

POLICY PROPOSAL

TITLE: TIME FOR RIGHTS

PROPOSED BY: BATH UNIVERSITY LABOUR CLUB (BULC)

SECONDED BY: AMY FORTNAM (AF680)

REASON FOR CHANGE

Considering that...

1. The EU has long been a strong advocate for workers' rights, including maternity and paternity pay, agency worker rights and health and safety laws.
2. The EU's Working Time Directive is a key example, which includes the right to at least four weeks holiday per year, rest breaks, restricts excessive night shifts and ensures a maximum 48-hour working week.
3. 77% of students are now entering into some form of employment to ease the growing financial pressures of going to university, the majority of this being employment on part-time or zero-hours contracts.¹
1. Some workers' rights in the UK only apply to full-time workers, meaning many students – often on short-term or zero-hour contracts – don't receive them.²
4. In contrast, the EU's Working Time Directive applies to all types of workers including students in insecure employment.
5. Former Governments have repeatedly opposed EU workers' rights legislation, including attempting to block the Working Time Directive in 1993 and rejecting EU employment laws in a parliamentary vote in January 2018.
6. The former Brexit Secretary, Dominic Raab specifically criticised the Working Time Directive, claiming that "Britain should secure a total opt out" from the legislation.

PROPOSAL

1. The SU Bath believes the rising cost of living is forcing more students to take on work while at university.
2. The SU Bath also believes that students and other low-paid workers are becoming increasingly exploited, particularly those on insecure contracts.
3. The SU Bath also believes that Brexit poses a huge threat to hard-fought workers' rights, particularly the Working Time Directive.
4. The SU Bath also believes that with these rights at risk, our Students Union should actively defend and promote workers' rights.

¹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/11794199/Rise-in-number-of-university-students-in-paid-work.html>

² <https://www.eoc.org.uk/employees-rights/>

5. For the SU to lobby the University of Bath to commit to guaranteeing the protections outlined in the Working Time Directive for all student staff, even if they're removed or diluted in law post-Brexit.
6. The SU Bath should educate students on their rights at work and the danger to these rights posed by Brexit.
7. The SU Bath should also educate students on their right to trade union representation and the benefits that come from trade union membership.

RATIONALE

1. The SU Bath is committed to “promoting the interests and welfare of students at the University of Bath” and thus should be committed to securing the rights of student workers on campus.
2. The SU’s vision for “students to get the most they can out of their time at the University” will be greatly advanced through increased security of student working conditions on campus.
3. The SU is committed to the “personal development of its members”. Educating students about their rights in the workplace and their right to trade union representation an important part of preparing members for their life after education.

IMPLICATIONS

1. This policy would impose no new financial costs on the University.