

EQUAL ACCESS POLICY

Title:	Equal Access	Date of Student Council:	05/12/2017
Proposer name:	Grace Anderson	Role:	MA Sociology Rep
Seconder name:	Michael Turner	Role:	Trans* Students' Rep (Cambridge)

Union Notes:

1. The Union's values state that: "We champion equality, diversity and inclusion. We respect the needs of the individual and the wider student community."
2. The Union supports the concept of tuition free education (signified by continuous support for the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC) national demos) which at its core is to ensure everyone can access higher education.
3. Refugees in the UK and asylum seekers appealing to the UK are treated as international students in ARU's Higher Education Funding System.
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2011/may/31/asylum-seekers-overseas-students-fees>
4. Refugees in the UK are given an allowance of £36 a week to live on. www.star-network.org.uk

Union Believes:

1. That refugees have a right to seek education in their country of residence and that this should be made accessible to them.
2. That being a refugee, forced to seek asylum in another country, is very different from being an international student, who chooses to study in the UK and can return to their home country at any time.

Union Resolves:

1. To campaign for ARU to classify all those seeking asylum as home students for fee purposes.
2. To campaign for ARU to offer at least 10 scholarships that cover study and maintenance costs for people who have come to the UK seeking refugee protection.
3. To campaign for ARU to publicise their Equal Access policies and make them easily locatable, so that potential students can easily apply for these scholarships.
4. To publicise its support for refugees and their right to education during Refugee Week.
5. To publicise its support for refugees and their right to education during relevant political votes in the Houses of Parliament, including encouraging local MPs to vote in support of refugee needs.



INCREASED EQUALITY FOR VEGAN STUDENTS POLICY

Title:	Increased equality for vegan students	Date of Student Council:	05/12/2017
Proposer name:	Sarah Gradidge	Role:	President, Vegan Society and Treasurer, Ruskin RAG
Seconder name:	Kirsten Cope	Role:	Administrator, Vegan Society

Union Notes:

The Union has a responsibility to protect all students and to cater for the lifestyles of all different types of students. Veganism is a protected belief system under international human rights law (The Vegan Society, <https://www.vegansociety.com/resources/solutions>). However, vegans are still sometimes marginalised and are associated with many negative stereotypes (Burgess, Carpenter, & Henshaw). The Union recognises that vegan students and staff members should be protected from marginalisation, and providing vegan options can be seen as both a preventative measure and a solution.

However the provision of only one vegan option does not allow for choice and especially does not cater for vegans who may have food allergies. Moreover, in order to find the vegan options at the catering services in university, vegans often have to search among all of the non-vegan options.

Veganism continues to become more and more visible within the university environment (such as ARU's Vegan Society). In fact, the largest current population of vegans in the UK is the 15-34 age bracket (The Vegan Society, 2016, <https://www.vegansociety.com/whats-new/news/find-out-how-many-vegans-are-great-britain>), and a large majority of university students fall within this bracket, with most people entering university at the age of 18 (Department of Education, last updated September 2016, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/552886/HEIPR_PUBLICATION_2014-15.pdf).

Also, 1 in 5 16-24 year olds currently identify as vegan or vegetarian (Mintel, 2014, <http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/health/517246/Vegetarians-are-on-the-increase-in-Britain>).

Union action will enable acceptance and protection to vegan students and staff members, who, despite currently being a minority, are an emerging group that deserve to be recognised.

Furthermore, the Union has demonstrated their commitment to the environment and sustainability, for instance providing the Society Green Fund and actively encouraging ARU societies to advertise ARU's Travel Survey. However, the consumption of meat, dairy and eggs has a direct effect on the environment, contributing to increased greenhouse gas emissions (especially beef, cheese and pork - Carlsson-

Kanyama, & Gonzalez, 2009), increased water footprint (Hoekstra, & Chapagain, 2007) and deforestation (Kaimovitz et al., 2004). Through implementing this policy, the Union can continue to champion for environmental issues through encouraging the university to promote and provide more environmentally-friendly vegan products.

Union Believes:

The Union believes in equality for all students and believes that all students have the right to choose. It will champion for options that increase equality and it will recognise differing lifestyles and belief systems of students. It will recognise the differing needs of various students and will implement steps to address these needs.

Further, it is the responsibility of the Union to be involved in the protection of the environment. This has already been demonstrated through ideas such as the Society Green Fund. By increasing vegan options throughout university, the Union can help to reduce the university's environmental impact.

