

# NUS Motion Submission

Proposed by Joseph Attard

A motion is a proposed policy. It states what we believe about an issue, and the action we will take. Any students' union that is affiliated to NUS can submit a motion or amendment to National Conference.

The motion is discussed and debated by King's students at AGM, and if it passes, it is sent to NUS National Conference. There, it will be discussed and voted on again, and if it passes, will become NUS policy, so will set out NUS' political stance and work for the year ahead.

## Motion to Support the UCU Strike

Conference believes:

1. University staff have faced a sustained attack on their living and working conditions over the past few years.<sup>1</sup>
2. These attacks come at the same time as a drive towards the marketisation of education through higher tuition fees and pay increases for senior management at many universities.<sup>2</sup>
3. The latest attack on university staff is a proposed change to their pension schemes which, if implemented, will leave a typical lecturer almost £10,000 a year worse off in retirement than under the current set up.<sup>3</sup>
4. In response, the University and College Union (UCU) balloted its members for strike action. UCU members overwhelmingly backed industrial action. Overall, 88% of members who voted backed strike action and 93% backed action short of a strike. The turnout was 58%.<sup>4</sup>
5. There is a long history of student unions and the UCU cooperating in defence of education. NUS President Shakira Martin has already released a joint statement of support with the UCU.<sup>5</sup>

Conference further believes:

1. Redundancies, course closures, and cuts to pay have had a detrimental impact on staff and students at universities around the country.
2. There has been a drive to reduce costs and increase revenue, thereby increasingly treating universities as businesses instead of centres of learning.
3. That the pensions of university staff are being attacked as part of a wider attack on education that is being carried out in the interests of private profit.
4. That the struggle by staff for decent pensions therefore concerns students as much as the fight for free and decent education.
5. That this attack on education cannot be separated from similar attacks on the NHS, the unemployed, the disabled, the welfare state, the emergency services and other publicly funded institutions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/may/25/uk-university-lecturers-strike-over-pay>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ucu.org.uk/pensions>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/9247/Joint-NUSUCU-statement-on-USS-action>

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6. That the struggle against cuts to these services therefore concerns students as much as the fight for free and decent education.
  7. That there is enough money, not only to make these attacks unnecessary, but in fact to greatly increase public funding for education, healthcare and the welfare state.
  8. That this money, which amounts to hundreds of billions of pounds, is currently privately owned and remains uninvested, not because it is not needed, but because it cannot be used to profit the handful of people who control it.
  9. That this situation is the result of a capitalist economic system run for profit instead of need, and whose operation inevitably results in crises, inefficiency and the growth of inequality.

**Conference resolves:**

1. To publicly support all university staff taking strike action in the four rounds of action that have been announced between February and March 2018.
2. To publicly encourage all students not to cross picket lines, should strikes continue beyond their initial four-week period.
3. To send delegates to the local UCU branch and to picket lines to offer practical support for all action to fight against attacks on education and other public services.
4. To call for the nationalisation under democratic control of the banks and biggest businesses as the only way to secure decent pay and conditions for university staff, decent and free education for all, and properly funded public services.