

UNION POLICY (GENERAL MEETING – (11.5.11)

ZERO TOLERANCE TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT

THIS UNION NOTES

1. That Manchester students made up a sizeable number of the respondents to the NUS's hidden marks report.
2. NUS's hidden marks report into the experiences of women students state:
 - a. 97% of women students felt safe on university premises during the day in comparison to 1 in 3 feeling unsafe during evenings.
 - b. 68% of women students have experienced harassment in or around their institution.
 - c. Behaviour such as groping, flashing and unwanted sexual comments has become almost 'everyday' occurrences for some women students.
 - d. 12% of women students reported being stalked.
 - e. 1 in 10 women students has been the victim of serious physical violence.
 - f. 1 in 10 victims of serious sexual assault were given alcohol or drugs against their will before the attack.
 - g. Students were the majority of perpetrators in most categories of harassment – the exception being physical violence where 48% of offenders were students.
3. The Union currently has some good harassment safeguards in place, particularly in the advice service.
4. That sexual harassment disproportionately effects women but can happen to anyone of any gender.

THIS UNION BELIEVES

1. The following behaviours are unacceptable:
 - Unwanted sexual comments, including comments about someone's body or private life.
 - Unwelcome sexual invitations, innuendoes, and offensive gestures.
 - Wolf whistling, catcalling or offensive sexual noises.
 - Groping, pinching or smacking someone's body.
 - Moving or grabbing someone's clothes without agreement.
 - Exposure of sexual organs without consent.
2. Objectification, fetishisation and stereotyping of women do lead to a culture of sexual harassment and its normalisation.
3. The levels of reported harassment, partially that of sexual harassment severely under-represents the true number of incidents due to normalisation of harassment, embarrassment of the individual and fear of repercussions.
4. We should be a leading organisation on fighting sexual harassment both in commercial services and charitable objectives by building upon current policies referring to harassment.
5. The Students' Union has a core principle to be diverse and in the context of this policy that means being inclusive to all students by striving to eliminate sexism.
6. That any plan of action should be gender neutral in its language and approach as all students should be free from sexual harassment regardless of their gender.

THIS UNION RESOLVES

1. To take a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment in the Union in accordance to NUS's definition of sexual harassment.

2. To promote the Union's stance on sexual harassment through a publicity campaign in consultation with the Women's Officer.
3. To call upon the University for an updated sexual harassment policy in light of the hidden marks report.
4. To mandate the Women's Officer to work with the appropriate staff and interested Council members to:
 - a. Write and implement a sexual harassment plan of action.
 - b. Ensure staff are given the correct training in order to understand and implement the policy.
 - c. Ensure all staff are aware and confident in both the policy and implementation.
5. To not display images in the Union which objectify, fetishise or stereotype people.
6. To task the Women's Officer with carrying out a review of this policy in terms of its effectiveness and implementation in Spring 2012.
7. To report to Council what the plan of action is and lay out clearly a time line for its implementation.
8. To take all actions necessary to be an NUS recognised Zero tolerance Union by the start of the next academic year.