

**Standing up for Student Sex Workers Policy Proposal**

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| **Contact details** | |
| Your name (Proposer of the policy) | Tamsyn Hudson-Rose |
| The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy) | James Warren |

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| **Student Impact** | |
| Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how. | I have consulted with over 40 student sex workers, all of whom feel this motion meets their needs. |
| How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students? | This policy will make sure that student sex workers can access information and support where necessary.  This policy will also ensure that student sex workers know they are supported by their Union should they face disciplinary action by the university on the basis of their sex worker status.  It also means student sex workers know that UPSU supports safer working conditions and freedom from abuse and harassment for sex workers. |

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| **Policy Proposal** |
| **The Union Notes** (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible. |
| 1. Sex work refers to providing sexual services in exchange for money, this can include; escorting, lap dancing, stripping, pole dancing, pornography, web-camming, adult modelling, phone sex, and selling sex (on and off the street).  2. Decriminalisation does not endorse or promote sex work but acknowledges decriminalisation as the safest model for sex workers.  3. Currently prostitution (the exchange of sexual services for money) is not illegal, but associated activities (soliciting in a public place, kerb crawling, operating a brothel) are. This means that whilst sex work is not illegal in the UK, sex workers who work on the street can be picked up on soliciting or anti-social behavioural order charges, and sex workers who work together indoors for safety can be charged with brothel keeping.  4. Financial reasons, and any criminal record gain due to the criminalisation of sex work, are usually cited as the main reason for staying in sex work.[1]  5. The NUS National Executive Council passed a policy to support the decriminalisation of sex work and to campaign against any attempt to introduce the Nordic Model (which criminalises the purchase of sex) into the UK.  6. In August 2015, Amnesty International voted to adopt policy to protect human rights of sex workers.[2] The resolution recommended that they develop a policy that supports the full decriminalisation of all aspects of consensual sex work. The policy will also call on states to ensure that sex workers enjoy full and equal legal protection from exploitation, trafficking and violence. In holding this position, Amnesty International join organisations such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), UN AIDS, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health, Anti-Slavery International, the Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women, the International Labour Organisation, the Royal College of Nursing, and every current sex worker-led organisation in the world. |
| **The Union Believes** (Opinions/Beliefs) This section requires reflection on the facts stated in ‘The Union Notes’ |
| 1. Sex work is work - Sex work is the exchange of money for labour.  2. People should be free to choose what they do with their time, their labour and their bodies.  3. Due to the financial pressure placed on students, it is highly likely that some will do sex work alongside their studies.[3]  4. The stigmatization of sex work makes it unlikely for sex workers to seek help and support if and when they need it. The lack of institutionalised and legal protection for sex workers has driven them to create their own safety mechanisms: “National Ugly Mugs” collects reports from sex workers about violent incidents or dangerous clients and makes the data available via a paid service, while forums such as Redbook (which the authorities have since shut down) promoted the collection of similar information so sex workers could protect themselves. [4]  5. The “Nordic model” or criminalisation of sex workers’ clients has been shown to lead to further distrust of the police amongst sex workers and a willingness of sex workers to engage in more risky behaviour/safety procedures out of desperation.[5] The law increases difficulties in street work, jeopardises safety, increases violence, leads to sex workers’ child custody being revoked and being evicted from housing arbitrarily. Additionally, criminalisation of sex work means that clients are reluctant to give identifying information, ensuring that any client violence is virtually anonymous and not prosecutable. [6]  6. Decriminalisation would ensure that sex workers feel able to report unsafe clients or violence at work without the worry of criminal repercussions, work together for safety, and that those who wish to leave the sex industry are not left with criminal records as a result of their job.[7]  7. Expulsion of or disciplining student sex workers for their involvement in sex work is counterproductive to their goals, safety and wellbeing.  8. “Outing” or letting others know about a student’s status as a sex worker without their consent puts the student at great risk of harm, and is a form of harassment. “Whorephobia” is defined as the fear or hate of sex workers, and can include using slurs against sex workers, excluding sex workers from societies or events, purposefully silencing the voices of sex workers, aggressively arguing for criminalisation or for the Nordic model without inclusion of current sex workers themselves, and maliciously outing a sex worker with intent to cause discipline or harm. |
