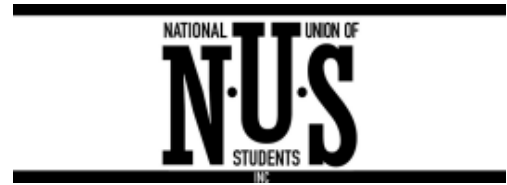


National Executive Meeting



National Union of Students Inc.

Wednesday, 1st May 2024

Minutes

Meeting Details:

Venue: Zoom

Time: 7:30 pm AEDT

Chair: Ngaire Bogemann (National President)

Minute Taker: Jonathan De La Pena (National Secretary)

1. Meeting Open - 7:37pm

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

1.2 Attendance

National Office Bearers/Non-voting members

Ngaire Bogemann	National President
Jonathan De La Pena	National Secretary
Sabrina Yassine	National Welfare Officer
Grace Franco	National Education Officer
Ela Akyol	National Women's Officer
Ella Gutteridge	National Queer/LGBTQIA+ Officer
Eddie Stephenson	National Queer/LGBTQIA+ Officer
Chandra Altoff (Apology)	National First Nations Officer
Mairead Foley	National Disabilities Officer
Reynal Adrien (Apology; joined 8:32pm)	National International Officer
Jacinto Hedus	National Ethnocultural Officer
Caitlin Marlor	National Small & Regional Officer
Beth Shegog	National TAFE Officer

State Branch Presidents/Voting Members

Oliver Shephard-Bayly	SA State Branch President
Disha Zutshi	Vic State Branch President
Hamish Covell	NSW State Branch President
Liam Bessell-Koprek	ACT State Branch President
Jeremy Wong	Qld State Branch President
Heidee Austic	WA State Branch President
Liam McLaren	TAS State Branch President

General Executive Members/Voting Members

Xavier Dupe	General Executive Member
Veronika Gobba (Proxied to Ela Akyol)	General Executive Member
Tess Robb	General Executive Member
Finbar Bray	General Executive Member
Nicholas Goodyer (Proxied to Dulan Ariyathilaka)	General Executive Member
Lucy Fawcett (Proxied to Yashaiah)	General Executive Member
Brandon Lee	General Executive Member
Kevin Li	General Executive Member
Alexander Knowles (Apology)	General Executive Member
Daniel O'Shea	General Executive Member
Molly Quinnell (Proxied to Dan O'Shea)	General Executive Member
Asadullah Jan (Proxied to Enzhe Li)	General Executive Member

1.3 **Absent**

1.4 **Election of Deputy Chair**

Action

The National Executive appoints Jonathan De La Pena as the Deputy Chair of the Committee.

Moved: Ela Akyol (Women's Officer)

Seconded: Grace Franco (Education Officer)

1.5 **Acceptance of Apologies**

Action

The National Executive accepts the apologies of the following:

- As noted above

1.6 **List of Accepted Proxies**

The following proxies have been accepted by the National Secretary:

- As noted above

Moved: Jonathan De La Pena (National Secretary)

Seconded: Ngaire Bogemann (President)

CWD

1.7 **Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest**

None received.

1.6 **Confirmation of Previous Minutes**

Action

That National Executive acknowledges the circulated minutes of the previous meeting and the discussed amendments are a true and accurate reflection of that meeting.

NX 2 - 15/03/2024

Moved: Finbar Bray (General Executive Member)

Seconded: Beth Shegog (TAFE Officer)

CWD

2. National Officer Reports

2.1 Chance for OBs to speak further on their reports.

Ngaire took report as read; spoke on a partnership program which had been initiated last year but had no follow up action taken leading up to the current terms until it was brought to the attention of NX this morning; as the partnership program involved significant financial/in-kind contributions and insufficient information was available as to the nature of the partnership the consensus was to table the partnership until further information was made available.

Jonathan took report as read;

Sabrina took report as read; spoke on the recent week of action and the positive attendance and social media presence the week of action presented.

Grace took report as read; spoke on the week of action as well as a press release with Sen. Mehreen Faruqi which Grace participated in and spoke on the NUS's demands from the Accords and the current Federal Government.

Ela took report as read; spoke on the ongoing encampment at UOW and the week of action.

Ella spoke on the recent Pro-Palestinian snap rally held at UQ as the Prime Minister had come on to campus and a snap rally was held. Comments were made on the size of the turnout and its effectiveness despite the turnaround.

Eddie took report as read;

Chandra apology; taken as read

Mairead took report as read; spoke on ongoing plans for Disability Conference and spoke with the Disability Department and their involvement in general NUS Conference planning.

Rey apology; taken as read

Jacinto took report as read;

Caitlin took report as read;

2.2 Motion to Accept National Officer Reports

Action

That National Executive accepts the submitted reports of the National Officers.

