**Appendix Two - Free Speech & Oxford Union Draft Statement**

*Oxford SU condemns the decision of the Oxford Union to award a platform to Ben Shapiro, Katie Hopkins and Charlie Kirk. We believe their views are repulsive and not worthy of respect in any reasonable society.*

*Ben Shapiro has been accused by the Scientific American of climate change denial25; accused the Palestinian people of “dress[ing] their toddlers in suicide vests” and declared that “[t]he Palestinian Arab population is rotten to the core”26; said that “Arabs like to bomb crap and live in open sewage”27; falsely claimed that George Floyd, an unarmed black man murdered in 2020 by white police officer Derek Chauvin, died of a drug overdose28; claimed that “[a] man and a woman do a better job of raising a child than two men or two women”29, that “homosexual activity is a sin”; and referred to being transgender as a mental illness, saying that “biology is biology; men can’t magically become women”30 and promoted the debunked and transphobic concept of rapid onset gender dysphoria.31*

*Katie Hopkins has said that “Islam disgusts me”32 and referred to Sadiq Khan as the “Muslim mayor of Londonistan”33; blamed crime on multiculturalism34; said she would not employ obese people35; promoted the white genocide conspiracy theory36; tweeted “Gypsies are ferrel [sic] humans – we have no duty to them”37; appeared alongside a holocaust denier whilst attempting to intervene to return migrants to unsafe Libya38; and blamed the Pittsburgh Synagogue shooting on the Chief Rabbi’s support for refugees.39*

*Charlie Kirk leads Turning Point USA, a group whose former second-in-command said “I HATE BLACK PEOPLE. Like fuck them all . . . I hate blacks. End of story.”40. He has promoted the cultural Marxism conspiracy theory41; advocated for the creation of a citizen militia to be sent to the US-Mexico border to protect against the “invasion” of the country by Haitian refugees and prevent the “diminishing and decreasing [of] white demographics in America”42; referred to George Floyd as a “scumbag”43; denied climate change44; pushed lies about the Covid-19 Pandemic45 and the 2020 election46; and referred to trans people as a “throbbing middle finger to God”.47*

*We believe that the right to free speech should not be used to actively harm marginalised groups, and that these views may amount to hate speech. The right to free speech does not equate to the right to a platform, especially one this exclusive, where the right to challenge these views costs up to £350.*

*As a students union we would like to speak freely on our views around this subject but one of the consequences of the interpretations of the new Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act, perversely, means we may not be able to. Instead we will condemn this ‘bastion of freedom of free speech’ not standing up for our own and implore them to actually be that bastion. Platform marginalised voices and activism, actually show opinions that the media often shoot down and trivialise, let marginalised voices be heard, beyond a context where we have to fight for our right to exist. In addition to condemning the views of Ben Shapiro, Katie Hopkins and Charlie Kirk and their invitation to the Oxford Union, we condemn the government’s introduction of the Higher Education Act and call for it to be repealed immediately, as the act is in fact, in our belief, a crackdown on freedom of speech.*