

Strath Union Standing Policies

Updated 17.10.2023

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2015/16

Keep Privatisation Out of Our Classroom

This policy was renewed by Student Parliament on 23rd March 2021. This policy will lapse in 2023/24 and cannot be renewed.

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Mikey O'Donnell, Vice President Education

Policy statement

USSA opposes any moves to invite private companies into the teaching environment as this sort of move will undermine the quality of teaching.

USSA Notes:

1. There has recently been a proposal to consider inviting in private companies to deliver courses where a possible development has been identified but cannot be done by the current in-house staff.
2. The marketization of education" is becoming a problem across the UK and numerous literatures have been written about the subject highlighting this problem.
3. The University main opposition to the HE governance bill has been the issue of autonomy, letting private companies take control over courses will undermine the University"s autonomy a lot more than this bill will.
4. That 'marketisation of education' is on the agenda at NUS Zones Conference 2015 which highlights the student movement as a whole recognises this as an issue.

USSA Believes:

1. Allowing private companies into education will undermine the teaching quality available to students as those brought in will not be up to the same standard as fully trained staff.
2. The University will have no autonomy over these private „contractors“ who would have a foothold in the education system if these proposals go ahead.
3. Proposals such as these undermine the University"s ability to improve as an institution as they cannot hold these private companies to account if the student experience is affected in a negative way from these changes.
4. By allowing this proposal to go forward, this will cause a culture of fear among teaching staff who will think if they speak out they will simply be replaced.
5. That these proposals could lead to a two tier system in the University where those on teaching contracts are replaced by less qualified "learning providers" with fewer employment rights.

USSA Resolves:

1. To oppose any moves by the University to implement these proposals whether at Faculty Level or on a wider basis.
2. To work with campus trade unions such as UCU on combating any moves to open the way for private companies into the classrooms.
3. To work with NUS on how to construct a wider response to this issue and involve more Universities to join the opposition and show support.
4. To educate students on the growing issue of 'marketization of education' and highlight the dangers of such proposals to their student experience of University life.

22nd October 2015

National day of walk-out

This policy was renewed by Student Parliament on 23rd March 2021. This policy will lapse in 2023/24 and cannot be renewed.

**Submitting Forum: Executive Proposer: Raj
Jeyaraj, VP Diversity
Policy statement**

Strathclyde University students will join Students across the country are taking part in a national walk-out day on November 17 to highlight their dissatisfaction with government immigration policies.

USSA Notes:

1. International students have been under constant attack by the Home Office for a number of years, including;
 - a. Post-Study Work (PSW) scheme which allowed any Tier 4 student to stay on and work (at anything) for 2 years after their studies has been abolished in 2012.
 - b. International students currently need to show they have enough money for course fees and living costs for either two months – if they have an “established presence” – or nine months. But the established presence provision is being removed, so all students will need to show they can support themselves for up to nine months or the full length of their course, whichever is shorter.
 - c. All Tier 4 students must now show when applying to extend their visas for a new course that the course represents „academic progression” from one level to a higher one
 - d. Since this November All Tier 4 students must now pay an Immigration Health Charge of £150 for each year of study.
 - e. Landlords must now check the immigration status of tenants
 - f. Prevent Duty guidance
2. These attacks have intensified since 2012 with the revocation of the 'Highly Trusted Sponsorship' of London Metropolitan University.
3. Other universities and colleges have also lost their sponsorship status since.

USSA Believes:

1. The onslaught on international students' rights in the UK is not an isolated matter and is part of a bigger picture of the anti-migrant sentiment which is growing in the UK.
2. International students are an integral part of Strathclyde's student community.
3. As a progressive movement, it is our responsibility to stand in solidarity with all migrants and condemn how they are treated in this country.

USSA Resolves:

1. USSA should prioritise the plight of migrants in general and that of international students in particular in its campaigning activities.
2. USSA to fully support, endorse and encourage a national day of walk out on 'International Students' Day', November 17th. This would be to raise awareness regarding the treatment of international students and the wider migrant communities in the UK. This would be a one-day walkout.
3. USSA to utilise every possible tool to get as many students as possible on-board and informed with the national day of action.
4. USSA to particularly magnify, advertise, and promote this day of action through its press, and media channels.
5. USSA to highlight this position to the university, local and national government, and relevant decision makers.

22nd October 2015

Prevent Prevent

This policy was renewed by Student Parliament on 23rd March 2021. This policy will lapse in 2023/24 and cannot be renewed

Submitting Forum: Executive

Proposer: Raj Jeyaraj, VP Diversity

Policy statement

USSA will boycott and oppose the government guidance for specified Scottish authorities on the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

USSA Notes:

1. The government's Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory requirement on public bodies – including universities – to “prevent people being drawn into terrorism” and to implement the „Prevent” agenda.
2. The Prevent agenda, as part of the Government's anti-extremism” work has been used to create an expansive surveillance architecture to spy on the public and to police dissent, systematically targeting Black people and Muslims.
3. Under Prevent, lecturers have been known to report students as being at risk of radicalisation” for merely taking an interest in political affairs in class, or for observing their religion more closely, whilst politically active students have found themselves visited by counter-terrorism officers.
4. The Government's counter-terrorism/security policy is fundamentally flawed in its approach; its operant concepts of „extremism” and „radicalism” are ill-defined and open to abuse for political ends.
5. The Act further criminalises Muslims and Black people, and comes amidst a campaign of fear and demonization from the government.

USSA Believes:

1. Islamophobia is massively on the rise across Europe, is state-sponsored and legitimised by the mainstream media.
2. The government's identified „warning signs” of “radicalisation” problematize and renders suspect those with mental health difficulties.
3. That the Act could serve to isolate many students who already feel that the only avenue through which the Government will engage them is „anti-radicalisation” initiatives, resulting in further alienation and disaffection.
4. The Act discourages free expression and analysis of ideas. Academics, as well as anyone in a public sector job, should not have to be part of this surveillance.

5. We fundamentally believe that universities and colleges are places for education, not surveillance
6. The implementation of the Prevent Strategy on campus will not only isolate Muslim students but undermine the civil liberties of other groups such as environmental, political and humanitarian activists.
7. That the National Union of Students (NUS) and University and Colleges Union (UCU) have both passed motions at their conferences opposing the Act and Prevent.
8. As a separate legal entity from the university, USSA is not legally bound to engage with Prevent and will seek to boycott it
9. The Prevent Duty Guidance is an attack on our students civil liberty
10. Our students should have an environment that promotes learning, safe from constants surveillance, free from discrimination.

USSA Resolves:

1. To mandate the Officers of this Union to not engage with the Prevent strategy or implement the proposals of the Act, and to boycott it as far as legally possible.
2. To work with campus trade unions including UCU on combating the Prevent strategy and its implementation on campus.
3. To educate students on the dangers of the CTSA and the Prevent Strategy.
4. To lobby the university to be more open and transparent about how they are engaging with Prevent and other similar initiatives. This includes:
 - a. Demanding publications of how the policy is operating within the university.
 - b. This includes access to materials used to train staff and students.
 - c. Holding consultations with the student body regarding how this affects students.

22nd October 2015

Counselling Cuts

This policy was renewed by Student Parliament on 23rd March 2021. This policy will lapse in 2023/24 and cannot be renewed.

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: Lord Mensah Apesti

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Strathclyde university student counselling provision has gone down to approximately 1.7 staff members.
2. The current waiting time for an appointment is 4 weeks.
3. The same number of students has been served this academic year (just 1st Semi) same as the whole of last academic year despite a decrease in staff from 2.2 to 1.7.
4. There were 45 students on the waiting list for counselling before Christmas.
5. NHS has seen a 25% increase in the use of their Mental Health services. (2)
6. There has been a 35% increase in the use of CAMHS (Children and Adolescent mental health service) in Scotland between 2013 and 2015. (5)
7. The NHS target waiting time is 18 weeks.
8. The recommended ratio by the Association of University and College Counsellors recommend a counsellor to student ratio of 1:3,000. (3) 20% of (1336) students consider themselves to have a mental health problem.
9. 13% of (1336) students have had suicidal thoughts at some point during their course.
10. More than 25% (.4) of students will not tell anyone.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Mental health is an essential part of a positive student experience.
2. The correct amount of resources should go into counselling provisions.
3. The current student counselling provision is not sufficient to cope with demands.
4. The current provision is dangerous for students welling.
5. The long waiting times is putting students at risk.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. Mandate the Union Exec to lobby the university to increase the counselling provision.
2. Campaign for the university to increase its commitment toward student counselling services.

Useful Links:

Association for University and College Counsellors Good Practice Guidelines
<http://www.nus.org.uk/Global/Campaigns/20130517%20Mental%20Distress%20Surety%20%20Overview.pdf>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-32861745#>

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Waiting-Times/Child-and-Adolescent-Mental-Health/>

1st March 2016

Useful Links: <http://www.strath.ac.uk/dataprotection/dataprotectionfaq/>

2016/17

Access to exam transcripts and average marks

This policy was retained at Student Parliament on 11.4.2022. This policy will lapse in the academic year 2024-25 and cannot be retained again.

