

Council Document 11

Final Policy and Internal Motions Booklet

Please keep this document safe, you will need it to participate in BYC's Annual Council Meeting 2020. If you need this document in another format contact elections@byc.org.uk

This document contains all of the motions that BYC member organisations have submitted for debate at the Annual Council Meeting 2020. The motions are in alphabetical order by member organisation. We intend for all motions to be debated on the day.

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How the debates will work

Debate rules

A member of the Board of Trustees will chair the policy debates. For each motion, the debate will run as follows:

- A 1 minute speech in favour of the motion or item of business, which will normally be from the proposing organisation;
- Up to 5 minutes of additional speeches, which may be for or against the motion or just for information;
- The option of a 2 minute summation in favour of the motion, which will normally be from the proposing organisation;
- You will then be given a short gap to enter your voting choice into ElectionBuddy.

Where there are approximately equal numbers of speakers for and against the motion or other item of business, the Chair will try to alternate between speeches for and against.

If any amendments have been submitted, they will be debated after the initial speech in favour of the motion to which they relate. The procedure for each amendment will be the same as that for a motion. Once all the amendments have been dealt with the debate returns to speeches on the motion as amended.

With advice from the deputy the Chair can limit the number of speeches on a motion or limit the length of time of speeches.

If the proposing organisation is not present, the BYC Board will propose the motion.

During the debates any questions can be directed to elections@byc.org.uk where we will attempt to answer any queries or concerns as quickly as possible.

Voting

Each member organisation has an allocated number of voting delegates based on the size of their organisation and therefore the number of young people they represent. This is why some large national organisations will have more voting delegates than a smaller local youth council, for example.

At the event, only delegates who have registered as voting delegates will be sent the web link to ElectionBuddy – the software which we will be using for all votes on the day. There will be one Election page containing all of the policy motions so please ensure that you note down your voting intentions or enter them on the webpage over the course of the debate.

At the end of the policy debate you may then submit your completed voting form via the ElectionBuddy webpage. We will ensure everyone is comfortable using this software on the day.

Policy Motions (in alphabetical member order)

1. UN Youth Delegate Programme (Action for Local Youth Voice Empowerment UK)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council manifesto

The British Youth Council believes that all UN member states should have a UN Youth Delegate Programme, including the UK. We encourage the UK Government to continue prioritising youth participation in all international decision-making settings, and especially to ensure that young people are represented in the highest decision-making structures of the UN. We call on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to establish a youth-led UN Youth Delegate Programme.

2. Address Healthcare Inequality (British Youth Council Board)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council manifesto

The British Youth Council believes that BAME young people and young people from the LGBTQ+ community face significant healthcare inequalities and require support during challenging times. The COVID crisis has highlighted health inequalities in our society. For example, people of Bangladeshi ethnicity had around twice the risk of death than people of White British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10% and 50% higher risk of death when compared to White British.

We believe the Government needs to revisit how health inequalities are defined, how we measure them, and how to tackle them. We call on the Government to address the root causes of health inequalities by investing in health services, education, housing, youth services, public transport, and other vital public services while working with BAME and LGBTQ+ communities in the here and now to ensure their health needs are taken into consideration across the health service.

Our asks are:

1. **Invest** – in young people’s charities and support services.
2. **Collaborate** – with organisations that are supporting these seldom heard voices.
3. **Educate** – look at the curriculum, actively teach children about racism and homophobia, health inequalities and how race is a factor which creates disparities in health from an early age.

