



# The Guide to CUSU

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# Introduction

This guide is intended to provide insight and information about the Cambridge University Students' Union for members of Cambridge JCRs and MCRs (and their equivalents, all collectively termed College Unions) and any other parties who might benefit from a better knowledge of how their Student Union works.

It is written in the hope that by providing a simple guide to CUSU for the people who come into contact with it most often, we might promote greater understanding of what CUSU does and how to get the most out of it. We also hope to encourage feedback on all aspects of CUSU's work from students and their officers, so that we may be more reactive to their needs and desires.

## What is CUSU?

CUSU is the federal union that supports and represents all the College Unions in Cambridge, and their students. With 18,000 students from 31 colleges both undergraduate and postgraduate CUSU is the voice of Cambridge students both nationwide and to the University. It exists to advance the quality of education and social welfare of its members, both collectively and individually, by providing them with representation, services, support, and by campaigning on their behalf.

## CUSU and other Student Unions

Many of the differences between CUSU and other Students' Unions stem from the aspects of Cambridge University that make it different from other universities. For example, CUSU does not have a bar largely because every College has its own. And where other Students' Unions receive a block grant from the university (and ultimately the Government) to fund sports or societies, CUSU does not because this money is channelled to students via the Sports Syndicate and Societies Syndicate (however we do provide representation on both the Sports Syndicate and Societies Syndicate).

Despite lacking many of the central facilities and services provided by other student unions CUSU boasts certain strengths. One of the most important of these is the network of College Unions meaning there are over 600 Student Union Officers within the University. The Cambridge brand carries a huge attraction for the media, and can make us a powerful voice in national campaigns. For example, CUSU is one of the most active Student Unions in the fight for better access to higher education. Our University links are very strong, and our caseworkers provide an invaluable service to the growing number of students who approach us with welfare and academic concerns.

# What does CUSU do?

## Representation

CUSU is recognised by the University as *the representative body of all students* and our officers sit on most University Committees to put student perspectives forward at every level. Most important matters affecting students such as complaints procedures, admissions policy, how the Counselling Service is run, and so on are discussed with us. When the University wants to hear students' opinions, it asks CUSU.

We are the only body that can ensure that good decisions are made and followed through. Without CUSU representation we would have lost the fight for central Access Funds, our work on getting an academic appeals structure would have not happened, and each college would still be fighting for its own Sexual Harassment code. These are a few reasons why our relationship with College Unions and Faculty Representatives is so important.

## College Liaison

A key part of CUSU's work is in supporting College Unions. For example if a college decides to set up its own bar or attempt to improve representation, CUSU officers will provide their time to help them. We have experience in doing so and can take surveys from other colleges in order to strengthen an individual college position. In addition to general executive training, we can provide specific training for Presidents, External Officers, Welfare Officers, Academic Affairs Officers, Women's Officers, Ents Officers and Treasurers. CUSU's inter-college contacts are therefore able to share expertise and solutions to a range of problems. We provide regular briefings for officers on certain issues. For example, recently one such issue has been the problems involving hobs in college kitchens. The CUSU President arranges Presidents and External Officers' meetings every fortnight in term time.

## Welfare Information and Support

Welfare services are provided to the whole student population of Cambridge, but CUSU also works for the interests of particular groups of students and provides help to College Union Welfare officers who meet weekly to discuss forthcoming campaigns. This is one reason why some of our most important work can go unrecognised by the majority of students.

## Casework- Individual Student Support Service

On average, two or three students a day approach CUSU needing welfare support or help. These enquiries may involve disciplinary proceedings, council tax, housing, financial information, academic concerns, pregnancy scares and more. Sometimes CUSU can help students immediately but we do refer to outside agencies who are better able to deal with some particular problems.

Casework, and in particular advocacy (defending a student against a perceived injustice), can be very time-consuming, and often involves extensive and prolonged contact with a large number of people. As such, it is a major part of the role of the Welfare & Graduates Officer and Academic Affairs Officer.

## **Campaigns**

CUSU organises welfare and education campaigns on issues that affect the whole student body – for example sexual health talks in Freshers' Week, anti-drink spiking campaigns, work on student safety and lighting, efforts to reduce exam stress and the campaign for student rights.