Submitting Forum: Student Parliament

Proposer: Tariq Mir

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Students at Strathclyde do not currently receive information on how their marks from assessments compare to the class average.
2. The data showing the spread of marks for assessments should be easily available.
3. There is no system in place for all students to see their transcript after an exam. Giving students access to exam transcripts following a request, is currently at the discretion of each department.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Giving students access to the spread of marks for assessments that contribute to the final mark for the course, would encourage those who need support to seek it, give students doing well a confidence boost and
2. Providing this information could also be used to highlight problems in course delivery if the average mark was very low.
3. Any information provided to students should be anonymous.
4. Having access to exam transcripts will allow students to reflect and plan their studying, enhancing their ability to progress through their course.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. The Executive to lobby the University to implement a system that shows students the spread of marks and average mark, for every assessment that contributes to the final grade for a course.
2. The Executive to lobby the University to make individual exam transcripts available to all students, on request.

More Ethical and Environmental Provision of Water in The Union and Across Campus

This policy was retained at Student Parliament on 11.4.2022. This policy will lapse in the academic year 2024-25 and cannot be retained again.

Submitting Forum: Clubs & Societies General Meeting

Proposer: Liam McCabe, VPVD

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That a majority of plastic bottles end up never being recycled, and when incinerated produce toxic fumes.
2. That it takes a huge amount of fossil fuel powered energy to create plastic bottles in the first place, and produces over a million tons of waste a year and several million tons of carbon dioxide¹.
3. That there is a huge impact upon wildlife, particularly marine², with birds and sea life in particular often consuming lethal volumes of plastic waste or an item which they cannot process, leading to death.
4. That according to the UN Human Rights Council (Resolution A/HRC/RES/15/9), access to clean drinking water is a human right³.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. It is incumbent upon us to reduce our impact on the environment, as part of our guiding principle of environmentalism and in line with our Environmental Policy.
2. That it is necessary for us to provide clean, safe drinking water to our students and this should be as accessible as possible, with cost and location in mind.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. To prohibit the sale of bottled water in The Union, and campaign for a similar ban across outlets on campus.
2. To replace bottled water with a combination of water fountains in The Union (with free, recyclable cups provided) and access to low cost water bottles for long-term use.
3. To continue to advocate for the proliferation of water fountains across campus, in line with legislation on workers' rights, and the provision of cups that said legislation entails for the use of students and staff alike.

¹ <http://www.hydratelife.org/?p=767>

² <http://www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/whats-the-problem-with-plastic-bottles/>

³ http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/15/9

2019/20

Banning Negative Marking

This policy was retained by Student Parliament on 24/01/2023. This policy will lapse at the end of the 2025/26 academic year and cannot be retained again.

Student Parliament Notes

1. Negative marking is used in some departments in assessments where a correct answer is +1 mark but an incorrect answer is -1 mark. Therefore, if you had sat a quiz and answered 15/20 questions correctly instead of receiving 75% as you would with regular marking schemes you receive 50% due to the deduction of marks for incorrect answers.
2. Negative marking is counterproductive and discourages students.
3. It has no constructive value and instead leaves students feeling bad about their studies.
4. In a poll 35 students had stated that they did not support the negative marking and 0 stated that they supported it.
5. In this poll, Students have given their opinion on negative marking below:
 - "Seems a bit pointless"
 - "It's really quite unfair. It's all good doing weekly assessments but it is punishing us for trying our best and not quite getting the answer right. It puts us at a disadvantage to other disciplines who don't have negative marking. You answer 8 right and 8 wrong and you get 0, totally pointless."
 - "If your presentation got a really good mark the quiz pulls you down from a first to a second due to the negative marking"
 - "It's counterproductive – shouldn't be punished for not knowing something"

Student Parliament Believes

1. That the University of Strathclyde should be supporting students and encouraging a positive learning environment.
2. Negative marking policies do not contribute to a positive learning environment
3. Students should be rewarded for their good work and not be penalised when they don't know the answers.

Student Parliament Resolves

1. All members of student parliament should support the motion to ban negative marking at University of Strathclyde.
2. All Faculty Reps should raise the issue of negative marking at relevant committee meetings.
3. The VP Education shall research into the use of negative marking in Strathclyde University.
4. The Executive Committee should lobby the university to implement a policy which bans negative marking across all faculties.

Lecture recordings for all

This policy was retained by Student Parliament on 24/01/2023. This policy will lapse at the end of the 2025/26 academic year and cannot be retained again.

Student Parliament Notes

1. Audio recording of lectures have been used by many other Scottish universities such as University of Glasgow, Herriot-Watt and University of Sterling.
2. Audio recordings allow students to revise content delivered in lectures.
3. Pilot studies of lecture capturing have been done in some departments.

Student Parliament Believes

1. Disabled students, chronically ill students, carers and parents may not always be able to attend due to circumstances without their control and they lose out on valuable information.
2. There is a negative stigma around lecture content perpetuated by lecturers who believe that if you are unable to attend then you aren't entitled to the information. Nobody should be denied access to knowledge and this removes barriers to learning.
3. International students, whose first language isn't English, will be able to listen back to what lecturers said even if they missed it in class. This removes language barriers in education.
4. In extreme circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, rely on the use of online learning. We would have a much easier transition to online based learning if staff were already used to using interactive technology.

Student Parliament Instructs

1. The Union should ask the university to invest in the equipment and software needed to improve the online learning environment for students.
2. Department and Faculty Reps should hold discussions with their department/faculty regarding the introduction of lecture recordings.
3. All new facilities built moving forward should be fully equip with lecture capture technology.

Sustainable Futures

This policy was retained by Student Parliament on 24/01/2023. This policy will lapse at the end of the 2025/26 academic year and cannot be retained again.

Student Parliament Notes:

1. In 2018-19 Strath Union achieved “Excellent” in NUS’s Green Impact Award which involves meeting sustainable procurement criteria including Fairtrade standards.
2. Strath Union currently serve Fairtrade tea, coffee, and snacks in both Recharge and in meetings, and supply Fairtrade clothing for staff and campaigns.
3. The current policy ‘Nestle Products in the USSA’ calls for the stocking of Fairtrade products in the association.
4. The current policy ‘Association Ethical Clothing’ calls for ‘USSA clothing to be sourced from Fairtrade ethical and local suppliers’.
5. Strath Union previously had a Fairtrade policy, Fairtrade Future, which has since lapsed.
6. As our awareness of our global impact has increased, so have the options for sustainable, ethical, and locally sourced products – meaning Fairtrade is no longer the only “good” option.
7. Locally sourced products can have a massive positive impact due to supporting local businesses and having a reduced carbon footprint.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Fairtrade Programmes have successfully raised people out of poverty worldwide and have a genuine impact on the lives of people and their communities in the developing world.
2. In order to mitigate our impact on the planet we should be ensuring wherever possible that our purchases should be as ethical and sustainable as possible.
3. That with each purchase made by Strath Union, its environmental and social impact should be considered.
4. By Strath Union ensuring that they only purchase and supply ethical products they are also making it easier for students to do so and therefore encouraging this throughout society.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. To ensure Fairtrade/ethical options are available in all cafes, bars, and for Union campaigns and activities and increase their availability.
2. To support clubs, societies and sports clubs that wish to use ethical products and encourage this where possible.
3. To continue to maintain the Fairtrade Status for the Union.

4. To continue to improve the sustainability of Strath Union by engaging with NUS initiatives such as the Green Impact Awards, but also by their own initiatives.
5. To lobby the University to increase their ethical and sustainable considerations regarding products they sell, but also the way in which they carry out university business.
6. To run at least one campaign each year to increase awareness, understanding and usage of sustainable, ethical, and Fairtrade options.
7. To embark on the journey of going net carbon zero in the most sustainable and ethical way possible in Strath Union.

Strath Union Cares

This policy was retained by Student Parliament on 24/01/2023. This policy will lapse at the end of the 2025/26 academic year and cannot be retained again.

This policy was put forward through the Executive Committee for consideration at Student Parliament

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Strathclyde was the first university in Scotland to sign up as an “official friend” of Who Cares? Scotland
2. Care Experienced children are **less likely to be in positive destinations nine months after leaving school**. Figures from 2017/18 show that 76% of children in care for the full year and 69% of children in care for part of the year, were in positive destinations. This is compared to 93% of all school leavers⁴
3. The overall **retention** rate for Scottish domiciled full-time first degree entrants completing year 1 and remaining in higher education was 92.5% in 2017-18. Meanwhile, 87.2% of entrants with care-experienced backgrounds remained in higher education.⁵
4. A dedicated landing page for all Widening Access students has been developed on the Strath Union website and will continue to be a site of resource for all our Widening Access students, including those who identify as Care Experienced.
5. Strath Union now has a dedicated “Access and Participation Coordinator” who’s role includes supporting students from widening access backgrounds

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Strath Union has a role to play in supporting **all** of students through their university experience.
2. Engaging with other charities in our community such as Who Cares? Scotland can be massively beneficial to our students who require specific support.
3. Strath Union should provide support for and raise awareness of care leavers in higher education.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. For Strath Union to work with Student Reps, Student Execs and the Care Experienced Society to remain responsive to the needs of our Care Experienced students.
2. To actively engage with, support and grow the Care Experienced Society, as necessary.
3. To retain its connection with Who Cares? Scotland and lobby the university to ensure it does the same.

