

UNION POLICY (GENERAL MEETING – (11.5.11)

GOING GREEN

THIS UNION NOTES

1. The Higher Education sector alone spends in excess of £3 billion every year on goods and services, consumes around £200 million worth of energy, and owns 9% of all office space.
[Source: People and Planet. 'How Universities can improve environmental performance and stop Climate Chaos']
2. The University aims to become a World Class Institute by 2015 and has acknowledged sustainable development as necessary for this through the formation of the Sustainability Steering Group.
3. The University has existing measures to address environmental sustainability including the Carbon Management Plan, the Green Travel Plan, commitment to BREEAM standards of 'Excellent', and written, publicly available environmental and energy policies. It is also currently formulating an Environmental Sustainability Strategy to 2015.
4. That this Union has a long history of campaigning on the issue of environmental sustainability, including climate change, and has had significant victories.
5. The Student Sustainability Forum exists on campus and acts to bring together students from academia, societies, and any other fields related to the issues of the environment and sustainability, in order to act as a discussion forum, and a broad link between the Students' Union and the university, and that this forum meets regularly once a term to discuss these issues.

THIS UNION BELIEVES

1. That environmental sustainability is crucial to a students' broader education.
2. That frequent statements of intent from the President stating the importance of reducing energy consumption as a priority in all Faculties, and Halls would draw staff and students together on this issue.
3. The University should follow recommendations made by research at the institution, for example the Tyndall Centre, which would improve its environmental performance and sustainability.
4. That the Student Union should be part of all decision making processes concerning environmental practices at this University.
5. That the Union and University must considerably improve its environmental sustainability by way of practical solutions such as decreasing energy consumption and through raising student awareness by campaigning on issues such as Climate Change.
6. The Student Sustainability Forum acts as an open forum which allows students to air their concerns on environmental and sustainability issues, and as a bridge with the university management.

THIS UNION RESOLVES

1. To lobby the University to have students on every decision making body and to mandate those students to feedback to the Student Sustainability Forum.
2. To hold the University accountable for actions it may take that breach its Carbon Management Plan and Environmental Sustainability Strategy.
3. To lobby the University to be more inclusive of students in the Green Travel Plan by increasing support and facilities that will aid Green Travel at the University, and to support student-led cycle campaigns.
4. To lobby the University to substantially increase student and staff access to paper, plastic, can and cardboard recycling facilities in all areas of university life, with the aim of recycling 40% of its waste by 2010, 45% by 2015 and 50% by 2020, and commit to continue to improve these facilities through signing a formal waste and recycling policy that covers every school, office and STARS.

5. To lobby the University to not only design energy efficient technology into new buildings, but also effective and well-planned waste management systems that should be pioneered in any forthcoming projects.
6. To encourage and lobby the University to manage its resources better and cut consumption, specifically regarding paper use on campus, by providing more efficient printing systems, and through promoting repairing equipment over purchasing new equipment.
7. To lobby the University to sign a comprehensive Sustainable Procurement Policy that will give preference to locally sourced and sustainable products over others, and commit the University to use at least 70% recycled paper as suggested by the Waste and Resources Action Plan (WRAP).
8. To lobby the University to provide all new staff and students with an environmental sustainability orientation, which emphasises the importance of recycling and reducing energy consumption as a priority at our University, and includes the schemes that are in place for this.
9. To lobby the University to provide free drinking water on tap in all University buildings, and where this is already available, appropriate signs should be placed to signify this (e.g. 'Drinking water').
10. To lobby the University to charge students in halls of residence less for rent but charge them for their bills so that a student that uses energy responsibly will pay less overall than they do now.
11. To lobby the University to implement their existing policy that states that they should divest from businesses whose practices and investments lead to environmental degradation, and encourage the University to invest ethically.
12. To lobby the University to cease all ties with banks and research partners whose practices and investments lead to environmental degradation.
13. To support the University in asking departments to take responsibility for their own energy bills.
14. To lobby the University to stop subsidising car parking for University and Union staff, unless they are part of a car sharing scheme and arrive in a full car.
15. To lobby the University to hire more staff to work on environmental issues.
16. To lobby the University to introduce a green standard for student accommodation through Manchester Student Homes, and to encourage letting agencies and websites such as Rate Your Digs to rate how environmentally friendly a property is.
17. To aim to procure 100% of their electricity from renewable resources either by switching to a supplier such as Ecotricity and, if financially viable, through microgeneration projects.
18. To organise a comprehensive campaign with a budget around the issue of climate change and environmental sustainability that uses a range of tactics including, but not limited to, lobbying, marches and direct action, and that links with local, national and international campaigns. The Campaigns Officer must organise at least one campaign week on the issue of climate change and environmental sustainability, with the inclusion and consultation of all relevant societies.
19. That the Sustainable and Ethical Business Committee, in conjunction with the Union staff and Executive, will conduct a thorough review of the Union's policy on environmental sustainability, including sustainable procurement, on a yearly basis, and use the findings from this to compile a comprehensive action plan for the improvement of the Union's environmental sustainability. The comprehensive action plan must be reviewed at least once a term and developed accordingly to ensure continual improvement of commitment to environmental sustainability.
20. To invite the President and Vice-Chancellor to publicly debate the issues with members of the student movement, and lobby her to agree to attend a forum to publicly debate a range of issues in this way at least once a term.
21. To recognise the Student Sustainability Forum as an important voice on the environment and sustainability issues, and to mandate at least one member of the Students' Union Executive to attend each meeting.
22. To ensure that during the purchases of new goods we buy the most sustainable products available, including, but not limited to the purchase of a new hybrid minibus and double-sided printers.
23. To ensure that our catering is as sustainable as possible through means including, but not limited to, Meat Free Mondays (with one meat option), providing vegan options, separating out waste for anaerobic

digestion, using local providers where possible and purchasing seasonal products, and to lobby the University to do the same.

24. To ensure that our shop is sustainable through means including, but not limited to, using local providers where possible, and that it provides environmentally friendly products including, but not limited to, low energy bulbs and re-usable mugs.
25. To mandate the Mancunions to publish vegan recipes once a term.
26. To do all it can to get Gold in the Green Impact Awards.
27. To ensure that any refurbishment in the Union is environmental, for instance by using water based paint and that the contractors we use are sustainable, for example by using energy efficient light, and to lobby the University to do the same.
28. To ensure that students and/or staff attend the Green enthusiasts University meetings, and lobby schools to have green enthusiasts so that all schools are covered.
29. To introduce energy metering in the Union.
30. To build a Union roof garden.
31. To increase recycling facilities in order to deal with the large volume of paper waste directly outside the Union particularly during Welcome Week.
32. To encourage students to live more sustainable lives, for instance by promoting cycling, tree planting weekends and local organic food.
33. To write a sustainability guide for students.