## **Welfare Phone lines**

CUSU has a casework mobile, which is on from 9am to 7pm every day, and allows a student to get in touch with a caseworker at any time. The number is 07999859940.

## CUSU Services

CUSU provides a growing range of services for its students as well as college union officers, faculty reps and everyone else. It should also be remembered that CUSU does not receive university funding for provision of services, unlike most other student unions, which explains why the services it does provide are comparatively limited. However, we always strive to provide a balance between quality services and good value for our members.

### Student Discounts

CUSU has secured discounts throughout Cambridge for discounts for students with their CUSU card. There are full details of places that accept these cards at: <http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk/services/studentid/>

### CUSU Mail Service

CUSU-MS delivers post within 36 hours for students to all 31 colleges every day of full term. Unlike the University Mail Service, which is only for use by College/Faculty/Admin staff and Fellows, the CUSU Mail Service is open to all students. There is a CUSU Mail Service box in each College's pigeon-hole room or Porters' Lodge, and mail can also be sent from the CUSU offices.

### Post Forwarding

CUSU provides a permanent e-mail address (*yoursociety@cusu.cam.ac.uk*) for all college union representatives and societies. This allows us to contact you easily, and you are free to adopt it as a permanent forwarding system. It does help us if college unions notify us of the new contact addresses for incoming officers during handover. Postal forwarding can be arranged for societies on request.

### Vehicle Hire

The University Vehicle Hire Scheme is funded by the University and administered by CUSU. It provides two eight-passenger MPVs (people-carriers) and one equipment van, all available for hire by all student groups. It is often asked why CUSU no longer provides a minibus hire scheme to transport larger groups. The reason for this is that recent changes to driver licence requirements for minibuses now stipulate a minimum age of 25. Some remuneration against the increased cost of the service can be sought from the University Society's Syndicate travel grant.

## Equipment Hire

CUSU are constantly attempting to improve the services we offer, which is why a recent equipment hire scheme was set up. To hire equipment, you must first book the equipment with [CUSU reception](#), who you should contact in advance. To guarantee the equipment is returned, and to pay for damages, a deposit is required for the equipment, which will be returned when you return your equipment. You will be responsible for all equipment once you have hired it out, and will cover all costs of equipment damage. We will need to see your Student ID Proof (your Cambridge University card.) You will be charged upfront the hire fee. Equipment includes:

- Projector (with remote control, portable stand and portable screen.) It is £22.50 a day for hire, and a £100 deposit needed, and student ID (Cambridge University card.)
- Trolleys. £2 a day for hire, and £30 deposit needed and student ID (Cambridge University card.)
- Standing A3 sign holders, £2 a day for hire and £30 deposit needed, and student ID (Cambridge University card.)
- Projector.
- Professional audio recordings equipment. The Recorded Drama Society owns all of the equipment required to make professional audio recordings. This includes a recording desk, two microphones, cables and microphone stands. Due to the specialist nature of the equipment, the equipment must always be handled by a trained member of the Recorded Drama Society. However, any current member of the University is able to take advantage of the equipment when a trained member of the Recorded Drama Society is available. A rough cost for the use of these facilities is £5 - £10 per studio hour. The society is also able to edit recordings and produce or help to produce a finished product, usually for an additional cost. If you are interested in taking advantage of these facilities, or for more information about what the society can help you with, please email [rds-technical@srcf.ucam.org](mailto:rds-technical@srcf.ucam.org)

## Services in the Office

Services in the office are provided principally through Reception, which is open Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 5:30pm during Full Term, and 8:00am to 4:00pm during vacations. Reception services include:

