

SRC Policies

2017/2018

This document contains Student Policies that were passed by the Student Representative Councils in academic year 17/18. **These policies are no longer in force**, and are provided for reference purposes only.

In line with *Schedule 3: Student Representative Council*;

- these Policies automatically lapsed at the first Student Representative Council meeting in their succeeding academic year.
- the process of how policies can be created is set out in the Student Voice handbook.

Demonstration for Education

Passed SRC #1, 16th October 2017

Prosper	REDACTED
Seconder	REDACTED
SRC Notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Westminster government's austerity agenda has led to wide ranging cuts that are having an adverse effect on the education sector, student's prospects and opportunities.2. That while the system of education funding is different in Scotland, funding decisions made in Westminster have an effect on Holyrood's budgets.3. Education is not free in Scotland; there are many circumstances in which students have to pay for their education here at Abertay, such as; international, rest of UK, postgraduate, returning and some mature students.4. That student's are leaving education with expansive and often unmanageable debts.
SRC Believes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Austerity is a political decision and not necessarily the only way to manage the current education budget.2. Taking part in a national campaign against fees and cuts offers support to a larger campaign to change education.3. University fees cause barriers to education when education should be seen as a societal good.4. That the current system of funding views students as customers and consumers purchasing a service rather than learners in an academic environment.
SRC Resolves	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That we will endorse the NCAFC National Demo: Free Education Now in London on 15th November 2017.2. We will work with partners to create the opportunity for students to attend and support the demo.3. We will continue to engage with action against cuts to vital education services and lobby government at all levels promote free and adequately funded education.4. That we will stand in solidarity with other education institutions that are unnecessary cuts across the sector.

Save the Student Centre!

Passed SRC #1, 16th October 2017

Prosper
Seconder
SRC Notes

REDACTED

REDACTED

1. Abertay University is currently making plans to sell the Student Centre, meaning it's services and facilities will no longer be usable by the Abertay Community - both staff and students.
2. Abertay University systematically and continually has cut funding, staffing, opening hours, the services and facilities that the Student Centre offers in order to recoup costs.
3. Key positions in the Student Centre's running and management, such as General Manager and Marketing Manager, have never been scrapped or replaced with an inadequate part-time equivalents.
4. These sustained cuts and non-existent communication have caused student opinion towards the current state of the Student Centre to be quite poor, and they are less likely to use it now than they have ever been.
5. Abertay University has never undertaken effective consultation with the Student Community to understand the needs and wants of Students in relation to the services provided.
6. Abertay SA undertook a comprehensive and exhaustive consultation campaign in Academic Year 16/17, with the support and understanding of the University Executive, surveying student thought and opinion on the future of the Student Centre and the role it should play in our community.
7. The campaign Survey showed that students are overwhelmingly in favour of keeping our student centre, and investing in it so that it can provide the best services and facilities possible for students.
8. The University Executive has backtracked on their support of the campaign in order to sell the Student Centre.
9. The University is already in a very strong financial position compared to other universities in Scotland, with the largest cash reserves relative to it's size.

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SRC Believes

1. The Student Community has a definite need of a physical hub for non-academic and social activity on campus, which the Student Centre has the potential of meeting.
2. The University's approach toward the Student Centre, sustained cuts over a period of time, has done massive damage to the reputation of the centre amongst students, and can only be undone by investing in the space with consultation from the students.
3. The Student Centre building is an iconic and visually integrated part of the Abertay campus, and contributes to the sense of place and belonging of students.
4. The Student Centre would benefit from a marketing and events team, like it once had during it's popular years and before the cuts passed down by the university.
5. In the interests of creating a "sticky campus" flourishing extra-curricular community, the Student Centre building offers a non-academic space in which students can come together and build a interdisciplinary support networks which we believe will help ensure student retention.