3. Black Lives Matter: Ending Anti-Black Police Brutality (British Youth Council Board)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council Manifesto

The British Youth Council unequivocally believes that Black Lives Matter. Whilst much focus has been on brutality against Black Americans, we recognise the anti-Blackness inherent in the murders of Seni Lewis, Sarah Reed, Sheku Bayoh, and those whose names we don't know, here in the UK. The British Youth Council further believes we must listen to, and support, Black communities who have outlined how we end the global pandemic of anti-Black police brutality. Therefore, we recognise that more officers, arms, jails and prisons are not a solution to longstanding problems of racism, injustice and police violence, and actively support the Movement for Black Lives' demands, calling upon the UK government, MPs and other elected representatives to realise them for Black communities in the UK:

1. End the war on Black people, including an end to the criminalisation, incarceration and killing of Black people & not just individual accountability of officers after a murder, but entire police departments.
2. Divest from the police and invest in communities, calling on councils and elected officials to divest resources away from policing in budgets and reallocate them to healthcare, housing and education that Black people deserve.
3. Local schools, colleges, universities and all public institutions cut ties with the police in the interest of public safety.
4. Immediate relief: in the short-term, e.g. direct cash payments, rent cancellation, mortgage cancellation, and a cancellation of student, medical and other forms of debt and, in the long-term, Universal Basic Income in order to address the immediate crisis and pave the way for a just recovery that doesn't prioritise corporations and leave Black communities behind.
5. Economic justice: in this moment of economic crisis, we must seize the opportunity to rethink the economy and move towards one that serves the needs of people and the planet, not corporations and the wealthy.
6. Respect the rights of protestors: violations of property should never be equated with violation of human life. There should be no use of force on protestors.
7. Repair for harms: state actors like the police, immigration agents and corporations who have caused harm to Black communities must repair the harm done, through acknowledging the harm these institutions have caused, officially apologising and committing resources to families and communities who have suffered.

8. Community control: the most impacted in our communities should control the laws, institutions, and policies that are meant to serve us – from our schools to our local budgets, economies, and police departments. Additionally, we call on the government to

9. Revoke all export licenses for the sale of tear gas, riot equipment, rubber bullets and other arms to US, as these may be used against those protesting for Black lives, meaning the UK is complicit in the harm done.

10. Understand anti-Black police brutality as inextricably linked to the UK's history of slavery and colonialism, and to remove all statues in public spaces that laud the legacies of slaveowners, colonialists, and racists & to launch a review into reparations for these racist atrocities.

4. Defending Trans Young People (British Youth Council Board)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council manifesto

The British Youth Council commits to supporting advances in transgender equality, as remaining at the forefront of this vital area of work and actively working to dispel myths and challenge bigotry is how we ensure the lives of young trans people are protected. As the national youth council, we recognise that we must make a commitment to amplifying the voices of young trans people across the U.K., and work to combat legal and social barriers that they face. The British Youth Council notes that as an organisation, we are committed to providing a safe space to young transgender and non-binary people, and we are actively committed to empowering the voices of young members of the community. The British Youth Council commits to the following:

- 1) Work with organisations such as Stonewall to support the passage of any bill arising from the Gender Recognition Act consultation that seeks to remove unnecessary barriers to gender recognition and self identification.
- 2) Supporting Stonewall's recommendations of: - Ending the requirement to provide medical evidence to support your gender identity - Introducing self-determination in line with Ireland, Norway, Malta and Argentina - Legal recognition for non-binary people - Lowering the age to access gender recognition to 16
- 3) Lobby decision makers to ensure a legal recognition of non binary genders is included in the Action Plan.
- 4) Monitor the actions taken by the government on the commitments made in the Action Plan, and work to empower the voices of young trans people in the process.

- 5) Promote and respond to the Calls for Evidence on the issues faced by non-binary people and the experiences of intersex people.
- 6) Commit to work with appropriate bodies and partners to further transgender equality across the UK and the devolved nations.
- 7) Ensure all of our spaces – including online, and at events – are safe and welcoming for trans members of the British Youth Council.

5. CHANGE Amendment: ‘Campaigning for a People’s Vote on the Final Brexit Deal’ to become ‘Listen to Young People on Brexit’ (British Youth Council Board)

Text in bold to be added, text with ~~strikethrough~~ to be deleted.

