Disability collectives are groups that act as the representative body for disabled students and lobby for their best interest. It is essential to have these bodies on campus that allow all disabled people to be involved with fighting for their rights.
4. According to the NUS and Headspace joint survey, they found that a large amount of students can be defined as having a physical or mental disability or chronic illness. Because of this, it is imperative that there is a representative body for disabled students everywhere

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the importance of accurate representation of all students and the importance of students with disabilities to advocate for themselves
2. NUS also acknowledges the importance of disability collectives on all campuses as a way to achieve better representation and engagement with students with disabilities.

Action:

1. The NUS disabilities officer will create a briefing for all universities on how to best represent disabled students on their councils, and how to establish a disabilities collective if necessary. This will be distributed to all universities.
2. The NUS disability officer will reach out to all universities that do not have disability representatives on their student councils and encourage them to create a role for a disability representative within the year.
3. The NUS disability officer will reach out to all universities that do not have disability collectives and work with these unions to establish them within the year.

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

DISABILITIES 9.15: Sexual Education**Preamble:**

1. Sexual Education within Primary and Secondary schooling often fails to provide correct and informative information about sex, sexuality and healthy relationships to those with non-normative bodies or disabilities.
2. Sexual Education provided by universities or student unions often fails to deliver useful information to students with disabilities and non-normative bodies about sexual health and healthy relationships.
3. Students with non-normative bodies and disabilities are often excluded from the social life and undergraduate culture, whilst also leaving them vulnerable to unsafe sexual behaviour and falling into unhealthy and/or manipulative relationships where they can be subject to abuse.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises that the failure of these and other organisations to provide adequate education to the needs of students with disabilities or non-normative bodies contributes to social norms that work to disadvantage people with disabilities.

2. The National Union of Students recognises the failure of these and other organisations to provide adequate education contributes to the abuse of people with disabilities in relation to healthy relationships, sexual health, sex and sexuality.

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer will engage with relevant student representatives within affiliated student unions to enquire as to what information and services are available from the student union or university.
2. The National Disability Officer will engage with relevant student representatives within affiliated student unions to ensure that the services and information provided by the student union and or university are relevant and informative.
3. The National Disability Officer, will, when required, help relevant student representatives lobby or campaign for their university and or union to provide services or improved services where the services provided already are not adequate, or non-existent.

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Tom Quinlivan (National Executive)

DISABILITIES 9.16: Spoons Week**Preamble:**

1. Disability and chronic illness is often misunderstood by the general public. Incorrect assumptions and generalisations made about people with disability and chronic illness is harmful and can cause significant harm and suffering to those who live with these, especially as often disability and chronic illness can be difficult to communicate to those with no personal context or understanding.
2. Spoon Week has been held at various university campuses as a disability awareness week. Spoon Week is a fantastic opportunity to promote understanding and break down barriers and stigma of disability and chronic illness and begin conversations about disability, access and wellness.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Student recognises the importance of Spoon Week as a platform to begin open and safe conversations about disability and chronic illness, and as a celebration that warrants national attention.

Action:

2. The National Disability Officer with the input from relevant campus student representatives will set a time for Spoon Week 2018.
3. The National Disabilities Officer will produce and provide materials for campuses to promote Spoon Week and distribute these to affiliate campuses.
4. The National Union of Students will promote Spoon Week via their Social Media channels.

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

DISABILITIES 9.17: National Students with Disability Conference**Preamble:**

1. Students with disabilities are the only marginalised group within NUS that do not have an annual, autonomous national conference to meet, organise, collaborate and learn. While it is possible to collaborate, using this method can be very restrictive and not allow for large amounts of people being involved and the ability to have in depth conversation.
2. Disability collectives are struggling now more than ever, and we need a strong activist base for students with disabilities to fight the savage cuts being made to funding that specifically helps students with disabilities.

Platform:

1. NUS supports disability activism and understands the importance of having a specific conference that allows for coordination on a national scale.
2. NUS acknowledges that students with disabilities are systematically more likely to be of low socioeconomic status, and there is a need for a conference that is financially accessible

Action:

1. The National Executive must ensure that the chosen campus for Education Conference, is fit to organise a National Students with Disability Conference on the weekend before or after Education Conference.
2. The National Disability Officer will communicate with affiliate campus Disability Officers to determine the content of the conference.
3. The National Executive must ensure the conference is as accessible as possible, both financially affordable and access.

4. The National President and The National Welfare Officer should assist with the conference where appropriate.

Moved: Nattydd Siguthur (USASA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.18: Support for students with neurodevelopmental disorders and learning disabilities**Preamble:**

1. Students with neurodevelopmental disorders (such as, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorders) and learning disabilities (ie dyslexia, dyscalculia) face unique disadvantage in a university setting.
2. These disorders develop in childhood and as such, most support services are aimed toward children - yet there is very little support available once these people reach adulthood or if they are diagnosed in adulthood. In addition to this, there are many misconceptions about these disorders, even amongst medical & disability practitioners
3. At many universities some of the highest disability-related dropout rates are of students with ASD, this is mainly due to a lack of adequate support.
4. Furthermore, to access specific accessibility software (ie, screen readers, dictation software) many universities require that students must have had neuropsychological evaluations or learning needs assessments - these can cost upwards of \$800 and due to this financial barrier many students are missing out on support.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that students with learning disabilities and neurodevelopmental disorders are uniquely disadvantaged in a university environment and often do not receive adequate support.
2. NUS supports encouraging development of better strategies to engage and support these students, including more comprehensive staff training.
3. NUS recognises the financial barriers that prevent students from receiving adequate support outside their universities and calls upon university disability services to bridge the support gap

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer will work with relevant representatives and disability groups to identify the most appropriate training and strategies for working supporting university students with ASD, ADHD and learning disabilities and will lobby universities to have their staff undertake training on these issues.
2. The National Disability Officer will work with relevant campus representatives to lobby university disability services to grant students access to software or other supports based on the student's self-reported needs and symptoms, to ensure that students are not disadvantaged if they are unable to afford learning needs assessments.

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

DISABILITIES 9.19: Autonomous spaces for students with disabilities**Preamble:**

1. Autonomous spaces are important for students from marginalised groups to have a welcoming, safe space to rest, study, and socialise. There has been great success with Women's rooms and Queer spaces which are commonly found at many universities - however very few universities have dedicated autonomous Disabilities spaces.
2. Aside from providing a safe space and helpful disability-related resources, this would also be beneficial for students who need somewhere to rest, or to get away from over stimulating sensory environments on campus. Disability autonomous spaces also provide a way to grow disability collectives and to reach more students who may be socially isolated or unaware of support available to them.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that students with disabilities are marginalised and face unique challenges at university.
2. NUS believes that students with disabilities should be able to have safe autonomous spaces on campus for rest, and for meeting students with similar experiences.

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer will contact relevant campus representatives and investigate which universities do not currently have autonomous disabilities spaces
2. The National Disability Officer will lobby universities and representatives to establish disabilities spaces.

Moved: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

DISABILITIES 9.20: Tutorial Attendance**Preamble:**

1. There are many reasons a student may not be able to meet the 70-80% attendance required for most university courses, including work commitments, illness, timetable clashes or caring duties among more.
2. Despite more tertiary courses removing lecture attendance requirements and online recordings of materials, tutorials retain the 70-80% attendance requirement at most universities, and often unintentionally exclude students who can not make this required amount of attendance to no fault of their own.
3. With the technology and tools that we have available to create more accessible and flexible teaching methods, no student should be barred from academic success because they face difficulty accessing tutorials.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students supports the use of technology to aid students who cannot physically attend their tutorials to have access to them through the use of technology.
2. The National Union of Students supports the use of disability and access training for teaching staff members to alert them of the obstacles students with disabilities and chronic illnesses may experience and how that may cause them to miss classes, improving the understanding between teaching staff and their students.

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer will engage with relevant student representatives within affiliated student unions to enquire as to what information and allowances are available for students who miss classes due to chronic illnesses or disability.

2. The National Disability officer will lobby or campaign with the help of campus representatives to create better university policy surrounding technological access to tutorial classes for students who are unable to meet their tutorial attendance requirements.

Moved: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

DISABILITIES 9.21: Access to Autonomous Rooms

Preamble:

1. Autonomous spaces on campuses are important for students from marginalised groups when they are seeking out a safe place. Women's and Queer rooms are found on many campuses across Australia and allow for rest and recuperation from a society that marginalises them.
2. However, these spaces are not necessarily designed or placed with the consideration of students who belong to these marginalised groups while also having a disability. Women's and Queer rooms on campuses do not always have accessible entrances, and exclude some people with physical disabilities from accessing them.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises the intersectionality and overlap of marginalisation and the challenges and exclusion the students with disabilities face while trying to access a space that should be intended for them.
2. The National Union of Students believes that students with disabilities should be able to access and use the spaces of other marginalised groups they belong to just as easily as students who are able bodied.

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer will investigate with the help of relevant campus representatives the accessibility of autonomous rooms on campus for students with physical disabilities.
2. The National Disability Officer will lobby or campaign the universities that do not have accessible access to autonomous rooms for improvement in access to these rooms with relevant campus representatives.

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Kynesha Temple (University of Adelaide Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.22: Return To Study

Preamble:

1. Students who have disabilities or chronic illnesses may have to or chose to postpone their studies for their health and wellbeing.
2. Because Universities often have a cap on how long a degree must be completed in, students with disabilities or chronic illnesses are forced to choose between their health and wellbeing and their academic pursuits.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students believes that everyone should have equal access to education. Students with disabilities or chronic illnesses should not be disadvantaged because of time off they may need to take to look after themselves.

Action:

1. The National Disability Officer along with other relevant National Office Bearers, including the National President and the National Welfare Officer, will contact the Federal Education Minister and State Education Ministers committing the National Union of Students' position on the time cap on university degree completion dates and the effect that these caps may have on students with disabilities or chronic illnesses.
2. The National Disability Officer will write to affiliate campuses, committing the National Union of Students' position on the time cap on university degree completion dates and the effect that these caps may have on students with disabilities or chronic illnesses, and requesting that these time caps be reviewed for students with disabilities or chronic illnesses.

Moved: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

DISABILITIES 9.23: Accessibility of Student Representation Spaces

Preamble:

1. Students with physical disabilities or illnesses are often precluded from participation in student representation due to such spaces often being dated and inaccessible.
2. As such, discussions by student bodies and unions often lack voices of people with lived experience of physical disability and illness.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students affirms its commitment to accessible student representation.
2. The National Union of Students believes that 3.2.4 of the SSAF Guidelines places a burden on Higher Education Providers to ensure student representation spaces are accessible.

Action:

1. The National Disabilities Officer will work with campus Presidents and Disabilities Officers to ensure campus student representation spaces are accessible, including by developing frameworks for ensuring proper infrastructure is provided by Higher Education Providers.
2. The National Union of Students and its State Branches will ensure that meetings and spaces used for representation and activism are accessible.

Moved: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate)

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

International

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INT 10.1: International Student Transport Concessions

Preamble:

1. Currently, international students are not eligible for public transport concessions, and as such must pay double that of their local counterparts. In Victoria for example, a single tram, bus or train journey into or out of the CBD costs \$2.05 on a concession, and \$4.10 full fare. Over the course of an academic year, this will cost international students approximately an additional \$750, and that's assuming they live within the metropolitan area.
2. International students pay colossal tuition fees to attend university in Australia, often more than 4 times that of domestic students. As such, they are often already struggling financially, and not being eligible for concession unfairly disadvantages them further.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that International students that are studying full-time should be eligible for public transport concessions, provided all other criteria are met.
2. NUS believes that the current restriction on international students acquiring transport concessions is unfair and will refuse to support any attempt to restrict students from accessing concessions.
3. NUS urges all State and Territory governments to reverse the ineligibility of international students for public transport concessions.

Action:

1. NUS shall write to the national Minister for Transport Darren Chester MP, and all relevant State and Territory transport ministers urging them to lift ineligibility for international students accessing public transport concessions.

Moved: James Kerr-Nelson (RUSU Delegate)

Seconded: Aditya Sharma (RUSU Delegate)

INT 10.2: International Students Fees

Preamble:

1. Annual International fees run into the tens of thousands a year, with no option to defer them. This imposes a significant financial burden on international students and only adds to the stress of attending

university. While some campuses offer the ability to pay in installments, this is not universal.

2. Additionally, Students do not know how much their fees will rise in any given year, with it being an arbitrary decision by the university administration. Some course fees have risen by up to 10% in any given year.

Platform:

1. International students should have the option available to pay their course fees in installments over the course of the semester.
2. International Students must be informed of the reasoning behind their increase in fees, as well as being told the increase significantly before they commence the next academic year.

Action:

1. The NUS International Officer will assist affiliated student unions in lobbying their university to implement the platform point 1 and 2.
2. The NUS national president will lobby the federal government to implement platform point 2 on a national level.

Moved: Brian Njane (Edith Cowan University)

Seconded: Palak Mittal (Edith Cowan University)

INT 10.3: International students are not cash cows

Preamble:

1. International higher education is one of Australia's largest exports, with income from international students reaching \$21 billion in 2016-2017.
2. The government is looking to double this figure by 2025.
3. International students face continuous exploitation, often paying three times more than a commonwealth supported student for the same degree.
4. These extortionate fees must be paid up front.
5. International students are limited in how many hours they can work while studying, often putting extreme financial strain on them during semester. This is exacerbated by the lack of access to welfare services and student concessions which are provided to domestic students.
6. This racist policy is designed to extort as much profit from international students as possible while reinforcing the inequality and systematic racism faced by international students.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that charging international students more for the same degrees while limiting their access to financial support and work is racist and reinforces inequality.
2. NUS condemns the system which allows international students to be exploited for profit.
3. NUS supports free education for all students, including international students.
4. NUS rejects the broader orientation that universities and the government have towards higher education, as profit making degree factories.

Action:

1. NUS will continue to raise the demand of free education for all, including international students.
2. NUS will actively campaign for the rights of international students, and against any further attacks on their rights.