⁴ <https://www.whocarescotland.org/who-we-are/media-centre/statistics/> (Scottish Government, 2019*, cited from Who Cares? Scotland, 2020).

⁵

http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/statisticalpublications_sfcst072019/Report_on_Widening_Access_2017-18_Executive_Summary.pdf (SFC, 2019, p. 3)

Additional Information

1. The term “care experienced” refers to anyone who has been, or is currently in care. This care may have been provided in many different settings, such as:
 - Kinship care – living with a relative who is not your mum or dad.
 - Looked after at home – with the help of social work.
 - Residential care – living in a residential unit or school.
 - Foster care – living with foster carers.
 - Secure care – living in a secure unit.
 - Adoption

(Who Cares? Scotland, 2020)

2020/21

The Right To Congregate Act (2020)

This policy received the requisite number of votes for discussion at Student Parliament

Student Parliament Notes:

1. The Scottish Government has recently released a revised Route Map displaying the different stages of lockdown within Scotland to combat the spread of COVID-19, and detailing the everyday restrictions in order to return to normalcy.
2. Scotland is currently within Phase 3 of the Scottish Government's Route Map meaning that: the University is heading towards a "phased return to on campus learning as part of a blended model with remote teaching,"; however other restrictions have not yet been lifted that allow for the traditional operation of Clubs and Societies.
3. In addition on the 1st of September 2020 the Scottish Government issued further guidance to Universities and Colleges covering teaching, working and socialisation throughout Phase 3 reiterating that rules around social gatherings such as those "indoor gatherings of no more than 8 people, from a maximum of 3 households" and "outdoor gatherings of no more than 15 people, from a maximum of 5 households."
4. Furthermore when Scotland enters Phase 4 of the Scottish Government's Route Map, it is noted that "mass gatherings resume in line with public health advice, all ceremonies can take place, with improved hygiene."
5. Phase 4 further says "relaxation of live events in line with public health advice," and "College and university campuses would be fully open including student services."
6. Suicide rates have inclined as mental health takes a toll from isolation and lack of social interaction, as the Scottish government states "As Scotland faces the extraordinary challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic it is clear that these are difficult and uncertain times for many people and it is highly likely the impacts of the pandemic on individual mental health and wellbeing will be felt for some time to come. There is global concern that the COVID-19 pandemic may increase suicide rates."
7. Furthermore, the National Suicide Prevention Group reports estimates that there has been "a 50% year-on-year increase [in suicides] among young people."
8. Also noting the Strath Union's efforts towards assisting students who do not possess the necessary equipment to participate in online events.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Clubs and Societies play an essential role in the integration of new students into University life, as they allow students to meet like-minded peers and form friendships; this is especially true for International Students who are adjusting to University life while also adapting to Scotland itself.

2. Furthermore, Clubs and Societies offer outlet, relaxation, and a sense of community for students who have already fully integrated into the University.
3. Some students do not have access to technology to keep them engaged with the Club or Society they wish to be, and even those with technology may not have up-to-date auxiliary items that allow them to fully participate with the group.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That Strath Union will place no heavier restrictions under Phase 4 than that of the Scottish Government in order to stop clubs and societies from congregating.
2. That, in line with relevant Government guidelines, Strath Union will produce an expectation list for Clubs and Society members to adhere to in the event that Scotland moves into phase 4, including but not limited to: contact tracing guidelines, social distancing do's and don'ts, as well as quarantine procedure in the event of an outbreak.
3. That Strath Union Exec shall lobby The University of Strathclyde to open buildings to Clubs and Societies to meet and congregate, as long as said building has the capacity and space to practice social distancing.
4. That the VP Community, alongside Clubs Exec, will encourage Clubs & Societies to keep an online opportunity available for those who are at risk or choose to not meet in person for whatever reasoning they may have.
5. That Strath Union will, with consideration to Scottish Government guidance, support clubs and societies to host in-person meetings as safely as possible.

Additional Information

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-suicide-prevention-leadership-group-covid-19-statement/>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-what-you-can-and-cannot-do/>

<https://www.gov.scot/groups/national-suicide-prevention-leadership-group/?fbclid=IwAR22VFZmGMc8v9AYBPVR1xCo4a29nOID89TCWT-B0AsKGPxu3Ow6HCVrefl>

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2020/09/coronavirus-covid-19-universities-colleges-and-student-accommodation-providers/documents/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-universities-colleges-and-student-accommodation-providers/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-universities-colleges-and-student-accommodation-providers/govscot%3Adocument/Coronavirus%2BCOVID-19%2B-%2Bguidance%2Bfor%2Buniversities%252C%2Bcolleges%2Band%2Bstudent%2Baccomm%2Bodation%2Bproviders%2B-2.pdf>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-54093110>

Student Health Act (2020)

This policy received the requisite number of signatures for discussion at Student Parliament

Student Parliament Notes:

1. The global Covid-19 pandemic is affecting the health and wellbeing - both physically and mentally - of citizens around the world including students studying at Strathclyde.
2. University of Stirling, University of Edinburgh and Heriot Watt University (Edinburgh Campus) currently provide an on campus health centre for their students in partnership with NHS Scotland however the University of Strathclyde currently lacks such a service.
3. Last year the Terrence Higgins Trust provided a temporary on campus STI Clinic via Strathclyde Sport however the closest permanent sexual health clinic for students at Strathclyde is the Sandyford Clinic in Glasgow, which is often plagued by high waiting times.
4. The University of Strathclyde currently offers mental health support such as counselling via the Disability and Wellbeing Service, it is often said anecdotally that waiting times are high within the counselling service, however no official waiting times are produced or released by the University.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Given the impact of Covid-19, and its many indirect side effects, the need to ensure that students at Strathclyde are staying in good physical, mental and sexual health is important now more than ever.
2. Students at the University of Strathclyde would therefore benefit from the existence of both an on campus health centre as well as a permanent sexual health clinic.
3. Students at Strathclyde would further benefit from increased access to mental health support and therefore additional investment should be put in place by the University along with a holistic approach and preventative measures to ensure the development of mental health issues is minimised.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That the Strath Union Executive will gather evidence relating to the physical, mental and sexual health of students at Strathclyde and report any data gathered back to Strath Union Student Parliament at the earliest possible opportunity.
2. The Strath Union VP Welfare will use any appropriate collated information gathered to campaign for increased health service provision for students at Strathclyde.

Student Tenants Unions Act (2020)

This proposal reached the requisite number of signatures for consideration at Student Parliament.

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That there is an existing policy supporting Living Rent - Scotland's Tenants Union - which has continued to grow and develop over the last few years.
2. That students - especially those living in purpose built student accommodation - often face an additional set of challenges as renters.
3. That since policy in relation to Living Rent was passed, independent Student Tenants Unions have also been developed, with a focus on organising student tenants in cities such as Stirling and Aberdeen.
4. That there are now moves towards establishing a Glasgow Student Tenants Union following the work of the Strath Union: Housing Action Group and Living Rent's "Student Tenants Organise" campaign.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That Covid-19 has exposed the moral bankruptcy of private - and sometimes institutional - student accommodation providers that have put profit before the wellbeing of students.
2. That students are well within their rights to organise collectively - including the act of forming tenants unions - and should not be penalised for such action.
3. That a Glasgow Student Tenants Union would be a positive development for students and would lead to meaningful action against often inadequate accommodation providers.
4. That it is in the interest of students that Strath Union should support the creation of a Glasgow Student Tenants Union.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That Strath Union should encourage its members to participate in the development of a Glasgow Student Tenants Union.
2. That Strath Union should encourage its members to join it, should such an organisation be successfully launched.
3. That Strath Union will provide meeting spaces, free of charge, for such an organisation at the request of two or more Strathclyde students during normal operation of the building.

4. That Strath Union reaffirms its support for the Living Rent union alongside the wider tenants union movement.

Strathclyde Against Sectarianism

This proposal was submitted for consideration at Student Parliament by the Executive Committee

Student Parliament Notes:

1. The Independent Advisory Group on Tackling sectarianism in Scotland says that: "Sectarianism in Scotland is a mixture of perceptions, attitudes, actions, and structures that involves overlooking, excluding, discriminating against or being abusive or violent towards others on the basis of their perceived Christian denominational background. This perception is always mixed with other factors such as, but not confined to politics, football allegiance and national identity."
2. Strath Union is located in the centre of Glasgow, which has a historical issue with sectarianism. This, no doubt, plays a role on our campus and affects a portion of our students.
3. Strath Union currently has no anti-sectarianism policy.
4. Strathclyde students have faced sectarian threats and violence in recent months, both in Glasgow and online.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Sectarianism has no place on our campus, along with any other kind of discrimination.
2. Strath Union has a responsibility to support students who experience sectarianism both on and off campus in any way that they can.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. Strath Union should have a zero-tolerance policy for sectarianism and should take all appropriate steps to eliminate it from campus – including updating the Equal Opportunities policy to reference this Zero Tolerance approach to Sectarianism.
2. Support should be provided for our students who have experienced sectarian threats, violence, or harassment - in the union, outwith the union, and online.
3. Strath Union should work with Action on Sectarianism in order to ensure staff and students are properly trained on sectarianism or have access to this training, as well as proper resources to help raise awareness of sectarianism and aid in tackling it on our campus.