~~Campaigning for a People’s Vote on the Final Brexit Deal~~ **Listen to Young People on Brexit**

In 2016, young people voted overwhelmingly to remain in the EU referendum. Many organisations were mandated by their young members to campaign to remain, with the main reasons being the concern about employability prospects, opportunities for young people, threats to our education system and concerns about rising racism and fascism within our society.

Since the referendum, many have campaigned for the Brexit deal to be the ‘best deal for young people’, focussing on maintaining human rights for the LGBT+ community, preventing a destructive hard border on the island of Ireland, and ensuring the employability and educational prospects of young people aren’t damaged by our withdrawal from the EU.

Over ~~two~~ **four** years have now passed since the referendum and none of the above wishes of young people have been met through the negotiations. Potential job losses for apprentices and young workers are already plummeting, no solution to the difficulties of the Irish border have been found, whilst racism and fascism all across the UK has risen exponentially. In addition to this, ~~approximately~~ **well over** 1.5million young people have turned 18 since June 2016, none of whom had a say during the referendum and many of whom deserve a voice on the biggest decision facing our country since the Second World War.

The British Youth Council that young people are the key to an outward looking, prosperous and welcoming United Kingdom; we also believe that the voices and wishes of young people in particular have not reflected in Brexit negotiations up to this point. Therefore, ~~we believe the best way to give young people a clear say on their future is to join the growing campaign, calling on the UK Government to deliver a People’s Vote on the final Brexit Deal.~~ **we believe that young people should be given a meaningful say in the content of the discussions**

which take place during the transition period.

6. CHANGE Amendment: End Period Poverty (Liverpool Schools' Parliament)

Change to the use of gender inclusive language as not all menstruating people identify as female.

Text in bold to be added, text with ~~strikethrough~~ to be deleted.

~~The British Youth Council supports the work that is being done to tackle period poverty but believes that more can be done.~~

The British Youth Council believes that period poverty is a barrier preventing participation of menstruating people. To further progress towards gender equality, this problem must be addressed. We encourage governments across the UK to take the issues surrounding period poverty seriously, to ensure that the cost of a natural bodily process does not disadvantage menstruating people, and hold them back in education, and their personal or professional lives.

~~One way this should be tackled is through governments across the UK providing dedicated funding for schools, colleges and universities to provide period products to pupils and students who need them.~~

We call on governments across the UK, alongside local authorities, educational establishments, youth organisations and other decision makers, to assess the issue of period poverty ensuring that sufficient supplies, support, and education are provided at no cost to those at risk of, or currently experiencing period poverty. This could be achieved through working alongside existing organisations and initiatives, as well as adding menstrual hygiene management provisions to existing programmes such as the provision of free contraception.

~~The British Youth Council believes in encouraging everyone including youth organisations, decisions makers and influencers to pledge to tackle period stigma by talking openly about periods, so that no one feels embarrassed talking about them. Through this we want more people to have open conversations and change the negative language we use when talking about periods.~~

The British Youth Council believes in encouraging everyone to pledge to tackle period stigma by talking openly about periods so that no one feels embarrassed in talking about them. Through this we open conversations so as to change the negative language used when talking about periods.

7. CHANGE Amendment: Tampon Tax (Liverpool Schools' Parliament)

Change to the use of gender inclusive language as not all menstruating people identify as female.

Text in bold to be added, text with ~~strikethrough~~ to be deleted.

The British Youth Council believes that sanitary products are essential for people who menstruate and therefore should not be taxed as a luxury product.

We recognise ~~believe~~ that this tax ~~shows a disregard~~ for the needs of ~~girls and young women~~ **menstruating people** and has a detrimental impact on their lives. We call on the UK Government to remove ~~the luxury~~ **this tax and continually commit to the affordable provision of menstrual hygiene management materials after Brexit.** ~~on these products, and to continue to commit to this following Brexit.~~

We also believe that in addition to the **removal of the** tampon tax ~~being removed~~, sanitary products ~~(as an essential item for females)~~ should be **provided free of charge to those deemed under the poverty line alongside anyone in need of this provision, such as those living in challenging situations, living in refuge, and/or leaving care.** ~~free to purchase for all those deemed to be living under the poverty line.~~

8. CHANGE Amendment: Address Healthcare Inequality (Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet)

Text in bold to be added, text with ~~strikethrough~~ to be deleted.

