

11 August 2025

By email

To:

Kat Stark
NUS UK Director
National Union of Students

Subject: Request for Clarification on Use of Funds and Member Return on Investment

Dear Kat,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Trustees at the Students' Union at Bournemouth University (SUBU), to express our concerns regarding the financial and governance implications of recent events within the National Union of Students (NUS), as well as the value for money represented by our continued affiliation.

SUBU pays in the region of £24,000 per year in affiliation fees to NUS UK. This represents a significant investment from our limited resources, and we have a duty to ensure that these funds are deployed in a way that is transparent, proportionate, and demonstrably beneficial to our members.

We are seeking urgent clarification from the NUS on the following matters:

1. Expenditure on Investigations and "Other costs"

It appears from NUS UK's published accounts and media reports that NUS UK has spent over £1 million on investigations related to allegations of antisemitism, including the employment tribunal and subsequent out-of-court settlement with former NUS President Shaima Dallali. It appears that these costs may include:

- £622.5k during 2021/22 (Note 13 to NUS UK's Accounts for year ended 30 June 2022).
- £222.5k during 2022/23 (Note 12 to NUS UK's Accounts for year ended 30 June 2023).
- A total of £677.4k (2024: £492.3k; 2023: £185.1k) listed as "Redundancy and other related costs" (Note 12 to NUS UK's Accounts for year ended 30 June 2024).

Given the modest size of the NUS UK team over recent years, we are concerned that these figures may reflect legal costs and subsequent settlements rather than operational redundancies. This is particularly the case given the widely publicised tribunal proceedings concerning Ms Dallali ran concurrently to these reporting periods.

- i. We therefore request a full explanation of the nature of this expenditure, including confirmation of how much, if any, of these sums were used in relation to the Dallali case and related investigations.
- ii. Furthermore, we seek assurance that robust financial controls and governance mechanisms are in place to avoid such extraordinary liabilities in the future.

2. Return on Investment for Member Unions

We ask NUS to provide a clear and specific statement of the return on investment for member unions and their student members, detailing:

- Campaign and policy successes over the last 24 months that have achieved national change students.
- Any future plans or reforms that aim to enhance accountability, value for money, and strategic alignment with students' unions' priorities.

Considering recent disaffiliations by other students' unions, we wish to understand the tangible benefits that our students and student Officers receive in return for our annual contribution.

We would appreciate a written response by the end of August, to allow proper consideration by the Board of Trustees. We remain committed to principles of student representation and collaboration but must also ensure responsible stewardship of our funds and transparency in the partnerships we maintain.

Yours sincerely,

Aylwin Yafele
Deputy Chair of the Board of Trustees
Students' Union at Bournemouth University