

Writing a Motion (Getting things Changed)

When writing a motion you are putting an idea forward on behalf of all of the members of the Union. It is presented to a formal meeting, to be discussed, debated, voted on and carried out. This is one way in which you can get things changed in your Union.

Who can submit a motion?

Any member of the Union or any group of members can submit a motion to a meeting. It is quite usual that the sub-committees of council who have a remit to discuss very specific issues relating to students/student groups will make recommendations to Council for new policies by presenting motions.

The meetings at which motions can be submitted are

AGM	An annual meeting where all aspects of the management of the Students' Union are discussed
AU AGM	An annual meeting where all aspects of the management of the Athletic Union are discussed.
Sports Council	Meets four times per year to discuss matters relating to the experience of members of Union's sports clubs.
Societies Council	Meets four times per year to discuss matters relating to the experiences of members of Union's Societies.
Student Council	Meets five times per year to discuss matters relating to the educational, academic, welfare and extra-curricular experiences of all students

Writing your motion

The Union Notes

- a summary of the facts that support your idea.

The Union Believes

- the widely held opinions related to these facts that support your idea.

The Union Resolves

- the actions you would like to take place

Attached is an example of a motion submitted to NUS national conference in 2008.
(They use the form Conference believes, further believes and resolves)

Submitting your motion

You must submit your motion to the President of the Students' Union by 5pm 7 clear working days before the meeting at which you would like it presented. Every motion must be proposed and seconded (by another person who supports the motion)

The motions will be published ahead of the meeting, which will give the opportunity for people to make amendments to those motions. All amendments need to be submitted to the President one clear working day before the meeting. Every amendment must be proposed and seconded (by another person who supports the motion)

Presenting your motion

A flow diagram of the process of a motion at a meeting is attached.

The proposer will be allowed to explain the motion to the meeting and try to raise support. The meeting then moves to the amendments, the proposer of the amendment will be allowed to explain the amendment to the meeting and try to raise support. If the proposer of the original opposes it they will be allowed to make a speech to explain. There can be a number of rounds of speeches for and against, before voting.

If the amendment is rejected then it goes back to the original motion (unless there are other amendments to be considered). If the amendment is accepted, the person proposing the amendment shall make a speech to convince the meeting of the newly amended motion and then if someone wants to oppose the motion as it now stands they too are also allowed to make a speech. Again there can be a number of rounds of speeches for and against.

Once the Chair is satisfied that the motion has been discussed fully and balanced arguments presented, the Chair shall invite the person proposing the motion (or its current amended format) to make a summation - a summary of the debate - but shall not introduce any new material. The motion is then put to a vote. Each member of the meeting has one vote and a motion will be carried by a majority.

What happens to the motion next?

If a motion is carried it becomes part of Union policy for 3 years. For example last year a motion was passed by council for the Union to lobby the University for more parent & child facilities on campus. The Union will, for the next three years, use its influence to do this.

Why do we bother with all this?

The University of Lincoln Students' Union is run by students, for students and seeks always to reflect the best interest of the students of the University of Lincoln. We have methods to receive formal and informal feedback to help make us aware of issues that are affecting students. Presenting a motion is one method of formal feedback and gives students an opportunity to directly set our strategic priorities. For more ways to get things changed, look at our website to see how you can get more involved. www.lincolnsu.com

Motion: 502
Heading: Recognising Extra Curricular Skills
Submitted by: Bradford University

Conference Believes:

1. That the greatest amount of participation in Students' Union happens through clubs and societies, volunteering, media and sport.
2. Through these activities, students develop skills that they might otherwise not acquire in the lecture hall or seminar room.
3. A central reasons for the vast majority of people attending or aspiring to attend university is to improve their employment prospects.
4. As fees have increased, for many students the decision to go to university has become increasingly a decision based on financial returns.
5. Activities within the universities are high on government agenda and there is a great amount of funding available. Examples include the substance of the "Youth Matters" paper and Student Volunteering England.
6. That the creation of the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) is a positive development with regards to the agenda of student employability and extra-curricular activities.

Conference Further Believes:

1. It is often the skills gained supplementary to those acquired from one's academic degree that differentiate graduates to employers.
2. Some graduates struggle to articulate or recognise the skills they have acquired outside of academic study whilst others embellish their genuine achievements to the detriment of the value of extra-curricular activity.
3. It is important for institutions and the government to develop a framework which recognises and awards extra-curricular skills gained whilst at university.
4. Such a framework for recognising skills would help more students realise what skills they could develop whilst at university and college.
5. Given that students' unions provide many of these opportunities, it would benefit our Constituent Members for students to be encouraged to broaden their skill sets.
6. Having more students involved in and aware of opportunities to develop extra skills would improve equal opportunities and improve the employability of students.

Conference Resolves:

1. For NUS to lobby relevant higher education sectors and government department to push for a structured mechanism for accrediting and qualifying extra curricular activities.
2. NUS to continue to support student activities officers and relevant staff in delivering the best possible opportunities with students' unions.
3. NUS to work with graduate employers and the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills in order to explore other avenues for development in this area of work.