- One top-quality, high-automation black and white photocopiers. Provides automatic double-siding, sorting and stapling of sets and booklet making. They are ideal for newsletters, concert programmes and so on. Photocopying costs 4p per A4 sheet, 8p per A3, and all the automatic functions are free. It is also networked to our computer system for top-quality printing from files.
- One top-quality, high-automation full colour photocopier, providing excellent colour reproduction at the best rates in Cambridge – 10p per A4 sheet, 20p per A3. It is also networked to our computer system for top-quality printing from files.
- A4 and A3 Lamination. Use of the machine is free, although the laminate pouches are charged for at a competitive rate: 25p for A4 and 50p for A3.
- Binding facilities: Use of the machine is free, but the combs and paper used are charged for.
  - Wire combs- 8mm- £0.10
  - Wire combs- 12.5mm- £0.15
  - Plastic combs- 8mm- £0.05
  - Plastic combs- 10mm- £0.10
  - Plastic combs- 20mm- £0.15
  - Clear PVC cover- £0.10
  - Black card cover- £0.10
- A free heavy-duty guillotine that can slice up to 550 sheets at a time. Ideal for creating flyers.
- Faxing – available in reception and can be used to receive messages (for free) and send them anywhere in the world for 25p
- Desktop Publishing Facilities (enquire via the Services Officer)
- The Financial Times discount scheme, offering the FT at 20p per day to students during term time.

## Welfare and Sexual Health Supplies

The following items are all available to buy from the CUSU reception. JCR and MCR Officers buying for their college may leave a note for their union to be invoiced, as long as the order is over £25. Otherwise payment is by cash or cheque.

### CONDOMS:

- Pasante Regular (20) = £1.40
- Pasante Regular (144) = £10.00
- Pasante Regular (12x3) = £5.00
- Durex Elite (144) = £13.00
- Pasante Unique NON LATEX (3) = £1.25
- X-Large (10) = £1.00
- Femidom (1) = £0.60

*Please note that the Durex condoms are in no way better quality or safer than the Pasante ones. Both brands having been tested to rigorous standards and are suitable for all kinds of penetrative sex, including anal sex.*

*All condoms are non-spermicidal, as conclusive studies have shown that spermicidal condoms are in no way more effective at preventing pregnancy, and may in fact have negative effects.*

### OTHER:

- Lubricant sachet (each) = £0.10
- Latex gloves (4 pack) = £0.25
- Dental dam (each) = £0.40
- Non-latex dental dams (each) = £0.80
- Attack Alarms (each) = £2.00

### TEST KITS:

*These are given out by the CUSU Welfare & Graduates Officer. We can give out a max. of 5 at a time and you can get them by emailing [welfare@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@cusu.cam.ac.uk) or coming into the office and picking them up (although it is wise to check s/he is there first.)*

- Pregnancy Tests = FREE
- Chlamydia Screening Kits = FREE

## CUSU Societies Fair

CUSU organises the Societies Fair at the beginning of each October, giving new and old students alike an opportunity to view the rich diversity of Cambridge Societies. This year over 350 societies and 10,000 students will attend the fair which spends two days in Kelsey Kerridge sports centre. For a society to attend the fair they need to be listed on the CUSU Societies Directory (below) and pay a small fee for the cost of their stall.

## The Societies Directory

The online CUSU Societies Directory has been updated and revamped. The new system provides:

- A complete catalogue of Cambridge societies, kept up-to-date by their managers and used to contact societies to arrange the Societies Fair
- A quick signup facility allowing new members to add themselves to mailing lists for all societies

The system can also be used by college union officers to publicise events going on in different colleges. Finally, the information collected is also used to create society contact lists published in the Cambridge Survival Guide.

## Societies Representation

The Services Officer sits on the Sports and Societies Syndicates, and acts as a first point of contact for enquiries from university societies or anyone wishing to set up a new society. We have extensive information for societies online at [www.cusu.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk) under 'societies'.

## events@cam

events@cam is our long-awaited new event listing system, added to the Societies Directory. It's also the new way to submit listings for TCS. Our listings can be embedded automatically into your own website. It is an easy and quick way for societies and students to publicise their events.

## Colleges Database

This is a new way for MCRs and JCRs to share information, specific to each college. In order to add information email [coordinator@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:coordinator@cusu.cam.ac.uk) and ask to be made an administrator for your college.

## Entertainments

CUSU employs an Entertainment Manager to run its club nights and other events throughout the course of the year, and to act as a point of information and expertise for other arms of CUSU and college unions wishing to provide entertainments.

CUSUents currently runs the following club nights. We are responsible for setting music policy and entry price, negotiating discounts on drinks and promoting the nights to students. In return we receive a share of the ticket sales.

