

Motion to Mandate the Graduate Union to initiate the process to activate a Referendum concerning the Proposals for a New Single Students' Union

Updated version of the motion presented at meeting in July 2019

Proposer: Alessandro Ceccarelli, President and Chair, Graduate Union (henceforth GU)

Seconded: Mrittunjoy Guha Majumdar, Chair of Exec and Vice-president, Graduate Union

The Graduate Union notes:

1. That extensive consultation and proposal development has been undertaken in the past months on joint proposals from the GU and CUSU on the creation of a new students' union;
2. *See Appendix A.* That 51 undergraduate and 93 postgraduate students responded to our recent survey. 90% of undergraduate respondents supported CUSU and the GU working more closely together and 78% supported the proposal for a single union. Of postgraduate respondents, 86% supported CUSU and the GU working more closely together and 65% supported the proposal for a single union. Between 73 and 75% of postgraduate respondents supported the proposed sabbatical, executive committee and council and forum structures. Between 60% and 75% of undergraduate respondents supported the same proposed structures. Undergraduate respondents were most supportive of the proposed council and forum structures;
3. That the proposal have been modified in order to respond to areas of concern. For instance, concerns were raised about the proposed access and education roles, an LGBT+ role, and the need for an equal postgraduate voice in any new council and forum structures. These and more requests and concerns have been actively addressed at GU-CUSU working group meetings and a new updated proposal has been developed so as to meet a compromise between the needs and requests of UG and PG students (*See Appendix B*);
4. That in July, August, September and October 2019 the GU and CUSU Sabbatical officers and members of staff have consistently and successfully undertaken positive and constructive conversations to improve the proposal so as to promote better representation of PG students with a 'New Single Students' Union' (henceforth 'New-SU');
5. That MCRs and Postgraduate student representatives have been kept informed during the proposal developments and their voices, needs and concerns have been presented to the GU-CUSU working group, as well as discussed and integrated in the proposal as far as possible. (see paper 1019.L);
6. That a Business Case was formalised and presented to, and accepted by the Trustees of each charity (ie. CUSU and GU);
7. That discussions with the GU Board of Trustees have been conducted so as to guarantee the interests of the GU Charity;

The Graduate Union believes:

1. That we need to continue to engage with students and to endorse **a Referendum** concerning the 'New-SU' to be presented to the University of Cambridge student community;
2. Since postgraduate students make up half the student body, and a majority of postgraduates are international students, we must develop a 'New-SU' structure, procedures and mission statements that ensures parity of PG and UG students, as well as home and international students;
3. That the current GU and CUSU sabbatical teams (2019/20) should continue the current direction of travel and **campaign to raise awareness of this positive initiative among the student population until a Referendum is held;**

The Graduate Union resolves:

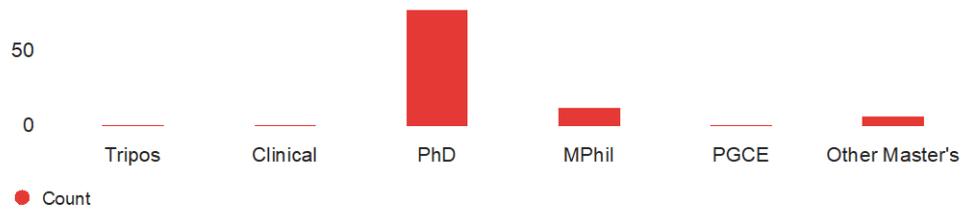
1. To endorse a Referendum concerning the 'New-SU' to be presented to the University of Cambridge students community in Michaelmas Term 2019;
2. To campaign in favour of the 'New-SU' project and raise awareness among the student population until a Referendum is held.

Appendix A: Report from the GU-CUSU Proposal Consultation

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GU-CUSU Proposal Consultation - Students (PG)

Q15 - Student status:



Q9 - Do you support the concept of a new single union?



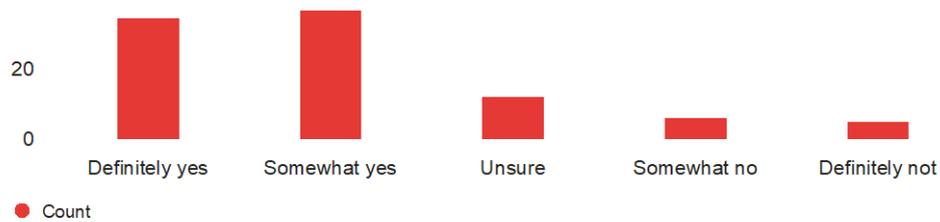
Q2 - Do you support the proposed sabbatical structure and roles?



Q8 - Do you support the proposed executive committee structure?



Q4 - Do you support the proposed council and forum structure?



Appendix B: Some students' requests concerning the 'New-SU'

(students' signatures not included below)

MCR's requests concerning the new single union. "New-SU" project (2019/20)

The following lists of suggestions and requests are crucial elements that we would like to include in the **Constitution** of the new single union currently designed by GU and CUSU. The following requests have been presented by MCR Officers and by GU Exec Officers, and aim to improve and guarantee the representation of Postgraduate (PG) and Mature Undergraduate (UG) students.

Trustees of the New Union:

- Two or maximum four trustees out of ten should be sabbatical officers, and 50% of them should be equally PG and UG. This structure will guarantee the best support to sabbatical officers and will guarantee equal representation.
- If non-sabbatical students trustees are appointed, they should also be 50% UG and 50% PG.

Council, voting and quoracy:

- In order to guarantee equal representation and voices of PG and UG at the Council, structural mechanisms should be in place. Both the quoracy and the voting system should be structured in ways that guarantee equal representation.
- There must be an 'electoral college system', whereby the membership of the Council is divided into two groups ('undergrads' and 'postgrads') which must give approval/vote individually for a motion. In addition to this, the council as a whole must provide its approval for the motion, (this would however be done in practice in one vote).
- There must also be a quorum of PG and UG representatives present in order for a vote to go ahead and be binding – exact numbers would depend on the membership of the council.

Structure and representation:

- There must be equal structural co-leadership (UG and PG) of executive portfolios and campaigns (e.g. 'liberation campaigns').
- The frequency and workload of informal and formal platforms (e.g. Academic Forum, College Forum, and Councils) must take into account PG v UG cultures equally. Excessive numbers of informal meetings for MCR representatives may generate confusion and may dilute the overall energy of student representatives.
- We suggest to host a maximum of one extra informal discussion meeting for MCR reps per month (e.g. one informal College Forum per month).
- We request at least one or two Fora or Councils per year dedicated exclusively to and for postgraduate students during Terms, as well as one or two meetings per year exclusively designed for undergraduate students.
- Inductions, trainings and certain events should be mindful and respectful of PG and UG cultural and social differences. Ideally, sessions for/on Postgraduate students should be ran and delivered by Postgraduate students (i.e. by students representatives who are/were postgraduate students). Similarly, sessions for/on international students should be delivered by international students (i.e. by students representatives who are/were international students).
- The logo of the New Union should not resemble the current logos (e.g. bubble speech or shield) and a new brand identity should be designed.