

Proposer:	<b>Beth Sutton</b>
Passed:	<b>Union Council, 24 February 2014</b>
Lapses:	<b>23 February 2016</b>

### **UCLU Notes**

1. The term 'sex worker' includes people working in escort work, lap dancing, stripping, pornography, selling sex (on or off street), webcamming, adult models and phone sex work.
2. Many students enter the sex industry to pay for ever increasing tuition fees and costs of living, especially in London. Research on sex work has shown that the main reason for entering into and staying in sex work is due to financial hardship. For instance, 93% of sex workers in New Zealand reported financial need as their reasons for entering the industry<sup>1</sup>.
3. The current regime of cuts to services and support has disproportionately affected women and women's services, putting more women students into financial hardship.
4. Sex Worker organisations such as the English Collective of Prostitutes note that the decriminalisation of sex workers will create safer environments for sex workers, reducing police abuse and violence and decreasing the risk of catching HIV/AIDs and other STIs and STDs.
5. Increasingly, police are raiding and shutting down brothels and saunas in which sex workers are active, pushing them out into the street, where conditions are worse and far more dangerous<sup>2</sup>.

### **UCLU Believes**

1. Sex work is like any other job in which labour is exchanged for a wage and therefore sex workers should be treated like any other worker, in that they should have access to holiday and sick pay, pensions, union representation and a safe and secure environment in which to work.
2. Sex work is/are consensual acts between a sex worker and person/persons and should not be conflated with trafficking.
3. Whorephobic anti-sex work campaigns endanger women.
4. Criminalisation of sex work has a negative impact on sex workers, increasing stigma, making working conditions worse and making it harder for workers to organise.
5. Prostitution is one of the oldest forms of labour and will exist whether criminalised or not and therefore UCLU will listen to sex worker organisations and support their agendas.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy/commercial-property-and-regulatory/prostitution/prostitution-law-review-committee/publications/plrc-report/documents/report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/theobserver/2014/jan/26/letters-criminalisation-prostitution-women-at-risk>

## **UCLU Resolves**

1. To take a zero-tolerance stance to whorephobia and anti-sex worker campaigns and attitudes.
2. To offer support students in the sex industry.
3. Condemn anti-sex worker campaigns at other universities and unions.
4. The UCLU Women's Officer and UCLU Women's Network to work with the NUS Women's Campaign to do research into students' experience of sex work.
5. The UCLU Women's Officer and UCLU Women's Network to work with organisations such as the English Collective of Prostitutes, Sex Worker Open University and National Ugly Mugs to further understand how we can help sex worker students whilst at UCLU.
6. The UCLU Women's Officer to put out a statement calling for the decimalisation of sex work.