Moved: Jacinto Hedus (Ethnocultural Officer)

Seconded: Tess Robb (General Executive Member)

CWD

3. State Officer Reports

3.1 Chance for SBPs to speak further on their reports

Oliver took report as read;

Disha took report as read;

Hamish took report as read;

Liam BK took report as read;

Jeremy gave a verbal report on how UQ and QUT how they're currently fighting with the University against SSAF being directed towards universities instead. Commended Ella and Queer Students for Palestine rally and its mobilisation.

Liam M took report as read;

3.2 Motion to Accept State Officer Reports

Action

That National Executive accepts the submitted reports of the State Officers.

Moved: Jacinto Hedus (Ethnocultural Officer)

Seconded: Jonathan De La Pena (National Secretary)
CWD

4. Matters for Discussion

4.1 March/April Financial Statements

Speaker: Jonathan De La Pena

Presented the current financial statements for perusal, noted primarily day-to-day expenses with the biggest expenses coming from the Week of Action, nil questions were raised.

5. Matters for Decision

5.1 Education Conference Tender

Preamble:

Every year the NUS holds a National Education Conference (Edcon). This consists of plenaries from guest speakers and workshops run by student representatives from all around Australia to share ideas and engage in robust political debate. This conference will be held from 1 – 4 July.

Action:

- That the NUS awards the tender for the 2024 Education Conference to a nominated campus based on tenders received prior to the 26th of April 2024. This is to be held Monday 1st July to Thursday 4th July.
- That the NUS will hold an EdCon Organisation Committee meeting in the following month and invites interested NX Members to participate

Mover: Jonathan De La Pena (National Secretary)

Second: Grace Franco (Education Officer)

Xavier and Eddie spoke on the issues of accessibility and costs to attend a potential Education Conference in Curtin

Beth, Grace and Jeremy spoke in support of Curtin; including enfranchising Western Australian universities who have not had the opportunity to host any NUS Conference in over 10 years and have historically had low attendance numbers due to this lack of accessibility.

A vote was conducted to award the tender to Curtin University as per the above action

Votes for: 18 **Votes Against:** 1

Motion is Carried

8:30pm NX goes on an accessibility break and the meeting is suspended

8:38pm Meeting continued

5.2 NUS Strategic Plan + Strategic Goal

Action:

1. The NUS Endorses the Strategic Plan and ratifies the [Strategic Plans Goals](#)

Mover: Ngaire Bogemann (President)

Second: Grace Franco (Education Officer)

CWD

5.3 NUS supports Kenyan students fighting for an independent national student union

Preamble: Kenyan students face appalling conditions. Food and other on-campus services are often for profit and prices are totally unaffordable.

Kenya's government banned the country's independent national student union in 2016 through the University Amendment Act. Its replacement is deliberately constituted to stifle the voice and resistance of students, with many of its positions chosen by university management. Student activists have revived the independent union as the National Students Caucus, but it is illegal and its activists face arrest or jail for fighting to stand up for students.

The NSC is campaigning to reverse the University Amendment Act and win back the right to their independent student union. As part of this, they've called for statements of support and financial assistance from student unions internationally.

NUS must support the NSC's fight for an independent student union. Students, whether in Kenya or Australia, need independent unions to fight attacks by university management and the government. NSC's campaign is about defending this principle, and a victory for NSC would set an example for students elsewhere to fight for democratic rights and against the crises wracking our society.

Platform:

1. NUS NX stands in solidarity with the Kenyan National Students' Caucus in their fight to regain legality for their independent, democratic student union

Action:

1. NUS President will publish this motion on NUS social media
2. NUS NX will take a solidarity to be published on social media and sent to NSC
3. NUS Office Bearers and members of NX are encouraged to film videos expressing their solidarity and send to NSC

Moved: Xavier Dupé (General Executive Member)

Seconded: Ella Gutteridge (Queer Officer)

CWD

5.4 **Financial support for the campaign for an independent Kenyan student union**

Preamble:

The Kenyan Student Caucus (KSC) is a grassroots campaign to win back the right to a democratic, independent national student union in Kenya. Given the repression they face from the government, they have requested financial support from student organisations internationally to assist with their campaigns for student unionism, improved student accommodation, and to oppose fee increases.

Action:

NUS supports, in principle, sending \$1000 to the KSC, from TBD budget line, pending further information about the campaign.

Moved: Xavier Dupe (General Executive Member)

Seconded: Eddie Stephenson (Queer Officer)

Motion pulled by mover and deferred for a later NX

5.5 **NUS National Executive condemns Labor's racist attacks on refugees and calls for the Migration Amendment Bill to be scrapped**

The Albanese Labor government has recently sunk to a new low in its attempts to scapegoat refugees. Refugees will now face up to five years prison or a fine of nearly \$100,000 if they attempt to resist their own deportation. Additionally, the government will ban visa applications of

refugees from 'removal concern countries' at the Minister's discretion. At the moment, this includes countries like Russia, Iran, and Iraq, well known for their documented human rights abuses.

Under these laws, the Muruguppan family from Biloela would have been deported and fined.

