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**NUS Conference Guidebook**

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# What is the National Union of Students (NUS)?

The National Union of Students is an organisation that aims to “promote, defend and extend the rights of students.” They stand for fighting discrimination, isolation, and injustice towards students through campaigns and democratic representation. They represent students at a national level, making sure student voices are heard at all levels.

As students at Wolverhampton University, you are members of NUS, and therefore can be a part of creating exciting change through becoming an NUS National Conference or Liberation Conference delegate.

# What Does a Delegate Do?

**Before NUS Conferences;**

* You will be provided with a briefing from Students’ Union staff prior to the conference.
* Ask any questions you may have so you fully understand the process.
* Familiarise yourself with the agenda and other papers. Agendas and motions often aren’t online until around 3 or 4 weeks before the event.

**During NUS Conferences;**

* There are three main roles of a Delegate at any NUS Conference
  + voting on policy
    - Discuss and vote on motions which will become policy of NUS when passed. Policy informs the NUS what its members think are important key issues and mandates them to work on it
  + voting in elections
    - Delegates will elect the officers and committee members for the year ahead.
  + Voting on reports
    - Delegates will review the work of the various committees, councils and governing bodies.
    - Delegates will have the opportunity to hold to account the officers responsible by asking the officers questions and voting on whether to approve the report.

As a delegate you will also have the opportunity to attend extra, educational sessions within conference these could be on anything from BME representation on campus through to best practice for elections.

**After NUS Conference;**

* Let students know what you have learnt and the difference you have made at the conference by writing a news story for the union website
* Give feedback on how prepared you felt for conference and your experience as a delegate.

# What is a motion?

A motion simply lays out what change needs to happen and how. This is then voted on by the delegates at the conference to decide if this should or should not happen. Motions will be submitted by various unions in advance of the conference. As a delegate, you will hear speeches for and against the motion. During these discussions, it is possible for amendments to be made to the motion. As a delegate, you will be asked to vote on first whether the amendments should be included, and then when all amendments have been voted on, you will vote on the motion itself. All delegates will be given a voting card. In order to vote, you will be required to hold your card in the air so it can be counted against your decision to either vote for, against, or abstaining from the motion.

# What is a card vote?

In most instances all delegates will get the option to vote on decisions. On some occasions though a card vote may be called. In the case of a card vote, each union will get one vote, not each delegate. The union’s card will be kept by the Lead Delegate (voted on by the National Conference delegates) who will be the one to use it as necessary.

# How are officer elections conducted?

As well as voting on motions, you will be asked to elect the new NUS Officers. These elections will be by secret ballot and will use the ATV system, which means you should number the candidates in order of preference (like how we run elections at Wolverhampton SU). You do not have to put a number by all of the candidates. Vote RON to reopen nominations if you don’tbelieve any of the candidates to be suitable

# Current NUS Policy

NUS Policy lasts for 3 years from the date it was voted on, and steers the work of the NUS both as a national body and within the liberation groupings. Policy passed at the liberation conference can be taken to National Conference to become policy for the whole of the NUS to follow.

To see the current policy please open the NUS Conference 2020 policy document found in the candidate hub.

# What is the time commitment?

To be a delegate you must attend the duration of the conference (including time for travelling to and from the location, unless it is taking place online) as well as briefing prior to the conference and debriefing after. For more information on what delegates do visit: NUS conferences website

# Are there any costs to attending?

The Students' Union covers conference registration fees, accommodation, and travel for delegates and will reimburse food and drink where the delegate needs to leave their home. If you require support during the conferences please visit this [site](https://www.wolvesunion.org/pandemic-fund/)

# Upcoming elections

**National Conference**

Every year NUS hosts its National Conference to gather feedback from students on issues that relate specifically to them. Delegates are elected to represent Wolverhampton University students at a national level and influence NUS decision making for the year ahead. At this conference, delegates scrutinise the current work of NUS, set the direction of the NUS for the next three years, and elect future leaders of the NUS. It is also where the budget for the year ahead is decided through the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Every year over 1,500 delegates arrive at the conference from institutions across the United Kingdom.

**Positions available**

There are 6 positions available to attend the National Conference and 3 of these places must be filled by women. This is in line with NUS national policy that 50% of the delegation must be women, rounded down. The President will attend the Conference as ex-officio on behalf of The Union, and will act as the delegation leader.

**When**

Tuesday 6th April 2021 - Thursday 8th April 2021

**Where**

Online

**Liberation Conference**

The Liberation Conference brings together student activists from NUS Liberation campaigns to build policy and discuss issues affecting students from Liberation groups. NUS Liberation campaigns support and fight for the rights of Black\*, Disabled, LGBT+, Trans and Women students. Each of the campaigns are represented at the Conference with space for attendees to discuss matters relevant to members from the Liberation groups represented. The Conference is used to discuss motions that become policy for five years, hold Officers to account and hold elections.

**Positions available**

There are six positions available to attend this conference:

• One Black\* Student

• One additional place for a Black\* Woman Student

• One Trans Student

• One LGBT+ Student

• One Disabled Student

• One Woman Student

\*the NUS use Black to mean students from African, Asian, Arab and Caribbean heritage. All of these delegates must self-define in their respective category.

**When**

Tue 23rd March - Thu 25th March

**Where**

Online

# What are the key election dates?

• Nominations open: Monday 1st February

• Nominations close: Friday 19th February

• Voting opens: Monday 1st March

• Voting closes: Thursday 4th March

• Results announced: Friday 5th March

If you’ve got any questions about the NUS Conference elections, feel free to contact our Head of Influence and Engagement, Lisa Burton lisa.burton@wlv.ac.uk