Moved: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith University)

INT 10.4: Better housing for International students – no more slums!**Preamble:**

1. There has been a stream of exposés on the atrocious living standards of International students, who are often being exploited by dodgy landlords
2. Due to limitations on International students' working hours, inadequate welfare and unaffordable housing, many are forced to live in slums crammed with other people. This often involves five to ten students living in a one or two-bedroom apartment, with partitions erected to create "rooms" or even students living in closets. In one case in Adelaide, 53 students were living in 12 one-bedroom apartments.
3. Being crammed into tiny apartments with many other students is a threat to the safety, health and wellbeing of International students, who are being exploited by racist landlords hoping to multiply their profits

Platform:

1. NUS stands in solidarity with International students forced to live in degrading conditions due to the lack of affordable housing available to them

2. NUS opposes the disgusting exploitation of International students by dodgy landlords who cram multiple students into tiny apartments to increase their profits
3. NUS demands that International students be given the same working and welfare rights as domestic students
4. NUS demands that universities provide affordable, adequate housing for International students

Action:

1. NUS will actively campaign for the rights of International students to a living wage and affordable, decent quality housing.

Moved: Claire Francis (Curtin University)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

INT 10.5: Against the new language test for International students**Preamble:**

1. A majority of international students in Australia come from China, India, Vietnam, South Korea, and Thailand. These students' first language is rarely English.
2. A Government-proposed English test for international students would exploit this as a way to profit off of these students. The courses that lead to the test can cost thousands of dollars, paying into a \$28 billion international education industry.
3. The test is a guise for the racism of the Liberal government. Stricter English requirements are a tool to exclude non-white international students.

Platform:

1. NUS represents these students and is tasked with standing up for them.
2. NUS stands against attempts to exploit international students for profit.
3. NUS rejects racist measures that aim to oppress a large section of the student population.

Action:

1. NUS condemns the proposed language test.
2. NUS shall write to Education Minister Simon Birmingham to urge him to abandon the proposed test.

3. NUS shall consult the Council of International Student Australia on possible further action regarding the language test.

Moved: Tom Auld (University of Adelaide)

Seconded: Kim Collet (Griffith University)

INT 10.6: Parlez-vous Anglais?

Preamble:

1. Universities continue to use International students as cash cows and will go to great lengths to enroll them without proper structures to support their learning.
2. This results in international students resorting to academic misconduct to complete assessment in some instances.
3. These students are then left terminated from their degrees with money wasted and difficulty maintaining their visa.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that all overseas students should be given the best chance to pursue higher education in Australia
2. NUS believes that International students should not be enrolled at all costs just to increase university profits
3. NUS believes that universities should ensure that they have appropriate structures in place to support language acquisition and learning before enrolling international students

Action:

1. The National Union of Students shall engage with Universities, in conjunction with the relevant campus student unions, to push for better language education services and structures
2. The National Union of Students shall campaign against universities enrolling international students with poor english without adequate support.

Moved: Dylan Heywood (Curtin University)

Seconded: Liam O'Neill (Curtin University)

INT 10.7: SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT NUS

Preamble:

1. It is critical to promote NUS among campuses to raise its awareness not only among local students, but also international students as well. It is a union that can benefit students a lot if it can increase its influence and engage more with the international student community.
2. NUS could better work with international students more by helping them setting into local life and making sure international students are aware of their rights in Australia. In particular, international students should be more aware of their working rights so they are not exploited in the workplace.
3. International students are more vulnerable to experience mental health problems as they can often feel isolated being in Australia for the first time without any connections. This can often lead them to quitting their studying life in Australia.
4. International students, and particularly women international students, are also more likely to experience sexual or domestic violence, which is reflected in data from End Rape On Campus Australia, the Australian Human Rights Commission report, and data from South Australian-based Yarrow Place Sexual Assault Service.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises the value that the international student community has in the Australian higher education sector.
2. The NUS will fight to protect the rights of all students and include international students in their campaigns.

Action:

1. The NUS International Officer will work with the National President to come up with a strategy of how to engage more international students with the NUS.
2. The NUS International Officer will identify the issues faced by international students at Australian university campuses across a wide range of issues including working rights, resources for mental health services, and rights around sexual violence, and work to run an advocacy campaign based on the rights of international students.

Moved: Qihua Zheng (USASA Delegate)

Seconded: Sarah Tynan (National Executive)

Ethno-Cultural

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ETHNO 11.1: 'I Don't Like It': Condemning Pauline Hanson and far-right populism.

Preamble:

1. Australia is one of the most multicultural countries in the world. It is a melting pot of different cultures, languages and traditions.
2. In a global context we are seeing the rise of the far or alt-right politics, the success of Brexit and Donald Trump demonstrates this.
3. Political figures and parties like Pauline Hanson, Corey Bernadi and George Christensen are vocal in their bigotry and prejudice - and they are on the rise.
4. Hanson stood in Parliament in 1996 and declared that Australia was being "swamped by Asians", fast forward to this point in time, where she now stands in Parliament calling for a blanket ban on all Muslim migration.
5. Australia is an open and inclusive country, and there is no place for Hanson's misinformed and ill-conceived campaigns against minority groups.

Platform:

1. That NUS condemns racism and bigotry in all its forms.
2. That NUS condemns Senator Pauline Hanson and other right-wing politicians alike.

Action:

1. That NUS reaffirms its support for a multicultural Australia by releasing a statement condemning the racism and bigotry of political figureheads like Pauline Hanson and other right wing politicians alike.
2. NUS will write to the Minister and Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Australia to express its concern in this matter.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Qisthy Kodarusman (University of Western Sydney)

ETHNO 11.2: Ethno Rep

Preamble:

1. Students from ethnoculturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds are disproportionately affected by under representation in work & internship places, educational institutions and leadership opportunities.
2. 1 in 3 people experience racism in the workplace, this can only be changed through the education and sensitivity training of staff and students in workplaces and educational institutions.
3. Ensuring the representation of these marginalised groups on university campuses is vital in the fight against racism and under representation.

Platform:

1. That NUS recognises the importance of greater representations of ethnically and linguistically diverse students in student run and led organisations.
2. NUS understands the significance of more representation and the impact it will have in levelling the differences and inequalities between those who are ethnically or linguistically diverse and those who are not,

Action:

1. That NUS will support ethnically and linguistically diverse students in Ethnocultural collectives in providing resources and support specific to assisting in an increase of Ethnocultural representation.
2. That the NUS Ethnocultural officer will keep in close contact with collectives on affiliated campuses where Ethnocultural officers and representatives exist and where they do not exist - seek to lobbying organisations to implement or create positions.

Moved: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

Seconded: Beatrice Tan (University of Technology Sydney)

ETHNO 11.3: We Must Act Against Anti-Semitism

Preamble:

1. Antisemitism is often dismissed as a phenomenon of the past in public debate and academic discourse. Too often, people mistakenly assume that anti-Semitism is merely historical.
2. Shockingly, the opposite is true. 2017 saw a 9.5% rise* in recorded anti-Semitic incidents and a huge increase in anti-Semitic activity occurring on campus.
**Executive Council of Australian Jewry 2016-2017 Report of Antisemitism in Australia (<http://www.ecaj.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/ECAJ-Antisemitism-Report-2017.pdf>)*
3. The systematic Holocaust Denial campaign which saw the distribution of leaflets across nearly every campus in Australia is but one example. In 2017, Jewish students were attacked for simply wearing religious clothing, campuses were vandalised with swastikas and horrific statements and accusations were made against Jewish students participating in campus elections.
4. In an increasingly hostile campus environment, it is hard for Jewish students to feel safe and protected. Therefore, it is vital that the National Union of Students, the peak representative body of Australia's tertiary students, acknowledges and takes action to prevent rising anti-Semitism, both on a campus and within its own institution, similar to NUS UK.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns anti-Semitism in all its forms as defined by the globally recognised International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition. This is the working definition used by the Australian and many international Jewish Community bodies. It states that:
2. "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities".
 - a. https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/sites/default/files/press_release_document_antisemitism.pdf
3. NUS commits to working with the Australasian Union of Jewish Students (AUJS), as the peak representative body for Australasian Jewish students, to ensure NUS activist spaces, events, protests and ethno-cultural spaces are inclusive and welcoming of Jewish voices and perspectives, without any pre-qualifications necessary for Jewish students to attend and/or feel included.

Action:

1. NUS will endeavour to provide Kosher food as an option at all NUS functions/events.
2. NUS will assist AUJS in making representations to universities for special consideration and exam requirements due to Jewish holidays and Sabbath services, and ensure appropriate prayer room and religious centre facilities are available to those in need.
3. The NUS National EthnoCultural Officer will work with AUJS to run a campaign/survey, focusing on the effects of anti-Semitism on Australian campuses. This was run with tremendous success by the UK NUS in 2016-2017 and revealed some horrifying statistics.
 - a. <https://antisemitism.uk/nus-surveys-almost-500-jewish-students-finds-that-less-than-half-would-feel-comfortable-at-nus-events/>
 - b. <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/articles/jewish-students-have-told-us-about-their-experiences-now-we-must-act>
 - c. <https://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/The-experience-of-Jewish-students-in-2016-17>
4. NUS will formally recognise and publicise January 27, as designated by the United Nations General Assembly, as International Holocaust Remembrance Day; and work with AUJS in either partnering or sharing material designed to educate and commemorate the horrors of the Holocaust.

Moved: Emily Marshall (Monash University, Clayton)

Seconded: Nicola Davis (Monash University, Clayton)

ETHNO 11.4: Fighting the far right

Preamble

1. 2017 has seen a growth in the organised far right internationally. In Poland a predominantly fascist demonstration amassed 60,000 participants in November and included chants calling for a Muslim Holocaust. In the United States the election of Donald Trump has emboldened Nazis and members of the Ku Klux Klan, while political parties with strong fascist connections have experienced electoral success in Germany, Austria and France.
2. Australia has not been immune to these developments. The rise of Pauline Hanson around extremely Islamophobic policies, and the ongoing organisation of groups such as the United Patriots Front, as well as the highly publicised speaking tour of alt-right figure Milo

Yiannopoulos, demonstrate the prominence of far right politics in Australia.

3. The far-right has also gained a presence on University campuses in Australia - particularly the sandstone Go8. Islamophobic graffiti, anti-semitic posters, MAGA hats and more far-right propaganda has been sighted on numerous campuses including the University of Sydney, Melbourne University, the University of New South Wales and more. At Monash far-right organisations have held campus stalls, and at the University of Sydney the right organised a screening of 'The Red Pill', and ran a well-known islamophobe and holocaust denier on a student union election ticket.
4. There is a pressing need for the left and for progressive institutions such as student and trade unions to organise to combat these developments. The political status quo cannot be trusted to stop the rise of the far right. In fact, mainstream parties, including social democratic parties, have been responsible for normalising the racism that the far right feeds off. The Blair Labour Government's support for the Iraq War played an enormous role in normalising Islamophobia, while in Australia Labor's ongoing support for racist refugee policies has helped make anti-refugee racism a rallying call for fascists.
5. It is therefore extremely important to build a grassroots anti-racist movement in Australia, which orients to building collective resistance against the far right. Mass anti-racist protests stopped the rise of the fascist National Front in Britain in the 1970s. In the United States this year, after a Nazi murdered left-wing activist Heather Heyer, successive protests of tens of thousands in Boston and Portland massively outnumbered and demoralised far right groups which sought to organise follow up demonstrations.
6. Such mass movements have been effective because they have sought to organise the largest possible number of people who are prepared to take an active stand against the far right. Importantly, they have emphasised solidarity and shared interests amongst oppressed groups. They were also prepared to confront the far right and directly march against them.
7. These movements should inform the strategies that are adopted in opposing the far right today. Activists should seek to organise the largest number of people who are prepared to oppose the far right and organise demonstrations that are not timid, but are proud and defiant in their opposition of fascists. When the far right mobilises, they should be met with the opposition of all those who oppose their reactionary and bigoted ideas.
8. Collective grassroots organisation is the only effective and principled means by which to oppose the far right. Anti-racist and left-wing activists should not appeal to figures of authority, whether they be the Government, University Administration, the courts, or other powerful institutions, to ban or censor right-wing political groups. In the first

place such an approach does nothing to prevent the rise of the far right, which is fed by the racism, authoritarianism and other oppressive ideas that pervade mainstream society. In the second place, empowering these institutions to decide which political views are permissible is unacceptable from a left-wing point of view. Universities should not be able to discriminate who can and cannot attend a campus based on their political views. Similarly, governments should not be able to withdraw fundamental rights, such as the right to political expression, based on the views of citizens.

9. Opposing official censorship does not mean opposing the right of people to express their disagreement with particular political ideas. Everywhere the far right attempts to spread racism it should be challenged. This again places the onus on activists who oppose the far right to organise as many people as possible to challenge and express opposition to its views.
10. It has been a widespread view amongst sections of the anti-racist left that the best way to deal with the far-right is to ignore them. This is a dead end strategy. It is not anti-racist protests that provide attention to figures such as Yiannopoulos, their platform comes from a sympathetic mainstream media and powerful politician who share their views. Mobilising against the far-right is necessary to highlight the danger inherent in their racist politics, and to physically prevent their demonstrations from growing in size.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the need for grassroots activism to oppose the growth of the far-right and affirms that such activism should be centred on the building of a mass protest campaign and other forms of collective action.
2. NUS stands in solidarity with those in America and elsewhere internationally who have organised large demonstrations to resist the far right.
3. NUS opposes any censorship of political groups or speakers by campus administration.

Action:

1. NUS will look to work with anti-fascist organisations to assist in the promotion of rallies, forums, and other events as part of the campaign against the far right in Australia. This collaboration will include the promotion of such events through social media and other means, and where possible assistance in the production and distribution of materials promoting such events.
2. NUS will publish statements of solidarity and support for those resisting the rise of the far right internationally.

3. NUS will assist campus activists in campaigning against the far-right on campus. The ethno-cultural officer and other national office bearers will donate funds for materials and events, and will provide political support for campus campaigns by publishing statements, press releases, and speaking at campus demonstrations.