Tuesday **Kinki** @ Ballare (formerly Cindies')

Sunday **Service** @ Club 22 (formerly Life)

In addition to this CUSUents works with Ta Bouche to provide an unofficial "Students Union Bar". CUSU cardholders get a 25% discount on food and drinks Sunday-Thursday at Ta Bouche, where there'll also be reps for CUSUents telling you where the hottest nights are.

## Publications

Every summer, a series of informative and useful handbooks and guides are printed and distributed to new students, and the student newspaper, The Cambridge Student (TCS), has a circulation of 10,000 copies per week and reaches over 15,000 students.

- The Cambridge Student *an award-winning student newspaper*
- Freshers' Guide *delivered to Freshers before they arrive, it provides useful information and guidance, preparing new students for their arrival*
- The International Freshers' Guide *delivered to international Freshers before they arrive, giving specific information which may be relevant to them*
- The Cambridge Guide *which provides information of welfare and academic issues, as well as highlighting what CUSU does, and how we can support you*
- Cambridge Survival Pack *including the "Cambridge Guide" plus the LGBT "Freedom Book", a safer sex pack, meningitis leaflet and free stuff!*
- CUSU Diary *a Cambridge-specific diary based around the academic year*
- Oxford and Cambridge Careers Handbook *produced in association with Oxford University Students' Union and the University Careers' Service*
- Women's Handbook *specific information and support for female students*
- LGBT Freedom Book *provides support and advice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered students, and raise awareness of different sexualities*
- The Little Black Book *gives information about the CUSU Black Students campaign*
- Alternative Prospectus *sent to all schools in the country, this provides a student perspective for anyone who is considering applying to Cambridge*

## Autonomous Campaigns

CUSU provides representation tailored for students with specific needs. Their representatives and their policy are determined by their own 'constituents' rather than by CUSU Council and they have their own constitution. Only their finances, outlined in the CUSU budget, are controlled by CUSU.

### CUSU Women's Union

[womens@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:womens@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

[www-womens.cusu.cam.ac.uk](http://www-womens.cusu.cam.ac.uk)

The Women's Union is the second largest union in Cambridge and comprises a diverse membership of women from all over the university and colleges. They are an autonomous policymaking body and the representative body for student women in the university.

### CUSU LGBT Campaign

[lbgt@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:lbgt@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

[www.cusu-lbgt.com](http://www.cusu-lbgt.com)

The LGBT Campaign represents and acts in the interests of those members of CUSU who self-define as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender or who consider their sexuality to fall within the area defined by LGBT. It provides welfare support on LGBT-related issues to all students and a social activities network for its members – any students who are sympathetic their aims.

### CUSU International

[www-international.cusu.cam.ac.uk](http://www-international.cusu.cam.ac.uk)

[international@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:international@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

CUSU International represents the needs of members of CUSU whose legal or funding status in the UK is that of overseas student, or who are residents of a continental EU country or of the European Economic Area (EEA), or who self-define that way. It provides assistance to international students in residence in the areas of welfare, academic affairs and social life.

### CUSU Black Students' Campaign

[blackstudents@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:blackstudents@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

'Black' is designed to be an embracing term covering those students who, by virtue of not being white, are at risk of racist discrimination and prejudice. The Black Students' Campaign offers unified representation to, and acts in the best interests of, those members of CUSU who self-define as Black.

# “Ordinary” Campaigns

## CUSU Ethical Affairs

[Ethical-chair@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:Ethical-chair@cusu.cam.ac.uk)  
<http://www.green.cusu.cam.ac.uk/>

CUSU Green promotes best environmental practice in the University by co-ordinating the activities of various student groups: development groups through the One World Network, college groups through College Green Officers, individual students through the Environment Action Network, the annual One World Week or Environment Action Week and any other means possible. CUSU Green helps these groups with publicity, training and obtaining funding.

## Graduates

[graduates@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:graduates@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

There are around 5,000 full-time graduates and 2,000 part-time graduates at Cambridge, and the proportion of graduates here is steadily increasing. The Graduate Union President is a member of the CUSU Executive, there is also a separate Graduates Officer elected at CUSU Council and graduates fall within the remit of the sabbatical Welfare & Graduates officer.