The British Youth Council believes that BAME young people and young people from the LGBTQ+ community face significant healthcare inequalities and require support during challenging times. The COVID crisis has highlighted health inequalities in our society. For example, people of Bangladeshi ethnicity had around twice the risk of death than people of White British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10% and 50% higher risk of death when compared to White British.

We believe the Government needs to revisit how health inequalities are defined, how we measure them, and how to tackle them. We call on the Government to address the root causes of health inequalities by investing in health services, education, housing, youth services, public transport, and other vital public services while working with BAME and LGBTQ+ communities in the here and now to ensure their health needs are taken into consideration across the health service.

Our asks are:

1. **Invest** – in young people’s charities and support services.
2. **Collaborate** – with organisations that are supporting these seldom heard voices.
3. **Educate** – ~~look at the curriculum, actively teach children about racism and homophobia, health inequalities and how race is a factor which creates disparities in health from an early age.~~ **people in the medical profession on how they can stop being overtly or subconsciously prejudiced and the drastic results this can have on the BAME and LGBTQ+ community in terms of their health.**

9. ADD Amendment: Defending Trans Young People

Text in bold to be added, text with strikethrough to be deleted.

The British Youth Council commits to supporting advances in transgender equality, as remaining at the forefront of this vital area of work and actively working to dispel myths and challenge bigotry is how we ensure the lives of young trans people are protected. As the national youth council, we recognise that we must make a commitment to amplifying the voices of young trans people across the U.K., and work to combat legal and social barriers that they face. The British Youth Council notes that as an organisation, we are committed to providing a safe space to young transgender and non-binary people, and we are actively committed to empowering the voices of young members of the community. The British Youth Council commits to the following:

- 1) Work with organisations such as Stonewall to support the passage of any bill arising from the Gender Recognition Act consultation that seeks to remove unnecessary barriers to gender recognition and self identification.
- 2) Supporting Stonewall’s recommendations of: - Ending the requirement to provide medical evidence to support your gender identity - Introducing self-determination in line with Ireland, Norway, Malta and Argentina - Legal recognition for non-binary people - Lowering the age to access gender recognition to 16
- 3) Lobby decision makers to ensure a legal recognition of non binary genders is included in the Action Plan.
- 4) Monitor the actions taken by the government on the commitments made in the Action Plan, and work to empower the voices of young trans people in the process.
- 5) Promote and respond to the Calls for Evidence on the issues faced by non-binary people and the experiences of intersex people.

6) Commit to work with appropriate bodies and partners to further transgender equality across the UK and the devolved nations.

7) Ensure all of our spaces – including online, and at events – are safe and welcoming for trans members of the British Youth Council.

8) Educating all members on the importance of pronouns, and taking action in cases of misgendering.

10. Eliminating Racial Bias in Education (Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council manifesto

The British Youth Council believes everyone is entitled to an education that is free of bias and inclusive of all demographics. The current ethnocentric curriculum is unacceptable and harmful to all people of all ethnicities, especially those which are ignored or belittled. Key figures and events are omitted from the syllabus or not emphasised enough. People such as Mary Seole, Lewis H Latimer, Abdul Karim and Septimus Severus are not recognised for their contributions and how they helped build modern Britain. Events such as the slave trade and British civil rights movement are too often understated. There is a general lack of prominent figures who are not part of compulsory education system.

The British empire topics often focus on the victories of England rather than the successes of those they attempted to suppress. This leads to some parts of history being excluded thus alienating people who are not white British. This bias also extends to other subjects, for example English literature where it seems the overwhelming majority of the authors taught are white men. This limits role models to a particular ethnicity since children are not introduced to alternatives. The entirety of British education is taught from a colonialist perspective. The main impact is ignorance which is a significant cause of racism.