Moved: Chris Di Pasquale (NOB)

Seconded: Vishnupriya De (Griffith)

ETHNO 11.5: NUS Can and Should Fight Against Racism

Preamble:

1. With refugees stranded on Manus without electricity, food, water and medical supplies; with Muslims victimised in the press and by the state eager to prosecute a war on so-called “terror”; with the prisons in which Tane Chatfield and other Indigenous people have been murdered still open, racism is the bread and butter of Australian politics like no other issue. There has never been such a dire need to fight against racism in Australia.
2. The international political climate is no salvation. A far right brand of racism has surged in world politics, particularly in Europe. The Trump presidency has given a moral boost to those in the alt-right in the US, as well as homegrown racist Pauline Hanson. Fascists gathered in numbers in Charlottesville in Virginia in August, where one among them actually killed a left-wing counter-protester. Alternative fur Deutschland in Germany is the first far-right party to enter the Bundestag since deNazification in 1945, since they gained 12.6% in the September elections. Eastern Europe is awash with far-right populist and openly fascist forces. On November 11 this year, an “independence day” march in Poland saw over 50,000 march through Warsaw with key slogans
3. Just like in Australia, this racism has been encouraged and subsequently mirrored by the mainstream political parties. It was not the far right that locked the borders of Europe to refugees coming across the Mediterranean from Syria, nor is One Nation in the ruling LNP government which is currently torturing refugees on Manus (with the active support of the ALP). Honing in on the student world, it’s the policies of the sensible centre that see international students pay exorbitant fees and get hyper-exploited in places like 7/11 to pay for their stay. It sees 457 visa migrant workers stripped of many basic rights such as the right to unionise.
4. It’s both the LNP and ALP that are responsible for racism in this country. Both supported Howard’s Northern Territory Intervention in 2007, and

the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd Labor government continued it. Over the last twenty years, they’ve raced to the bottom on counter-terrorism laws that target Muslims and ramped up national security rhetoric that sees Islam as the enemy. This has resulted in attacks on hijabis in the street, and provided fertile ground for fascist grouplets to form. The bipartisanism of refugee torture is well known. The ALP began mandatory detention in 1992; Howard merely took up their mantle. Labor’s insistence (in a speech in the Senate on November 16 by Katy Gallagher) that they “believe in strong borders, offshore processing, regional resettlements and boat turnbacks” and that they will “never let people smugglers back in business” so Australia will never be a resettlement option could have come from Dutton’s mouth.

5. There’s a crying need in society for a voice against this bipartisan racist consensus. As a progressive organisation in society, NUS can and should play a role in building a culture of anti-racist protest. Despite being a student body, NUS should not be confined merely to so-called ‘student issues’ but look to show solidarity with other groups in society. The NUS ethno-cultural department will mobilise its resources for campaigns across the country, and actively participate in anti-racist campaigning both on and off campus.

Platform:

1. NUS does not limit itself to dialogue about ‘student issues’. NUS stands in solidarity with Muslims, refugees, Indigenous people and migrant workers and condemns the LNP and ALP policies that oppress them.
2. NUS recognises the dire state of racism in Australia and the increase in its global manifestations.
3. NUS supports efforts to organise protest campaigns against racist oppression in Australia, including but not limited to campaigns for refugee rights, the anti-fascist campaigns across the country and Invasion Day demonstrations.
4. NUS takes a position of global solidarity with oppressed groups and supports efforts to organise solidarity actions with the victims of imperialism and genocide.

Action:

1. The NUS Ethnocultural Department will speak out against racist policies and political figures via press releases, articles in the media and any other avenues available.
2. The NUS Ethnocultural Department will show active support to existing anti-racist campaigns.
3. The Department will publicise anti-racist campaigns through social media, press releases and any other avenues such as student publications.

4. The Department will provide resources to such campaigns, including funds for posters, leaflets, social media boosted posts, and materials required for demonstrations.
5. The Department will make an effort to mobilise students from campuses to attend anti-racist rallies.
6. The NUS Ethnocultural Department will endeavour to organise, where possible, demonstrations against racism.
7. The Department will be responsive to the political situation and explore avenues for snap protests against government policy on refugees, for example.
8. The Department will use social media, the press, and any other avenues to publicise such protests.

Moved: Chris DiPasquale (NUS LGBTI officer)

Seconded: Emma Norton (University of Western Australia)

ETHNO 11.6: Why you should protest Milo Yiannopolous and other alt-righters

Preamble:

1. Since GFC, establishment politics and parties of the neoliberal centre have increasingly turned to racism and nationalism as a cover for austerity budgets and a way of cohering their political projects in the absence of any positive policies to offer ordinary people. World crises like the reaction to the Arab spring in Syria, the genocide of Rohingya population in Myanmar and the political persecution of Tamils in Sri Lanka has created millions of refugees who have in turn become scapegoats for all forms of societal ills. Islamophobia is routinely used to legitimise and pass “anti-terror laws” which further demonise muslim communities, curtail civil liberties, and create a censorious climate of fear and repression.
2. This has laid the basis for the growth of the far right and development of what’s become known as the alt-right. In America, the election of Donald Trump gave confidence for alt-right groups and individuals to step out from anonymous internet forums to organising in the real world. In Australia this trend has been expressed by the electoral success of Pauline Hanson, the antics of hard conservatives in the Liberal Party, shock jocks like Andrew Bolt and Mark Latham, as well as the emergence of far right outfits like Reclaim Australia, neo-nazi groups like the United Patriots Front, Soldiers of Odin, and the True Blue Crew.
3. Right Wing provocateurs like Milo Yiannopoulos aren’t just media personalities and ‘trolls’ but have extensive connections to neo-nazi and violent white supremacists. The events in Charlottesville in August show

the severity of this threat. Neo-Nazi’s and white supremacists marched in the hundreds in support of confederate statues, chanting ‘blood and soil’, and inflicting terror and violence on the liberal college city culminating in the murder of antifascist activist Heather Hayer. In Australia, far right grouplets have organised demonstrations in major cities, carried out stunts in front of mosques, and harassed muslim politicians. They’ve received ample airtime on major media outlets including the ABC, Sunrise, and The Project.

4. The anti fascist protests in response to Charlottesville in America, including the 80,000 strong ‘unite against the right’ rally in Boston, have helped to throw the alt-right into disarray. Following the Boston rally, over 60 alt-right rallies that had been planned were cancelled, as organisers feared being embarrassed by a high turnout of anti-racists. In addition, the constant antifascist actions in Melbourne has seen the mobilising ability of far right groups drop from a few thousand to a couple of hundred. These cases indicate that far right forces need to be confronted with vibrant anti-racist counter-protests, in order to both politically cohere the left and to sap the confidence and organising ability of the right.
5. Furthermore, other methods for confronting the right are dead end strategies. Calling on the courts or universities to suppress the forces of the alt-right does nothing to stifle their organising abilities, allows them to paint themselves as martyrs of political correctness and crusader of free speech, and sets a anti-democratic president in an already censorious climate in society and on campus. Conversely, ignoring the right does nothing to deprive them of the plentiful oxygen they get from their extensive media appearances and only demoralises those wanting to take on these reactionaries.

Platform:

1. NUS stands against all forms of reactionary politics and understands the danger of the alt-right growing confidence and attempting to build a right wing current in Australian politics.
2. NUS supports students and communities off campus protesting against public appearances of right wingers, counter rallies against the far right.
3. NUS understands the role these mobilisations play in marginalising fascist groups, emboldening wider layers to organise against racists, and encouraging people to challenge the ideas of the right on a broader scale.

Action:

1. NUS directs all national office bearers to proactively organise, support, and promote protests against the alt-right and far right outfits.
2. NUS will work with groups such as the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism in Melbourne to build such protests.

3. NUS will continue to support anti-racist campaigns against the government including for refugee rights, against islamophobia and for indigenous rights.

Moved: Eleanor Morley (University of Sydney)

Seconded: Athulya Jancy Benny (RMIT)

ETHNO 11.7: We stand against the Antipodean Resistance

Preamble:

1. Throughout 2017 the Antipodean Resistance, an Australian neo-nazi group, has attempted to drive political life to the right by promoting extreme racism on the campuses and through demonising LGBTI people throughout the equal marriage postal vote.
2. The group went onto campuses to put up posters demonising Muslims. At Monash and Melbourne Uni they plastered posters which told Chinese international students that they would be deported, and which were designed to look as if they were produced by the student union and the university.
3. Throughout the equal marriage postal vote they put up posters linking homosexuality to pedophilia, a disgusting trope which the left has long fought against.
4. The entry of this group onto campuses and their high level of activity signifies a desire to grow neo-nazi politics. In the United States, neo-nazi groups regularly build up their forces on university campuses, organising demonstrations and events. These groups focus particularly on directing racism against Muslims, but oppose left wing politics in every sense. Their political worldview is characterised by an elitism, opposition to unionism, extreme sexism and homophobia. An example is the recent demonstration in Charlottesville, in which young neo-nazis carried torches and chanted nazi slogans. The protest, at which left wing activist Heather Heyer was killed by a member of the far right, marched directly into the University of Virginia.
5. In Australia, these right wing political currents are not likely to dissipate on their own. The virulent racism promoted by the Australian Government, combined with the rise to prominence of the far right throughout the US and across Europe gives these groups confidence and adds credence to their political position, making it likely that they will increase their attempts to bring their reactionary organisations prominent.
6. In response to the above, it is imperative that students on campuses across Australia build up a tradition of anti-racist organising. Students

who oppose racism are given confidence to stand up to the right through collective organising, seeing that there are others on their side who are willing to be defiant in the face of reactionary politics. An example is the response at Monash University to the Antipodean Resistance posters. The Environment & Social Justice department of the student union department organised a series of tutorials to take solidarity photographs with a placard declaring opposition to the racist posters, and held daily stalls to encourage students to take similar solidarity photographs or help to put up anti-racist posters. These are just small examples of the wider organising that can be done in response, including protests, publication of anti-racist political material, and ongoing campaigns.

7. Actions such as those by the Antipodean Resistance should be virulently opposed by student unions both on individual campuses and nationally. Rather than calling on university management to repress these groups, student unions must at every opportunity vocally take the side of the left and attempt to use their institutional weight to lend confidence and organising ability to anti-right activists. This is what can lead to the development of left wing, anti-racist currents on the campus without stripping away political freedom.

Platform:

1. NUS stands in deep opposition to all manifestations of neo-nazi and far right politics.
2. NUS opposes the posters put up by the Antipodean Resistance.
3. NUS recognises the importance of student unions taking a lead in organising progressive activism against neo-nazis.

Action:

1. NUS will put resources into campaigning against the Antipodean Resistance if they come onto campuses again.
2. NUS will help campus student unions to organise activism including photo petitions and protests against the far right.
3. NUS will make public through facebook posts and it's website the fact that
4. It opposes the far right
5. It supports activism against far right politics
6. NUS will proactively lead a response to the far right in future
7. NUS will reach out to other left wing groups and campaigns such as the Campaign Against Racism and Fascism

Moved: Eleanor Morley (University of Sydney)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

ETHNO 11.8: Racist hysteria and the Apex Gang

Preamble:

1. The so-called Apex gang was an invention by the media, Victoria Police and the Andrews Government used to criminalise young African migrants living in the suburbs of Melbourne. Since the Apex gang was first reported on in March 2016, it has been exposed that no such gang with any formal structures ever existed but was rather a term adopted by a loose collection of friends. The media, in particular the Murdoch-owned Herald Sun, as well as Victoria Police and the State Government played a large role in popularising the term, leading to its notoriety and use.
2. The Apex gang functioned as any other racist scapegoat, used by the Liberal opposition to discredit Daniel Andrews apparently weak stance on law and order, and used by the Labor Government to justify their massive expansion of the police, their powers and the erosion of civil liberties such as bail and parole.
3. The targeting of African youth by evoking the bogeyman of the Apex gang has become stock-in-trade for the Andrews Government, hellbent on pursuing a repressive law-and-order agenda in order to secure their place in the polls. Daniel Andrews has presided over extending sentencing for minors, shifted juvenile detention from the Department of Human Services to Corrections Victoria (who manage adult prisons) and even referred minors who've been charged with crimes to Border Force for potential deportation.
4. Court proceedings show that African youth in Victoria are stopped at two and a half times the rate as their white counterparts, despite being underrepresented in crime statistics. This is the result of a concerted media campaign tying African youth, often migrants themselves, to crime and the fictitious Apex gang.

Platform:

1. National Union of Students (NUS) condemns the Victorian State Government's repressive law-and-order agenda and recognises that Premier Daniel Andrews pursues this in order to shore up his votes and woo institutions such as Victoria Police.
2. NUS recognises that the Apex gang is a racist invention of the right-wing media and the police in order to create a scapegoat that can justify increased police spending and powers, and the erosion of civil liberties.
3. NUS recognises that this crackdown on the African community is racist and we stand with the African youth who are increasingly the target of racial profiling by Victoria Police.
4. NUS recognises that broadly, law-and-order campaigns by governments are never driven by concern for safety and are almost always used for

racist scapegoating, as a cover for eroding civil liberties and for increasing the repressive capacity of the state.

Action:

1. NUS Ethnocultural Officer release a statement condemning the Andrews Government's racist law-and-order campaign and calling for the overturn of these repressive laws and condemning Victoria Police for racial profiling of African youth.
2. NUS Ethnocultural Officer also release a statement standing in solidarity with African youth and commit to supporting and providing solidarity with the African community when it resists the racism of the state of Victoria.

Moved: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

ETHNO 11.9: Stop Australia's racist citizenship changes

Preamble:

1. The citizenship changes proposed by the liberal government should not be seen as nothing but an extension of their racism and bigotry towards immigrants and refugees. This turn towards ethno-nationalism fits with the broader policy of the government of Muslim-bashing, Refugee demonization and promoting mass hysteria around immigrant gangs. The government is obscenely utilizing the racist citizenship system as wedge to differentiate those who are "white enough" to live in Australia and those who are not. The changes include a university-level English language proficiency test, which many Australian-born citizens would fail if they had to take it. Proposed sections give Dutton the power to decide whether or not the applicant had integrated into the Australian community. Some children born in Australia can also be denied citizenship simply due to their parents' immigration status. These measures are the kind of measures fascists in Europe and the US praise Australia for and even sometimes think go to far. This is nothing but a thinly veiled racist attack on civil liberties and immigrants' rights. It is a move to further establish the Trump-style border regime that the Australian state is committed to.