## Students with Disabilities

[disabilities@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:disabilities@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

The Welfare Officer and Disabilities Officer work closely with the University Disability Resource Centre to campaign for improvements in accessibility in the University. Areas the campaign is currently focussed on are questions such as: what are the options available for students with disabilities to get lecture notes? Supervisions? Amanuensis? Special arrangements for exams?

## Mature Students

[mature-students@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:mature-students@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

There are a large number of mature students (undergraduates over 21 at the start of their course) in the University. Through the Mature Students' Officer on the Exec, CUSU publishes information for mature students and organises occasional social activities.

## Student Parents

[welfare@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@cusu.cam.ac.uk)  
[womens@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:womens@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

There are hundreds of student parents in the University, but Cambridge is the only University in England and Wales that does not have a student nursery. CUSU funds and staffs the Childcare Campaign, sits on the Childcare Committee, assists with the University Childcare Guide and supports the Cambridge Family Society. We also contribute to the

online City Guide for Student Parents and campaign to improve the proposed facilities on the west Cambridge site.

## **Students Living Out**

**Welfare@cusu.cam.ac.uk**

About 30% of undergraduates and the majority of graduates will have to live out at some time in their University career. The CUSU Cambridge Survival Guide includes a comprehensive section on housing rights and finding accommodation, and CUSU has representatives on University committees relating to housing.

## **Higher Education Funding**

**He-funding@cusu.cam.ac.uk**

The way in which we pay for university education has changed dramatically in the last 3 years, with the introduction of variable fees ('top up fees'), and the potential for the cap on fees to be lifted in 2009.

The HE Funding campaign has two focuses: to engage students in a debate about the funding of Higher Education, and to ensure that no student is prevented from applying to, or studying at, Cambridge for financial reasons.

Many prospective students believe, falsely, that studying at Cambridge is more expensive than other universities and only for the children of wealthy, elite families. This is a preconception that CUSU tries, through the HE funding and Access campaigns, to break down. Cambridge has one of the best bursary systems in the country, and we try to ensure that the University continues to financially support its students and raise awareness of the available support outside Cambridge.

The Funding and Access Team runs campaigns and events throughout the year to raise awareness of HE funding.

## **College Rents**

**rents@cusu.cam.ac.uk**

In 1999-2000 CUSU and many of the College Unions launched a massive campaign on the issue of rapidly increasing rents. The issue of rents continues, albeit in a less vocal fashion, as yearly rent negotiations between College Union representatives and College officials progress. Seven years on the issue of rents and charges has risen again with more College Unions facing unacceptable rents increases. CUSU provide support to College Unions in their negotiations with college authorities and in the event that they undertake any form of action. Through the Colleges Database we are also allowing colleges to use other college examples for lobbying their college.

## Access

[access@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:access@cusu.cam.ac.uk)

'Access' is an umbrella term for all of CUSU's efforts to make Cambridge more accessible to students from all backgrounds. This includes encouraging applications from traditionally under-represented backgrounds, scrutinising the University's admissions process, and countering negative stereotypes and perceptions of Cambridge. CUSU's Access work can be divided into several main strands:

### Shadowing Scheme

CUSU co-ordinates a residential visit which brings 240 year 12s from schools or families with little or no tradition of University to Cambridge. They stay for three days, in which time they 'shadow' a current undergraduate studying the subject in which they are interested. They see what student life is really like in Cambridge, in real time, and it has proven to be a very effective way of breaking down stereotypes, with a high success rate of shadows who go on to gain places at Cambridge. It is dependent upon a high level of involvement from the student body and college Access Officers.

### Target Visits

Every Easter and Summer, students from across Cambridge go back to state schools in their local area to talk to sixth formers about life at Cambridge and university. By going into schools and making an effort to reach out to students, we show a personal face to Cambridge and attempt to make it seem less distant and mysterious. It's a great way for students to be able to find out about Cambridge, the college system, the way we're taught and the application process, as well as to ask any questions, in an informal environment. CUSU provides help, information and resources for everyone giving a Target Talk. Target packs are available from college Admissions Offices and CUSU, and include powerpoints, prospectuses, fact sheets and guides to giving a talk and contacting schools. There is also a database to locate and sign up to a school in your local area, which will be online at [www.cusu.cam.ac.uk](http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk).