| **The Union Resolves** (Actions) Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific. |
| 1. To provide student sex workers with information about how to access support they may require.  2. To support the full decriminalisation of sex work.  3. To support and liaise with sex worker-led organisations, such as the English Collective of Prostitutes and Sex Worker’s Advocacy and Resistance Movement, who work to improve the lives of sex workers across the UK.  4. To support any student sex worker being threatened with disciplinary action based solely or in part due to their status as a sex worker.  5. To support student sex workers that are being outed, targeted, faced with whorephobia or harassed in the university for their status as sex workers. |
| **Appendices/supporting information** Please include any supporting information relevant to your motion, this could include; consideration of how you would achieve any points in ‘The Union Resolves’, links to news articles or online publications |
| Sources:  [1] A Review of the Literature on Sex Workers and Social Exclusion [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/303927/A \_Review\_of\_the\_Literature\_on\_sex\_workers\_and\_social\_exclusion.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/303927/A%20_Review_of_the_Literature_on_sex_workers_and_social_exclusion.pdf)  [2] Q&A on the Policy to Protect Human Rights of Sex Workers <https://www.amnesty.org/en/qa-policy-to-protect-the-human-rights-of-sex-workers/>  [3] The Student Sex Work Project Research Summary <http://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/Student%20Sex%20Work%20Report%202015.pdf>  [4] <https://uknswp.org/um/welcome/>  [5] Sweden’s abolitionist discourse and law: Effects on the dynamics of Swedish sex work and on the lives of Sweden’s sex workers <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1748895814528926?hwshi%20b2=authn%3A1446058181%3A20151027%253Aada299c6-0730-4d4a-b9a035c896af403e%3A0%3A0%3A0%3AWrTAU%2F%2FAf5dS0x7Uui2hvA%3D%3D&>  [6] “Sex work is not commercial sexual exploitation”, briefing from SCOT-PE <http://www.scot-pep.org.uk/sites/default/files/reports/sw_is_not_cse_summary1.pdf>  [7] Report of the Prostitution Law Review Committee on the Operation of the Prostitution Reform Act 2003 <http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy/commercial-property-andregulatory/prostitution/prostitution-law-review-committee/publications/plrc-report/reportof-the-prostitution-law-review-committee-on-the-operation-of-the-prostitution-reform-act2003>    Further Information:  ECP Fact Sheet and Mythbusting <http://prostitutescollective.net/2015/02/06/fact-fiction/>  Amnesty International: Draft Policy on State Obligations to Respect, Protect, and Fulfil the Human Rights of Sex Workers <https://amnestysgprdasset.blob.core.windows.net/media/10243/draft-sw-policy-forexternal-publication.pdf>  Vice: The Amnesty Sex Work Argument, Broken Down <http://www.vice.com/en_uk/read/the-amnesty-sex-work-argument-broken-down-622>  Decriminalising sex work in New Zealand: its history and impact <https://www.opendemocracy.net/beyondslavery/fraser-crichton/decriminalising-sex-workin-new-zealand-its-history-and-impact>  Full list of SCOT-PEP’s briefing papers on various legal models <http://www.scot-pep.org.uk/about-scot-pep/briefing-papers>  State Violence, Sex Trade, and the Failure of Anti-Trafficking Policies, Emi Koyama <http://eminism.org/store/pdf-zn/complexities2.pdf>  Sex Worker Open University - For Allies, “So you want to help sex workers?” <http://www.sexworkeropenuniversity.com/uploads/3/6/9/3/3693334/alliesleaflet.pdf>  Playing the Whore: The Work of Sex Work, Melissa Gira Grant  Decriminalise sex work for safety's sake <http://www.pledgedecrim.com/>    Rachel Thorn (2016): The mothers secretly working as sex workers. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-38128523>  César Amaya Sandino (2012): The Prisma: Prostitution in the UK (I): ‘Poverty, the driving force’. <http://prostitutescollective.net/2012/07/prostitution-in-the-uk-i-poverty-the-driving-force/>  ICRSE (2015): Underserved. Overpoliced. Invisibilised. LGBT sex workers do matter. [http://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/Underserved.%20Overpoliced.%20Invisibilised.%20LGBT%20Sex%20Workers%20Do%20Matter%2C%20ICRSE%20-%202015.pdf](http://www.nswp.org/sites/nswp.org/files/Underserved.%20Overpoliced.%20Invisibilised.%20LGBT%20Sex%20Workers%20Do%20Matter,%20ICRSE%20-%202015.pdf)  Ruth Jacobs (2014): Policing Prostitution - The Merseyside Hate Crime Model That Prioritises Protection of Sex Workers <http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ruth-jacobs/prostitution-law-merseyside-model_b_4731381.html>  The Student Sex Work Project, March 2015 <http://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/Student%20Sex%20Work%20Report%202015.pdf>  Statistics on Prostitution <http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/data/files/Statistics_on_prostitution.pdf>  Statistics on VAW in the UK: <https://thewomensresourcecentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/inequalitystats.pdf> |