Platform:

1. NUS is committed to opposing racism and defending the rights of students from immigrant backgrounds to stay in the country and have full citizenship rights.

Action:

1. That NUS publicly denounce changes to the citizenship laws and extend solidarity to students affected by the racism of the Australian state and racist organizations by being more active in campaigns that fight around this issue.

Moved: Melinda Suter (university of Melbourne)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith University)

ETHNO 11.10: Condemn Donald Trump: Racist Warmonger**Preamble:**

1. Billionaire bigot Donald Trump has been President of the US for under a year. In the space of a few months he has pushed through draconian racist policies and promised more to come; he has increased the likelihood of a nuclear war with North Korea, threatening to 'totally destroy North Korea'; and he has emboldened a motley crew of white nationalists, the KKK and fascists, and contributed to the growth of the Far Right across the world.
2. Suffering a crisis in his unpopular administration and possible impeachment Trump has doubled down on his most racist and militarist election promises, throwing a bone to his small but rabid base of right-wing supporters.
3. One of Trump's first executive orders was to massively increase the racist 'deportation force' ICE (Immigrations and Customs Enforcement), increasing their funding and training 10,000 new officers. Since then ICE has waged a campaign of terror against undocumented migrants and Latinx communities more generally. More recently he has pushed through a repeal of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, making 800,000 young adults eligible for deportation.
4. Trump reacted to the horrific events in Charlottesville, where a young antifascist protester was murdered by members of the Far Right, by condemning 'both sides', equating the KKK and white supremacists with those protesting against them.
5. Moreover, Trump has attempted to stack out the White House with white nationalists, is going ahead with building a wall on the US-Mexican border, and has pardoned the most racist and corrupt police official in the US, Joe Apai while attacking anti-racist NFL footballers in the media.
6. In almost every country, including Australia, Trump's election has spurred on the growth of the Far Right. Here, we have a multitude of

small fascist organisations inspired by Trump, while Pauline Hanson is attempting to position herself as Australia's Trump.

7. Trump's belligerent stance on North Korea, and his massive expansion of the military budget (which received bipartisan support), could lead to an unfathomably destructive nuclear war. Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has welcomed these developments, promising Australian troops in the event of a war with North Korea and stating that Australia stands 'shoulder to shoulder' with the American government, and that 'the American alliance is the bedrock of our national security'.
8. Similarly, Turnbull has failed to condemn the appalling racism of the Trump administration, instead meeting with its officials and supporting his government.
9. Shamefully, the Australian Labor Party have largely followed the Liberals' line on Trump. Bill Shorten congratulated the Liberal government on its response to Trump's warmongering.
10. NUS is an anti-racist organisation, whose responsibility it is to oppose racism in all its forms. We should also be extremely worried about the possibility of a nuclear war, driven by the Trump administration, which would threaten the lives of millions around the world.
11. Internationally, organisations which represent students and workers are joining in the condemnation of the Trump administration. In countries where Trump has or is set to meet with other world leaders, protests have been organised against him. Most recently, South Korea saw thousands protest Trump's visit, the devastating sanctions on North Korea, and the impending war which could destroy the Korean peninsula. Three quarters of South Koreans polled agreed that Trump is 'dangerous'.
12. Around the world, there has also been opposition to Trump's horrific racism, sexism and homophobia. The Women's marches at the beginning of the year and the 'Day without Immigrants' were important demonstrations against the Trump administration, which had echoes in Australia and other countries.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the racist, warmonger-in-chief, Donald Trump.
2. NUS supports and offers solidarity to the resistance against Trump, in America and elsewhere.
3. NUS condemns Australian politicians who have supported Trump's drive to war, and who have failed to oppose his racist rhetoric.

Action:

1. NUS will continue to solidarize with people around the world protesting Trump, and will mobilise students for any international demonstrations against his horrific new world order.

2. The 2018 NUS Ethnocultural Officer will look for opportunities to mobilise students against Trump, especially if he visits Australia.
3. The 2018 NUS Ethnocultural Officer will ensure that the Australian Far Right and One Nation, who take inspiration from Trump, are met with protests whenever they hold public demonstrations.
4. NUS will oppose, in words and action, any further developments towards nuclear war with North Korea.

Moved: Eleanor Morley (University of Sydney)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

ETHNO 11.11: No to Dutton's super department

Preamble:

1. The Liberal government announced the creation of a Home Affairs department which will incorporate ASIO, the AFP, Immigration, Border Force and smaller crime-related agencies including the Australian Crime Intelligence Commission and AUSTRAC. This concentrates significant power into a single portfolio.
2. The new 'super department' is set to be overseen by Peter Dutton by June 30 2018.
3. This is part of the process of strengthening the repressive powers of the state under the guise of "national security".
4. This has served to drastically decrease civil liberties in Australia. Under the banner of anti-terror laws, people are able to be held for being suspected of considering a terrorist offence (for possible thought crime). People (and in some states children) can be detained for 14 days without charge if suspected of committing a terrorist act. The right of confidential legal counsel can be withheld. There's also been huge expansion in surveillance, particularly in data retention as well as increased permission for the ADF to use lethal force.
5. The narrative of national security is also used to whip up Islamophobia – to distract from right-wing economic policy and scapegoat Muslims. Almost all of the people charged under anti-terror laws identify as Muslim, who are charged under offences relating to association, planning or planning to plan, rather than any act of violence.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the formation of the Home Affairs department.
2. NUS opposes the ongoing militarisation and strengthening of the Australian government's repressive and surveillance institutions such as ASIO and the AFP.

3. NUS stands against Islamophobia in all its forms.

Action:

1. The Ethnocultural officer will campaign against the introduction of the Home Affairs department.
2. The Ethnocultural officer will campaign against any new legislation which increases the powers of ASIO, the AFP or Border Force.
3. The Ethnocultural officer will support demonstrations against the racism and repression of ASIO, the AFP, Immigration and Border Force.
4. The Ethnocultural officer will build links with anti-racist community organisations.

Moved: Eleanor Morley (University of Sydney)

Seconded: Kim Collett (Griffith University)

ETHNO 11.12: Refugee Scholarships on all campuses

Preamble:

1. The number of refugees globally has reached 22.5 million, the highest number of refugees since the UNHCR started taking records in 1950
2. The scale of the current world refugee crisis can largely be attributed to political and military instability instigated or exacerbated by the imperialist interventions of powerful nations, including, in no small part, our own Australian government
3. A direct bolster to the military capacity of various states intervening in the regions where the refugee crisis is at it's worst is the investment from various key Australian universities in weapons research and manufacturing companies. For example, the University of Melbourne's investment in Lockheed Martin, or RMIT university's investment in BAE systems.
4. Australia resettled only 1.43% of the global number of refugees resettled in 2016, and continues to do so on a basis of increasingly precarious visas and increasing difficulty for refugees to obtain citizenship or any kind of permanency. Not to mention the appalling boat turnback policy and mandatory offshore detention for asylum seekers, the policies of successive Australian governments regarding refugees have made it near impossible for anyone fleeing war or persecution to seek asylum in Australia.
5. For those refugees who are resettled in Australia, there are the added difficulties of learning the language, finding work, living off the pittance of social welfare provided or finding adequate housing.

6. Currently, only 12 universities across Australia offer refugee or humanitarian scholarships for people on temporary protection visas. These are a great means by which refugees, an already significantly marginalised section of the community, can be provided access to the Australian higher education system. Education is a right, no less for those denied the right to safety and stability in their own country.
7. The program in place at Adelaide University was created by the initiative and energy of student activists in their student union, by holding forums with academics, making anti racist arguments to staff and students and collecting thousands of signatures demanding its implementation. This is a model for the role student unions can play in demanding university administrations implement refugee scholarships, and illustrates the centrality of making broader anti racist arguments and creating an on campus anti racist atmosphere to have an effective campaign

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the benefits of Refugee Scholarships for refugees struggling to resettle in Australia.
2. NUS also recognises the role that Refugee Scholarships can play in creating an anti racist and welcoming campus.
3. NUS believes that education should be a right afforded to all people residing in Australia and around the world, one step towards this being increased accessibility for refugees through scholarship programs
4. NUS calls upon all universities in Australia to either expand their existing refugee scholarship program or to immediately instate one, especially those universities with direct links to weapons manufacturers perpetuating and worsening the refugee crisis around the world

Action:

1. The NUS welfare officer, working with the ethno-cultural officer, will initiate and coordinate campus level campaigns around the country calling upon all universities to put in place a refugee scholarship program

Moved: Tom Gilchrist (University of Adelaide)

Secoded: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

ETHNO 11.13: Against Pauline Hanson

Preamble:

1. Pauline Hanson's One Nation has risen to prominence on the back of racism, xenophobia, and the demonisation of Muslims. One Nation has spurred on already-existing islamophobia in Australian society, acting as a political force for the normalisation of islamophobic discrimination.
2. Pauline Hanson has historically pioneered right-wing shifts in policy regarding the rights of asylum seekers, Indigenous people, and migrants, with the Howard government, as an example, having adopted various policies originally proposed by One Nation in the 1990's.
3. One Nation has acted as a far-right political pole, contributing to a rightward political shift with regards to immigration, refugee rights, and Muslim people. One Nation have argued for a ban on immigration by Muslim people, engaged in demonization of the social and religious practices of Muslims, and have continued to argue for xenophobic immigration policy.
4. One Nation have supported government attacks on the organisational rights of trade unions, while supporting government legislation reducing corporate tax rates, as well as supporting cuts to welfare spending.
5. One Nation's electoral success has emboldened other far-right political groups throughout Australia, further bolstering the presence of racism and xenophobia in politics and society.
6. Instead of challenging the politics of the far-right, sections within major parties have taken the electoral rise of One Nation as a signal to further accommodate for racist politics, serving to legitimise the supposed 'concerns' of One Nation supporters.
7. Consequently, mobilised opposition to One Nation has not been significant enough to fundamentally challenge the politics of One Nation and the far-right in general.
8. NUS concluded the 2017 Education conference with a demonstration outside of One Nation's Brisbane electoral office, protesting against vile racism which One Nation propagates.
9. NUS and the student body has the capacity to significantly contribute to campaigns against One Nation and the far-right through the mobilisation of students against racist politics.
10. NUS has the capacity to set a precedent for how unions and anti-racist campaigns can challenge the racism and islamophobia in Australian society.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the racist bigotry of Pauline Hanson's One Nation.
2. NUS supports the rights of refugees to seek asylum in Australia, and condemns the political demonisation of refugees to which One Nation contributes.

3. NUS supports the rights of Muslim people to freedom from discrimination and bigotry, and absolutely rejects the islamophobic portrayal of Muslim people that is promoted by One Nation.
4. NUS understands that a strategy to oppose One Nation must challenge the racism and islamophobia of One Nation, while simultaneously exposing One Nation as a party that stands counter-posed to the economic interests of workers and students.

Action:

1. NUS will continue to stand against racism and islamophobia in Australian society, combatting racist lies that One Nation promotes.
2. The 2018 National Ethno-Cultural Officer will run a campaign against racism and against Pauline Hanson's One Nation. This will include, but not be limited to, promotion and building of anti-racist events and demonstrations, and active political engagement with students regarding issues of racism and discrimination.
3. The 2018 National Ethno-Cultural Officer will engage in mobilisations against One Nation and the far-right.
4. The 2018 National Ethno-Cultural Officer will seek to collaborate with student and community organisations to contribute to the continued growth of an anti-racist, anti-One Nation campaign.

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS LGBTI officer)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith University)

ETHNO 11.14: Solidarity with Rohingya Refugees

Preamble:

1. The horrific incursions by the Myanmar military into northern Rakhine state, a Rohingya-majority area of the country, have resulted in more than 400,000 Rohingya being forced to flee across the border into Bangladesh.
2. The United Nations describes the current situation as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing, and asked the Myanmar government to stop all current military operations and all discrimination against Rohingya people.
3. A Citizenship Law passed in 1982 excluded them from consideration as a recognised ethnicity; in recent years they have been forced to hand over the residence registration papers they had been issued. In a census held last year they were denied the right to register as "Rohingya", being allowed only the choice of being recorded as "Bengali" (thereby declaring themselves foreigners).

4. These legal restrictions and accompanying discrimination and persecution have resulted in 50 percent of the Rohingya population being forced to flee the unsafe situation they are facing in Myanmar.
5. The Australian government has refused to allow Rohingyas fleeing this situation to come to Australia, instead torturing them on Manus Island and attempting to bribe them into going back to Myanmar to certain torture and persecution.

Platform:

1. NUS stands in solidarity with Rohingya refugees.
2. NUS acknowledges the rights of refugees to seek asylum and refuge from persecution.
3. NUS Stands against the racism and Islamophobia which has been increasingly targeted at refugees and perpetuated by the Australian governmental.
4. NUS condemns the escalation by the Australian government in closing down the detention centers leaving refugees with no water, food, and medicine.
5. NUS acknowledges the necessity of institutional support to put pressure on the government to stop the torture of refugees and bring them here.

Action:

1. NUS will endorse and support any demonstration in support of refugee rights and will encourage students to attend.
2. NUS will print materials such as leaflets, placards, banners, posters to help build solidarity actions that support refugee rights.
3. NUS will promote any refugee rally on all of its facebook pages by creating facebook events, sharing rally events, and providing advertising on FB.
4. The 2018 NUS Ethno officer will expend resources on organising and supporting refugee demonstrations
5. The 2018 NUS Ethno officer will actively work with Rohingya and refugee support groups

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS LGBTI officer)

Seconded: Caitlin Egloff-Barr (Curtin University)

ETHNO 11:15: Education Not Detention: Free the Refugees!