### Open Days

CUSU organises a series of Open Days each year. Like the College Open Days, these involve tours of Cambridge, talks from an Admissions Tutor and question and answer sessions with undergraduates from a range of subjects. They also include a mock interview.

### Ask a Student

CUSU runs a system whereby prospective students can ask a question about any course or college to a relevant undergraduate. These questions run from questions about the admissions process to the number of lectures for Engineers, from how to choose a college to specifics about the nightlife at Homerton.

### Comprehensive Campaign

CUSU goes on tour during the Easter holidays and visits schools in areas across the country. Taking place over 5 days, and this year in conjunction with Oxford University Students' Union, the Comprehensive Campaign focuses on state comprehensive schools.

### Alternative Prospectus

CUSU write, design, publish and fund an Alternative Prospectus. Written by students, for students, it aims to give an honest perspective of life at Cambridge, with information and profiles about all the courses and colleges. This is a very popular publication and is both printed and online.

## **Anti-Racism**

**[Anti-racism@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:Anti-racism@cusu.cam.ac.uk)**

Ethnic minority students in Cambridge can face problems with identity, disaffection and racism, both overt and institutional. The CUSU Anti-racism campaign seeks to ensure that the atmosphere in colleges and faculties is anti-racist and that incidents of racism are taken seriously. A liberal atmosphere conducive to integration has to be bolstered by the setting in place of more lasting and concrete structures to counter racism in all its forms.

## Structure of CUSU

CUSU's membership includes all students of the University of Cambridge both undergraduates and postgraduates.

### Graduates and CUSU

Graduates within the University are full members of CUSU and we provide a wide range of support for this substantial section of our membership. Nearly all of the benefits CUSU provides are designed to be useful to graduates and undergraduates alike. Graduates can use the CUSU Individual Student Support Service and our campaigns on issues like childcare and international students can be more relevant to graduates than to undergraduates.

Graduates (plus mature students, affiliated students and fourth-year undergraduates) have an additional representative body in the Graduate Union (GU). CUSU and the GU work together in many areas, and are looking into ways of developing a closer working arrangements.

### Funding

The College Unions affiliate to CUSU by financial contribution. They pay a fee of £5.75 per undergraduate and £2.61 per graduate, on each student's behalf, to CUSU. This is set in the CUSU annual budget by the Services Officer. We have policy to endeavour to keep annual increases in affiliation below the base rate of inflation when possible, and this has been satisfied for the past few years. In fact, the budget for 2006-7 saw a freeze in affiliation fees.

Obviously we strive to ensure value for money from affiliation and, where possible, augment it with alternative revenue streams. Consequently £5.75/2.61 per year provides a range of publications, an individual student support service free for all students, effective representation of students on university committees, a wide range of good value and professionally run entertainments, entrance to the Societies Fair and much more. Our output per student approximates to five times the rate of affiliation. Affiliation fees help fund representation, campaigns, elections, College Union support, welfare support, phone lines and more.

Funds for college unions and CUSU are ultimately public money from the Government specifically intended for such activities. Students themselves do not at any point pay for CUSU affiliation fees.

### Decision-making

There is a formal hierarchy of decision-making in CUSU. The purpose of the decision-making process is to arrive at CUSU Policy. CUSU's work must be in line with what our members have decided. The Executive are mandated by council to execute CUSU policy.

### Referenda

The supreme policy-making forum is a referendum of all students, although in practice this generally only happens when the constitution needs to be changed, or when a highly contentious issue cannot be resolved at CUSU Council. There is also an annual referendum on CUSU's affiliations (e.g. to the NUS) typically held during the annual elections.

## CUSU Council

The main decision-making body of the Union is CUSU Council. This is made up of all the Presidents and External Officers of each College Union, together with various other representatives. Although any member of CUSU can go to Council, only specific representatives actually have a vote. See the Guide to Council for more information.

## Open Meetings

Open Meetings are held once a term, at which any member of CUSU can vote. Decisions made at Open Meetings are not policy until ratified by CUSU Council and Council is not obliged to do so. However, the decision of a quorate Open Meeting is likely to be carried by Council. Also under the terms of the constitution the decision of a quorate Open Meeting must be voted on at Council with no discussion – there is only one opportunity to discuss the matter at hand.