Union Resolves:

In order to carry out this policy, the following actions will need to be taken:

1. More vegan options will be provided in the existing catering services around university.
2. All clubs and societies will be required to provide at least one vegan option at any event they hold or, if not possible, to inform their attendees that vegan options will not be available.
3. Vegan options within the catering services at university will be placed separately from the non-vegan options – this is to allow ease of access for vegan students.
4. Vegan options will be widely advertised and actively promoted throughout university.
5. The University's Environment Team will be encouraged to consider the impact of meat, dairy and egg consumption on the environment and to take steps to address this issue.
6. All catering services around university will be required to participate in "Meatless Mondays".
7. 30 day Vegan Pledge will be advertised throughout university

The proposer and seconders of this policy are happy to help with every step of the process of implementing this policy, such as by suggesting vegan foods. We are also happy to provide information on vegan statistics and through aiding those who take the Vegan Pledge.



KEEP WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS FREE POLICY

Title:	Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free	Date of Student Council:	05/12/2017
Proposer name:	Laura Douds	Role:	Vice President (Science and Technology)
Seconder name:	Johanna Korhonen	Role:	Vice President (Arts, Law and Social Sciences)

Union Notes:

1. Students attend Anglia Ruskin University to enhance themselves academically through a certificate, a degree, masters or PHD. However, the importance of students gaining additional skills through extra and co-curricular activities is widely agreed.
2. Over 7000 students participated in volunteering, societies or representation within the Students' Union last academic year. Currently we have 2059 volunteers, 1547 society members and 484 reps.
3. According to a recent study into students' mental health, extra/co-curricular activities have proven to improve mental health in students and increase how worthwhile students rate their lives. These should be encouraged by Higher Education Institutions. - "The invisible problem? Improving students' mental health" - Higher Education Policy Institute, 2016
4. Anglia Ruskin University was recognised as the Entrepreneurial University of the Year (2014) and it is this focus among others on the value of extra/co-curricular activities that have shown a significant growth in student numbers.
5. BUCS matches and sports training frequently occurs on Wednesday afternoons and evenings.

Union Believes:

1. Wednesday afternoons should be free for the entire student body to get involved in not only extra/co-curricular activities, but also catching up on assignments, practice good self-care or spending time with their family.
2. Academic and personal commitments such as part-time employment mean that students are either unable to participate in extra/co-curricular activities **or** are forced to miss these commitments to attend.
3. The University and Union has shown dedication to developing enterprising transferable skills in their members, and every student has the right to take advantage of these opportunities.
4. With fewer lectures scheduled on a Wednesday afternoon, it would allow for the university to also focus their extra/co-curricular activities at this time, such as employability programmes and counselling & wellbeing services. It would also allow time for academics to use this time for team meetings for example.

Union Resolves:

1. We will continue to lobby the University to make an ongoing commitment to avoid the scheduling of lectures for all courses after 12pm on a Wednesday.
2. We will lobby the University to commit to support students to change teaching times and assessed sessions after 12pm on a Wednesday where possible and provide alternative methods for affected students to access materials or resources.
3. We will ask students on courses which do have teaching or other academic obligations beyond 12pm on a Wednesday about how it is affecting them. If necessary we will report to the university on our findings.
4. We will ensure students are informed of their responsibility, where lectures are still in place, to receive permission to be absent from their Course Leader as early as possible.



UP YOUR GRANTS POLICY

Title:	Up Your Grants	Date of Student Council:	05/12/2017
Proposer name:	Laura Douds	Role:	Vice President (Science and Technology)
Seconder name:	Johanna Korhonen	Role:	Vice President (Arts, Law and Social Sciences)

Union Notes:

1. Clubs and societies are consistently requesting more than what we can provide, which often means we cannot provide societies with the funds they may need to reach their full potential.
2. With the lack of on campus facilities available to some clubs and societies, grant requests have to cover facility hire and transport to various facilities as well as the regular requests from previous years.
3. Many clubs and societies purchases are cheaper options than what is ideal, or second hand, which often puts members at a disadvantage. Equipment is also prone to damage through length of use and in need of replacement.
4. In line with our new strategic plan we will be working to increase the number of course based societies to have one on each course, which will impose a strain on the activities budget if not increased.

Union Believes:

1. The adequate financial support of clubs and societies leads to them being more sustainable and able to increase membership and satisfaction with the club/society.
2. That students getting involved in any student activities either in societies or clubs is to be encouraged, as it improves the overall student experience.
3. That we need more space or access to more space for clubs/societies which will come at a financial cost.
4. With a greater expectation of The Union and the University on societies to become more active, it is unfair for us to ask for greater output with less resource.

Union Resolves:

1. To increase the grant pot by 15% each year for both Cambridgeshire and Chelmsford campuses.
2. For this money to be sought from Union budgets that do not relate to Clubs and Societies activities and Extra-curricular student experience.
3. To lobby the University to continue to fund off campus facility hire.
4. We will still actively encourage clubs and societies to fundraise to increase the resources being put into their societies to reach their aims and objectives.