Preamble:

1. A Save the Children/Unicef report released in September 2016 found that the government's refugee policies have cost a total of \$9.6 billion between the 2013 and 2016 financial years. This includes the cost of detention both in Australia and on Manus and Nauru, as well as the government's turnback policies.
2. In the 2016/17 budget the projected spending of the Government over the next three years is \$3+ billion on Border Enforcement, \$684+ million on Border Management, \$3+ billion on Onshore Compliance and Detention and \$1+ billion on Offshore Management, totalling at least another \$8 billion.
3. The Australian Government has over many years pursued an agenda of gutting funding to important public services such as healthcare, welfare, and education. This includes proposed cuts of \$2.8 billion from higher education.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes all forms of mandatory detention and offshore processing and demands an end to the detention regime and for all refugees to be brought to Australia immediately.
2. NUS believes that public money should be spent on public services and not on funding the implementation of racist refugee policies.
3. NUS believes that public services such as education, welfare and healthcare should be fully funded by the government and provided for free and is committed to fighting around these demands.

Action:

1. NUS and the NUS Ethno-Cultural Officer will promote and support demonstrations for refugee rights and encourage students to attend.
2. NUS and relevant NUS Office Bearers will support and dedicate resources to campaigns around increasing funding to public services.
3. NUS and relevant Office Bearers will publicly oppose any proposed cuts to higher education, welfare or healthcare.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

ETHNO 11.16: Tear Down the Statues - No Pride in Genocide

Preamble:

1. Statues of colonial figures such as Lachlan Macquarie, James Cook, and Robert Towns testify to and celebrate Australia's racist history of dispossession and genocide of Indigenous peoples. Australian capitalism was built on stolen land. The sugar and pastoral industries, both cornerstones of early Australian capitalism, relied heavily on dispossession of Indigenous peoples as well as indentured Islander labour.
2. Monuments which venerate disgusting figures are not merely historical. Lachlan Macquarie, who ordered punitive massacres and the lynching of Indigenous people, is described as "a perfect gentleman" on a plaque near his statue in Sydney's Hyde Park. This statue was unveiled by the NSW government in only 2013. These statues clearly intend to whitewash colonial violence and contribute to Australian nationalism.
3. The statues serve as a reminder that Australian capitalism remains noxiously racist, and still relies on the ongoing oppression and genocide of Indigenous peoples. Tearing down these symbols of colonial violence is a rejection of the racism of Australian capitalism, and a stubborn refutation of the notion that this racism should be glorified in any way.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the removal of racist monuments to Australia's colonial past.
2. NUS opposes the ongoing oppression of Indigenous peoples, such as the forced closure of Aboriginal communities, the Northern Territory intervention, welfare income quarantining, and systematic police violence.

Action:

1. The NUS Ethnocultural & ATSI Departments will write a public statement declaring support for the removal of racist statues, and an end to the racist policies of the Australian state.
2. The NUS Ethnocultural & ATSI Departments will put resources towards activism taking up the question of Indigenous rights.

Moved: Lauren Saunders (NUS LGBTI officer)

Seconded: Elliot Downes (La Trobe University)

ETHNO 11.17: True Blue Crew, United Patriots Front and the growth of the far right - It's right to protest Nazis!

Preamble:

1. Over the past few years a rash of hard right to far right racist groups have emerged across Australia. They have been confident enough to emerge from the Internet, show their faces openly in public and display their symbols of hatred. Worse still they have been involved in several serious mobilisations of varying character. Most have an islamophobic focus, but it has not been beyond them to target people who are Indigenous, LGBTI or women, for example.
2. This has been fostered and allowed by successive governments, whose language and actions have demonstrated an absolute commitment to normalising racism and oppression generally.
3. Policies which were first drafted by Pauline Hanson in the late 90s, such as mandatory and offshore detention, have become political norms in Australia. This is a badge of honour for the major parties, patting themselves on the back for their courageous bipartisanship in indefinitely locking up refugees for no crime at all.
4. This has mirrored the growth of the far right and fascist groups across the world. The election of Trump was but one of the boosts the international far right received recently.
5. With the mainstream media giving these far right voices massive amounts of airtime, coverage and freedom to speak openly about racism, it is up to us as a union of students to support challenges to them.
6. We must acknowledge that any accommodation or concession to the far right is no way to challenge them. Instead we have to learn from the histories of fighting fascist groups. This is a proud history of counter-mobilising and drowning them out in numbers, breaking their confidence and pushing them back in the shadows. After Charlottesville, the far right had to cancel their US-wide protests after one of their protests garnered 25 in Boston, only to be outnumbered by the 15 000 on our side. This is how to break the confidence of the far right, with proud protesting.
7. We must also recognise that they are only part of the problem. We as a union must stand against racism, oppression and its normalisation by the supposed respectable centre of politics, those with institutional power to actually do what the nazis can only say. The Islamophobic justifications of Australia's interventions in the Middle East are but one example.
8. If you're against mass opposition to serious far right mobilisations, you are to the right of Mitt Romney and in the same league as Trump after Charlottesville. It is the worst kind of pandering to the forces of the far right to deny a political challenge is necessary.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that anti-racism is sorely needed in Australia. Specifically, movements are needed to challenge oppression on the streets with our own message of solidarity with our numbers.
2. NUS in particular condemns Islamophobia, as it is a key mobilising tool of the far right, whipped up and normalised by governments across Australia.
3. This therefore demands that NUS takes up the fight against the most ugly manifestations of oppression in the form of the far right.
4. It also demands that NUS takes on the governments of the day, and the Labor and Liberal Parties and other political formations like One Nation to oppose their actions and language of oppression, like their treatment of refugees and immigrants.

Action:

1. NUS will support the campaigns of public mobilisation against the far right and nazis.
2. The various offices of NUS will treat the rise of the far right as a central threat and therefore play a central role of mobilisation as part of a strategy of challenging oppression.
3. NUS will also support the campaigns challenging governments whose policies create the climate which leads to emboldening nazi and far right groups.

Moved: Emma Norton (university of Western Australia)

Seconded: Clare Francis (Curtin University)

ETHNO 11.18: Anti Trump Rallies

Preamble:

1. Throughout early 2017, protests were organised all across the major cities in Australia, in the wake of Donald Trump's election as US President. These protests, inspired by those in the US, rejected Trump's racism, sexism, Islamophobia and anti working class politics and were a major success, mobilising hundreds of people across the country. This included over a thousand people calling for global resistance in Melbourne and Sydney as well as roughly 300 coming out against Trump's Muslim ban in Adelaide.
2. The protests showed how important it is for activists to use international events to mobilise people around social issues in Australia. This was proven by the fact that these protests were some of the largest against Islamophobia that we have seen in recent years. These protests

acknowledged that Trump represents right wing politics globally and that Australia is not exempt from this. Here we have our own far right politicians, with the likes of Pauline Hanson and Cory Bernardi sharing some of the most vile aspects of Trump's politics. This isn't even to mention the fact that the two major parties in Australia have also backed Trump's threats of nuclear war against North Korea more recently.

3. These protests were just the beginning of a necessary fight to challenge the Islamophobia and right wing politics here in Australia.

Platform:

1. NUS is firmly opposed to Donald Trump and his racism.
2. NUS recognises that taking up social issues, including questions of racism and Islamophobia, is union business.

Action:

1. NUS supports the anti Trump protests and will support such actions in the future. This will include organising protests against Trump's imperial aggression and further attacks on civil liberties. This will also include organising protests against the far right in Australia as this represents a similar threat.

Moved: Tom Auld (University of Adelaide)

Seconded: Tom Gilchrist (University of South Australia)

ETHNO 11.19: Bring Manus and Nauru refugees and asylum seekers to Australia

Preamble:

1. On October 31, the detention centre on Manus Island was formally closed by the Australian Government and extreme pressure began to be placed on the refugees detained therein to leave. This came following a protracted period in which water and electricity were cut off, facilities were destroyed, staff were evacuated, and food ceased to be supplied to the detention centre.
2. In the following weeks the Australian government via the Papua New Guinean security forces continued to place extreme pressure on the refugees to leave. More of the facilities were destroyed, including containers which the refugees had been using to catch rainwater in order to survive. Wells were polluted with refuse, while refugees suffering from severe medical conditions went untreated.
3. On November 23rd the security forces stormed the detention centre, wreaking carnage, and with video footage demonstrating them savagely

beating the refugees. Journalist Behrouz Boochani, a detainee, was arrested, while dozens of others were forcibly removed. This came after looters had earlier invaded the detention centre with machetes, and after earlier in the year the PNG Navy had fired live ammunition into it, wounding several refugees.

4. The refugees are deeply fearful for their safety in the replacement facilities. They have suffered repeated assaults since their imprisonment on PNG, with six refugees dying since 2013. Other threats to the refugees are legion, including potential assault by the PNG Navy and Mobile Squad Units, a paramilitary which has been documented to torture and abuse detainees. Diseases such as cholera, typhoid and dysentery threaten to break out.
5. Protests have rippled through Australia demanding the refugees are brought here to safety. There have also been a number of inspiring direct actions, including protests at the Melbourne Cup and the blockading of the Australian Border Force offices. The NSW Young Labor Left have called on Anthony Albanese and Tanya Plibersek to oppose offshore processing, while Victorian Trades Hall Council have condemned both the Government and Labor Opposition and called for the refugees to be brought to Australia. These are commendable stances and demonstrate the importance of unions and the left taking a principled stance on this issue.
6. The detainment of refugees on Manus Island and Nauru has always been against international law and a violation of the fundamental human right to seek asylum. The pursuit of offshore processing by both major parties is a stain on Australian politics and there is a vital need to continue to build a campaign in support of the rights of asylum seekers.

Platform:

1. NUS calls on the Australian Government to bring all of the refugees and asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru to Australia.
2. NUS condemns the Australian Government and the Australian Labor Party for their support of offshore processing.
3. NUS supports and commends those who have protested and taken direct action in support of the men on Manus Island.
4. NUS recognises that the refugees themselves have undertaken inspiring acts of resistance against their mistreatment and commends them for doing so.
5. NUS condemns the Australian Government for overseeing the arrest of Behrouz Boochani, and supports his work as a dissident journalist on Manus Island.
6. NUS supports the ongoing organisation of a grassroots campaign for refugee rights.

Action:

1. NUS will publicise protests and other events promoting refugee rights through its National Office Bearer positions.
2. NUS will seek collaboration with trade unions, campaign groups and other organisations which defy the Government and Labor's support for offshore processing.
3. NUS will encourage campus unions to organise and publicise contingents to demonstrations for refugee rights, and to publicise such demonstrations by other means, including social media and the distribution of campaign materials.
4. NUS will lend solidarity, and, where possible, material assistance to activists who are persecuted for protesting in defiance of the government's refugee policies.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith University)

ETHNO 11.20: Stand up to Islamophobia

Preamble:

1. Islamophobia is a scourge in Australia and internationally. In recent years it has continued to rise to appalling levels.
2. Politicians and the media have pursued a racist narrative that has connected Muslims and Islam to violence and terrorism. This narrative has been pushed by both conservative and small-l-liberal wings, with the disagreements a matter of emphasis. They all agree there is something wrong with Islam and Muslims, the right blames all Muslims and the more liberal wings think we need to get the "good Muslims" on side in the fight against "Islamic extremism". Both narratives must be opposed.
3. Sensationalised reports have been whipped up about terror attacks and plots, both real and imagined. There have been repeated hyped up terror raids to which the media have been invited to document the whole thing, only to have those arrested quietly released without charge shortly afterwards. Measures like the removal of bins from public places and the installation of "anti-terror bollards" have contributed to an amped up climate of fear and hostility.
4. The conflation of Islam with terrorism is used to justify extremely repressive legislation. ASIO has the right to detain suspected terrorists in custody with no right to confidential legal counsel and no right to see the evidence brought against them. The Council of Australian Governments has agreed to push to extend nationally laws currently in

- place in New South Wales that allow police to detain a terror suspect – who could be as young as 14 – without charge for 14 days.
5. Right-wingers in and out of parliament have targeted everything from the building of mosques to halal certification, claiming a threat to "Western civilisation" in the basic practices of Muslim people. The seemingly fringe and conspiratorial anti-halal views of figures like Cory Bernardi were given the legitimacy of a Senate inquiry, while in 2014 the Liberals briefly considered a ban on Muslim women wearing face veils in federal parliament. Pauline Hanson's burqa stunt was a particularly provocative incident, but the Islamophobia behind it is a regular part of parliamentary proceedings.
 6. It is in this atmosphere that an Islamophobic party like One Nation could thrive, and even become a regular and normalised part of Australian politics. The Western Australian branch of the Liberals struck a desperate preference deal with the party in the state elections there this year, and Turnbull has relied upon their support in the Senate to get parts of his reactionary agenda through, including cuts to health, welfare and education spending and the anti-worker ABCC legislation.
 7. All this has unfortunately impacted upon the attitudes of the Australian population. A 2015 University of South Australia report found that around 10% of Australians had highly Islamophobic attitudes, while a further 20% were unsure about how they felt. Several polls have found greater than 40% support for a ban on Muslims entering Australia.
 8. These attitudes have translated into discrimination, abuse and violence. A 2014 Scanlon Foundation survey found that 27 percent of Muslim Australians have experienced discrimination. A University of Western Sydney survey found that 77% of Muslim women experienced racism on public transport or in the street. A 2017 study of Islamophobic incidents found that physical harassment occurred in 29.6% of incidents. Muslim women were disproportionately targeted: 67.7% of those attacked were female, 1 in 3 of whom had their children with them.
 9. The same study found a clear link between media and government Islamophobia and street abuse. Reports on terror attacks in the media and the government's 2014 proposal to ban Muslim women from wearing face veils in federal parliament both correlated with a spike in cases. A 2015 study revealed that there was a three-fold increase in the number of incidents following the proposal of the ban in parliament.
 10. Internationally, we have seen trends which could easily replicate themselves in Australia, and which the far right have taken inspiration from:
 - a. In Europe, far right parties sprouting Islamophobia have been able to perform well in recent elections. In Germany the far right Alternative for Germany are now the third largest party in the Bundestag, Marine Le Pen of the Front National finished second in the French presidential elections, and in Austria the fascist Freedom Party of Austria are in talks to be part of a

- coalition government after recent elections. All the electoral formations used extreme hostility towards Muslims as part of their campaign.
- b. The Islamophobia these parties trade off of has not come out of nowhere. Mainstream parties of both the centre-left and centre-right in all these countries have whipped up Islamophobia in recent years, with partial or full government bans on Muslim women wearing face coverings in public in Germany, France, Austria, and Belgium. These racist bans have been upheld by the European Court of Human Rights.
 - c. In the United States, Donald Trump ran on a platform of banning all Muslims entering the US, and has since issued executive orders aimed at limiting the movement of nationals of certain majority-Muslim countries to the US. This follows years of the "war on terror" in which Muslim majority countries were invaded and Muslims in the US were subject to demonisation and harassment at the hands of the state. Bipartisan support for racist policies in the chambers of government has given white supremacists and neo-Nazis increasing confidence to march the streets
11. The international dominance of Islamophobia has also given further confidence to racists in Australia. Islamophobic politicians like Cory Bernardi and Pauline Hanson celebrated Trump's victory with champagne and smiling selfies.
 12. A large number of students are Muslim, and have had to deal with Islamophobia from university administrations and racist abusers. The University of Sydney prayer room has been trashed and vandalised multiple times. At a series of universities in Western Australia far-right activists have physically invaded prayer spaces and a pig's head was found in a mosque toilet. University administrations have shown little concern about these attacks. On top of this, prayer facilities are often overcrowded and inadequate. It is crucial that we stand in support of Muslim students.
 13. On top of supporting Muslim students, fighting racism is always union business. Australian governments have a long history of using racism to aid in their pursuit of a broader reactionary agenda. This has only increased in recent decades with the dominance of neoliberalism: governments who have nothing good to offer ordinary people have relied on politics of division, distraction and bulls*** nationalism. The most nakedly obvious and cynical example of this is Tony Abbott's increasing of the terror alert level in the wake of the disastrously unpopular 2014 budget, but it is an enduring feature of Australian politics. We cannot fight for a better education system or better student welfare if we are not prepared to confront the racist campaigns used by governments to distract and divide movements. Our union can and should play a role in building campaigns against Islamophobia.

