Information for Students with Dietary Requirements

This Union notes

1. 1 in 100 people in the UK suffer from coeliac disease, although only about 24% have a clinical diagnosis (Coeliac UK Fact Sheet 2014).
2. Coeliacs may experience a severe reaction from eating food contaminated by small amounts of gluten, such as breadcrumbs (Coeliac UK Fact Sheet 2014).
3. Approximately 15% of people in the UK suffer from lactose intolerance (<http://www.lactoseintolerant.co.uk/what-is-lactose-intolerance/lactose-intolerance-facts/> ).
4. Approximately 21 million adults in the UK suffer from at least one allergy (Mintel, 2010)
5. The UK is in the top three countries in the world for number of people with allergies.
6. Dietary requirements are a commonly occurring condition in modern society particularly among the young adults, many of whom are students entering University and are either unaware that they have these conditions or are recently diagnosed.
7. Difficulties in finding suitable food can severely limit the quality of life and the student experience for sufferers. Social ostracism due to a lack of appropriate catering is a major cause of depression among sufferers (Addolorato et al. 1996)
8. For many sufferers, eating contaminated foods can lead to severe reactions and long – medium term illnesses severely impeding ability to study and risking life.
9. For many students, coming to university is the first time they will be catering for themselves.
10. Requesting information about the contents of food can be a major source of anxiety for sufferers of dietary conditions.
11. The National Union of Students passed a motion from Royal Holloway Students’ Union to support students with dietary requirements. This included a mandate to produce an information pack for students with dietary requirements.

This Union believes

1. Students with dietary requirements have a right to be able to find safe food
2. Sharing information about where to eat free-from will eliminate a significant part of the anxiety experienced by sufferers
3. This Union is obligated to do all it can to improve the welfare of its members

This Union resolves

1. Collate information on the availability of free-from foods on campus and in the local area and make this information to all students
2. Work with the College catering to ensure detailed and accurate information about their foods is included
3. Update this information not less than once per academic year
4. Promote and Distribute the NUS Dietary Requirements Information Pack as soon as it is available
5. Work with the college to distribute both the local information pack and the NUS information pack.
6. Work with the college to ensure free-from foods offered are properly advertised
7. Ensure that Union outlets fully and clearly promote all free-from foods offered at least at the standard set by the college.

Proposed by: Alex Clarke (Postgraduate Officer)

Seconded by: Imogen Tyreman (Women & Marginalised Genders Officer)