To be quorate an Open Meeting must be attended by at least 100 ordinary members of CUSU. An Open Meeting can be held by the prior arrangement of the Executive or when petitioned to do so by at least 200 ordinary members of CUSU under the terms of the constitution.

## The Executive

The Executive is the body which carries out the actions required from whatever decisions CUSU Council has made, although it takes many operational decisions itself. In practice, this means that members of the Exec work out the details of what needs to be done, and then get on with it.

The CUSU Executive includes:

- The Sabbaticals, (only one - the Women's Officer - has a vote at Council.)
- The eight part-time posts elected each March who can vote at Council.
- A range of members co-opted from the various campaigns or elected by Council. Of these only the faculty liaison officer can vote at Council.
- The Graduate Union President, who can vote at Council.

A part-time member of Exec has the same 'power' as a sabbatical. Popular impressions that different executive or part time officers have different levels of authority are often misleading.

## The Teams

CUSU now consists of 6 'Teams', each led by one executive officer:

- The Democracy and Development Team, led by the CUSU President
- The Resources Team, led by the CUSU Services Officer
- The Welfare Team, led by the CUSU Welfare & Graduates Officer
- The Access and Funding Team, led by the CUSU Access Officer
- The Education Team, led by the CUSU Academic Affairs Officer
- The Ethical Affairs Team, led by the Ethical Affairs Chair

Each team leader has a responsibility for organising weekly meetings, which anyone can attend, by emailing that leader in advance. The Team Leader also has the job of coordinating the members within their team. For more information as to who is in which team, have a look at the Exec page of the CUSU Website.

## **Elections Committee**

The Elections Committee is made up of the Returning Officer (the President), two members of the CUSU Executive (elected internally) and two member elected by CUSU Council. You can not be a member of the elections committee if you are planning to run in the elections. The Committee organises the hustings, publicity and the ballot boxes for the elections. They also adjudicate on any complaints that are made.

## **The National Union of Students**

CUSU is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS), and as a result all members of CUSU are NUS members. CUSU pays a central subscription each year to NUS, as it is much cheaper this way than for Colleges to affiliate to NUS individually.

NUS plays an important role for CUSU. CUSU Sabbaticals and Staff receive training from NUS and can request legal advice on any matter. Colleges often only see the fringe benefits of NUS – such as NUS Cards (the free democracy card, and the paid for Extra Card) and huge mailings of posters – but without NUS help CUSU would be unable to deliver many of the services it provides.

## Guide to Council

Council is the principal governing body of CUSU – only a referendum is more powerful. Council makes almost all of CUSU's policy, and decides how CUSU should spend its money. It is theoretically in control of almost everything we do throughout the year. For detailed information the document "A Guide to CUSU Council"<sup>3</sup> is available from the Council Chair or the President.

## Voting & Voting Rights

Council consists of the eight members of the part-time Executive elected by cross-campus ballot, representatives of the Autonomous Campaigns, representatives from Faculty Forum and either two or three representatives from every college. The college reps are the President of the JCR, the President of the MCR, and the External Officer from whichever of those two committees is the largest.

It is often the case that motions brought before CUSU Council will be of considerable importance to the wider student body, and the College Union Presidents and External Officers may be mandated by their students to vote a certain way on particular issues. This gives students a form of input into CUSU decision-making. On other matters it may be entirely at their discretion how they choose to vote. The elected representatives of Autonomous Campaigns, for example the Women's Officer, can also be mandated by their members on how to vote.

## Executive Accountability

Council, as well as being a policy-forming body, also provides a chance for students to ask members of the Executive questions about any aspect of their work. Announcements from the Executive and Questions to the Executive are items on the agenda of every Council meeting. Each council reports and plans of every member of the Executive, in the form of a compiled book, are submitted to Council indicating what they have done and intend to do. Copies of these should be available from your college union, the Council Chair and the Services Officer.

## Submission of Motions

Motions can be submitted by any two members of CUSU, or by a defined group of members (e.g. 'Churchill JCR'). Motions should be submitted to the Chair of CUSU Council (council-chair@cusu.cam.ac.uk) at least ten days before the meeting. Emergency motions can be submitted at any time before the meeting, though whether or not they are discussed is at the discretion of the Chair. Motions should be submitted in the following form:

CUSU notes: certain facts about a given situation

CUSU believes: various opinions about that situation

CUSU resolves: to take action (normally through the Executive)

Proposed: at least one proponent

Seconded: at least one seconder

Help on how to submit a motion can be given by any of the CUSU Sabbaticals, Chair or Secretary.