Useful Links: <https://www.actiononsectarianism.info/young-people/about-sectarianism/what-is-sectarianism-3>

Fair Tuition Act (2020)

This policy proposal met the requisite number of signatures for consideration at Student Parliament

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That prior to Britain leaving the European Union (EU), Under EU law, the free tuition policy for students based in Scotland meant that EU citizens who came to study needed to be treated the same.
2. The commitment by the Scottish government to ensure EU citizens who study a Further or Higher education course in Scotland in the 2020/21 academic year will be charged the same tuition fees and will get the same fee support as Scottish students for the entirety of their courses.
3. The understanding that as of the beginning of the 2021/22 academic year, universities will be given full power to set tuition prices for EU students in the same manner as they currently do international students.
4. That during the 2018/19 academic year (which is the most recent statistics available from the University) the University of Strathclyde welcomed 17,235 Scottish students, 230 Northern Irish students, 45 Welsh students, 975 English students totalling 18,485 total UK students. Furthermore, the University welcomed 1,410 European Union students and 2,740 Non-EU students.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Education is a human right, and the goal of the Strath Union should be to minimize if not eradicate tuition fees, for all students, regardless of domestic or international status.
2. It would be discriminatory for non-EU students to pay higher tuition fees compared to students from the European Union.
3. Fees and economic situation can be a large factor in students deciding where to attend University. Increasing fees on students who have already enrolled at the University of Strathclyde prior to Brexit could cause students to fall on economic hardships and even drop out of the University due to unexpected fees.
4. The University should not use Brexit as an opportunity to increase revenue through fees paid by International Students, but instead should lower tuition fees across the board.
5. The University will attract more students and become more competitive if tuition fees are decreased.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. That the Student Executive Committee, as the advocates for students at University meetings regarding fees, as well as Strath Union as a whole, will adopt and campaign for the following positions to be actioned or upheld:
 - a. Students from the European Union should pay the same amount in fees as International Students.
 - b. With the added fees being paid from students from the European Union, along with the added demographic students to pay fees in the future, the International Fees should be lowered **drastically**.
 - c. European Union students enrolled at the University of Strathclyde prior to Brexit should not have to pay International Fees.

References

- 1) BBC News. 2020. *Free Tuition To Continue For EU Students In Scotland*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-47989007>> [Accessed 13 November 2020].
- 2) Gov.scot. 2020. *Extension Of Free Tuition For EU Students - Gov.Scot*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.gov.scot/news/extension-of-free-tuition-for-eu-students/>> [Accessed 13 November 2020].
- 3) Hesa.ac.uk. 2020. *Higher Education Student Statistics: UK, 2018/19 - Where Students Come From And Go To Study | HESA*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/16-01-2020/sb255-higher-education-student-statistics/location>> [Accessed 13 November 2020].
- 4) Op.europa.eu. 2018. *National Student Fee And Support Systems In European Higher Education : 2018/19..* [online] Available at: <<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1367d516-f1fa-11e8-9982-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-82053839>> [Accessed 13 November 2020].

Headspace for Strathclyde Students

This policy proposal met the requisite number of signatures for consideration at Student Parliament

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Mental health is a big problem faced by students in higher education in Scotland. (1)
2. This is a problem which has gotten worse due to the COVID-19 pandemic as highlighted by NUS . (2)
3. The use of mindfulness apps can help to improve mental health. (3)
4. Headspace is one of the only apps to have its effectiveness studied. It showed a decrease in depressive emotions and an increase in positive emotions after just 10 days use. (4)

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That Strath Union should continue to support students in seeking mental health support.
2. That providing students with access to apps like SilverCloud and Headspace will improve the mental health of the student population.
3. That the University of Strathclyde should provide free subscriptions to Headspace for all registered students as well as continue to offer access to SilverCloud.

Student Parliament Instructs:

1. That the Vice President Welfare should take this motion forwards to the University to secure Headspace subscriptions for all registered students.

References:

1. <https://www.bps.org.uk/sites/www.bps.org.uk/files/Policy/Policy%20-%20Files/Call%20to%20Action%20-%20Mental%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20in%20Scotland%27s%20Higher%20and%20Further%20Education%20Sector.pdf>
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-54706305>
3. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/mindfulness-apps-how-well-do-they-work-2018110615306>
4. https://repository.uel.ac.uk/download/65f73ee7a7007e6810d074804cb6f3be8d24351c3d158c708ae83e801dd56879/929658/Howells_2015_JOHS.pdf

Strathclyde Wednesday Afternoon Policy Inclusionary Change for All Students

This policy was passed at the AGM on 20.1.2021

Strath Union General Meeting Notes:

1. Postgraduate (PG) and other specific course lecturers can and do book scheduled classes on Wednesday afternoons.
2. Current academic policy only applies to Undergraduate Students and not Post Graduate and specific groups of students. While coordinators should be cognisant of this, it is not a requirement.
 - a. *'5.1 This section of the policy currently applies to undergraduate programmes following the Standard Teaching Year only. Where possible, local departmental/school timetabling coordinators are encouraged to be cognisant of this policy for postgraduate and other taught provision.'*⁶
3. Parliament resolved on this issue:⁷
 - a. *That Strath Union will seek a commitment from the University of Strathclyde to keep Wednesday Afternoons (from 12pm) free for student activity.*
 - b. *That Strath Union will survey all students to identify classes and faculties that timetable classes/lectures/seminars/tutorials/labs after 12pm on Wednesdays; and with this data, lobby the university to explore how this can be addressed.*
 - c. *That those on the Students Executive will press relevant committees that they are part of (i.e. Timetabling Steering Group; SEES) to ensure adequate measures are in place to benefit the student body for Academic Year 2018/2019.*
 - d. *Incoming and Returning Sabbatical Officers will continue to uphold this policy and Strath Union will support them to do so.*
4. The resulting University of Strathclyde Policy directly segregates entire student populaces from their policy. They state the following students do not apply to this policy⁸:
 - a. *(i) Programmes with formal requirement to undertake a credit bearing placement as part of the curriculum, which may require to be scheduled on a Wednesday afternoon.*
 - b. *(ii) Postgraduate Taught programmes.*
 - c. *(iii) Apprenticeship or work-based learning degree programmes.*
 - d. *(iv) Fully online programmes.'*
5. The current University of Strathclyde policy disables Postgraduate and other students from having any recourse if they fail to attend a lecture resulting from them attending Strathclyde Sports sessions on a Wednesday afternoon.
6. Should a Postgraduate student fail to attend scheduled course-based work because of attending sport on a Wednesday afternoon they will face appropriate academic penalties as a result.
7. Post Graduate programmes in the Business School and MBA unit capitalize on student extracurriculars to develop opportunities and growth in areas such as sports teams as employers value team working skills.

⁶ More information can be found [HERE](#)

⁷ Strath Union's Wednesday Afternoon Policy can be found on pg 88 on the Union Policy Document [HERE](#)

⁸ More information can be found [HERE](#)

8. The current union policy indicates in §5. *'The UK Government has found that graduate employers consider a range of factors when shortlisting candidates, namely: "work history; personal achievements; extracurricular activities; and academic background"'*.⁹
9. Other Scottish Universities, including Glasgow¹⁰ and Edinburgh¹¹ support all students in their policy and guidelines for Wednesday afternoons with a blanket statement or offer alternatives.

Strath Union General Meeting Believes:

1. Widening access is essential to all students not just undergraduate students.
2. All Students should have access to clubs, societies, and sports.
3. Staying physically and mentally fit as a part of a (sports) club or society is crucial to supporting student's health.
4. The Students Union promotes fair representation for all students.
5. The Students Union is a champion for equal opportunity for all.
6. The Students Union's mission is 'To represent, support and enhance the lives of all Strathclyders to ensure they maximise their student experience whilst creating life changing opportunities.'
7. Being a part of a (sports) club, and society directly benefits student's general wellbeing and improves academic standing.
8. Having the ability to continue membership of a (sports) club, and society is further incentive for a student to choose Strathclyde as a Graduate school after a student has completed their undergraduate at the University.