We call upon the Department for Education to reconstruct the national curriculum to include the British civil rights movement, more BAME individuals in all aspects of education, teaching the specific atrocities of the British empire on its colonies, increased awareness of racism for staff and students and eliminate the imperialist and racial bias. In order to create a greater awareness of the struggle for equality and to eliminate ignorance. Thus ensuring an impartial and inclusive education that includes everyone in national identity.

11. CHANGE Amendment: 'Fair Transition Back to School Following the Covid-19 Pandemic' to become 'Support Young People with a Fair Transition back to School and Beyond' (Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet)

Text in bold to be added, text with ~~strikethrough~~ to be deleted

The British Youth Council believes that as young people transition back to school following the Covid-19 crisis, students who are vulnerable, should not be forgotten. Many young people have been shielding, have a disability or may have fallen behind academically due to lack of resources to complete online learning. Many young people did not have appropriate support networks in place during lockdown and will need additional support as they transition back to school **and beyond**.

Many students do not have a laptop at home on which they can work or access to appropriate Wi-Fi. There has been no support for this from central government. As we transition back to school, many students will still be expected to learn from home part time and many students who are shielding will still be doing this full time. These young people need to be treated fairly and provided with necessary support, **for as long as is required**.

The Government should consult with young people and ask them what they need in order to adequately support them as they transition back to school **and for the duration of the pandemic**. This can be done by supporting schools to consult with individual students to understand their needs and ensure there is a fair transition, especially for young people who have faced disproportionate disadvantage during lockdown.

12. CHANGE Amendment: The importance of visibility around additional needs in formal and informal educational environments through discussion and planning. (Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet)

Change all references to SEN and disabled students to SEND except for use in the statistic to ensure it is more inclusive.

Text in bold to be added, text with ~~strikethrough~~ to be deleted

The British Youth Council believes disabled young people face significant barriers when accessing education in both formal and informal environments. Currently, the only regulation regarding additional needs in schools is that each school should have a SENCO, new regulations are needed to provide further support for students with additional needs. Only 3.1% of the 14.9% pupils with special educational needs have an EHCP, so it's vitally

important that all students with SEND access the help they are entitled to regardless of the severity of their condition. Even if a student is passing in their subjects, they should have the opportunity to do better when given the right support. Many people with SEND also have difficulty accessing informal education such as youth groups and sports clubs. Many parents choose not to disclose additional needs when joining a youth organisation in fear of discrimination, so new guidance surrounding discreetly disclosing and gaining adaptations would make organisations more accessible.

Despite staff within these establishments attending training, students often feel as though staff misunderstand their needs. Since it's the student living with their condition, they understand what they need to learn better than anyone. We believe the government should be encouraging educational establishments to formally discuss an action plan for each student with SEND, containing reasonable strategies and tools the student needs to thrive. The plan will contain actions that must be carried out, for example, ensuring that a dyslexic student has coloured paper or allowing an autistic student time out of the lesson if they feel overwhelmed. They will be simple tasks to perform, however make a big difference to the student. These action plans must be carried out and there should be a process in place to support students who are not getting the support they are entitled to. To ensure this is carried out we suggest that this should be checked as part of an Ofsted inspection by asking students with an action plan if they have received suitable support. In addition, lack of proper support tends to continue into higher education, with individual tutors and departments not knowing about students' needs - these action plans should continue through further and higher education and could potentially perform part of the DSA needs assessment, or be put in place by universities' support services.

Our asks are:

- Each teacher or youth group to have conversations with all students with additional needs to gauge individual necessary requirements.
- An action plan to be put in place for each student that is legally required to be followed.
- Continuing support for students in further and higher education.