## Elections

CUSU runs one set of elections in March of each year, plus any by-elections that may be needed at other times during the year. CUSU's constitution requires that a ballot box is made available in every college, so that every student has an opportunity to vote.

All CUSU Elections are run by the Elections Committee which consists of five members: The Returning Officer (normally the CUSU President), two members co-opted by the Council, and two members appointed by the Executive. The Elections Committee is elected at the third CUSU Council of Michaelmas term.

Ballot papers are sent to college Returning Officers the day before the election, and each college is asked to have a ballot open for at least six hours. Ballot papers are returned to a central location where they are counted, with the result announced the day after the election. Colleges are asked to provide a list of who has voted, so that this can be compared with the number of ballot papers returned to ensure that the numbers tally. If colleges run out of ballot papers during the day they should phone CUSU and ask for more as soon as they realise that they are running short.

At the time of the annual elections we also ask students to decide whether or not we should remain affiliated to external organisations such as the NUS.

## The CUSU Offices

The CUSU building is in the Old Examination Hall, on New Museums Site. We are now completely disabled accessible as well.

### Reception

01223 333313 for all enquiries

reception@cusu.cam.ac.uk

7:30-5:30, Monday to Friday in Full Term CUSU's receptionists should be your first contact if you need to find a sabbatical or use any of CUSU's facilities. Student ID, CUSU publications, condoms and attack alarms can be obtained from reception.

### Business

business@cusu.cam.ac.uk

01223 761687

10:00-17:00, Monday to Friday in Full Term

If you wish to place an advert in one of our publications, such as TCS, the Business Manager is the person to talk to.

### Entertainments

ents-manager@cusu.cam.ac.uk

01223 761686

14:00-16:00 Monday to Thursday in Full Term

If you have any enquiries about our entertainments or want to propose an idea, you can contact our Entertainments Manager.

### Sabbaticals Offices

Each of the sabbaticals has office space in the CUSU open plan office. There is also the reprographics room, staff room, private room, Conference room and publications room. The latter contains seven computers that are available for students to use, however they are in high demand from CUSU and TCS so contact the Coordinator in advance if you need them. We also have wireless internet access in the office which any student with a Raven Password may use.

# Budget & Finance

## Ultra Vires

As CUSU is a charity it is out of the powers (ultra vires) of the union to spend its money on certain things. We must abide by charity law and our constitution. Furthermore the 1994 Education Act restricts the activities of Student Unions to matters that affect students in their role as students, rather than as people in general.

Student Unions cannot spend money for any purpose other than that laid down in the 'aims and objects' part of their constitution. As standard, the trustees of CUSU seek legal advice on all motions submitted. This system, beginning for the 2006/7 year, should clear up much of the confusion regarding legality of motions.

The trustees of a Student Union are quite entitled to ignore the instructions of a motion if they believe it to be ultra vires to follow them, because it is the trustees themselves (and not CUSU) who would be personally liable should the expenditure be found illegal. The elected trustees of CUSU are the President, Services Officers, Academic Affairs Officer, Welfare & Graduates Officer and Access Officer.

## The Annual Budget

At the first CUSU Council of Summer Term, the Services Officer presents a budget which sets out how much money CUSU should expect to receive and how it might be spent. The budget is drawn up in consultation with all groups responsible for income and expenditure: entertainments, ordinary and autonomous campaigns, incoming and outgoing members of the executive, staff and so on.

It is voted on at Council and if passed is taken as a commitment by colleges to pay the rate of affiliation, and for the CUSU Executive to make sure the money is spent in the way which has been democratically decided. There is also a 'Campaigns to Allocate' budget, which acts as a reserve fund for new projects as they arrive during the year. Money can be allocated from this by resolution of Council as specified in the Financial Policy.

CUSU Council can revise the Budget at any stage during the year and this is typically done once at the end of Michaelmas term. This can take into account unforeseeable disasters, windfalls and any change in priorities.