

**Please read the following trigger warnings/content warnings before reading this document: Israel/Palestine, anti-Semitism, islamaphobia, racism, discrimination, sustainability, facilities, accessibility, stereotyping, immigration, prevent, giving blood, homophobia, community, mental health, national campaigns**

Some Beliefs & Commitments have been grouped together as they cover similar themes

Notes/additional background information for any Beliefs & Commitments are noted in green text.

## **List of Beliefs & Commitments to be renewed:**

### *Group 1*

- The Student Movement
- Activism

### *Group 2*

- Education for Sustainable Development
- Facilities

### *Individual Beliefs & Commitments*

- Israel/Palestine Conflict
- No Platform
- Stereotyping
- Immigration
- Prevent
- Giving Blood
- Community
- Mental Health
- National Campaigns

## **Group 1**

### **The Student Movement (ASM)**

The Guild is part of the wider national student movement, with which comes a collective responsibility to represent the interests of all students. We recognise that we are stronger in such a movement and that our campaigns, lobbying and representation are stronger too.

The Guild believes it has the duty to back NUS supported demonstrations and protests, if they are in line with Guild Policy, and are in the interests of students.

### **Activism (Campaigns Committee)**

The Guild supports peaceful direct action and protest, within the law of the land and in line with Guild policy. The Guild of Students believes in individuals' rights to carry out peaceful direct action. The Guild will not distance itself from legal non-violent protest, although it may not in all cases explicitly condone it.

The Guild will do all it can to protect students engaged in activism from being subjected to violence and intimidation, and provide guidance to them about their rights in protest situations and how to diffuse potentially violent situations.

## **Group 2**

### **Education for Sustainable Development (Campaigns Committee)**

The Guild believes that it has a duty to educate and inform students about sustainability, the impact their decisions/lifestyles can have on the natural world, and way that they can live more environmentally friendly lives, both at university and in the future. The Guild of Students recognises the importance of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and the UN Sustainability Goals.

The Guild commits to work with university academic services, college committees and student experience officers to embed ESD into the universities formal curriculum and to support student representatives to lobby for more environmental education on courses and the use of sustainability as a topic of learning and assessment. The Guild commits to educating Student Group committees, elected student representatives and Guild/University staff on ESD, the UN sustainability goals and the importance of sustainability throughout the Guild's activities.

### **Facilities (Campaigns Committee)**

The Guild believes it has a responsibility to continually improve its infrastructure, reduce the carbon footprint of its building and activities, and as much as possible use renewable energy. The Guild believes that the University has a responsibility to ensure future campus developments and new buildings are built as sustainably as possible, and will work with university to actively encourage this.

The Guild commits to aim for on-going carbon footprint reduction in its own facilities, to make reasonable adjustments to planned development and services to minimise environmental impact, and procure energy efficient equipment where possible.

### **Individual B&C**

#### **Israeli/Palestinian Conflict (ASM)**

The Guild supports a peaceful settlement of the Israel/Palestine conflict in line with NUS policy and does not support either side of the conflict. The Guild shall avoid investing in companies identified by NUS as impacting negatively on attempts to foster a peaceful settlement in the region, and will lobby the University to allow the contracts to expire and be reassessed with emphasis on not renewing the contract. It will lobby the University to seek to end these contracts before expiration where possible.

*To note: NUS has two policies related to Israel/Palestine, which are due to expire in June 2022. They can be found on the [NUS 2019 Policy Document linked here](#), number 64 and 145.*

#### **No Platform (ASM)**

The Guild has a moral responsibility to ensure that all its members are able to use its services and be involved in its activities free from the fear of attack, discrimination or threats due to their ethnicity, sexuality, disability or any other factor. Because of this duty, it shall provide no platform to groups that pose a threat to the Guild of Students being a safe space for all students. This shall include barring such groups from using the Guild's services and engaging in its activities, and also barring Guild Officers, Student Groups and Guild Committees from sharing a platform with such groups in their official Guild capacity.

In addition, the Guild will give no platform to the following groups:

Hizb ut-Tahrir  
English Defence League  
British National Policy  
Al-Muhajiroun

Muslim Public Affairs Committee

*To note: This policy has been checked against NUS' **No Platform Policy** & **No Platform List** (approved in 2015). It is recommended that National Action are removed as they have been proscribed as a terror group since 2016 under the Terrorism Act 2000*

### **Stereotyping (W&L Committee)**

The Guild actively discourages any form of stereotyping comments/behaviour towards students based on their membership to a particular Sports Club, Student Group or Association. The Guild of Students does not tolerate any form of discrimination and harassment based on the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation), in line with the Zero Tolerance Policy.

### **Immigration (W&L Committee)**

The Guild opposes racism and xenophobia and believes that immigration enriches our society both culturally and financially and that we should be supportive of it. The Guild believes that pandering to anti-immigrant arguments does not undermine racism, but instead normalises it, helping fuel the growth of right-wing political forces and far-right organisations.

### **Prevent (W&L Committee)**

The Guild of Students opposes the “Prevent” strategy and believes it reinforces crude stereotypes of Muslims that will only feed prejudice and discrimination, leading to isolation and stigmatisation which will only prevent their continued engagement and contribution.

Whilst the Guild does not believe “radicalisation” to be a widespread problem it recognises that it may take place on some occasions, and that it has a responsibility to ensure the safety of all students. Universities are places where extremist views can be challenged effectively through dialogue, open forums and debates and this is the most appropriate way to combat these problems. The Guild opposes spying on any students and will not pass on information about members’ religious or political opinions or society members’ lists to the police, university authorities or any

other third party.

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### **Giving Blood (W&L Committee)**

NHS Blood and Transplant currently prevents men who have sex with other men from donating blood unless they have had no sexual contact with another person for 3 months or more.

The Guild believes that this policy is unfair, and it will retain the right to use such blood drives or other events to highlight this issue.

The Guild of Students recognises the importance of blood drives, and will, where possible support students to give blood, platelets or other tissue.

### **Community (ASM)**

The Guild believes that the University is more than just a collection of buildings where students pay to receive a degree. The University is a community which unites both students and staff in a partnership, making the University what it is.

The Guild believes living independently in the community is an important part of students’ university experience and that students should feel safe and be valued as an integral part of the local community.

The Guild of Students is committed to improving community cohesion between students and local residents, so that the significant positive influence that students provide in the local and wider community is recognised.

The Guild believes that a positive and influential relationship with Birmingham City Council should be maintained and that we should work with the Council to ensure their policies are set with the benefits of students in mind.

The Guild is committed to providing advice and support to students. It will seek to lobby the University and local police so that students both feel, and are safe, in the community, working in partnership where appropriate.

### **Mental Health (W&L Committee)**

The Guild is committed to working with the University and other stakeholders to support the mental health of students. It shall work to improve and promote the services on offer to those who live with mental health conditions.

### **National Campaigns (W&L Committee/Campaigns Committee)**

The Guild will support (but not exclusively), the following national campaigns:

- Black History Month
- Women's History Month
- LGBTQ History Month
- Disability History Month
- Fossil Free UK
- Reclaim the Night
- Holocaust Memorial Day
- Go Green Week

The Guild believes in student-led campaigning and commits to support student-led campaigns with training, support and funding.