13. CHANGE Amendment: Building a Movement to Transform Education (Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet)

Text in bold to be added, text with ~~strikethrough~~ to be deleted

The British Youth Council believes in an education system which is funded, lifelong and accessible. We are facing grave problems around

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- Education funding: Governments prioritise setting lower tax rates for high earners and deprioritise education funding, with some politicians wanting students to fill the funding gap with higher fees. Funding for education has declined - for adult education in England, funding decreased by 45% between 2010/11 and 2018. Spending per student for those in 16-18 colleges fell by 12% in the same period. In NI, universities receive 27% less public funding than they did in 2004. In Scotland, core funding for universities is £127million below the level it was at in 2014.

- Lifelong education: We face a future where many jobs have not yet been invented & our education system isn't set up to support retraining. Returning to education is often impossible as funding isn't available to support students with previous qualifications, and education isn't flexible enough. **In addition to this further training after university (for more specialised roles) is extremely expensive and there is little support available.**

- Accessible education: One of the biggest barriers to entering tertiary education is the lack of maintenance funding for students. In Scotland, Wales and NI, a mix of grant and loan funding is available for students on a means-tested basis, while in England grant funding for students has been abolished. This has led to the poorest students graduating with the greatest amount of debt. ~~This debt has a negative impact on student mental health, exacerbating a situation already in crisis.~~ **This debt increases wealth divides and creates a cycle of disadvantage.** In FE, there is a mix of support available, depending on where you are in the UK. However, in England, those who get the Learning Support Fund can usually only spend it within their college. Working class students access education at a lower rate than their more well off peers and have a dropout rate of almost double. There is such stratification in education that widening participation initiatives often focus on getting those who would anyway go to university into a more elite institution, not breaking down the barriers to education as a whole.

To address these problems, BYC believes that:

- Power needs to be spread throughout institutions so that students have a meaningful say in their education: through strong students' unions. From decolonisation to clothing rules in colleges: education should belong to and be shaped by the community who use it.

- Education should be out in the community: we will make sure that divides between towns & education institutions are broken down, so that everyone feels pride and ownership, not alienation.

- We must value all forms of education and make sure it's high quality. We need high quality technical education, and apprenticeships that come with proper off the job training. Currently, apprentices can be exploited by private training providers, where they're offered poor quality training and left without protection when these go bankrupt. This cannot go on.

- We deserve a sustainable and fair funding formula, ensuring that students receive a living income all year round – in line with the real living wage - with funding which creates equity of

opportunity no matter their circumstances.

14. Young people living and working in rural areas should have the same connectivity as those living in urban areas (National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council Manifesto

The pandemic has led to hundreds of thousands of young people (now dubbed as the Coronavirus Generation) experiencing huge upheaval to their lives. As well as changes to their homelife and routines, many have not been able to attend educational settings since the 23rd March and instead have had to seek new and alternative ways to continue their education. There have been obstacles to overcome such as educational settings needing time to adjust, a lack of IT resources to engage in lesson and for those living in more rural areas a lack of accessibility to connect to the digital world as connectivity is inconsistent and in some areas very poor.

In 2018, 700,000 young people reported having no internet access via a laptop or tablet at home. A further 60,000 reported having no internet access at all at home. This is not taking into account large households who need to share equipment, and young people who struggle to afford data packages. Take the Temperature Report – [Beetfreaksyouthtrends.com](https://www.beetfreaksyouthtrends.com) 2020.

There has been a concerted effort to fill the educational gap yet many rural young people cannot take advantage of what is on offer due to an inadequate broadband infrastructure.

Edu-businesses such as Pearson have made their online learning services available for free to new subscribing institutions, and launched packages of 'homeschooling' advice, resources and guidance. Many of the world's largest and most successful technology businesses have also expanded their educational services rapidly, including Google, Microsoft, Amazon and Zoom. (Pandemic politics, pedagogies and practices: digital technologies and distance education during the coronavirus emergency by Ben Williamson, Rebecca Eynon & John Potter May 2020.)

Rural communities cannot function adequately either in business or socially if there is not adequate provision of technology for broadband availability and quality in rural areas.

