



Open Meeting: NUS Referendum

Tuesday 20th November
@ The Students' Union

Why are UPSU having a Referendum?

The UPSU Trustee Board unanimously voted to trigger this referendum after a long discussion at an extraordinary board meeting.

The rationale behind this, although still encompasses the issues we faced in our last referendum have not improved and have become an increase of concern. These concerns mainly surround:

- the value for money for students,
- lack of political standing,
- lack of support and minimal confidence in the National Union of Students.

The Trustee board are unanimous, however we are all aware of political arguments for and against remaining affiliated with NUS, and since significant change has been evident we felt it was necessary to ask our members once again if we should stay affiliated with the National Union of Students or not.

Alex Doyle – *Chair of UPSU Board of Trustees*

The Referendum Process

Referenda is used to make a decision on a single issue, it gives all full members of the union the opportunity to vote on this matter.

The issue is asked in the form of a question, with students voting Yes or No in response.

The Referendum By-law states that a minimum of 3% of the student population needs to vote for the result to be binding.

The minimum number of votes required in this referendum is **649**

If this figure is not reached, the issue in question may not be addressed again for two years.

However, the Board of Trustees may decide the following;

- to accept the decision of the majority votes cast
- to decide on the issue by a majority vote of Trustees
- Agree to call a further referendum at a specified future date.

The Timeline

Action	Date
UPSU received notice from the Board of Trustees	Thursday 15 th November
Open Meeting	Tuesday 20 nd Nov, 17:00.
Campaign Training	Wednesday 21 st November, 15:00 Rolle 206
Deadline for campaign Lead information to Student Voice	Friday 23 rd November, 12:00 midday
Voting Opens, on upsu.com	Monday 26 th Nov, 09:00
Voting Closes	Friday 30 th Nov, 17:00

Running a Yes or No Campaign

- There may be one Yes and one No campaign, each having a maximum budget of £30. The Union will refund up to £30 for each campaign, upon production of receipts.
- The Student Voice Team will provide training and support for students wanting to run a Yes or No Campaign.
- Each campaign will need to provide the Student Voice team with the names of two students who will act as Leader and Deputy for the campaign.
- Only students of the University of Plymouth are allowed to campaign

Contact the Student Voice department: studentvoice@su.plymouth.ac.uk

What is NUS and how does it impact UPSU

NUS are a confederation of around 600 HE and FE students' unions, each paying an affiliation fee in return for various services.

There are a range of complex benefits and costs that impact UPSU due to our affiliation to NUS. We would save on affiliation fees, some costs of training and be able to secure more beneficial commercial deals, however we will lose some benefits such as Union support, conferences, retrospective discounts and commission from TOTUM cards (previously NUS Extra).

A broad overview follows, however it is very difficult to ascertain the exact financial implication of the affiliation, however the Senior Management Team believe that it will be broadly cost neutral.

What is NUS and how does it impact UPSU

Affiliation fees and additional costs

In 2017/18 UPSU paid £54,564.67 in affiliation to the NUS. This year the affiliation fee is £57,282.83 and this will rise to £60,000 the year after. In addition to this, UPSU spends approximately a further £40,000 on other activities such as training, conferences, meetings and associated travel as well as awards such as Green Impact.

TOTUM cards (NUS Extra)

In the 2017/18 academic year our members purchased 5,454 cards, helping us generate £34,665 surplus for the organisation, this was a 25% decline on the previous year. During the summer NUS rebranded the card into TOTUM. The introduction of this has resulted in year to date sales of 2,345 cards sold, a 41% decline on the same time last year. The predictions are we will see a end of year £15,000-£18,000 decline on last year.

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Retrospective Discounts

In 2017/18 UPSU received £32,414 from NUS in retrospective discounts. Our retail turnover provides us significant buying power to negotiate effective deals to achieve a cost neutral position in the future.

Questions