SRC Resolves

1. To lobby the University's board and senior managers to not only Save Our Student Centre, but to invest in it to create valuable services and facilities so that there is an incentive for students to want to use the centre.
2. To launch a campaign to Save Our Student Centre, encouraging grassroots students to voice their concerns and lobby management also.
3. To build a cross-community campaign with staff and the unions based around investment in facilities, including the Student Centre.
4. To create a petition to be submitted to the university's governing body.
5. To engage with the wider local community and the local press to raise awareness of this issue.
6. To put students at the heart of a new rebranded, refreshed and refocussed Student Centre.

2018 NSS Boycott

Passed SRC #3, 17th January 2018

Prosper
Seconder
SRC Notes

REDACTED

REDACTED

1. Over the past year, the U.K. government introduced a series of reforms to higher education. ¹
2. At their heart is the Teaching Excellence Framework which ranks universities Bronze, Silver and Gold according to a set of metrics including the National Student Survey (NSS) and graduate earnings. ²
3. The HE reforms and TEF are already causing job cuts in multiple universities, for example in Manchester where over 100 redundancies have been announced, explicitly citing changes to HE policy as a reason. Previous moves towards marketisation since 2010 have also contributed towards recent job cuts. ³
4. In 2016, NUS National Conference passed a policy to boycott the NSS until the TEF is scrapped and the HE reforms are withdrawn. ⁴
5. In at least 12 institutions, NSS response rates dropped below 50% as a result of the boycott, making the results unusable. In many others, response rates have also fallen significantly. ⁵
6. The boycott was widely reported in the media and mentioned in parliamentary debates around the Higher Education and Research Act. ⁶
7. In 2017, Theresa May announced that tuition fees in England for the following academic year would not go up. However, there has been no guarantee that the freeze will continue for future years or that TEF and fees will be delinked. ⁷
8. *Education is not free in Scotland; there are many circumstances in which students have to pay for their education here at Abertay such as; international, rest of UK, postgraduate, returning and some mature students. While home students are subjects to loans instead of grants*
9. *The NSS itself has been discredited as a measure of teaching quality, including by the Royal Statistical Society. Its results have also been proven to reflect gender and racial bias. ^{8,9}*

Continued Overleaf

SRC Believes

1. TEF not only does not adequately measure teaching quality, it is a threat to higher education as we know it and needs to be resisted by any means available to us.
2. TEF means universities are chasing metrics and not meaningfully improving standards for students or staff.
3. Successful NSS boycott campaigns at multiple universities forced TEF and wider higher education policy onto the national agenda.
4. The NSS boycott contributed towards the government temporarily severing the link between TEF and tuition fees in England.
5. The government's efforts to limit the effects of the boycott, by halving the weight of NSS as a metric and using data from previous years in institutions where response rates fall below 50%, are meant to discourage students from boycotting the survey. This shows that the leverage is effective and the student movement cannot afford to give up.
6. The government and university managers need NSS results not only to implement the TEF, but to manage the already-existing marketisation of the university system. By refusing to fill it out, we can therefore disrupt their business and gain leverage that helps students push them to concede to our campaign.
7. NSS turnout or results should never be tied to SA/SU funding. We need to stand in solidarity with any SA/SU that receives threats of funding cuts because of participating in the national campaign. Such blackmail from some universities is a despicable attack on union autonomy.
8. To keep up the pressure on the government, the NSS boycott needs to continue as part of a wider campaign against TEF, the HR reforms and Marketisation.

SRC Resolves

1. To promote a boycott of NSS 2018 and in future years until the reforms are withdrawn. This may include:
 1. Refusing to promote the NSS or have any pro-NSS material with the SU logo on;
 2. Working with UCU to discourage NSS promotion by academics and encourage academics to actively provide information about the boycott to students;
 3. Promoting the boycott through posters, leafleting, door-knocking and social media, before the survey is released and throughout the time when it's open;
 4. Taking part in national and local actions and demonstrations linked to eat NSS boycott and campaign against TEF, the Tory HE reforms and marketisation
2. To call on other students' unions and associations to join the boycott - the bigger it grows, the stronger we are.
3. To campaign against any link between NSS and SA/SU block grants and actively support any union which receives threats from its university due to participation in the boycott.

