

## **Student Sex Worker Policy**

### **This (union/ university/ department) recognises that:**

- The cost-of-living crisis, along with high tuition fees and lack of government support, has meant that more students have gone into sex work to support themselves. One in five students have considered doing some form of sex work, and of those, 2/3 would do so in order to support their studies.
- While neither buying nor selling sex is currently illegal in the UK, various offences like “loitering and soliciting” and “brothel keeping” are. In practice, this means that sex workers, forced to work alone, are less able to keep themselves safe putting them at greater risk of rape and other violence and depriving them of resources and compensation.
- The fear of discrimination and the stigma that often surrounds sex work is isolating, forcing student sex workers to keep their job hidden from peers, family and university staff.
- In an educational environment, discrimination against sex working students can lead to students being kicked off study courses, eviction from student housing and having private information disclosed by support staff without consent.

### **Therefore this (union/university/department) hereby commits to:**

- Demonstrate its support for the **full decriminalisation of sex work**, as advocated for by sex-worker led organisations like the English Collective of Prostitutes, Decrim Now and international organisations such as UNAIDS, The Global Alliance against Traffic in Women, Amnesty International and the World Health Organization. New Zealand decriminalised in 2003 with verifiable improvements in sex workers’ health and safety.
- Oppose an increase in criminalisation, including the **so-called Nordic Model** (in which buyers are criminalised), which has been shown to increase exploitation and violence.
- Recognise sex work as an economic rather than moral issue and commit to protecting student sex workers from discriminatory and stigmatising **disciplinary actions** and **morality clauses**. This includes a commitment to help to fight any issues with access to housing and employment that student sex workers can face on the basis of their current or previous work.
- **Train support staff** in responding to student sex workers who disclose and be prepared to provide **well-informed, confidential and tailored support**, counselling and signposting to student sex workers.
- Make disclosure by a student or staff member of someone’s sex worker status without their consent, a breach of the Union and/or University’s disciplinary code. Disclosing someone’s status without their consent risks their safety, wellbeing and relationships within and outside the university.
- A review of hardship funds with a view to making them more accessible to students engaged in sex work, without necessitating disclosure by students of their sex-working status.
- In the long-term, advocating for the reintroduction of grants and affordable/free study and accommodation for all.