

Council Agenda

3rd Week Michaelmas Term 2016

3rd Week Council to start at 5:30pm prompt, with sign in opening at 5:15pm, on Wednesday 26th October 2016, at Garden Quad Reception Room, St John's College.

We aim to make Council as accessible as possible, and ensure that it is always in accessible venues. However, if there are any accessibility requirements that we are not meeting for yourself or others, please contact OUSU's Democratic Support Officer on 01865 611831, or at dso@ousu.ox.ac.uk.

If you have any questions about OUSU Council, please feel free to contact the Chair, Matthew Dawe, at chair@ousu.ox.ac.uk.

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
- c. Elections in Council
- d. Reports from and questions to the Sabbatical Officers, Executive Officers, Representatives of the OUSU Campaigns and RAG (*Raise and Give*)
- e. Items for Resolution
 1. Urging the Oxford University Press to withdraw its appeal in the Rameshwari Photocopy Services case before the Delhi High Court
 2. Higher Education Bill
- Below the Line*
 3. Consequential amendments to Campaign constitutions
 4. Co-option of Student Trustee
- f. Items for Debate
- g. Any Other Business

* We mark some items as "below the line" if we think they are uncontroversial – these will not be discussed unless someone in Council requests this, and at least ¼ of voting members present agree.

Please Note:

OUSU's Communication team will be filming elements of Council as part of a new marketing and communication plan to promote OUSU Council. If you are not happy to be filmed or would like to remain out of the footage please contact Matt Tennant, Membership Services Manager (msm@ousu.ox.ac.uk) or Jo Gregory-Brough, Communications Manager (commsmanager@ousu.ox.ac.uk)

a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

b. Matters Arising from the Minutes

c. Elections in Council

Language Centre Committee (x2) - One of these positions must be filled by a postgraduate. To serve from Michaelmas 2016 to Trinity 2017.

JSc(EC)SM (Joint Subcommittee of the Education Committee with Student Members) (x2) – The principal committee for OUSU’s relationship with the University. Responsible for reviewing the democratic procedures of the Student Union, such as our elections and budget. **Must be filled by a graduate student.** To serve until the end of Trinity Term 2017.

Consultative Committee for Health and Safety – This position must be filled by a postgraduate from either the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences (MPLS) Division, or the Medical Sciences Division. To serve until the end of Trinity Term 2017.

Part-Time Executive (to serve for Michaelmas Term 2016)

- Graduate LGBTQ Officer
- Rent and Accommodation Officer
- Trans Officer
- Common Room Support Officer
- Mature Students' Officer
- Graduate International Students' Officer
- Graduate Women’s Officer
- Black and Minority Ethnic Students’ Officer
- Student Parents and Carers Officer
- Graduate Welfare Officer
- Community Outreach and Charities Officer
- Environment and Ethics Officer

Steering Committee (x2) - Steering Committee is responsible for compiling the agenda for Council, and referring motions submitted to Council to other committees for preliminary discussions as and when needed. To serve for Michaelmas Term 2016.

Budget Advisory Group (x3) – This is an advisory subcommittee of OUSU’s Finance Committee. To serve until the end of Trinity Term 2017.

d. Reports from and questions to the Sabbatical Officers, Executive Officers, Representatives of the OUSU Campaigns and RAG (*Raise and Give*)

e. Items for Resolution

1. Urging the Oxford University Press to withdraw its appeal in the Rameshwari Photocopy Services case before the Delhi High Court

Council Notes:

1. The Delhi High Court in the case of *the Chancellor, Masters and the Scholars of the University of Oxford, trading as Oxford University Press v. Rameshwari Photocopy Service*, permitted the photocopying of certain course materials.
2. That the Oxford University Press has filed an appeal against this judgment before a larger bench of the Delhi High Court, scheduled to be heard on 29 November 2016.
3. That the authors and academics published by the Oxford University Press have recognized the social consequences of this decision and have opposed the filing of the original lawsuit.
4. That the case found that, contrary to the publisher’s stance, Oxford University Press have not and will not suffer any significant losses by allowing students to photocopy excerpts of academic works for course packs.

Council Believes:

1. That the court's verdict protected the right of the students in India to have an affordable and meaningful education.
2. That the decision of the Oxford University Press to appeal the decision ignores the tremendous resource constraints with which students and institutions in developing countries are faced, and the many economic hurdles they have to overcome to access knowledge goods.
3. That if the Oxford University Press is successful in its appeal, it will result in an increase in the cost of higher education in India to the extent that higher education in India will be inaccessible to all but a privileged few
4. That it is disappointing for a University Press, affiliated to a University which strongly believes in devising ways for securing equitable access to knowledge, and instituting open access regimes with greater reach, to pursue such an aggressive litigation in a developing country.
5. It is important to support better access to education for students across the world, in line with existing OUSU policy.

Council Resolves:

- 1) To condemn this decision of the Oxford University Press to appeal the decision of the Delhi High Court.
- 2) To urge the Oxford University Press to withdraw their appeal before the Delhi High Court.
- 3) To mandate the OUSU Sabbatical officers to take all possible efforts to convince the Oxford University Press to withdraw their appeal before the Delhi Court.
- 4) To support the open letter to the Delegacy of the Oxford University Press by the students, urging them to withdraw their appeal.
- 5) To encourage all members associated with Oxford presently or in the past, to sign the above-mentioned open letter.
- 6) To continue OUSU's commitment to supporting better access to education for students.

