

2009 Scrap Prescription Charges passed 17 November 2016

Proposer: Kate Snape (Students' with Disabilities Officer)

Seconder: Jo Swo (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer)

Union Notes:

1. According to NUS research more than 50% of students struggle to meet the cost of living at University. ¹
2. Prescriptions in England cost £8.40 (per item)
3. In the last five years medication costs have increased over £1
4. Only students under 18 in fulltime education are automatically exempt.
5. Students can apply for a discount through an HC1 form
6. International Students have to pay £150 to just access the NHS
7. For students requesting 'Extenuating Circumstances' for medical/personal reasons, they often require a doctor's note which they have to pay for
8. Students who suffer ongoing illness are far more likely to drop out than their peers, and the financial weight of prescription fees is an unnecessarily added burden.
9. NUS has launched the 'Scrap Prescription Charges' in 2016

Union Believes:

1. Everyone deserves free and accessible provision to medication that they require to live and everyone deserves a life free of pain, including International students.
2. Medication is a human right that should be free.
3. That whilst many students can apply for discounted medication through the HC1 form, this is an unnecessary barrier that many find complicated and often results in very expensive fines.
4. Students from lower-income backgrounds should not have to decide between food or medicine
5. Prescription charges have a disproportionate effect on liberation groups and students from lower-income backgrounds, which is grossly unfair and condemnable.
6. The increased fees of prescription charges, doctor notes and contraception is an indicator of the slow privatisation of the welfare state and the NHS.

Union Resolves:

1. For Student Officer Committee to join the 'Scrap Prescription Charges' NUS campaign and support students who want to go to Bursary Not Bust
2. For SOC to support students who wish to attend and promote national and local demonstrations in relation to protecting the NHS and HSC students, such as Bursary Not Bust

¹ https://www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/PIYP_Summary_Report.pdf

3. To mandate SOC to write a statement in support of fully scrapping prescription charges, condemning the high fees International Students have to pay and the cost of doctor's notes.
4. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy Officer and Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to work with and lobby the University and local NHS branches to offer free doctors notes.
5. To mandate all the full time officers and the Students' with Disabilities Officer to write to relevant councillors and MPs on this issue and urge them to speak and vote against any future increase, and speak and vote for scrapping prescription charges.
6. To mandate the Campaigns and Democracy, Welfare, Community and Diversity and Students' with Disabilities Officer to campaign against the current prescription charges and any attempt to increase them
7. To mandate Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer to advertise the HC1 form and how to make it more clear, and support any students who need help.