

Disclaimer: The Union Board of Trustees have made a decision that the NUS Referendum should reflect the balance on both sides to students that NUS is currently under reform and we do not know what the future holds for NUS. Both sides are expected to reflect this within their campaigning. All views expressed in the below statement are that of the campaign teams and not of UPSU

The NUS has been in crisis for years now. Whether that be from its utter democratic deficit to its complete failings in being able to handle finances it is now clear that NUS no longer represent the interests of Portsmouth students. All 5 Portsmouth sabbatical officers support NO to NUS and here is why you should too:

- YOUR UNION WASTES ~£50,000 IN NUS AFFILIATION FEES EVERY YEAR WITH ALMOST NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT IN RETURN. THIS MONEY CAN BE SPENT BETTER BACK IN PORTSMOUTH:

Whilst the Union is forced to cut its minibuses for societies, we throw away ~£50,000 to an organisation that is operating a £3m debt and a further £12m in pensions liabilities. This has led to mass redundancies with NUS cutting around half its staff. Your sabbatical officers have experienced the absolute lack of support from NUS when they were running at full capacity - how will they manage to turn this around with half the manpower? The NUS clearly has no idea how to manage money and, more worryingly, how to support Students' Unions. This money can be better spent back in Portsmouth supporting activities and projects that our students love.

- NUS IS NO LONGER PROGRESSIVE - IT RECENTLY VOTED TO RENEW ITS POLICY THAT GAY MEN DON'T FACE OPPRESSION:

Yes - you read that right! This month the NUS LGBT+ Campaign voted to renew its policy that gay men no longer face oppression. This coupled with the alarming cuts that NUS is making to its liberation campaigns sends a clear message to students that NUS is now a regressive organisation that cannot be the champion of marginalised students.

- THE TOTUM DISCOUNT CARD HAS BEEN A DISASTER AND THERE ARE BETTER, FREE ALTERNATIVES:

The TOTUM launch was a total failure with many Students' Unions (including ours) reporting a nosedive in sales. It makes sense - why pay £32 for a TOTUM discount card when you can use services like StudentBeans and UNiDAYS for absolutely free whilst still retaining a good number of discounts. Staying in the NUS purely for its discount card no longer makes any logical sense.

- OTHER STUDENT UNIONS THAT HAVE DISAFFILIATED HAVE THRIVED:

Students' Unions such as Plymouth, Surrey, and Southampton join a list of 14 other SUs that are disaffiliated from the NUS and are thriving. Newcastle Students' Union recently had a re-affiliation referendum where the majority of students voted against re-affiliating with the NUS.

- NUS OFFICERS ARE REGULARLY SEEN BULLYING AND HARASSING THE STUDENTS THAT THEY ARE MEANT TO REPRESENT:

Bullying and harassment has been an age old problem within the NUS and, most recently, we have seen senior NUS officers harass a student at the University of the West of England to the point where they had to step down from running in elections at their Students' Union. Is a body that acts like this really an organisation that Portsmouth should be a part of?

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