Proposed: Gopika Murthy Lekshmi (Exeter)

Seconded: Arushi Garg (Magdalen)

2. Higher Education Bill**Council Notes:**

1. OUSU has policy to oppose tuition fees and to campaign for free education.
2. The Higher Education Bill proposes to link fees to a measure of teaching excellence called the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The TEF will assess universities and colleges based on metrics of graduate employment, student retention and student satisfaction, as well as taking into account additional evidence submitted.
3. Stage two of the TEF will be used to determine what level of fee increase English universities are allowed – up to a maximum of a rise in line with inflation. This will result in a differentiated system of tuition fees where institutions deemed to be “excellent” will be able to charge higher levels than other institutions in the sector.
4. Later stages of TEF indicate that differential fee levels between subjects will be considered.
5. All existing evidence focusing on access to Higher Education highlights that debt aversion disproportionately affects prospective students from the least socio-economically privileged backgrounds alongside other underrepresented groups when applying to university.
6. The power to decide whether to enter TEF lies with the University of Oxford.

7. OUSU contributed extensively to the feedback on the Green and White Papers that preceded the Bill, opposing the majority of proposals.
8. The Government has already turned maintenance grants and NHS bursaries into loans, curtailed the disabled students' allowance and allowed interest to be charged on student loans.
9. The government's decision to allow interest to be charged on student loans is in breach of the contracts that students signed, together with breaking the promise made to many university applicants.
10. These policies leave the poorest students with more than £53,000 debt after three years' undergraduate study.
11. The participation rate increase for the poorest students has stagnated and 18-year-olds from the most disadvantaged backgrounds are 2.4 times less likely to apply.
12. If the TEF is implemented, fees could reach £11,697 by 2025-26.
13. The University of Oxford has already indicated to OFFA that they may increase fees for the 2017/18 academic year to £9,250 for new and continuing students.

Council Believes:

1. That fee increases resulting from entry into TEF, in conjunction with the Government's decision to allow interest to be charged on student loans, will discourage more students from less-privileged backgrounds from applying to university and in particular to the best universities.
2. The principle "you should pay more for better education" is a core motivation behind the TEF.
3. The proposals of the HE bill to be contradictory to the professed aims of the bill to increase accessibility to education and bring students 'into the heart' of Higher Education policy.
4. Linking tuition fee rises to an assessment of teaching quality will have severe ramifications, entrenching inequality between higher education providers and contradicting the government's ambitions around widening participation.
5. The National Student Survey scores provide only a limited measure of satisfaction, not quality of teaching.
6. The proposed metrics for the TEF do not measure teaching experience and are therefore not fit for purpose.
7. It is unfair to increase fees for students already on course and that it amounts to a betrayal of student trust regardless of legality.

Council Resolves:

1. To mandate the Sabbatical officers to oppose Oxford University opting into TEF from year two onwards, and to oppose the increase in fees for continuing students in particular.
2. To mandate the Sabbatical officers to work with the National Union of Students and other student unions to oppose TEF nationally.
3. To mandate the Sabbatical officers to keep the student body informed of developments regarding TEF.
4. To mandate the Sabbatical officers to lobby the University of Oxford to work to mitigate against any fee increases' (if and when they happen) impact on students from less socioeconomically privileged backgrounds through bursary and hardship support coupled with outreach efforts.

Proposed: Jack Hampton (St Catherine's)

Seconded: Eden Bailey (Magdalen)

Below the line:

3. Consequential amendments to Campaign constitutions

Council Notes:

1. Recent changes to OUSU's governing documents approved by Council (Trinity Term 2016), and in particular, minor amendments to the provisions concerning OUSU's campaigns and requirements for their constitutions.
2. That a series of consequential changes are needed to the constitutions of all of OUSU's Campaigns; Council approved some of these in Trinity Term 2016.
3. That Campaigns have been consulted on these changes, and that the amendments now only require Council's ratifications.

Council Resolves:

1. To ratify the amendments to four Campaign constitutions, as provided in track-changes format in the Appendix (separate document on Council website).

Proposed: Orla White (Brasenose)

Seconded: Sandy Downs (Corpus)

4. Co-option of Student Trustee

Council Notes:

1. There is a current vacancy on OUSU's Trustee Board for a Student Trustee. The vacancy is until the end of Hilary Term 2017.
2. Student Trustees are usually elected in a cross-campus by-election, but Council and the Trustee Board can decide jointly not to hold a by-election and to keep the vacancy open. The Trustee Board have already agreed this is the best option.
3. The timetable for elections means that voting in a by-election could not take place until the end of Michaelmas Term.
4. If the vacancy is kept open, the Trustee Board have the power to co-opt a Student Trustee in the interim (that is, appoint a student instead of electing one). This has been done before.

Council Believes:

1. A cross-campus by-election would not be a good use of time or resources, and it would be better to appoint a trustee until March while encouraging interested students to run in the main Hilary Term elections.

Council Resolves:

1. To agree to keep the current vacancy of a Student Trustee open, permitting the Trustee Board to co-opt a Student Trustee until the end of Hilary Term 2017.

Proposed: Bethany Currie (Corpus)

Seconded: Jack Hampton (St Catherine's)

f. Items for Debate

g. Any Other Business
