A PRAGMATIC APPROACH to PROGRESSIVE BELIEFS.

The Philosophy of 020.

In its essence, the aim of this text is to fully clarify to all members of 020 what our aims are in the University and what are the means we use to achieve them. To elaborate on the former, 020 has a bunch of policy topics, such as sustainability, (online) education, and health care among others. Although, for us, the most crucial topics are diversity and inclusion, jobs, housing, and students' mental health. One could consider these four as our main pillars, the major fields we would like to ameliorate in the University.

To that end, fighting for inclusive and bottom-up change lies at the core of our ambition and has led us to brand ourselves as progressive pragmatists. This is based on two central principles. The progressive principle is a belief in bottom-up democracy and care for the collective and its environment—it means redefining the way we study to fit a changing world. The second foundational principle, the pragmatic principle, is based on an understanding of real-world institutional limitations, and the need to carefully assess the costs, benefits, and unintended consequences of our actions. However, it also means looking at possibilities and finding the right avenues along which to work towards our goals. Progressive pragmatism means being ferocious in your ideals and practical in making them tangible.

When we look at the University from this perspective, it becomes clear that the way it approaches its role in society is outdated. Higher education has become a cornerstone of society. From an elite academic institution, it has been increasingly evolving into a bridge to a stable and fulfilling future. Therefore, it is time for the University to recognise the responsibility that comes with that new position. This is not to devalue its academic foundations, but to make sure the university remains relevant in a rapidly changing and interconnected world. As such, 020's four main pillars come forward as those issues most in need of change.

Core Issues.

To start, O2O sees diversity as being pivotal to improve higher education in the 21st century. We find ourselves in an evermore globalising world and with modern technology we have more knowledge available to us than anybody else in history. To be able to navigate and understand this vast network of perspectives, stories, and individuals, it is crucial to recognise and value its diversity. Yet, to truly foster, maintain, and enhance diversity and a pluralist setting, another fundamental principle—inclusion—must be taken into account. This means not only superficially advocating for diversity but to actively welcome and internalise it, in order to integrate into the melting pot of an interconnected world. These two values are essentially intertwined, mutually reinforcing, and often used synonymously. The environment offered by the University should reflect this—it is only possible to accurately understand the world around us if we learn about the different perspectives that shape it.

Next, we believe that it is imperative for the bridge between the University and the professional world to be solidified. For an economy reliant on knowledge and innovation, it is the University that is the lifeline to its future. Additionally, for many students, this is the place where they seek to broaden their horizons and discover which direction their career will take. Furthermore, because of an ever-evolving work environment, there is a rising gap between the skills taught in higher education and those skills in demand to keep up with rapid technological and societal developments. It is our conviction that instead of undermining the academic relevance of the University, a deeper connection to the professional world will make students appreciate the skills they learn and the societal relevance of their studies.

Core Issues.

The next pillar 020 sees as critical in our venture to improve the university experience is housing. We believe that a suitable living environment is a primary requirement for fruitful student life. This stems from our belief that for students to fully flourish academically and professionally they need to be able to partake in the broader concept of student life. Studying is for many the first time they develop themselves as independent individuals—meeting inspiring people, discovering new ways of thinking, and finding communities with which to associate. To fully integrate into this new stage of life and to partake in everything it has to offer they first need a place to call their own. This process of personal development is endangered by a chronic lack of living spaces and we see it as our and the University's responsibility to improve this.

Last, 020 wants to highlight an often-overlooked problem plaguing the student body—mental health. A 2018 RIVM study found that 53,3 per cent of young adults experience periods of angst or depression; with for many the pressure to perform well on their studies being the main source of these issues. Consequently, as the study environment is such a common source of distress, we think the University bears a responsibility to not only change this setting but also facilitate those in need of help with the necessary means to improve their state. This drive to safeguard the mental stability of students is again underpinned by our firm belief that the University functions as a cornerstone of society. Once graduated, students should not only have developed themselves academically and be ready for their professional life but should also have grown into independent persons with the mental fortitude to build their existence in society.

Political Spectrum.

When discussing ideology, 020 does not want to brand itself as either left- or right-wing. We encourage you as a progressive thinker not even stay neutral, but to entirely dealign yourself from the concept of the political spectrum. 020 does not approve of the constructed bipolarity of the current political landscape and would not want to enforce it furthermore. Moving beyond arbitrary labels, people can find more common ground on issues that truly matter and collectively work towards decreasing them. Thus, 020 fights for change on issues that are both societally construed as "left-wing" or "right-wing".

With the move away from these arbitrary labels enforced by society, 020 strongly believes that people will be able to realise that the issues we fight for don't have losers. Bettering the mental health facilities, supporting students in their quest of finding meaningful jobs, diversifying the University curriculum, complete blind grading to limit conscious and unconscious biases and so forth are all examples of policies that everyone can come together on, nonetheless of their assumed ideology. We deem the left-right spectrum to be inefficient and outdated. Moreover, following and enforcing it would defeat our pragmatic approach to the goal to better the lives of all students, leaving no one behind.

To summarise, we are a political party that utilises progressive pragmatism to achieve its goals. Of those aims, we especially value increasing diversity, helping students with housing, and connecting our peers with job and internship opportunities. Thus, we not only focus on matters directly related to university education, like most parties, but also on crucial matters that will improve their prospects after finishing their studies and moving on to professional careers.