14. There have been positive anti-racist responses to Islamophobia in society. Following the 2014 Martin Place siege a social media campaign in support of Australian Muslims was launched using the hashtag "#illridewithyou" to assist Muslims who may feel intimidated to use public transportation. The protests in the US against Trump's Muslim ban inspired protests in Australia in solidarity. We need to build on these campaigns against Islamophobia and the far right.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns Islamophobia. We stand in solidarity with Muslims, on and off campus. We recognise Islamophobia is a noxious form of racism and must be called out as such.
2. NUS recognises that the war on terror and anti-terror campaigns are racist and should be opposed. We condemn all existing and proposed anti-terror laws.
3. NUS condemns the Islamophobia and racism of the Liberal and Labor parties. We condemn Pauline Hanson and One Nation.
4. NUS recognises that all unionists have a stake in fighting against the global rise of racism, of which Islamophobia is a particularly acute form.
5. NUS commits itself to organising against Islamophobia.

Action:

1. The NUS Ethnocultural Officer will support and promote campaigns and actions against Islamophobia.
2. The NUS Ethnocultural Officer will coordinate efforts of students nationally to speak out and organise against Islamophobia. This may include, but is not limited to, organising protests, producing fact sheets, running social media campaigns, and producing petitions.
3. The NUS Ethnocultural Officer will, where appropriate, organise in response to international Islamophobic events, building off of the successful protests against Trump's Muslim ban.
4. NUS will make clear through press statements and social media the positions outlined in the platform, including opposition to anti-terror laws.

Moved: Emma Norton (University of Western Australia)

Seconded: Priya De (Griffith University)

ETHNO 11.21: The Regional Students are Revolting

Preamble:

1. It's become a cliché in NUS to accept that small and regional campuses are too isolated, passive or conservative to take part in national protest campaigns. It has been argued that small and regional campus unions which are under-resourced, distant from metropolitan centres where politics happens and more likely to cater to students from poor and working class backgrounds are unable to organise protests, direct actions or any activism more radical than a yearly sausage sizzle. Some have argued that national days of action are inaccessible or even alienating, counterposing noodle stalls, photo petitions and cosying up to university management with organising rallies to fight fee increases, campus cuts, or for refugee rights. Recent campaigns at Wollongong University and the University of Newcastle have shown that students at small and regional campuses can organise successful campaigns around on-campus issues and national campaigns when office bearers do the work to engage students.
2. At Wollongong University this year there has been a revival of student activism under difficult circumstances, with the campus union run by Liberals, recently disaffiliated from NUS and under threat of being closed down. The NUS Make Education Free Again campaign organised the first rally in 3 years, including a protest on May 17 with 200 staff and students. NUS has rebuilt its presence on campus with the National President and LGBTI Officer visiting to speak at protests against fee increases and as part of the YES campaign for marriage equality.
3. Doing the basic work of having campaign stalls, lecture announcements, morning bus stop leafleting and teaming up with the NTEU has helped to rebuild a culture of activism and pushed back University Management plans to wind up WUSA - the campus union. Campus activists were able to respond to an attack on the local free bus service with a rally of 300 people after semester 2 had wound up.
4. Newcastle University has organised impressive on campus demonstrations for years as part of NUS education campaigns. The recent protests, stunts and direct actions organised by Students Against Detention have shown how consistently mobilising students to defend their education has built up the activist culture and confidence to take on broader political issues. Newcastle students have successfully forced their Vice Chancellor to drop a lucrative deal with for-profit torturers through the public pressure they placed management through protest.
5. These examples show that small and regional campuses, even those with besieged unions that have had their resources and independence cut back by VSU, can build an activist culture to defend student rights and fight racism. That takes the support of the National Union and most importantly campus activists and office bearers who organise protests

instead of or relying on clichés about passivity as an excuse to do nothing.

Platform

1. NUS recognises it is the responsibility of the Small and Regional department to organise and assist with funding protests on small and regional campuses
2. NUS Office Bearers recognise that campus activism and participation in national days of protest are a central way to push small and regional campuses to reaffiliate and maintain affiliation to NUS

Action

1. NUS Small and Regional department will prioritise organising protests on small and regional campuses in conjunction with the Education and other departments
2. NUS National Office Bearers will prioritise flying to small and regional campuses when they hold protests, particularly as part of NUS campaigns
3. NUS Small and Regional department will put aside \$1000 of its budget to print protest leaflets and posters for small and regional campuses which are underfunded

Moved: Madeleine Powell (UNSW)

Seconded: Belle Gibson (La Trobe)

ETHNO 11.22: Refugee Scholarships

Preamble

1. Students from Refugee backgrounds face particular disadvantage in accessing higher education.
2. People seeking asylum and refugees on Temporary Protection Visas are unable to access programs and assistance to access higher education that are available to those on Permanent Humanitarian Visas. Without access to government assistance or university scholarships, these individuals are only able to access higher education by paying expensive international student fees.
3. Currently some Australian universities and state governments have recognised the financial hardship of refugees and some programs and scholarships to make access to tuition fees, textbooks, costs for transport and travel etc. do currently exist.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that students from backgrounds of disadvantage should have access to participation in higher education.
2. NUS believes that refugees should be supported in participating in higher education with as few barriers as possible.

Action:

1. That the NUS Ethno-cultural Officer work with campus representatives to push for universities to provide people on temporary protection visas scholarships covering their tuition and bursaries for living expenses.
2. The NUS Ethno officer will work with organisations like MYAN and the Refugee Council to push for refugee scholarships to be established in more higher education institutions.

Moved: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate) on behalf of Desiree Cai (Melbourne)

Seconded: Kynesha Temple (Adelaide Delegate) on behalf of Shreeya Luthra (Monash)

ETHNO 11.23: Creating a National PoC/Ethno-cultural Officer Network**Preamble:**

1. As more Student Unions across the country are able to create POC/Ethno-cultural officers in their Unions,
2. There are a range of issues that POC and Ethno-cultural officers from different Student Unions can collaborate on.
3. Skill and information sharing has the potential to make the planning of cohesive campaigns and events, such as a POC/Ethno-cultural conference, or campaign against racism on uni campuses much easier.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that POC/Ethnocultural departments in Student Unions benefit when they are able to share skills, information and resources and work together.
2. NUS supports the creation of networks and communication channels for POC/Ethno-cultural departments across the country.

Action:

1. That the NUS Ethno-cultural Officer create a network to connect POC and Ethno-cultural officers by creating an Ethno-cultural/POC Officers Facebook group and mailing list.

2. The NUS Ethno-cultural Officer will endeavour to support POC/Ethno-cultural officers and collectives across the country regardless of whether they are affiliated to NUS or not.

Moved: Kynesha Temple (Adelaide Delegate)

Seconded: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate)

ETHNO 11.24: 2018 NUS National Ethno-cultural Student Conference**Preamble:**

1. Students that identify as people of colour often have difficulty engaging in the student movement. Often they feel isolated or disengaged from other student activists.
2. For several years the NUS Ethnocultural department has been inaccessible for POC activists to genuinely engage with and look to for support.
3. In 2017 no widely publicised Ethno-cultural conference was organised, which was a loss for many POC activists within Student Unions across the country.
4. Previously organised Ethno-cultural conferences, such as in 2016, gave activists the ability to come together to discuss and collaborate on ideas and begin plans to create more ethno-cultural spaces for students throughout the country.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that experiences of racism for students of colour are fundamentally underrepresented at a student activist level.
2. NUS affirms the importance of supporting a student conference to promote and foster POC activism that is relevant to the Ethnocultural NUS portfolio.
3. NUS believes that providing opportunities for skill and knowledge sharing between students identifying as people of colour will improve their participation and engagement in student activism and NUS.

Action:

1. That the NUS Ethnocultural officer will work alongside POC activists and ethnocultural/ POC state branch and campus office bearers to create a POC student conference in 2018 to provide knowledge and skill sharing for students of colour across Australia.
2. That the NUS Ethnocultural officer works to ensure that the conference is widely publicised and works to mobilize the support and attendance of the conference.

Moved: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate) on behalf of Shreeya Luthra (Monash)

Seconded: Kynesha Temple (Adelaide Delegate)

ETHNO 11.25: Proliferation of POC/Ethno-cultural Officers in Student Unions

Preamble:

1. The National Union of Students should continue to recognise the damaging effects of racism and discrimination faced by students of colour due to a variety of factors that may include but are not limited to culture, language, religion, ethnicity and colour.
2. However, many affiliated organisations in Australia continue to lack autonomous departments and collectives representing the interests of students of colour despite ongoing support for the creation of these departments and collectives.
3. NUS should therefore encourage campuses to introduce autonomous People of Colour departments where possible (or similarly named departments for the same purpose). These departments can be vitally important in providing support to students of colour in environments that can often be unfriendly and marginalising.
4. Autonomous departments allow students of colour to be properly and continuously represented at a student level.

Platform

1. The National Union of Students (NUS) strongly supports efforts to increase the representation of students of colour in positions of power in student unions.
2. The NUS recognises that students of colour are subject to unfair discrimination and marginalisation, and autonomous departments provide a platform in which students of colour can be supported and represented.
3. The NUS recognises the the NUS Ethno-Cultural Officer is the national representative for students of colour in Australia and is thus accountable to the relevant autonomous departments, collectives and individual students of colour.
4. The NUS applauds efforts to create autonomous departments and collectives for students of colour.

Action

1. The National Union of Students will support efforts by affiliate organisations to increase the representation and recognition of students

of colour in those organisations, particularly through autonomous departments.

2. In campuses where there is no autonomous department representing People of Colour, the NUS Ethno-Cultural Officer will work with such campuses consistently and continuously to introduce and maintain People of Colour Officers (or similarly named offices) in order to represent and advocate for the voices of students of colour.
3. The NUS Ethno-Cultural Officer will work with campus departments to create a shared source of resources to assist affiliate organisations in maintaining and creating autonomous departments and collectives for students of colour.

Moved: Kynesha Temple (Adelaide Delegate) on behalf of Desiree Cai (Melbourne)

Seconded: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate)

Small and Regional

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S&R 12.1: Country Kids in the Big City

Preamble:

1. Students that attend University in metropolitan areas, but are from families in the country systematically face different issues to students that were born in the city.
2. Often they are forgotten by University Unions as well as University management, and thus lack resources that would benefit them the most
3. Of these issues, rent and housing accessibility is a large one, as well as access to Centrelink, as well as the fact that it is systematically more difficult for rural and regional students to attend city universities.
4. Due to this issues rural and regional students attending city universities a much more likely to have mental health issues, and not have the same access to mental health providers as students that previously lived in the city.
5. It should also be noted that while there are scholarships available specifically to students from rural and regional areas, these scholarships often go unused as students are unaware of them, and thus unable to access them.

Platform:

1. NUS Recognises the importance of making university as accessible for everyone as possible, and notes that HECs isn't the only thing that is stopping Rural and Regional Students from attending universities, particularly universities within metropolitan areas.
2. NUS Highlights the importance of intersectionality when discussing issues to do with educational accessibility and notes that too often Rural and Regional Students that attend Universities within metropolitan areas are often left out of conversations that directly affect them.

Action:

1. The NUS welfare officer will work with the NUS Rural and Regional Officer to support rural and regional students that attend city universities in regards to Housing Affordability and Centrelink Issues.
2. The NUS welfare officer will work with the NUS Rural and Regional Officer to compile a list of scholarships for Rural and Regional Students to Attend City/Metropolitan Universities.
3. The NUS welfare officer will work with Campus Unions to fight for Rural and Regional Mandated spots
4. NUS encourages Metropolitan Campus Unions to work with management to restructure university housing in a way that would best benefit rural and regional students
5. NUS encourages Metropolitan Campus Unions to work with university management to make mental health more accessible to Rural and Regional Students

Moved: Ashley Cain-Grey (UNSW Delegate)

Seconded: Matilda Grey (MSA Delegate)

S&R 12.2: Active Mental Health Support for Regional Students

Preamble:

1. Psychological distress has been found to be significantly higher for rural and regional students due to the stresses of relocating, in order to access higher education. A 2017 study reported that regional Australians were 66% more likely to die of suicide than their respective metropolitan counterparts - with suicide being the leading cause of death in those aged 15-24.
2. Distance for rural and regional students has also proven to create complexities with provision and coordination of mental health services - regional students are shown to be less engaged with on-campus services, and encounter challenges with maintaining their mental health care while between usual places of residence in and out of semesters.
3. In 2015 it was published that student location significantly impacts university attrition rates, with 30.2% of these regional students leaving their courses.