Notes

¹ <https://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/highereducationandresearch.html>

² <https://www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/tef>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/may/10/university-of-manchester-to-axe-171-staff-amid-brexit-concerns>

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/apr/20/students-vote-to-sabotage-plans-to-rate-teaching-in-universities>

⁵ <http://wonkhe.com/blogs/nss-boycott-2017/>

⁶ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2017-03-06/debates/1417811C-0D3C-4193-AB3E-C14687EB6D64/HigherEducationAndResearchBill>

⁷ <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/student-finance-reforms-raise-questions-over-sector-funding-and-tef>

⁸ <https://www.rss.org.uk/Images/PDF/influencing-change/2016/RSS-response-to-BIS-Technical-Consultation-on-Teaching-Excellence-Framework-year-2.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/biased-students-give-bme-academics-lower-nss-scores-says-study>

Support Abertay UCU

Passed SRC #5, 21st March 2018

Prosper	REDACTED
Seconder	REDACTED
SRC Notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the university have been in discussions with AUCU (Abertay University and College Union) regarding compulsory redundancies at the university.2. That the university have issued a lecturer who is also the AUCU Branch President with a notice of compulsory redundancy.3. That the Abertay UCU (Abertay University and College Union) held an emergency general meeting (week 04/03) to discuss this issue.4. At this meeting a motion was unanimously passed that 'robustly condemns the threat of redundancy against AUCU Officers' and 'resolves to ensure appropriate actions are taken to voice, and where necessary campaign' regarding this issue.5. That this means that if this issue is not resolved then AUCU will move to a dispute situation.6. That UCU's National Body has shown its support to Abertay UCU in this dispute and written a letter to Nigel Seaton (University Principal) to highlight their concerns.7. That over the last few months students up and down the country have been standing in solidarity with university workers in trade union disputes.

Continued Overleaf

SRC Believes

1. That solidarity between staff and students through out each other's struggles is vital in providing a united front against the marketisation of education and disempowerment of staff and student representation.
2. That the working environment of our lectures is also our learning environment and that a situation where our lecturers fear for their jobs and are living precariously benefits no one.
3. That a policy that promotes a fear of repercussion for union engagement is move against our right to organise and to representation.
4. That mandatory redundancies are immoral and unnecessary and it would be much more beneficial to all at the university if we moved to a redundancy avoidance policy in line with many in the sector that includes both staff and student representation from the outset

SRC Resolves

1. That the SLT (Student Leadership Team) should (where possible) lobby senior management of the university to reconsider its position regarding this redundancy and seek a resolution that avoids any compulsory redundancies.
2. That a message of solidarity should be sent from SRC to Abertay UCU in support of them through this situation.
3. That SRC will stand opposed to the university's mandatory redundancy policy and lobby for a redundancy avoidance policy in line with what AUCU have requested and is standard practice across the sector.
4. That AbertaySA should show its support to the UCU throughout this current dispute and offer assistance in their activities.

Future of Abertay SA Democracy

Passed SRC #5, 21st March 2018

Prosper	REDACTED
Seconder	REDACTED
SRC Notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Democracy is at the heart of every student association so should activism and representation.2. Abertay has always had a small and specialist type of Association, currently composed of 6 Executive Officers and 2 Sabbatical Officers.3. Representation of liberations, whilst key, is not represented in any of the roles currently available.4. We have a Student Representative Council which at times can become stagnant. Engagement with Class Representatives can be inconsistent and this doesn't help improve SRC.5. The SA's Democratic process at present is fractured, with current and previous Executive struggling to engage with each other and find a place to be executives within the current structure.
SRC Believes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We should represent all students no matter the size of form of institutions.2. Some groups believe the SA doesn't currently represent them properly. This leads to further non-engagement.3. The way in which we reach out to particular groups is sometimes flawed, as Exec and Sabbaticals, while supportive of these groups, are not necessarily a part of them. This means that we often do not understand the issues at stake, and often resort to working with societies.

