

STUDENT COUNCIL NOTES:

Abortion was decriminalised in Northern Ireland in October 2019 under The Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2019 (NI EF Act), and a new framework to provide lawful access to abortion services in Northern Ireland [Abortion (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020] was laid out on 31st March 2020.

Abortion access is restricted by factors other than criminalisation such as stigma, conscientious objection, lack of rural access, and barriers relating to gender identity, migrant status, disability, or socio-economic status.

Abortion services have not been fully commissioned and there is little information on how or where to access services. This creates additional barriers for students that live in trusts that have no access to early medical abortion services such as the Western Health and Social Care Trust.

STUDENT COUNCIL BELIEVES:

Anti-abortion campaigners can use misinformation and distressing language to shame women and pregnant people who are accessing abortion services. Protesters outside clinics and healthcare facilities are a source of stress and hurt to those accessing healthcare in these facilities, including the staff.

UUSU Student Council believes that the creation of safe access zones can protect and safeguard the rights of those entering healthcare facilities and would ensure that they could use them without fear of harassment or intimidation.

Abortion is a student and workplace issue, and students face barriers in accessing non-directive information and abortion services.

Student council believes that students should be supported in whatever decisions they make and should have access to all the information available to make an informed decision.

STUDENT COUNCIL RESOLVES:

UUSU should Lobby with NUS-USI and other Students Unions to support amendments improving the accessibility and stability of services both now and in the future.

UUSU will provide information both now and in the future on how to access abortion services such as signposting relevant bodies such as Alliance for Choice, Doctors for Choice NI and BPAS.

UUSU should work with NUS-USI and relevant Pro-Choice organisations both now and in the future to campaign for safe access zones to safeguard people in risk of harassment in accessing Abortion care, this includes ensuring safe access to campus sexual health services.

UUSU should lobby for further access to sexual health clinics on campus.

Name of Proposer: *Amy Merron*

Name of Seconder: *Colette Ansell*

Policy renewed on the 26th April 2023

