



UNION POLICY (GENERAL MEETING – (20.10.10))

STAYING ETHICAL

THIS UNION NOTES

1. On the 15th March 2006, students' overwhelmingly supported a motion calling for an Ethical Students' Union, specifying criteria in how it trades and invests.
2. That Corporate and Social Responsibility (CSR) in recent years has been employed by almost all major companies and corporations to portray their 'ethical' side.
3. The motion passed in 2006 reaffirmed our principled stance, as many other organisations such as the NUS, have to boycott Nestle products due to their malicious marketing of baby milk in Africa and Asia leading to unnecessary illness and death, all in pursuit of profit.
4. On the 7th March 2007, students voted to boycott Coca Cola, joining many other Unions such as Sussex, York, Michigan, and UNISON in doing so, due to their anti-Union activities around the world, such as in Colombia, and the abuse of water resources and pollution caused by their activities in India, for which their own commissioned reports have suggested shutting up shop.
5. NUS Services Limited provides much of the produce sold in the Students' Union.
6. Climate change is a defining issue of our time, and presents a great threat to much of the world in how it will affect everything from food production to where people can live.

THIS UNION BELIEVES

1. Coke and Nestle are subjects of boycotts from this Union due to their conflict with the Ethical Student Union policy, and that they are still in conflict with its terms.
2. The need to remain ethical in our operations has never been greater, with the growing threat of catastrophic climate change.
3. Companies such as the Royal Bank of Scotland, of which citizens of the UK are majority shareholders, shamelessly invest heavily in dirty, extractive industries, such as coal, that are severely hindering attempts to slow down climate change.
4. Ethical investments are often very successful. The Church of England has implemented an ethical investment policy and in recent years has done better financially than many other organisations.
5. CSR is often used to cover over the real issues that companies refuse to acknowledge and cannot be trusted as a way to inform oneself about a company.
6. That this Union has a duty to take a moral stance and encourage corporations to behave more responsibly, and that consumer boycotts, ethical investment, and maintaining a Sustainable and Ethical Business Code, are just some of the peaceful and effective ways of doing this.
7. Boycotts can be an effective tool in highlighting and ending gross injustices in a company or countries practices, as shown for example in the boycotts of Barclays relating to Apartheid South Africa.
8. That although the Union, University and City Council all have Fair Trade Status, there remains a case for stronger and broader Sustainable and Ethical Business Codes encompassing purchase of commodities such as food, drink, clothes, sports equipment, stationery and energy, as well as for the provision of pensions and other long term investments.
9. As well as continually investing in Fair Trade produce, we should also seek to source as much local produce as possible, which reduces the Union's overall environmental impact.
10. There are many organisations working to achieve a more ethical and peaceful world, such as the CORE Coalition, Trade Justice movement, Amnesty International and Campaign Against the Arms Trade.

11. There are many societies working together to achieve a more ethical and peaceful Union, such as Make Trade Fair, the Environmental Collective, Amnesty, People & Planet and UNICEF.
12. The policy previously passed set a progressive precedent to which other organisations have looked in their operating practices.

THIS UNION RESOLVES

1. To continue to implement the following Sustainable and Ethical Business Code for use in the Union's business decisions.
 - a. That, whenever possible, Fairtrade products will be provided in place of non-Fairtrade.
 - b. That renewable energy will be used when possible.
 - c. That companies, and their subsidiaries, that are invested in or procured from or that the Union has any financial relationship towards must:-
 - i Allow unhindered trade union participation of their workforce.
 - ii Be free of child, sweatshop, forced and slave labour.
 - iii Maintain and uphold anti-discrimination policies relating to ethnicity, religion, sex, sexuality, age and disability.
 - iv Not be contributing to the worsening of lives through abuse of market power and/or advertising.
 - v Not be contributing to the worsening of lives locally by its operating actions on the ground, or as a direct result of the use of its products.
 - vi Not operate in such a way, or invest in any other company or organisation, that is environmentally damaging, especially exacerbating climate change.
2. To re-establish a Sustainable and Ethical Business Committee, including the General Secretary, the Campaigns Officer and three nominees from Council.
3. That any student will freely be able to bring any concern of violations of the above Code by invested companies to the above Committee for consideration, by approaching any member of the Committee.
4. That this Committee may, by a majority vote and with ample consideration of the above Code, be empowered to take the decision for the Union to cease investing in or having a relationship with any company that conflicts with the Code. If agreement cannot be found, further policy must be passed at a General Meeting. This committee's decisions can be overruled by a General Meeting.
5. That the Sustainable and Ethical Business Committee will report back on the implementation of this policy to Council annually.
6. To boycott and inform as appropriate, any companies that fail to meet the requirements of the Code.
7. That the General Secretary and the Campaigns Officer will lobby NUS, NUS Services Limited (NUSL), the University and other external bodies to follow a similar code and look into disinvesting from any company in violation of it.
8. To lobby NUSL to make it easier for Student Unions' to invest in more locally sourced produce.
9. For the Communications and Campaigns Officers to publicise and promote this policy and any boycotts or other actions relating to this policy to all students at the University, in conjunction with the rest of the Union Executive.
10. To work with organisations such as those listed above whenever possible in order to promote ethical practice and lead to a more progressive society.
11. To maintain our boycotts of all Coke and Nestle products, and as soon as possible, cease all relationship with the Royal Bank of Scotland, due to each company's conflict with the above code, until there is a distinct change in practice.