Strath Union General Meeting Instructs:

1. That Strath Union will seek consultation with the University to understand and publish the reason for exclusion of student groups made by the University's policy.
2. Strath Union will survey programme reps to understand how current timetables are affected because of the policy.
3. Strath Union will press all relevant committees, and reps from programme rep. to executive rep. to support inclusive policy change ensuring adequate measures are in place for the entire student body to be represented in the University of Strathclyde's Wednesday Afternoon Policy.
4. Should this policy change take long enough that there will be new, incoming, or returning sabbatical officers, said new or returning representatives will uphold this policy and Strath Union will support them in doing so.
5. Strath Union will first seek a commitment by the University of Strathclyde to amend the current Wednesday afternoon policy to keep Wednesday Afternoons free for student activity for all students.
6. If Strath Union is unable to seek a commitment by the University for Section (5) Subsection (5) of the proposal or where impossible amendments are to be made, Strath Union will seek a commitment for amendment in Strathclyde University's policy for a requirement by lecturers to provide alternative arrangements so that students can catch up to an equal amount of work on an alternative date, platform, method,

⁹ See footnote 2

¹⁰ Information can be found [HERE](#)

¹¹ Information can be found [HERE](#)

Useful Information:

1. [Original Policy document drafted by proposers, which was circulated round students for signatures](#)
2. [Strathclyde Policy on the Academic Year and Teaching Calendar](#)
3. [Department for Business Innovation & Skills, BIS Research Paper No.231 – Understanding Employers' Graduate Recruitment and Selection Practices: Main Report \(November 2015\), p.145](#)
4. [Glasgow University's Wednesday Afternoon Information](#)
5. [Edinburgh University Timetabling Information](#)

Demanding Justice for Students

This policy was passed at the AGM on 20.1.2021

Strath Union General Meeting Notes:

1. Due to Covid-19 the majority of learning and teaching has been conducted online, despite this the University of Strathclyde has insisted on charging students full price tuition fees as if they were receiving an as advertised learning experience.
2. Online learning and working from home is a different learning environment than is normally provided by the University, meaning that students studying this year are being expected to perform as normal in vastly different conditions.
3. According to research recently published by NUS Scotland:
 - a. The number of students studying in Scotland who are in part-time employment has dropped to $\frac{1}{5}$, with those who do not work at all has jumped to 59% from 27% in July 2020, leading to an increase in financial pressures for students.
 - b. $\frac{1}{4}$ of students have struggled to pay their rent in full over the last 4 months, with $\frac{2}{3}$ of students worried about being able to pay their rent going forward.
 - c. The number of students accessing food banks has increased, with an estimated 14% of students accessing food banks during the pandemic, making students in Scotland more likely to access a food bank than those elsewhere in the UK.
 - d. 73% of students are concerned with how they are going to manage financially going forward due to the consequences of the Covid-19 crisis.

Last year, according to research by NUS, $\frac{1}{2}$ of students reported that financial pressures affected their mental health - this was before the pandemic struck.

Strath Union General Meeting Believes:

1. Tuition fees continue to be proven to be the wrong method of funding Higher Education, and given the severe disruption to learning and teaching this year, it is morally wrong for the University to charge full price tuition fees - they must be reduced.
2. An "Academic Safety Net" is needed to ensure that no student is negatively impacted for their decision to study this year opposed to studying during a more normal year, this should be an evolution of the "No Detriment Policy" of the 2019/20 academic year.
3. Food banks are now a vital life line for so many in society, but their growth over the last decade is a societal failure - no individual in our society, students or otherwise, should be forced to rely on food banks in order to survive.
4. Mental health matters and the pressures of Covid-19, including but not limited to; self isolation, money worries, and lack of normality, have likely further exasperated the student mental health crisis in Scotland.

Strath Union General Meeting Resolves:

The position of Strath Union is as follows:

1. The University of Strathclyde must provide tuition fee discounts, credits, refunds, or a combination of any of these measures, in order to account for the

substantial change to the format of teaching this year, for all self-funded fee paying students.

2. The University of Strathclyde must commit to an Academic Safety Net, similar to the so called “No Detriment Policy” of 2019/20, to ensure that no student is academically disadvantaged because they chose to study this year, instead of any other year.
3. The University of Strathclyde must introduce support, preferably in the form of direct payments or alternatively food parcels, for all students struggling to access food due to the economic fallout of the Covid-19 crisis.
4. The University of Strathclyde must boost funding to the Disability and Wellbeing Service in order to further support students whose mental health has been detrimentally affected by the Covid-19 crisis and its many consequences.

Zero Tolerance for Sexual Assault & Harassment

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 26.1.2021

CONTENT WARNING: graphic descriptions of sexual assault & harassment

Student Parliament Notes:

1. The 1752 group, in their 2018 report “Institutional responses to staff sexual misconduct in UK higher education”, recommend that institutions and the sector should “Instigate a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment, and define this clearly in the document”.
2. The NUS toolkit for the 16 Days of Action against Gender Based Violence recommends that unions should: “Use your democratic structures of your students’ association to pass policy on zero tolerance, combating gender-based violence.”
3. 62% of students and graduates have experienced sexual assault at UK universities according to research from Revolt Sexual Assault and The Student Room in 2018.
4. As of yet, no zero-tolerance policy against gender based and sexual violence has been written or implemented at Strath Union.
5. Sexual harassment that Strathclyde students may experience includes:
 - Unwanted sexual comments
 - Unwelcome sexual invitations, innuendos and offensive gestures.
 - Wolf whistling, catcalling, or offensive sexual noises.
 - Unwanted touching without consent.
 - Groping, pinching or smacking of the body, such as on the bottom or chest.
 - Having any item of clothing lifted, tugged, removed or altered without consent.
 - The exposure of sexual organs to an individual without consent.
 - Unwanted sexual conduct on any digital platform.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Students should feel safe from sexual assault and harassment while studying at Strathclyde.
2. Implementing a zero tolerance policy is vital to combatting sexual assault and harassment on our campus.

Student Parliament Instructs:

1. That Strath Union takes a zero-tolerance approach to sexual assault and harassment and will take all allegations of such seriously, and treat it with importance and compassion.

2. A clear mechanism will be provided for students to report instances of sexual harassment to Strath Union.
3. That this policy be featured on Strath Union website alongside the Equal Opportunities policy.
4. That relevant policy and procedure be updated accordingly, and that future policy encompass the zero-tolerance approach.
5. Student officers should lobby the University for the incorporation of a zero-tolerance policy to sexual assault and harassment.
6. Actions should be taken to ensure staff and students are aware of the existence of this policy.

Time Zone Awareness Bill

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 26.1.2021

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That online learning presents unique challenges in relation to attendance by international students and staff who live across various time zones.
2. That international students face unprecedented challenges in connectivity and access to live learning with some of Strathclyde largest student bases facing the following time zone differences:
 - China (East) +8 Hours
 - India +5h 30mins
 - US East Coast -5 Hours
 - US West Coast -8 Hours
3. International students make up a significant proportion of the Strathclyde student population, increasing the number of students impacted by a lack of time zone consideration in class times.
4. That online learning presents unique challenges in relation to attendance by students who are home-schooling.
5. Many students are both full time students and also parents, who unfortunately do not qualify as a category 1 for education services, meaning that many are occupied with home schooling throughout the day.

Student Parliament Notes:

1. More must be done by the University of Strathclyde in order to accommodate the specific needs of international students.
2. More must be done by the University of Strathclyde in order to accommodate the specific needs of students with children.
3. International students and students who are home-schooling should be provided with time-appropriate class options with mandatory online classes being offered at more inclusive times for those students facing the most radical time zone differences.
4. If point 3 cannot be achieved, those students who are home-schooling as well as international students with the most radical time zone differences should be exempt from mandatory classes and instead be provided with relevant resources (e.g. - recorded tutorials).

Student Parliament Believes:

1. All elected officers should take the approaches outlined in 'Student Parliament Notes'.
2. VP Education (or appropriate delegate) should present the case for flexible learning to the university and provide updates to student parliament on any progress.

Increasing Vegan Awareness

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 25.2.2021

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That although Strath Union shared a post during Veganuary to raise awareness of veganism¹², there is more that can be done to provide students with more information about veganism, including the benefits to individuals and the environment.
2. That sustainability is a key issue for Strath Union; there have been campaigns for divestment from fossil fuels and lobbying the University to become carbon neutral. However, there has been little information provided about the impact of animal agriculture on the environment.
3. That animal agriculture produces more emissions than the whole transport sector combined.¹³
4. That scientific research states that a plant-based diet is “probably the biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth,”¹⁴ and that the UN has been pushing for a transition to a plant-based diet for over 10 years.¹⁵
5. That moving to a plant-based diet is less resource intensive than diets which include animal products.
6. That factory farming is unjust and inherently cruel to animals.
7. That factory farming can be a breeding ground for infectious diseases due to unsanitary living conditions for animals. There are also significant negative impacts on workers in this sector, for example the impact on workers’ mental health.¹⁶
8. That affordable plant-based alternatives (for example, plant-based milk) are widely available.
9. That several Universities and Students’ Unions, including Oxford, Cambridge, Goldsmiths and Edinburgh, have taken initiatives to spread vegan and animal awareness to try to combat climate change.¹⁷

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That Strath Union works towards a better, fairer world with a stronger, healthier economy that relies on strong morals and an environmentally sustainable approach in all aspect of life, and that we take steps to achieve this goal through informative action.
2. This Union already recognises the issues of sustainability and encouraging environmentally friendly behaviour, and this attitude should be applied to all devastating problems that affect our planet, including animal farming.
3. The Union works towards combatting injustice and campaigning for positive change. As such, the issues raised through animal farming must also be addressed and campaigned on.