Labor made this disgraceful move after the High Court ruled that the government's policy of indefinite detention was illegal. One of the refugees at the centre of the case is known as ASF17 - a bisexual Iranian man who the government are trying to deport back to Iran, where they face prison or possible death. ASF17 has been held in indefinite immigration detention in PNG since he fled Iran to Australia in 2013. The government justifies his detention on the basis that he has refused to cooperate with Iranian authorities to receive the necessary travel documents to be deported.

Australia has set the world standard in detaining and torturing refugees for the past few decades, with its policies of mandatory detention, refugee removals to a third country and boat turnbacks replicated across Europe and in the United States. Labor is once again taking racist refugee scapegoating to an extreme, in a cynical attempt to distract from its presiding over a cost of living and housing crisis, and to take the wind out of the Liberal Party's attacks on Labor.

Platform:

1. NUS National Executive condemns Labor's racist attacks on refugees
2. NUS calls for the Migration Amendment Bill to be scrapped
3. NUS demands refugees without visas, or with any kind of temporary visa to be given permanent protection in Australia, without threat of deportation

Action:

1. NUS will support and attend protests against these laws

Moved: Ella Gutteridge (Queer Officer)

Seconded: Eddie Stephenson (Queer Officer)

Ella, Eddie, Ela, Ngaire, Hamish and Beth spoke on the motion
Discussion ensued.

Votes for: 2 **Votes against:** 17

Motion Fails

9:15pm NX goes on an accessibility break and the meeting is suspended

8:25pm Meeting continued

5.6 Motion from the Disability Officer regarding compulsory Disability Awareness training for the NUS

(Motion attached from Supporting Documents)

Title: Disability Awareness Training should be a standard not an aspiration.

Preamble:

Mandatory disability awareness training is essential for fostering inclusivity, reducing discrimination, improving accessibility, ensuring legal compliance, enhancing communication, supporting diversity, and building a more inclusive society. It promotes empathy, understanding, and respect for individuals with disabilities while equipping participants with practical knowledge and skills to create accessible environments and interact effectively with people with disabilities. It is everyone's responsibility to create inclusive and accessible environments.

Actions:

Action 1: The NUS commits to including disability awareness as a part of inductions for 2025 NUS Office Bearers and National Executive and all future incumbents.

Action 2: NUS commits to conducting Disability awareness training for 2024 National Executives and is to be completed by all national executives and staff by NX 5 on 31/07/24.

Action 3: The NUS will become a member of the Hidden Disability Sunflower Scheme

Action 4: All NUS National Executives and staff will apply accessibility measures to campaigns, projects, meetings and where else appropriate and necessary.

Moved: Maiready Foley (Disabilities Officer)

Seconded: Grace Franco (Education Officer)

CWD

5.7 Motion from the Disability Officer regarding future funding of the Disability Department

(Motion attached from Supporting Documents)

Title: The NUS Disability Officer constantly slays, and now it's time to be paid!

Preamble:

The NUS Disability Officer is considered the peak authoritative voice for D/disabled tertiary students within the disability advocacy sector by other peak body representatives like AFDO, ACIE, ATEND, CYDA and YDAS. The role has constantly required the elected officer to be involved in campaigns outside the tertiary education sector because due to the nature of disability rights they are all interconnected. This has involved: writing a joint report on Disability and Higher Education, representations to the Australian Human Rights Commission, NDIS/NDIA reviews, Employment roundtables, the Disability Royal Commission, ADHD inquiry as well as representing D/disabled tertiary education advocates regarding the UNCRPD to international governments. It is a constant ever growing list that must be balanced with the requirements of supporting elected Disability Officers, organising NUS campaigns, working through inaccessible environments, educating student unions and NUS office bearers of disability awareness, working paid employment, being a student and being disabled. It is not unexpected for the NUS Disability Officer to complete over 15 hours of work per week to keep up with the demands of the role.

It is unjust and unreasonable to expect a role that defines whether or not D/disabled tertiary education students are mentioned and addressed in the disability rights and policy- reform landscape to be unpaid. It is more unreasonable to expect a person who by nature of being D/disabled has to overcome more barriers, is more prone to burnout and health flare-ups to fulfil such a role without being paid. All past NUS Disability Officers have had to periodically sacrifice paid work to ensure their NUS campaign succeeded, a decision which can result in job instability, difficulty paying for disability supports and severe tolls on physical and mental health. The NUS

committed itself to improving its representation and culture surrounding D/disabled people and disability pride, and as such needs to start by paying its National Disability Officer.

Actions:

Action 1: NUS will conduct a review to pay the National Disability office bearer of 2025 and future incumbents with the intent of a pay rate no less than current national executive office bearers.

Action 2: The outcome of the review is to be presented no later than NX 6 on 4th September 2024.

Action 3: NUS will look into the viability of paying the current 2024 Disability Officer in a timely manner.

Moved: Maiready Foley (Disabilities Officer)

Seconded: Jonathan De La Pena (National Secretary)

CWD

6. Meeting Close - 9.34pm