

Policy Proposal: The Union should commit to not using Amazon vouchers/products

What would you like the Union to do?

I would like the Union to promote and use Amazon products/vouchers (e.g. as incentives/prizes for participation in activities) as a last resort and lobby UCL to do the same.

I spoke to a staff member who told me the Union has already bought some vouchers and now needs to finish them, so I propose we do not promote/use Amazon products going forward.

Why would you like to do this?

Amazon is an unethical and monopolistic company (references below). It exploits its workers, makes them work under unfair conditions, discourages unionisation, has sold controversial products in the past (e.g. a book on p*dophilia, reference below). During the pandemic, Jeff Bezos has expanded his wealth thus increasing his ever evolving billionaire status; meanwhile workers were treated unfairly even during the pandemic, e.g. not given enough paid leave if they needed to quarantine, or forced to not socially distance. I don't want mine or my University's money to go to this man!

Evidence: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/mar/31/amazon-strike-worker-fired-organizing-walkout-chris-smallls>

<https://www.bloomberg.com/businessweek/ap/financialnews/D9JDloVGo.htm>

<https://gizmodo.com/amazons-aggressive-anti-union-tactics-revealed-in-leake-1829305201>

How will this affect students?

Amazon is also infamous for selling products which breach equality and diversity principles (e.g. Nazi paraphernalia, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/amazon-accused-of-profiting-from-hate-1.3358259>). Students should see their morals reflected in the Union's choices. As a Union, we should not be supporting unethical billionaire companies. With Amazon out of the way, this is an opportunity to use small and local businesses as incentives, especially e.g. BAME owned businesses which struggle due to competition of giant companies like Amazon.

Amazon's biggest tool is its convenience, with its cheap prices and fast delivery - at the cost of its workers. If students don't see convenient outlets to shop at Amazon (e.g. the Union using Amazon vouchers) it would encourage students to shop small and shop ETHICALLY!