Student Parliament Instructs:

¹² <https://www.strathunion.com/festivecalendar/day33/>

¹³ http://www.fao.org/3/a0701e/a0701e00.htm?fbclid=IwAR0inH4KvCJy_CTH4Bd-DYCKPbMFvh10FXVbHn40iSCgufvlfboCZ8b0lqY

¹⁴ Dr Joseph Poore (Oxford Graduate, Dep. of Zoology), <https://www.zoo.ox.ac.uk/people/joseph-poore>

¹⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/jun/02/un-report-meat-free-diet>

¹⁶ <https://greenstarsproject.org/2020/05/04/social-impact-meat-industry-slaughterhouse-conditions-ptsd/>

¹⁷ <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/university-uk-vegan-ban-meat-climate-change-environment-a9347256.html>

1. That Strath Union will promote vegan/plant-based alternatives as a way of reducing carbon emissions, including by promoting articles and research which evidences this.
2. That Strath Union shall create a campaigns section on the website dedicated to ending the cruelty of factory farming of animals, which also recognises the impact of factory farming on workers' rights and the climate.
3. That Strath Union should dedicate more resources to the promotion of Veganuary throughout January, including sharing information on veganism and the philosophy behind it, as well as sharing advice on plant-based recipes, health, and combatting factory farming.
4. That Strath Union will promote information about the injustice of factory farming, including information on the conditions factory farmed-animals are living in, how it impacts climate change and the spread of infectious diseases, throughout the year.
5. That Strath Union should provide more information about the health benefits of moving to a plant-based diet and support to people who are interested trying veganism, which includes supporting plant-based alternatives through food bank and food sharing initiatives.
6. The Strath Union will campaign the University to reduce the sale of animal products across campus and to provide healthy, affordable plant-based alternatives, including within the Students' Union.

Useful Links:

1. Comprehensive lists of all reasons to go vegan, including a TLDR section <https://katch4n.github.io/>
2. A Documentary about standard factory farm practices. NOTE: This video has graphic content <https://youtu.be/LQRAfJyEsko>
3. A concise TED talk about veganism - <https://youtu.be/byTxzzztRBU>
4. The inspirational vegan speech <https://youtu.be/a22XxXP3nU8>
5. The response to 'vegans are extreme' <https://youtu.be/OA55lVeY22Y>
6. Veganism related to COVID-19 and zoonotic diseases <https://youtu.be/al0BAS6bLy8>
<https://youtu.be/gnQL-brl-9I>
7. The quickest rundown of environmental disasters caused by animal products - https://youtu.be/dSjE8xw_-Dg

Increasing library access for students with young children

This policy was passed by Student Parliament on 25th February 2021

Student Parliament Notes:

1. There are currently no dedicated spaces for students with young children to study while supervising their children in the library.
2. Students with children are more likely to face additional obstacles during their academic careers compared with their counterparts; due to balancing responsibilities of home, work and school life. ¹⁸
3. It has been shown that even small improvements of support for parenting students can have a positive impact upon student experience and attrition rates; with many universities around the world now offering family focused study areas within academic libraries. ¹⁹
4. Under current library conduct children are permitted into the library on an ad-hoc basis with access to services limited and the suggestion of study room space to be booked in advance. This procedure may inadvertently exclude members as planning may be required ahead of time in order to take advantage of library resources.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Strath Union is already committed to equal opportunities for all members using their services and accessing their premises, this proactive approach to equality should be extended to other on-campus facilities. ²⁰
2. We believe that raising children can be a demanding experience, which requires the support from all of society and that supporting caregivers in raising the next generation is beneficial to all of society.
3. By creating a dedicated space for students with young children, we not only improve the learning experience, but we also send a signal that students with children are welcome at Strathclyde.
4. That the University of Strathclyde should consider the creation of a designated family area within the main Strathclyde University library, similar to what is offered at the University of Glasgow library. This space would be an area designated for student parents with families the chance to watch their children whilst studying or accessing online resources in privacy. By offering

¹⁸ Keyes, K., 2017. Welcoming spaces: supporting parenting students at the academic library. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 43(4), pp.319-328. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S009913331730143X>

¹⁹ Current library regulations of students accompanying a child in the library is available at: <https://www.strath.ac.uk/professionalservices/is/help/userguides/parentsguardiansaccompaniedbychildren/>

²⁰ Strath Union Current Equal Opportunities Policy is available at: <https://www.strathunion.com/pageassets/about/constitution/Equal-Opportunities-Policy.pdf>

students the opportunity to study whilst supervising their children will reduce barriers faced by student parents.²¹

Student Parliament Instructs:

1. That student representatives lobby the university to create a dedicated, permanent space for students with young children. With the Union working in collaboration with families to create a suitable space for their needs to open following the lifting of current COVID-19 restrictions.

²¹ A family area for students to study with their children is currently available at the University of Glasgow, further information can be assessed at:
<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/library/openinghoursandlocations/mainlibrary/familystudy/>

Equity in Access Courses

This policy was passed by Student Parliament on 23rd March 2021.

Student Parliament Notes

1. The University of Strathclyde offers a range of access courses for prospective students who don't meet the entry requirements.
2. The University runs access courses through the centre for lifelong learning, costing £558 for a total of 45h of evening classes. This is open to students who have been outside of higher and further education for more than three years. This gives students access to²²:
 - a. the full-time and part-time BA degree in Humanities and Social Sciences
 - b. the full-time and part-time BA degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 - c. the full-time and part-time BA degree in Psychology and Counselling
 - d. the full-time and part-time LLB degree in Law
 - e. certain courses within the School of Education
 - f. certain courses in the Business School
3. However, for international students looking to do an undergrad, access courses are supplied by the private company, Study Group International²³.
4. The University of Strathclyde doesn't deem high-school diplomas from the following countries, amongst others, as sufficient evidence to start a undergraduate degree²⁴:
 - a. Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa (if below 70%), Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan (if under 75%), Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Russia, Ukraine.
5. Access to Postgraduate courses is similarly restricted, and the costs for access courses are also offered at exorbitant rates by Study Group International.
6. Under Study Group International²⁵, cost of 6-month access courses ranges between £11,500 and £16,800.
 - a. For an undergraduate HaSS degree, the price difference between doing an access course with the Centre for Lifelong learning and the International Study Centre is £14,392.

²² <https://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning/pre-entryaccesscourse/>

²³ <https://isc.strath.ac.uk/international-study-centre/about>

²⁴ <https://www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/internationalstudents/yourcountry/>

²⁵ <https://isc.strath.ac.uk/programmes>

7. Students studying access courses with Study Group International may not be technically Strathclyde students, but often use Strathclyde facilities, like student halls, the library, and the on-campus buildings.
8. The way the access courses are advertised do little to clarify that these services are run by an external private company, and it often only becomes clear to individuals when already partially through the process.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Free access to an education is a human right, no matter where in the world you're from.
2. Study Group International is a predatory private company, profiting from the exploitation of international students who already have to face the hurdle to education of having to pay sometimes extreme tuition fees.
3. The University's list of countries where high school diplomas are not deemed as sufficient shows inherent and ingrained racism, as many of those countries are majority black and brown countries.

Student Parliament Instructs:

1. That Strath Union's Executive officers lobby the University to end their business with Study Group International, and offer equity in the access courses they offer to home and international students.
2. That Strath Union's Executive officers lobby the QAA, the body which ratifies "Study Group International", to re-evaluate the suitability and ethics of Study Group International, and any other similar predatory private access course company²⁶.
3. That Strath Union Executive officers and representatives work with other SU teams and NUS to end the use of Study Group International across campuses.
4. That Strath Union will take opposition with predatory access course provider companies going forward.
5. That Strath Union lobbies the University to work with countries to identify entry requirements according to each country's primary school education, and ceases to categorically exclude students with the standard high-school degree equivalent of their country.
6. That Strath Union lobby the University to publish entry requirements for each country and present their entry requirements in a transparent manner for all countries.

²⁶ <https://www.kaplanpathways.com/>

Climate Crisis – Strath Union’s Areas of Focus

This document was submitted on behalf of the Climate Emergency Action Group. These state Strath Union’s positions on the climate crisis and the areas the Union will focus on to combat the climate crisis

1. An end to gestures of greenwashing throughout the university.

Strath Union believes that Strathclyde University must halt any further greenwashing actions that hinder the response to the climate crisis. This should apply to both policy and on campus actions. The response of the university must match the severity of the crisis according to climate science and the IPCC.

2. A formal student assembly to evaluate and participate in the University’s response to the climate crisis while encouraging democracy in the University.

