

NUS Conferences 2017/18

Dates, Deadlines and Guidance (Updated December 2017)

Context

NUS Conferences are the **sovereign policy-making bodies** of NUS. Every year 1000's of students from across the UK meet to discuss the big issues that students face. NUS national conference debates and **passes policies** which define how NUS will operate and what its priorities will be for the year ahead. National Conference also elects the president and vice-presidents of NUS.

As well as National Conference, NUS holds conferences for **each liberation and section group** (LGBT+ students, Disabled students, Womens, International students, Post Graduate Students, Black Students, Trans students, Part-time and Mature students). These conferences pass **independent policy** from NUS and also elect their own committees and officers.

Individual Student Unions (i.e. the Guild) send motions to conferences to be debated and voted on. Once a motion is passed it becomes policy, and NUS officers and staff start working on it. Motions are the 'property' of the student union (Guild). Delegates from the Guild can speak in favour of it at conference, but if they don't it still goes to a vote.

Conference Dates

International Students' Conference - **27th February 2018.**

LGBT+ Conference - **7th -8th March 2018.**

NUS National Conference - **27th - 29th March 2018.**

Women's Conference - **11-12th April 2018.**

Postgraduate Students Conference – **21st April 2018**

Mature and Part-time students conference – **21st April 2018**

Trans Conference - **30th April - 1 May 2018.**

Disabled Students' Conference - **2-3rd May 2018.**

Black Students' Summer Conference - **12-13 May 2018.**

Sending Motions to Conference

NUS Motions from the Guild to national conference, sections conferences and liberation conferences must first be passed through 'Your Ideas', the Guild's online democratic platform. 'Your Ideas' is how our members determine what the Guild does and how it works. You can find it here: <https://www.guildofstudents.com/yourideas>.

This year any motions that we submit to the NUS from the Guild will go through one of two 'cycles' (voting periods) of Your Ideas:

Round 1

For motions to:

- LGBT+ Students Conference
- International Students Conference

The submission deadline for motions is the 27th November at 10am

The voting period will be 4th December 10am – 15th December 4pm

Round 2

For motions to:

- NUS National Conference
- Womens Students Conference
- Trans Students conference
- Disabled Students Conference
- Black Students Summer conference
- Postgraduate Students Conference
- Mature & Part time Students Conference

The submission deadline for motions is the 12th January at 4pm

The voting period will be the 29th Jan 10am – 9th Feb 4pm

NOTE: For conferences where there is a limit to the number of motions that the Guild can submit, for instance with National Conference, and more motions are successfully passed through Your Ideas than the Guild can submit, then motions with highest number of positive votes will be submitted to NUS.

Quoracy

Based on our demographic data and lower relative populations in our members for some self-defining groups, motions for different conferences will require different numbers of students to vote in order to pass. These are:

- LGBT+ Students Conference – **30 voters**
- International Students Conference – **175 voters**
- Postgraduate Students Conference – **175 voters**
- Mature & Part time Students Conference – **175 voters**
- NUS National Conference – **175 voters**
- Womens Students Conference – **30 voters**
- Trans Students conference – **10 voters**
- Disabled Students Conference – **30 voters**
- Black Students Summer conference – **30 voters**

Motion Structure

Motions to NUS conferences are written in the format of **Conference Believes**, **Conference Further Believes** and **Conference Resolves**. A NUS Motion looks like this:

Conference Believes:

- That 4/10 students will suffer with mental health issues while at university.
- That NUS figures show that 75% of students suffering with mental health problems believe they have faced stigma while at university. *Not real data*

'Conference Believes' is where your information goes; including any evidence you have to back up your further believes.

Conference Further Believes:

- That students should have better provision from their universities to support them if they struggle with mental health problems.
- That universities should properly fund the student welfare and student counselling services.

'Conference Further Believes' is where your opinion and views go. These are the views that you want conference to subscribe to.

Conference Resolves:

- To encourage student unions to raise the issue of student mental health on their campuses.
- To conduct further research into funding levels for counselling services at universities.

'Conference Resolves' is where you state what the NUS will actually do if the motion is passed.

If you would like more information on how to write a motion, please contact Campaigns@guild.bham.ac.uk.

Areas and Policy Zones

Every Motion has to fit into a 'Zone' in the case of national conference, or a 'Policy Area' in the case of liberation and sections conferences. At national conference, policy passed in the Society and Citizenship zone then becomes the responsibility of the Vice-President Society and Citizenship. The Zones for national conference:

- Society and Citizenship
- Welfare
- Union Development
- Further and Higher Education

Policy areas for other conferences work in a similar way, but are more a way of categorising policy than anything else. They are as follows:

- Society and Citizenship
- Welfare and Student Rights
- Strong and Active Student Unions
- Education

If you are writing a motion and would like some advice as to what zone or area it would fall into, please email Campaigns@guild.bham.ac.uk

Word Limits

Because each NUS conference is independent and writes its own processes and rules, overtime each has developed its own rules. Motion limits are as follows:

- Trans Conference – 500 words (maximum of 1 per policy zone)
- LGBT+ Conference – 500 words (maximum of 1 per policy zone)
- Black Students Conference – 6 motions up to 350 words each - none on the same subject.
- Disabled students conference – 6 motions up to 500 words each motion
- Womens Students conference – 6 motions up to 500 words each
- International students conference – No Limit
- Postgraduate conference – No Limit

- National Conference – 1,400 words per union and a word limit per motion of 600 words.

If you have any questions about NUS conferences in 2017/18, or would like more information please email Campaigns@guild.bham.ac.uk or drop into student voice in the Guild. Alternatively you can find info on one NUS's website: <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/shape-our-work/nus-conferences/>