Platform:

1. NUS urges Australian Universities to actively engage in supporting regional and rural students mental health throughout their stay at university, not merely when they begin.
2. NUS recognises that these students are high-risk and are more likely to endure large mental and financial struggles which are unique to regional and rural students, and need to be actively engaged with by University staff.
3. NUS recognises that many regional and rural students are less likely to pursue and engage with mental health support services due to the heightened stigma of mental health.

Action:

1. The 2018 National Welfare Officer and Small and Regional Officer will campaign and lobby Australian Universities to engage regional and rural students upon being accepted to University, and continuing to contact those students during peak periods and at the beginning of the each semester. This initiative needs to engage students who have had academic difficulties, and actively offer engagement to those students.
2. NUS will incorporate regional and rural students into their Welfare campaigns to reduce the stigma of mental health among these students.

Moved: Ella Gvildys (RUSU Delegate)

Seconded: Sam Roberts (SSU Delegate)

S&R 12.3: PT in the Regions

Preamble:

1. Most regional cities have poor frequency route bus services, especially late at night when vulnerable students are travelling home from University.
2. Regional cities can support comprehensive public transport networks operating with tram-like service levels.
3. Over the years in a number of major regional cities, Governments have removed tram services and allowed good quality public transport to deteriorate markedly.

Platform:

1. NUS recognises that public transport is needed for many students, especially in regional campuses.
2. NUS encourages an increase in funding towards regional campus public transport.
3. NUS condemns any cuts to regional public transport services, as cuts will likely affect regional students who already struggle enough.

Action:

1. NUS Small and Regional Officer will write to the Federal Minister Infrastructure and Transport, The Hon Darren Chester urging him to increase funding to regional campus transport.
2. NUS will advise affiliated Student Unions to lobby for express shuttles services, or an increase in public transport around regional campuses.
3. NUS Small and Regional Officer will run a survey on regional campuses seeking out how an increase in public transport to regional campuses will affect students.

Mover: Jean-Marc Kurban (Deakin Delegate)

Seconder: Jake Cripps (La Trobe Delegate)

S&R 12.4: Minimum Regional Campus requirements for lecturers

Preamble:

1. A common issue with students within regional, or non-central campuses is that lecturers allocate little to no time for face to face contact.
2. These students are paying the exact same amount of fees for less contact from key staff than their central or non-regional counterparts.
3. In addition, much of the contact is not face to face but electronic, through emails, lecture recordings, and any, if all face to face type interaction is done through an online medium such as skype much of which is readily available for other students as well to the same degree.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that lecturers should have a minimum requirement for presence at regional or non-central campuses.
2. NUS urges universities to increase face-to-face contact between lecturers and students on regional and non-central campuses.
3. NUS endorses the use of technology to educate students, however there is still an element of disadvantage between students with ready access to staff and those without.

Action:

1. The NUS National Education, and Small and Regional Officer will investigate an appropriate minimum requirement of lecturers to be present on regional or non-central campuses.
2. The results of the above investigation will be relayed, and acted upon to the relevant bodies.

Moved: Jake Cripps (LTSU Delegate)

Seconded: Sam Roberts (SSU Delegate)

S&R 12.5: Protect Small and Regional Campuses!

Preamble:

1. Small and Regional Campuses are often left behind by NUS with some of them having little to no interaction with NUS at all.
2. Those Small and Regional Campuses need support from the NUS to prevent the stripping of funding and the gutting of services for regional campuses.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises the important role Small and Regional Campuses play in educating the next generation of students in rural and regional areas of Australia.
2. NUS needs to look towards the regions and provide the support it can in order to prevent a GO8 focus.
3. NUS recognises that it has a role in addressing issues that Small and Regional Campus students face day-to-day.

Action:

1. The NUS Small and Regional Officer contacts all Small and Regional Campuses currently not accredited/affiliated for 2017 and work with them to get them on-board in 2018.
2. Help Small and Regional student unions in rolling out and prosecuting their campaigns and agendas at a campus level.
3. The establishment of a Small and Regional link-up at the start of 2017 to discuss the issues at hand in 2018.

Moved: Nick Douros (ACT State Branch President)

Seconded: Jason Byrne (National Small and Regional Officer)

S&R 12.5: Funding for Regional Campuses

Preamble:

1. Regional Campuses are often the hardest hit by funding cuts by the Federal Government as they are seen as less profitable than metropolitan campuses due to population size.
2. With the possibility of the Federal Government lowering the HECS repayment threshold along with savage cuts to University funding, regional campuses and students will be hit hardest
3. In 2016 we saw Monash University pull out of its Berwick Campus and make moves towards a possible shut down of its Gippsland Campus

within the next two years. Deakin University has also made moves towards pulling out of Warrnambool in the near future, prompting Warrnambool students to run a campaign to keep the university in the regional centre. With no communication from the University since, it's not good enough to leave students in the dark.

Platform:

1. NUS believes that all campuses have a right to receive a fair share of government funding in order to operate
2. NUS believes that regional campuses play a vital role in providing Higher Education to regional and rural areas in Australia
3. NUS recognises the need for the Federal Government to guarantee funding to regional Universities in order to continue to operate at a high standard.

Action:

1. The 2017 National Small and Regional Officer shall run a campaign based around providing funding to regional and rural campuses from the Federal funding guarantees.
2. This campaign should take form of both lobbying all major and minor parties along with a petition to be promoted and circulated to Small and Regional Campuses as defined by NUS.

Moved: Nick Douros (ACT State Branch President)

Seconded: Jill Molloy (National Welfare Officer)

S&R 12.6: Engaging with Regional Universities Network (RUN)

Preamble:

1. Small and Regional Campuses have often been the first campuses to face savage cuts by Federal Governments.
2. NUS needs to engage in other relevant bodies in order to gain the best outcome for Small and Regional Campuses
3. By doing so, NUS can also engage in non-affiliated Universities with the aim of bringing them into the NUS

Platform:

1. NUS recognises the important role Small and Regional Campuses play in educating the next generation of students

2. NUS and the Small and Regional Officer need to engage with relevant Networks and Bodies in order to better support rural and regional students.
3. NUS recognises the importance of engaging all students with their local Student Unions on campus and with Student Unionism as a whole.

Action:

1. The NUS Small and Regional Officer get in contact with the Regional Universities Network to collaborate on potential campaigns for member campuses
2. The NUS Small and Regional Officer reach out to non-affiliated campuses who may be apart of RUN in order to facilitate a better working relationship between the NUS and regional campuses.
3. Promote this through NUS' social media

Moved: Nick Douros (ACT State Branch President)

Seconded: Jason Byrne (National Small and Regional Officer)

S&R 12.7: Relocation Barriers to Rural and Regional students

Preamble:

1. People from rural and regional areas are at a disadvantage compared to city dwellers from obtaining higher education in more ways than one.
2. Rural and regional students are often faced with the choice of attending an underfunded regional institution or expensively relocating entirely to a city.
3. The cost of relocation including travel and rent is often too great and especially locks out potential rural and regional low SES students.
4. Bonus point ATAR schemes and fortnightly Youth Allowance are not enough to overcome this barrier.
5. Particular focus should be paid to the ANU, where a majority of students are interstate relocations and consequently only 2.3% of students are from a low SES background.

Platform:

1. The National Union of Students recognises the unique difficulties that students from rural and regional areas face and that these difficulties are further exacerbated by class.

2. The NUS notes that the federal government and university administrations do not provide an adequate level of support for these students and potential students.
3. The NUS acknowledges that it has an obligation to support rural and regional students, particularly those of a low SES background.

Action:

1. The NUS Small and Regional Officer will use data collected from this year's Welfare Officer's Housing Affordability survey and others to establish the approximate cost of relocation for regional and rural students.
2. Based on this, the NUS S&R Officer should conduct a campaign to raise awareness of the issue with the ultimate goal of;
3. Compelling the federal government to provide financial assistance with relocation costs.
4. Convincing university administrations to provide more financial assistance to low SES regional and rural students beyond scholarships.

Moved: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Dom Cradick

Seconded: Kate Gallagher (FUSA Delegate)

S&R 12.8: Handbook for Small and Regional Campuses

Preamble:

1. Small and regional student organisations often have little to no contact with the NUS, leading to the perception that the NUS cares little for these students.
2. Potential accreditations and affiliations are lost due to the lack of effort.
3. These organisations are often underfunded and represent campuses with big distances between them, making it harder to carry out tasks that a city student organisation could do with ease.

Platform:

1. The NUS has a duty to represent as many students as possible, including small and regional students.
2. Representation can only be achieved through accreditation and affiliation of small and regional campus student organisations.

Action:

1. The incoming Small and Regional Officer will create a handbook for distribution to small and regional campuses with the intention of;

2. Assisting organisations with the running of their organisations.
3. Creating a path towards accreditation and affiliation.
3. The handbook will contain information and advice on running an underfunded organisation, stressing possibilities and priorities that they should have - including running campaigns.

Moved: Hamish Richardson (FUSA Delegate) on behalf of Dom Cradick (ANU)

Seconded: Hilary Wigg (FUSA Delegate)

Miscellaneous

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MISC 13.1: Say it loud say it clear! Magpies are not welcome here!

Preamble:

1. Australian magpies are infamous for swooping people, including NUS president Sophie Johnston, while they are going through their daily business. While only 10% of magpies swoop, they cause hundreds of injuries of a year. Many students get swooped on campus, or swooped on their way to campus. NUS should look out for student welfare and defend them from these aggressive birds.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the removal of problem magpies from university campuses.
2. NUS calls on state governments around Australia to protect the community from these aggressive animals.

Action:

1. NUS will provide guns and other weapons to affiliated student unions to help them remove problem birds from campus.
2. NUS will assist affiliated student unions in lobbying to remove problem birds from university campuses.
3. NUS will lobby state governments to achieve platform points 1 and 2.

Moved: Lewis Whittaker (WA State Branch President)

Seconded: Ashleigh Braybrook (Victoria University)

MISC 13.2: No to attacks by management at Monash

Preamble:

1. Monash University management has plans to approximately double student intake from 2018, while keeping staff levels the same
2. To cope with this increase, the university is considering running classes from 8am until 10pm at night, as well as taking away the option of face-to-face lectures for many students.
3. Already, Monash has taken away the option of face-to-face lectures for a large amount of students, especially those in undergraduate arts degrees. This takes away the opportunity for students to properly engage in course content.

4. Additionally, this gives lecturers and tutors a hugely increased number of students that they hold responsibility over, stretching their workload. Already, these student facing staff face difficulties in managing the large amount of students who they must teach and the comparatively short amount of hours they are paid for. Most, if not all, complete unpaid hours as a result.
5. It also increases the burden upon professional staff at the university.
6. This is a continuation of the trend at Monash and other campuses of increasing profitability of universities through increasing the ratio of students to staff, effectively lowering pay and working conditions as well as making lowering standards for students.
7. This trend is an inevitability of the user-pays system.
8. The NTEU at Monash is currently negotiating a new EBA for Monash staff, and is attempting to deal with some of the problems raised by the increased intake.

Platform:

1. NUS opposes the increase in the ratio of students to staff at Monash and other campuses
2. NUS opposes the user pays-model for higher education
3. NUS stands with the Monash NTEU in their attempts at improving staff working conditions and mitigating the effects of any student increase
4. NUS encourages students to support any potential strike action taken by the Monash NTEU, and directs campus unions to attend and organise other students to attend any pickets or protests held by the NTEU at Monash

Action:

1. NUS directs affiliated student unions, especially those in Melbourne, to organise students to attend and support actions by the Monash NTEU
2. NUS will make its opposition to the above attacks at Monash University public through media releases and facebook posts.

Moved: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Elliot Downes (La Trobe)

MISC 13.3: NUS backs an Australian Republic

Preamble:

1. Australia is a functionally independent nation, however under the Constitution a foreign monarch still stands as our formal head of state. As such, the Queen has far reaching power under the Constitution including disallowing any Australian law within a year of coming into effect.
2. The monarchy is also Un-Australian, as it reflects a system that is not based on merit, but rather a lottery of life, based on genealogy, imperialism and privilege.

Platform:

1. NUS supports Australia becoming a fully independent republic.
2. NUS acknowledges that the system of monarchy is an archaic remnant of the British empire and imperialism.

Action:

1. NUS will write to the Australian Republican Movement expressing its support towards its campaigns and work.
2. NUS will distribute information to its affiliate campuses in an effort to encourage students to join the Australian Republic Movement
3. NUS will support and assist the Australian Republic Movement with any recruitment drives targeted towards students.
4. NUS will write to Malcolm Turnbull, condemning him for stagnating, the movement and abandoning our shared values for an Australian Republic.

Moved: Lachlan Wykes (University of Technology Sydney)

Seconded: Valerie Song (University of Western Sydney)

MISC 13.4: NUS Supports penalty rates

Preamble:

1. With the attack on penalty rates by the Australian Liberal party effecting thousands of students across the country the NUS needs to step up to support these students.
2. $\frac{2}{3}$ of these students live below the poverty line and already struggle to balance work and university negatively affecting their studies, the NUS

needs to seek support from where it can to fight these cuts to students wages.

3. These wages are vital to students because these are often the people working in lower-paid jobs and barely staying financially afloat.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns the attacks on penalty rates
2. The NUS recognises that while he is busy defending North Queenslanders from crocodile attacks, Bob Katter has still managed to make time to support penalty rates
3. NUS condemns any political party, or politician (looking at you Cathy McGowan you spineless reptile) that has supported the abolition penalty rates.
4. The NUS recognises it must work with politicians who support and are sympathetic to the Students-For-Penalty-Rates cause.