The main issue with providing broadband services in rural and remote areas concerns is the limited, and sometimes complete lack of, infrastructure."

<https://www.broadband.co.uk/guides/rural-broadband/>

Lack of rural availability and higher service costs is a barrier for many young people preventing them from engaging in education and training programmes, virtually connecting with others, accessing online support as well as disadvantages to business set-up, investment and expansion. Again, our responses to various government consultations and media appearances highlight the importance of connectivity in rural areas.

The NFYFC Youth Forum are asking for parity in services between rural and urban environments to ensure that young people living in rural areas are not disadvantaged and have the same equal access as other young people living in urban areas.

15. Building a Movement to Transform Education (National Union of Students)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council Manifesto

The British Youth Council believes in an education system which is funded, lifelong and accessible. We are facing grave problems around

- Education funding: Governments prioritise setting lower tax rates for high earners and deprioritise education funding, with some politicians wanting students to fill the funding gap with higher fees. Funding for education has declined - for adult education in England, funding decreased by 45% between 2010/11 and 2018. Spending per student for those in 16-18 colleges fell by 12% in the same period. In NI, universities receive 27% less public funding than they did in 2004. In Scotland, core funding for universities is £127million below the level it was at in 2014.
- Lifelong education: We face a future where many jobs have not yet been invented & our education system isn't set up to support retraining. Returning to education is often impossible as funding isn't available to support students with previous qualifications, and education isn't flexible enough.
- Accessible education: One of the biggest barriers to entering tertiary education is the lack of maintenance funding for students. In Scotland, Wales and NI, a mix of grant and loan funding is available for students on a means-tested basis, while in England grant funding for students has been abolished. This has led to the poorest students graduating with the greatest amount of debt. This debt has a negative impact on student mental health, exacerbating a situation already in crisis. In FE, there is a mix of support available, depending on where you are in the UK. However, in England, those who get the Learning Support Fund can usually only spend it within their college. Working class students access education at a lower rate than their more well off peers and have a dropout rate of almost double. There is such stratification in education that widening participation initiatives often focus on getting those who would anyway go to university into a more elite institution, not breaking down the barriers to education as a whole.

To address these problems, BYC believes that:

- Power needs to be spread throughout institutions so that students have a meaningful say in their education: through strong students' unions. From decolonisation to clothing rules in colleges: education should belong to and be shaped by the community who use it.
- Education should be out in the community: we will make sure that divides between towns & education institutions are broken down, so that everyone feels pride and ownership, not alienation.
- We must value all forms of education and make sure it's high quality. We need high quality technical education, and apprenticeships that come with proper off the job training. Currently, apprentices can be exploited by private training providers, where they're offered poor quality training and left without protection when these go bankrupt. This cannot go on.

- We deserve a sustainable and fair funding formula, ensuring that students receive a living income all year round – in line with the real living wage - with funding which creates equity of opportunity no matter their circumstances.

16. Teach the Future About the Climate Emergency (Staffordshire Youth Union)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council Manifesto

The British Youth Council believes that in order to tackle the climate emergency and ecological crisis, we need substantial and immediate systemic changes. Our education system does not reflect this: climate change and ways to establish sustainable, carbon-neutral societies are topics limited to a few, optional subjects. Our generation is the future, and our teaching and learning do not reflect this.

To establish the necessary change, the British Youth Council supports a government-commissioned review into how the formal education system in its entirety is preparing students for the climate crisis. In addition to this, the British Youth Council supports the inclusion of the climate emergency and ecological crisis in teacher training and the establishment of a new professional teaching qualification.

