

# ST ANDREWS STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION NUS REFERENDUM FACT SHEET



Updated 15 March 2022

The purpose of this fact sheet is to provide clear guidance to campaigners and voters on the known facts, principally financial, as presented to the Students' Association by the National Union of Students (NUS) and as understood by the Board of the Students' Association.

This fact sheet is designed to provide transparency and accuracy regarding the effects of affiliation with the NUS. This document has been prepared and approved by the Deputy Returning Officers and is designed to be impartial. The students of the University of St Andrews will make arguments for and against affiliation.

Affiliation with the National Union of Students would provide the Association with a number of services, detailed within. Alongside the services offered, the implication of affiliation is of a major cost to the Students' Association.

The following information has been prepared from materials sent to the Deputy Returning Officers from the National Union of Students (NUS), the Students' Association Board (SAB), and from the University of St Andrews. Additional information may be added to this document as it becomes available.

# CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of February, 2022, the Students' Association's Student Representative Council (SRC) passed a motion to mandate a student-wide vote on whether or not to affiliate with the National Union of Students (NUS). The NUS is comprised of two separate companies.

NUS (UK) is a Company Limited by Guarantee, which focuses on delivering focused high-impact national campaigns and representation.

The NUS Charity is a Charitable Company Ltd focusing on the provision of a strong students' union for every student, promoting and building the stand-alone value of students' unions.

The majority of NUS members are affiliated to both NUS (UK) and the NUS Charity, but it is possible to affiliate to either one or the other.

The University of St Andrews Students' Association is currently not affiliated to either NUS (UK) or the NUS Charity.

Students at St Andrews will have the opportunity to vote on affiliating with NUS (UK) and NUS Charity in two separate ballot questions **on 1 April 2022**. (Voting will be open from 00:01 to 18:00 on the 1<sup>st</sup>).

# BOARD STATEMENT

*A statement from the Students' Association Board is forthcoming and will be added to this document at a later date.*

# BUDGET STATEMENT

The University have not confirmed whether or not there would be an increase in funding (via its block grant) to cover the cost of NUS affiliation and associated expenses, such as travel and accommodation costs associated with conferences and/or training events. Non-commercial budget areas are bolded on the budget information below.

*A comprehensive budget statement from the Students' Association is forthcoming and will be added to this document at a later date.*

## COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH AFFILIATION

According to NUS Scotland, the annual cost of affiliation to the St Andrews Students' Association would be as follows:

NUS Charity: £3,185

NUS UK / NUS Scotland: £12,740

TOTAL ANNUAL COST: £15,925

This equates to 2.5% of the Students' Association's annual block grant from the University (which currently totals £637,000 per annum).

These figures may rise and fall depending on the changes to the size of the block grant from the University.

## SERVICES PROVIDED BY NUS

According to NUS Scotland, the St Andrews Students' Association would be entitled to the following services and benefits by affiliating with the NUS.

### National Representation

As a member of NUS, the St Andrews Students' Association would be entitled to elect and send delegations to a number of NUS Conferences. Delegates are entitled to vote in NUS officer Elections, propose policy, and vote on policy motions.

These Conferences include:

- NUS National Conference
- NUS Scotland Conference
- NUS UK Liberation Conference (for students who self-define as Black, Trans, LGBT+, Disabled, or as a Woman).

Delegate Entitlement is calculated differently for each Conference, meaning the exact number of representatives that St Andrews would be entitled to send to each of the above conferences would vary based on student enrolment numbers.

Additionally, the National Union of Students represents its member organisations at Holyrood, Westminster, and in national media.

Current campaigns, according to NUS Scotland, include *but are not limited to*: for a fair system of gender recognition for trans people; to decolonise our education system; successfully lobbying for free sanitary products and investment to combat gender-based violence; Summer Student Payment; a Student Housing Strategy; Student Mental Health Action Plan; and a campaign to break education's links with private companies responsible for the climate crisis.

### Training and development opportunities for officers

The NUS (UK) and NUS Charity offer a variety of events and training programmes for officers and union staff, including:

- Regular learning, development and networking events such as “The Gathering” in Scotland.
- NUS Charity Offers training programmes such as a “Lead and Change” officer development programme and “Learning Academy” training events.
- Strategic Conversation – an annual networking, learning and horizon scanning event
- NUS UK offers anti-racism training.
- NUS UK offers a RISE leadership programme to provide in-depth development to black staff members.

### Other services

The NUS also offer Election Services, primarily in the form of appointing a Returning Officer to oversee appeals and comparison data on turnout.

The NUS also offers an Employee Engagement Survey to evaluate the engagement and satisfaction of union staff.

NUS Charity offers affiliated students' associations other practical support, such as HR guidance and legal support.