Action:

1. The NUS will write to all politicians, including but not limited to Bob Katter and George Christanson praising them for their support for penalty rates.
2. NUS will run a campaign condemning politicians who voted against penalty rates, especially Cathy McGowan.
3. The NUS commits to taking the steps necessary to fight the attacks on penalty rates, and commits to the position of supporting penalty rates.

Moved: Samuel Roberts (SSU Delegate)

Seconded: James Kerr-Nelson (RUSU Delegate)

MISC 13.5: End the Neoliberal Environmentalism on Campus

Preamble:

1. While environmental campaigns bring needed awareness to an important issue, these campaigns should be targeted at those who can afford to bear the cost of mitigation.
2. Any campaign placing the burden of environmentalism on students is in direct conflict with the student union movement campaigns to improve student welfare.

Platform:

1. Students should not bear the burden of environmentalism, or campaigns to improve the state of the environment. This burden and responsibility should be placed on corporations, and investors, such as Universities.
2. Student organisations, and their collectives, should not be actively seeking financial support for environmentalism, through retail or otherwise, from individual students, 2/3 of whom are below the poverty line. And doing so, contradicts our efforts to support student welfare.
3. Student organisations or collectives who wish to protect the environment should do so through activism, aimed at corporations, the conservative governments and the owners of capital, who negatively impact the environment.

Action:

1. The National Union of Students supports well targeted environmental campaigns, but not those which place the burden of action on, or are detrimental to students.

Moved: Sam Roberts (SSU Delegate)

Seconded: Ella Gvildys (RUSU Delegate)

MISC 13.6: Student Voter Enrolment Campaigns

Preamble:

1. The National youth enrolment rate (18-24) is currently at 88.5% which is much lower than the national enrolment rate of 96.35% of legible Australian being enrolled to vote. This leaves 220,050 (37% of which at university) Australians without their voice being heard in national and state parliaments.

2. This is a serious issue and means that students and student issues are underrepresented in Australia's Parliaments.

Platform:

1. The NUS recognises the imperative of students voting in State and Federal elections in so that students have fair and accurate representation in Australian Parliaments.
2. The NUS acknowledges the low enrolment rate of students and other Australians aged 18-24

Action:

1. The NUS Welfare Officer will run campaigns to Enrol students to vote during all State and Federal elections.
2. The NUS will endorse and continue to lobby for automatic voter enrolment
3. The NUS commits to taking the steps necessary to increasing student enrolment in elections.

Moved: Lily Xia (RMIT)

Seconded: Jake Cripps (La Trobe)

MISC 13.7: For the Republic

Preamble:

1. It's 2017 and Australia's Head of State is still a 92 year old hereditary monarch that obtained this role due to being born into a particular family.
2. As a country that claims to believe in the fair go, every Australian should have the right to aspire to be Australia's Head of State.
3. The Australian Republican Movement has renewed its campaign to change the constitution and remove our remaining ties to a foreign monarch.
4. Bill Shorten, Leader of the Australian Labor Party announced that should Labor win Government there would be a national plebiscite in 2020 on if Australia should become a Republic.
5. Meanwhile Malcolm Turnbull has taken a cop-out position on this issue, believing we should wait for the Queen to die.

Platform:

1. The NUS believes that all Australians should be able to aspire to be our Head of State.
2. The NUS believes that Australia's Head of State should be chosen by Australians for Australia.
3. NUS believes that we shouldn't have to wait for the Queen to die to have an Australian Head of State.

Action:

1. The NUS will support the Australian Republican Movement and a YES Campaign to amend the Constitution to achieve platform points 1 and 2.
2. At the next federal election in producing any form of scorecard or fact sheet, a political party's position on the republic will form part of this scorecard or fact sheet.

Moved: Liam O'Neill (Curtin University)

Seconded: Lewis Whittaker (WA State Branch President)

MISC 13.8: Environmental as Anything**Preamble:**

1. In 2016 the NUS voted to disband the position of National Environment Officer. Whilst this allows more capable organisations to continue to fight for the environment, this leaves the NUS without any voice in combating climate change and working to ensure the future of young people and students in Australia,
2. The national union would benefit from a policy space dedicated to this important topic, and the reassignment of this policy category to an existing Office Bearer.

Platform:

1. The NUS believes that young people (including current and future students) are heavily affected by climate change, and that existing campus groups should be supported in the absence of a dedicated NUS Environment officer
2. The NUS believes that whilst the Environment Officer position was rightly disbanded, Environmental Policy should be recognized and discussed at NUS in its own category, and that the portfolio should be the responsibility of the NUS President.
3. NUS believes that universities should be held to the same standards that fossil fuel companies are, regarding environmental offsets.

Action:

1. The NUS will restore the policy category of 'Environment'
2. The NUS will make carrying out Environment policy the responsibility of the NUS President
3. The NUS supports AYCC, ASEN and campus Fossil Free groups in push for environmental offset policy, in line with policies of the fossil fuel industries.

Moved: Dylan Heywood (Curtin University)

Seconded: Christopher Hall (Curtin University)

MISC 13.9: NO FRACKING**Preamble:**

1. The extraction of coal seam gas, a practice known as fracking, has expanded drastically since its initial introduction in South Australia's Cooper Basin in 2012. Australia has large reserves of coal seam gas, which has led to a proliferation of fracking operations as companies seek to invest in a cheap form of fossil fuel extraction with no regard for the severe environmental ramifications. Beyond the familiar issues of immediate environmental destruction from the development of fracking installations and the contribution to global warming caused by the use of fossil fuels, fracking also poses risks such as the contamination of water supplies that sections of the population depend on.
2. Expansion of fracking in recent years saw large-scale resistance from organisations concerned about the environmental impact of the practice, which has resulted in the governments of New South Wales, Victoria, and the Northern Territory implementing moratoriums on new gas production, effectively preventing the development of new fracking practices in these states.
3. The Turnbull government is pushing for these moratoria to be overturned, citing concerns about shortfalls in Australia's domestic gas production. The government wishes to open up as much territory as possible to the rapid development of new fracking practices, in line with its general approach of encouraging the expansion of fossil fuel industries while refusing to invest in renewable alternatives.

Platform:

1. That NUS is concerned by the environmental ramifications of coal seam gas extraction.
2. That NUS supports existing moratoria on coal seam gas extraction.

3. That NUS supports the closure of all existing coal seam gas extraction facilities.
4. That NUS calls on the federal government to significantly expand investment in renewable energy production as an alternative to fossil fuels.

Action:

1. NUS will publicly oppose both the existence of, and expansion of, coal seam gas extraction.
2. NUS office bearers will liaise with existing campaign groups to organise against the expansion of coal seam gas extraction.

Moved: Nick Reich (University of Melbourne)

Seconded: Melinda Suter (University of Melbourne)

MISC 13.10: Supporting Volunteer and Retained Emergency Service Members at University

Preamble:

1. A number of students across Australia are involved in voluntary or retained (part-time) work with emergency services, including fire services, SES services, ambulance services, and other general rescue services. They dedicate a number of hours to their communities to assist in emergency situations.
2. Often, students are required to attend these emergency incidents, particularly in rural and remote communities where there is little permanent full time emergency services, or where there is a large incident where the usual emergency response is inadequate. This means that students are required at unpredictable times, often with little to no notice. This places significant hardship on these students who may be unable to attend an exam or have difficulty completing an assessment task. Currently, unlike employers, there is no law or regulation that requires universities or tertiary institutions to not victimise emergency service workers for their unique role.

Platform:

1. NUS urges the state and territory governments to legislate protections for tertiary students into their respective emergency management legislation.

2. NUS recognises the value of having students in emergency service roles; the skills it brings to students, its importance to their local communities and the unique time demands it requires.

Action:

1. NUS will work with universities to ensure that they have adequate special consideration provisions specifically designed for students in emergency service roles.
2. NUS will write to respective state and territory governments asking for them to legislate protections for tertiary students into their emergency management legislation.

Moved: Lachlan Wykes (UTS Delegate)

Seconded: Taylor Ficarra (National Disabilities Officer)

MISC 13.11: Reverse the rip off - Fix the GST now!

Preamble:

1. The Goods and Services Tax(GST) was introduced in 1998 to replace many state taxes, as well as federal sales taxes. Through the Commonwealth Grants Commission, GST is distributed to states on a needs basis. While the GST distribution formula was originally well-intentioned, it has become distorted in recent years, with WA's share falling to a pitiful 29 cents in the dollar.
2. This has resulted in debt piling up and State Governments cutting back on essential services, many of which were used by students - such as public transport and accessible health services. However WA is not the only state affected by this - NSW has been seeing their share decline in recent years as well.
3. Finally, a common complaint in Western Australia is that NUS doesn't care about the West - fighting for an issue key to Western Australians will knock that claim dead.

Platform:

1. NUS acknowledges the inherent regressive nature of the GST and its impact on low-income earners and students, however it also acknowledges that it is key to funding many state government services and ensuring parity of services between states.
2. NUS condemns Scott Morrison and the Federal Government for doing nothing substantial to fix this issue of critical importance.
3. NUS condemns the current inequitable way GST is distributed, and supports the WA and NSW Government's as well as the Productivity Commission's in their call for reform in how the GST is distributed.

4. NUS calls upon the Federal, State and Territory Governments to develop a less regressive tax mechanism to equitably fund State Governments.
5. Action
6. NUS West, in consultation with National Office-bearers shall lobby relevant Federal Government ministers to reverse the rip off and fight for a more equitable share of the GST for WA and NSW.

Moved: Lewis Whittaker (WA State Branch President)

Seconded: Liam O’Neill (Curtin University)

MISC 13.12: Reverse (like as in a car) the Ripoff (haha)

Preamble:

1. A number of Australian Universities and Local Governments have privatised their parking system to use CellOPark.
2. At Curtin University, the Curtin Student Guild has been a consistent opponent of University Parking Fees including the use of CellOPark.
3. When Curtin Student Guild President, Liam O’Neill spoke out in the media in October around CellOPark’s unusual premium fees, CellOPark threatened to sue Liam for defamation.
4. CellOPark is accused of misleading customers to sign up for its premium service that can charge up to \$6 a month for a nebulous service offering.

Platform:

1. NUS condemns University’s using services such as Parking as efforts to raise revenue.
2. NUS condemns private companies that take or threaten to take action against Student Union Leaders and activists in an effort to silence them.
3. NUS endorses the Curtin University Revenue Raisers Resistance.

Action:

1. The NUS will support Curtin Student Guild’s efforts to resist Curtin University’s parking plans.
2. The NUS will support other Student Unions in campaigns against CellOPark.

Moved: Dylan Heywood (Curtin University)

Seconded: Liam O’Neill (Curtin University)

MISC 13.13: Fighting For Fossil Free Universities

Preamble:

1. Australian universities are today eager to prove their ‘sustainability’ and ‘green’ credentials, however these claims—to whatever extent they are actually valid—are entirely negated by the deep structural ties that continue to bind university, fossil fuel companies and government mining departments, and thus hinder any progress towards a fossil fuel free society. A not atypical example is the University of Queensland, whose engineering faculty webpage boasts its formal connections with Rio Tinto, Xstrata, Newcrest Mining Limited and Nihon Superior, and whose university senate also currently features a former Xstrata CEO
2. Far from being victims of coercion, Australian universities have long enjoyed this role as lackey for the fossil fuel industry. In return for funding, economic and political influence and prestige, they eagerly assist the fossil fuel industry in various ways such as: through the establishment of corporate-sponsored research centres, which hand over publicly-funded knowledge and expertise to the service of profit-making, and also allows corporations to influence research; graduate programs; and their own direct financial investment in the sector. This process has been accelerated in recent years by government funding cuts and deregulation, which have compelled universities to seek greater industry funding for research. While environmental science courses go conveniently underfunded, universities spend millions on new mining-related research initiatives, such as Curtin’s Resources and Chemistry Precinct, “a \$116 million facility that brings together university, industry and government”. It is one of many similar projects across the country.
3. Instead of reflecting the priorities of the state and big business, universities should reflect the interests of broader society. Given that popular opinion greatly favours renewable energy over continuing to burn fossil fuels (a recent Lowy poll found a phenomenal 81 percent of respondents “want governments to favour renewable energy over fossil fuels even if it costs more”) Australian universities should redirect the huge amounts of money currently flowing through engineering and mining schools for the purposes of furthering the fossil fuel industry, to instead disproportionately fund research for and prepare graduates to work in the renewable energy industry.
4. Given the reasons outlined in point 2, universities are incredibly resistant to calls for divestment, and when they do not ignore them outright, there is a real danger they will attempt to use divestment calls to ‘greenwash’ their image, as the Australian National University did in 2014 after only committing to a weak ‘partial’ divestment. Unfortunately, the Fossil Free campaign at that university hailed the university’s decision as a ‘win’, leading to a loss of momentum, the end

of the campaign, and no real change. Although there are Fossil Free campaigns at 15 Australian universities, none of these universities have committed to full divestment, and only two to a 'partial' divestment. Another weakness of these campaigns is that they tend to focus primarily on financial divestment only. In order to undermine the ties between universities and the fossil fuel industry, activists must not only be able to highlight the many other ways the two are linked, but importantly, need to actively build the size and strength of the student unionist movement, and to take up broader questions around the nature of higher education. For example, to fight for greater public funding for universities as part of NUS's 'Make Education Free Again' campaign would loosen university's dependence on corporate funding for research.

Platform:

1. NUS supports the call for universities to completely withdraw their financial investments in the fossil fuel industry.
2. NUS calls for the termination of all research partnerships with fossil fuel companies, and the redirection of those funds towards renewable energy research and education.
3. NUS also calls for the replacement of all graduate programs with fossil fuel companies with programs within the renewable energy industry instead.

Action:

1. NUS calls for any and all fossil fuel industry figures on university boards or senates to be immediately sacked.
2. NUS encourages students to join protests against their administrations to demand fossil fuel divestment.
3. NUS encourages divestment activists to join the national union in fighting corporate influence in our universities by fighting for greater funding as part of the Make Education Free Again campaign in 2018.

Moved: Anneke Demanuele (NUS education officer)

Seconded: Tom Auld (University of South Australia)