Addressing the climate crisis must be done through democracy and discussion. Nations of the world will come together in discussion at COP26. Strath Union must encourage democratic and participatory principals and work alongside the university to ensure collaboration in evaluating policies and provide discussion to strengthen our collective response to the climate crisis at the university. We must ask for formal student participatory assemblies that take part in Strathclyde Universities sustainable development.

3. A commitment from the university to actively lead Scottish universities on an innovative and active response to the climate crisis.

Strathclyde University is an international, world known University of innovation. Its principal of useful learning is key its success. Strath Union believes that Strathclyde University is in a unique and key position to lead Scottish universities and inspire institutions around the world on its potential for a democratic and innovative response to the climate crisis and should adopt frameworks and take actions to do so.

4. An adoption of CEKO and further climate education programs into the curriculum

Strath Union will lobby the University to formally educate students on the climate crisis; this is vital not only for solving the crisis but also in preparing students with useful learning which will inform them of what the world will be like in the years after they graduate. This is long overdue and must be swiftly adopted into the curriculum as a mandatory part of every course.

Inclusive Language Policy

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 27th January 2022.

Policy Statement:

This policy is to outline Strath Union's commitment to the widespread implementation and use of inclusive language within Strath Union, and the wider Strathclyde community.

Student Parliament Notes:

1. Inclusive language refers to language that avoids the use of certain expressions or words that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people, especially gender-specific words and pronouns.
2. Strathclyde has a diverse student population including women; transgender, non-binary, and gender-non-conforming people; estranged students, and students from any other relevant group.
3. Failing to appreciate and use inclusive language can alienate students from these groups, and limit their ability to engage in university life in a way that feels safe and authentic.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That students shouldn't be made to feel excluded by the language used on campus.
2. That Strath Union should be conscious of and promote wider acceptance and sensitivity towards these groups.
3. That individuals have the right to self-define, and that this should be respected and reflected in common parlance.

Student Parliament Instructs:

1. Strath Union as a whole to adopt inclusive language into all communications - both internal and external - such as information shared within the organisation, to students, and with external organisations. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to;
 1. All members of Union staff including elected representatives should include their pronouns in their email signatures
 2. All members of Union staff including elected representatives should endeavour to ask students for their pronouns when interacting with them
 3. All public communications should avoid using gender specific terms ("his or hers/he or she") and instead use a gender neutral alternative ("they/theirs")
 4. All public communications should avoid using family specific terms ("your mum or dad") where possible and instead use an inclusive term ("loved ones/supporters")
2. Members of Parliament and all other faces of Strath Union should champion the sentiment of this policy.
3. Strath Union Executive shall lobby the University to also adopt a policy of inclusive language that covers all communications, including course material.

Strathclyde Students Demand Better Student Housing (2022)

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 24th February 2022

Student Parliament Notes:

1. The right to adequate accommodation is a universal human right, and has been for over 70 years¹.
2. Year-on-year, Strathclyde students face a number of issues regarding housing including scams, overpriced rents, illegal landlord practices, and homelessness.
3. The Academic Year 2021-2022 has been no different, with specific issues appearing this year including a city wide housing crisis for students, rent prices skyrocketing, and Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) providers taking advantage of students worse than we have ever seen before².
4. International students studying at Strathclyde are acutely affected by some of these issues including scams, and issues with providing a UK-based guarantor.
5. This year presents a wealth of opportunities to make a difference in the area of student housing, including the initial stages of the redevelopment of the Student Village, appetite within the University for change, and a number of opportunities for Strath Union to influence policy within the Scottish Government.
6. Housing issues are not only impacting the lives of students studying at Strathclyde, but all across Glasgow and Scotland.

Student Parliament Believes:

It is clear that housing is a pressing issue facing Strathclyde students, and that now is the time to take action on this:

1. Students should not be asked to come to study at the University of Strathclyde without the University first considering their ability to secure stable accommodation in Glasgow - the University has a duty of care and responsibility to protect these students' wellbeing and not force them into a precarious living situation just to engage with their studies.
2. Strathclyde University must return to being a key provider of suitable, accessible, and affordable accommodation for its' students and must do all it can to develop and maintain this position in the future - with Strath Union being a key part of delivering the non-academic elements of these students' experience at Strathclyde.
3. Strathclyde University has an emphasised responsibility in caring for its' international student population and must endeavour to intervene with issues that face a majority of these students - issues that can greatly impact these students wellbeing, safety, and ability to engage with their studies.
4. Strathclyde students deserve to have easy access to the information and support they require to find a place to live, to fight back against their housing providers when they need to, and to come together to affect change collectively.
5. Strath Union has the capacity and scope to position itself in the decision making process at a local and national level to influence policy to better

provide for Strathclyde students in terms of housing, and should endeavour to do so wherever possible.

6. Strath Union should actively engage with and support any upcoming local and/or national campaigns from its partners around student housing to tackle these issues together as a united front.

Student Parliament Instructs:

1. Strath Union will launch a campaign on student housing that will aim to raise awareness of housing issues within the student body, provide students the skills and education they need to affect change on housing issues, and work towards securing demands for change in student housing.
2. The demands of this campaign will be as follows:
 1. The University of Strathclyde must commit to creating Housing Impact Assessments in line with Recruitment Targets - ensuring that all students' living situations are considered before asking them to attend their studies at Strathclyde.
 2. The ongoing redevelopment proposals and discussions for the Strathclyde Student Village (and other Strathclyde owned accommodation) should include as much, be as affordable, and be as accessible as it can be. Strath Union should have a clear presence within newly created spaces (be these offices, social spaces, and/or commercial offerings).
 3. Strath Union should work in partnership with the University of Strathclyde to begin the creation of an (International) Student Guarantor Scheme at Strathclyde - providing students the necessary lifeline some need to secure a safe place to live during their studies.
 4. Strath Union will develop and publish a 'Resource Hub', collecting housing advice and publishing this on the Strath Union on website, with information broken into sections based on individual issues/cases - allowing students facing housing issues an easy and accessible means of accessing the support they need, and providing them with the tools they need to fight back.
 5. Strath Union will seek to petition local government for more secure, accessible, and affordable accommodation for students – including accommodation suitable for students with atypical needs (such as students with families, pets, and accessibility needs).
 6. Strath Union will pledge to engage with and support any eligible upcoming campaigns on Student Housing from our partner organisations (such as NUS, the Glasgow Student Forum, or any other relevant organisation).
3. Upon the conclusion of this campaign, Strath Union will continue to keep housing as a key priority in its work moving forward - ensuring that the Union is doing all that it can to tackle housing issues and influence housing policy to improve the lives and experience of Strathclyde Students.

2022/23

HEAR We Go

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 27th September 2022.

Student Parliament Notes

- That the Higher Education Attainment Record (HEAR) is the sector standard for recording the extracurricular activities of students throughout their time at University¹.
- That this parliament has a long history of advocating for the implementation of HEAR within the institution, dating back to 2012 before being renewed in 2018.
- That the Vice President Education has submitted a proposal to Student Experience Committee with a view to implementing HEAR within Strathclyde.
- That Strathclyde students are involved with a wide range of extracurricular activities including, but not limited to, volunteering with Strath Union's many societies, representing the University within their sport or activity with the Centre for Sustainability or Strathclyde Inspire.

Student Parliament Believes

- That as the 'Place of Useful Learning', it is in the interests of students to have official recognition of these extracurricular activities within their academic transcripts.
- That HEAR would effectively bring together extracurricular activities from across the institution into one succinct reporting function.
- That the University of Strathclyde should implement the HEAR before the lapse of this policy in 2025.

Student Parliament Instructs

- That the Strath Union advocates for the implementation of HEAR within the committee structure.
- That the VP Education will continue to work with relevant stakeholders to begin scoping a business case for the implementation of HEAR.
- That this policy will replaced existing policy on HEAR

¹ <http://www.hear.ac.uk/about>

Make the consent module mandatory for all students

This policy was submitted via Changelt and was passed at Student Parliament on 24th January 2023.

The Introduction to Gender-Based Violence module, which covers consent, is available for students on MyPlace.

Students are encouraged to complete this - however it is currently voluntary. This module should be a mandatory part of induction across all courses at Strathclyde University.

If this proposal passes, the Union will lobby the University to make this module mandatory for all students by the start of next academic year (2023/24).

This idea was submitted by Eva Curran, Women's Rep at Strathclyde.

Calling for the Support of the Strath Union for the Strathclyde Climate Assembly Agenda

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 27th February 2023.

Context:

The climate crisis refers to the rapidly worsening state of the Earth's climate due to human activities such as burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and agriculture, which release large amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. These gases trap heat from the sun and cause the planet's average temperature to rise, leading to numerous impacts such as melting of polar ice caps, rising sea levels, more frequent and intense natural disasters, and altered weather patterns.

Climate change is not a new concept, but more than ever now the climate of our earth is reaching its crisis stage. As written in an article about the latest report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) from the National Geography published in February 2022; stated that "If warming is not halted soon, and it continues, as many as half the species living on land could become extinct, malnutrition in parts of the world will likely become widespread, and extreme weather events will become increasingly common."