Finally, the British Youth Council support the creation of Parliamentary legislation stating an expectation on education providers at all levels to deliver teaching and learning on the climate emergency, climate justice and the ecological crisis, and providing substantial new funding to enable this to happen at pace. Two key examples of this legislation are the English Climate Emergency Education Act and the Scottish Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Education Act as drafted by the Teach the Future campaign

17. The importance of visibility around additional needs in formal and informal educational environments through discussion and planning (The Scout Association)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council manifesto

The British Youth Council believes disabled young people face significant barriers when accessing education in both formal and informal environments. Currently, the only regulation regarding additional needs in schools is that each school should have a SENCO, new regulations are needed to provide further support for students with additional needs. Only

3.1% of the 14.9% pupils with special educational needs have an EHCP, so it's vitally important that all students with SEN access the help they are entitled to regardless of the severity of their condition. Even if a student is passing in their subjects, they should have the opportunity to do better when given the right support. Many people with SEN also have difficulty accessing informal education such as youth groups and sports clubs. Many parents choose not to disclose additional needs when joining a youth organisation in fear of discrimination, so new guidance surrounding discreetly disclosing and gaining adaptations would make organisations more accessible.

Despite staff within these establishments attending training, students often feel as though staff misunderstand their needs. Since it's the student living with their condition, they understand what they need to learn better than anyone. We believe the government should be encouraging educational establishments to formally discuss an action plan for each student with SEN, containing reasonable strategies and tools the student needs to thrive. The plan will contain actions that must be carried out, for example, ensuring that a dyslexic student has coloured paper or allowing an autistic student time out of the lesson if they feel overwhelmed. They will be simple tasks to perform, however make a big difference to the student. These action plans must be carried out and there should be a process in place to support students who are not getting the support they are entitled to. To ensure this is carried out we suggest that this should be checked as part of an Ofsted inspection by asking students with an action plan if they have received suitable support. In addition, lack of proper support tends to continue into higher education, with individual tutors and departments not knowing about students' needs - these action plans should continue through further and higher education and could potentially perform part of the DSA needs assessment, or be put in place by universities' support services.

Our asks are:

- Each teacher or youth group to have conversations with all students with additional needs to gauge individual necessary requirements.
- An action plan to be put in place for each student that is legally required to be followed.
- Continuing support for students in further and higher education.

18. Fair Transition Back to School Following the Covid-19 Pandemic (Telford and Wrekin Young People's Forum)

Text to be inserted into the British Youth Council manifesto

The British Youth Council believes that as young people transition back to school following

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the Covid-19 crisis, students who are vulnerable, should not be forgotten. Many young people have been shielding, have a disability or may have fallen behind academically due to lack of resources to complete online learning. Many young people did not have appropriate support networks in place during lockdown and will need additional support as they transition back to school.

Many students do not have a laptop at home on which they can work or access to appropriate Wi-Fi. There has been no support for this from central government. As we transition back to school, many students will still be expected to learn from home part time and many students who are shielding will still be doing this full time. These young people need to be treated fairly and provided with necessary support.

The Government should consult with young people and ask them what they need in order to adequately support them as they transition back to school. This can be done by supporting schools to consult with individual students to understand their needs and ensure there is a fair transition, especially for young people who have faced disproportionate disadvantage during lockdown.

19. CHANGE Amendment: Lower the Voting Age to 16 and Add Politics to the National Curriculum (Telford and Wrekin Young People's Forum)

Text in bold to be added, text with ~~strikethrough~~ to be deleted

Lower the Voting Age to 16 in ~~All Public Elections and Referenda~~ and Add Politics to the National Curriculum

The British Youth Council believes that 16 and 17 year olds should be given the vote in all public elections in the UK. We believe that at 16 we are mature enough to engage in, and contribute to, our democracy through having the vote. 16 and 17 year olds can pay Income Tax, get married, have consenting sex and join the armed forces but they can't elect MPs whose decisions affect their lives and these responsibilities. We believe that votes at 16 will ensure our views are better represented within UK politics.

We believe that votes at 16 should be partnered with the greater engagement of young people in decision-making in our communities, for example through the support of youth representation structures such as local youth councils, and **accessible, informative and compulsory political education within the National Curriculum.** ~~accessible and informative political education.~~ This means that when we turn 16 we can connect our interest in various issues with a formal political process and translate our knowledge and experience into practice at the ballot box.

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