WE LOVE THE LIVING WAGE POLICY

Title:	We Love The Living Wage	Date of Student Council:	05/12/2017
Proposer name:	Grace Anderson	Role:	MA Sociology Rep
Seconder name:	Laura Douds	Role:	Vice President (Science and Technology)

Union Notes:

1. The Living Wage is based on the amount a person needs to earn to cover the basic costs of living.
2. It is set at £8.75 an hour outside London (£10.20 in London). This is higher than the national living wage, which is £7.05 for adults aged over 21, and £7.50 for adults aged over 25.
<https://www.livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage>
3. The Living Wage enables a person to have a minimum acceptable standard of living with less reliance on benefits, and is calculated annually according to the cost of living in the UK.
4. 53 employers in Cambridge pay the Living Wage: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/living-wage>. 20 employers in the Chelmsford area pay the Living Wage. <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/employer-map>
5. The Living Wage assessed by the Living Wage Foundation is different to the government's Living Wage, which is in fact a minimum wage. <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/what-real-living-wage>
6. Anglia Ruskin University are certified as a Living Wage Employer.
7. ARU Students' Union are certified as a Living Wage Employer.

Union Believes:

1. That there is a correlation between student retention and financial worries.
2. That there is a correlation at ARU between financial worries and bad mental health.
3. That paying students the living wage can alleviate some of their financial stress.
4. That financial support for students from the government is a regular target for budget cuts, with the recent loss of maintenance grants and the NHS bursary.
5. That ARU should treat student staff equally to others they employ.
6. That the living wage set by the Living Wage Foundation is the real living wage as it is assessed specifically to help cover a persons living costs.
7. That if an employer cannot pay a living wage they cannot afford to be in business.
8. That students deserve a living wage and should be supported in accessing one.

Union Resolves:

1. To use any employability events the Union is involved in to promote that students deserve a living wage and to talk to students about why they should seek a living wage employer when looking for work.
2. To take part actively in the next living wage weeks while this policy is active.
3. To put the Union's commitment to the Living Wage into their recruitment practices and internal policies.



WHEELS IN MOTION POLICY

Title:	Wheels in Motion	Date of Student Council:	05/12/2017
Proposer name:	Kirran Khan	Role:	Vice President (Business)
Seconder name:	Benjamin Morris	Role:	FMS Faculty Rep (Chelmsford)

Union Notes:

Students and ARU staff are offered a discount for buses in Chelmsford but not in Cambridge. The discount in Chelmsford varies from 10% to 17% depending on the type of service and the type of ticket (daily, weekly, monthly, or annually) you purchase. See:

<http://web.anglia.ac.uk/estates/environment/travel/bus.php> for full breakdown of discounts available.

Students and staff in Cambridge have to pay for both the parking of their vehicle, and the bus travel. They pay the normal rate without the option for a student discount (with NUS card, Unidays, or by presenting a valid student ID Card)

Union Believes:

Students and staff in Cambridge should be offered a discount for using the park and ride service, equivalent to that offered in Chelmsford. This will then actively encourage members of the ARU community to consider using the service rather than driving in to Cambridge and parking – saving them money, causing less traffic in the city centre, and less complaints from local residents.

Union Resolves:

To explore potential partnerships with Cambridge Regional College; Cambridge University Students Union; College of West Anglia; and other educational providers in Cambridge, to lobby Cambridge County Council to acknowledge the issue and work towards offering a student discount for the park and ride service in Cambridge.



AGAINST NHS CUTS POLICY

Title:	Against NHS Cuts	Date of Student Council:	05/12/2017
Proposer name:	Eliza Torres	SID/Role:	Vice President (Health, Social Care, Education and Medical Science)
Secunder name:		SID/Role:	

Union Notes:

1. Bursaries have been cut for nursing students, which has introduced high levels of debt. This has been predicted to drive down recruitment and allied health students at ARU.
2. ARU is the largest provider of Health, social care and Education course in the East of England, with over 10,000 students and the university has been named one of the top 10 places in the country to study nursing.
3. Cuts to healthcare services means students will be seeking more Mental Health assistance from universities which will mean that there will be a larger demand for services that may not be met. The ratio of students to counsellors is 1:1,358, which shows just how stretched counsellors are to provide services for students.

Union Believes:

1. Cuts against the NHS affect students on multiple levels and create barriers to accessing these courses for various demographics of students.
2. Cuts to community health care also affects the wellbeing of students their ability to access needed care from facilities in a timely manner with regards to mental health and other presenting health issues.
3. ARU SU is against future cuts to the NHS and rising of fees. Cambridge ARU students attended a demonstration for free education in London and Chelmsford students created banners in support of the free education campaign.

Union Resolves:

1. To stand and campaign against all proposed cuts to NHS services
2. To support student campaigns against cuts to the nursing and allied health professions
3. To support local community campaigns against cuts to NHS services