People from all over the world are already suffering the short- and long-term effects of climate change where even phrases such as climate refugees are becoming increasingly common. In an article from the ENHCR wrote about how climate change is having significant and disastrous effects on vulnerable communities already; "The impacts of climate change are numerous and may both trigger displacement and worsen living conditions or hamper return for those who have already been displaced. Limited natural resources, such as drinking water, are becoming even scarcer in many parts of the world that host refugees. Crops and livestock struggle to survive where conditions become too hot and dry, or too cold and wet, threatening livelihoods. In such conditions, climate change can act as a threat multiplier, exacerbating existing tensions and adding to the potential for conflicts".

The consequences of the climate crisis threaten not only the environment, but also human societies and economies, and it is considered one of the biggest challenges facing humanity today. The scientific consensus is that immediate and sustained action is needed to mitigate the severity of the crisis and prevent the worst outcomes.

Climate Assemblies

Climate assemblies are deliberative democratic forums where members of the public come together to discuss, learn about, and make recommendations on climate change and its solutions. They are designed to be inclusive, representative, and collaborative, and aim to give voice to the concerns and perspectives of citizens, who are often underrepresented in climate policy discussions.

There are several reasons why climate assemblies have been seen as effective in addressing the climate crisis:

- **Representation:** Climate assemblies bring together a diverse and representative group of citizens, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives and ideas are heard and considered.
- **Inclusivity:** Climate assemblies foster inclusive and respectful dialogue, where all participants are encouraged to express their opinions and ideas.
- **Evidence-based recommendations:** Climate assemblies provide a space for citizens to learn about the latest climate science and policy options and make recommendations based on the best available evidence.
- **Public engagement:** Climate assemblies help to engage the public in the decision-making process, increasing awareness and understanding of climate change and its solutions.
- **Legitimacy:** Climate assemblies can help to build public trust and legitimacy for climate policies by demonstrating that decision-makers have taken the time to listen to the concerns and perspectives of citizens.

Scottish Climate Assembly

The Scottish Climate Assembly was established in 2020 by the Scottish Government to engage citizens in the development of Scotland's climate policy. The assembly brought together a diverse and representative group of citizens from across Scotland to discuss and make recommendations on the country's future climate goals and policies.

The Scottish Climate Assembly had several key objectives:

1. To provide a platform for citizens to learn about and engage with the science and policy of climate change.
2. To ensure that the public's views and perspectives are considered when developing Scotland's climate policy.
3. To build public support for climate action and increase public understanding of the challenges and solutions to the climate crisis.

The Scottish Climate Assembly was designed to be inclusive, transparent, and collaborative, and its recommendations were based on the latest climate science and evidence. The recommendations of the assembly were presented to the Scottish Government in early 2021 and are being used to inform the development of Scotland's new Climate Change Plan.

Climate Assemblies in UK Universities

Cambridge University: In 2019, Cambridge University held a climate assembly to engage students, staff, and alumni in discussions about the university's role in addressing the climate crisis. The assembly was an opportunity for members of the

university community to learn about the latest climate science and policy options and make recommendations for how the university can reduce its carbon footprint and support wider climate action.

University of Manchester: In 2021, the University of Manchester held a climate assembly to engage students and staff in discussions about the university's climate policies and initiatives. The assembly provided a platform for members of the university community to learn about the latest climate science and policy options and make recommendations for how the university can reduce its carbon footprint and support wider climate action.

These examples demonstrate how universities can use climate assemblies to engage students, staff, and other members of the university community in discussions about the climate crisis and the role that universities can play in addressing it. Climate assemblies can help to build support for university climate initiatives, increase public understanding of the challenges and solutions to the climate crisis, and ensure that university climate policies are informed by the best available evidence and the perspectives of the university community.

Strath Union Believes:

In the creation of the Strathclyde Climate Assembly, which calls for:

- An **accessible place** for staff and students to come together, discuss and propose **climate policies and sustainability** in the university.
- **Championing the voices of every staff and student** with an ambition to better their University.
- Participation in a form of **direct democracy**.
- Creating a more **sustainable and environmentally friendly community** for the future.
- Implementing structural change for the **betterment of the staff, students, and planet**.

The Strath Union's position should be in support of this manifesto and should recognise the validity of this process when it comes into effect.

Student Parliament Instructs:

The Union (specifically the Executive Committee) to actively assist Strathclyde Climate Emergency Action Group to achieve a formal agreement with the University of Strathclyde, Sustainable Strathclyde, the Union and the SCEAG on the validity of the Climate Assembly, and to support its implementation.

Below outlines the full responsibilities that Student Parliament instructs of Strath Union:

- The **creation** of a Strathclyde Climate Assembly and **implementation** into the University's governance structure.
- Policies discussed within the existing governance structure are to be discussed **in parallel** with the climate assembly. The Union will aim to have the assembly as a **fundamental part of the governance structure** at Strathclyde.
- To ensure that the Strathclyde Climate Assembly will provide a regular platform where proposals can be presented to the student and staff population to be presented directly to the university Executive Team (Appendix 1).
- To liaise with the university Executive Team and necessary governance parties to achieve ongoing formal agreement with the University of Strathclyde, Sustainable Strathclyde, the Union and the SCEAG on the **validity of the Assemblies**.
- To be responsible for the dissemination of knowledge and information about the Assemblies among staff members and students.
- To be responsible for assistance in arranging the room booking, materials, promotion, and information gathering, and general facilitating of the Assemblies (Appendix 2).
- To fully **respect the democratic validity** and champion the conclusions of the Assemblies.
- To hold the University to account as outlined in their duties within this proposal.

Strath Union will support the Climate Assembly to uphold:

- **Autonomous and transparent communications** at all stages of the items being discussed and the conclusions being made in the assembly.
- **Complete and open publishing** of the Conclusions by the assembly.
- Accountability of the University to account through open publication of the University's **action plan, results and updates** with what was implemented within specified time frames. And/or publication of valid **justification for lack of implementation** or progress.

- A process that allows the people to add amendments to successful proposals in response to the University's actions.
- A process that allows revisions to the procedures and structure of the Assembly based on democratic demand.

Any questions or suggestions about the proposal and its appendices may be emailed to ceag.strath@gmail.com.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Procedure of the Assembly Proposals (subject to change following review)

- Proposals can be made by students and staff.
- After the Proposal is presented and discussed, it will be published to the population for 14 days.
- The Proposal will result in one of two conclusions:
 - The Proposal does not achieve 100 backers within 14 days
 - The Proposal will then be dismissed by the Assembly and either dissolved, or present to the proposer to offer amendments for re-submission
 - The Proposal achieves 100 backers within 14 days
 - The Proposal is therefore passed and presented to the University Executive Team.
- In the case of a passed Proposal, The Assembly would require **receipt of the proposal** from the University Executive Team within 10 working days.
- In the case of a passed Proposal; After receiving receipt; the Assembly would require action from the University Executive Team in one of two options within 15 working days:
 - Publishing a **satisfactory justification** as to why the Proposal is not to be implemented based on **Ethical, Financial, Social, and Environmental reasoning**.
 - Publishing a **commitment of implementation** from the responsible person(s) and an **Action plan** to implement the Proposal into University Governance, including a **one month, and 6-month review**.

Appendix 2

Provisional structure of the Assembly (subject to change following review)

1. During the assembly, relevant information on the topic will be presented with a focus on collaborative learning & discussion:
 - a. Looking at boards, visual and audio media with information about the topic at hand.
 - b. Having designated 'information givers'.
 - c. 1 or 2 main presentations about the topic.
 - d. Breakout discussions where people share their thoughts.
 - e. Medium for virtual voting & attendance.
2. At the end a decision is made for or against with recommendations for the proposal
 - a. the recommendations made within the assembly will not be illegal or "impossible" that the University/Union cannot fulfil; however recommendations that the Assembly creates may require the university/union to take alternative measures.
 - b. where the University/Union cannot perform these recommendations made by the Assembly, the University/Union must;
 - i. provide a document outlining the reasons as to why the university/union is unable to meet the recommendations within the specified timeframe;
 - ii. provide a document with the reasonable alternative measure/action that the University/Union will complete, clearing stating a reasonable timeframe;
 - iii. The University/Union will continue to provide up to date emails every two weeks until the alternative recommendations are in practice to the Strathclyde Climate Action Group.
3. This is made into an official document which will be sent to a point of contact with the Exec team of the University with the power to implement the change (Appendix 1).
4. If no action is made within a reasonable deadline decided by the Climate Assembly, and the university gives an unsatisfactory response for the lack of implementation, then alternative action by students and staff is justified.

5. The University/Strath Union/Sustainable Strathclyde would be responsible for arranging the room booking, materials, promotion, and information gathering, and general facilitating.
6. The Strathclyde Climate Emergency Action Group would aid with information gathering, proposals for the assembly, engaging students, and helping to facilitate.
7. All stakeholders (the Union, the Action Group, the University, Sustainable Strathclyde) will come to a formal agreement on partnership to work on the Climate Assemblies and validate their outcomes (including all of the above).