SRC Resolves

1. SRC resolves to task the current and upcoming Student Leadership Team to work on formulating the changes to democratic structure needed to revive student engagement.
2. The Executive as it stands needs to explore the possibility of introducing liberation roles, as well as the idea of more sabbatical roles. However, only with a full democratic review of the association by an external company can collate information on these changes from the whole student body. We are due a student partnership and constitution review, we should take this opportunity to fulfil all these changes in one go.
3. These changes to SA democracy must be formulated with the wider student body in mind, as such, the student body as a whole must be consulted as these changes are formulated. SRC must be updated on the progress being done on the formulation of these changes, all of which must then be ratified by SRC and any other relevant bodies before enactment.

Legacy Funding

Passed SRC #5, 21st March 2018

Prosper	REDACTED
Seconder	REDACTED
SRC Notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Abertay Executives have in previous years done great work which can fall by the wayside with no continuation from new exec.2. Things like the relax trolley born from relax campaign and other things like the safe taxi scheme (unknown where came from not on web or in sa files?) and free periods campaign3. These policies are truly helping students and good for student morale and engagement especially at difficult times and essential or improve safety4. The relax trolley cost is £ Safe taxi cost is £ Free periods cost is £
SRC Believes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. These policies and others that come forward should continue and if SRC votes on continuation after they come up or lapsing that is great.2. However the funding should be made available for policies to continue and not disadvantage an incoming executive committee.3. If SRC votes to keep, however for funding reasons the exec vote to not do who has priority and will this create a problematic discussion at SRC as the exec are going against a democratic decision by the SRC.
SRC Resolves	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Students Association should look to creating a legacy fund to enable the continuation of policies that are voted to continue by SRC2. SRC should have a say on which policies are taken forward and voting should be democratic. All cases when the term of the policy is up if it's to be carried forward then it must be done democratically.3. This will enable Executives to concentrate on the manifesto promises and have an allowable budget to do so last year came to the wire with 3 campaigns the crèche referendum and free periods,

Student Minds (Information Overload)

Passed SRC #5, 21st March 2018

Prosper	REDACTED
Seconder	REDACTED
SRC Notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. With an average 27% of the total student population suffering from mental health problems, mental health is one of key issues facing universities and colleges.2. Female students are much more likely to report problems or seek help than male counterparts (34%v19%)3. Abertay has some great things happening within campus from, Peer to peer mentors and lead voices also the sports dept. put on events for free sport Fridays And the SA has the welfare coordinator and mental health society however the initiatives can be hard to find or missed through all student emails.
SRC Believes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We should improve signposting with initiatives being used.2. Expand the horizon to form close relationships with 3rd sector organisations locally.3. Initiate a form of aftercare to ensure folk are able to make full recoveries where possible.4. Look to a triage type system utilising resources we have and at key stress time's local 3rd sector help.
SRC Resolves	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Commit to a campaign to get the university to create a Tile on the myabrttay homepage specifically for the mental health at abertay (mentally healthy campus).2. Collect and display all initives on campus form a cross campus working relationship that can update weekly for events and things happening on campus.3. Creating a one stop shop for all mental health issues whether it is for counselling or just yoga classes to help stress reduction and improving signposting.

Climate Control

Passed SRC #5, 21st March 2018

Prosper	REDACTED
Seconder	REDACTED
SRC Notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The ventilation in the Hacklab(4511) is not prepared for the number of students using it simultaneously.2. During winter, the temperatures are too cold, and in summer they are too hot.3. When the labs are used in their full capacity, for example before the deadlines, the air odour is noticeable.4. Students do not have access to an alternative facility providing similar learning accessories at the university.
SRC Believes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Every student has the right to learn in comfortable conditions.2. The university should strive to provide the best learning conditions it can.
SRC Resolves	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Air conditioning or an alternative method of temperature and air quality control assurance should be installed in the Hacklab.

Wednesday Class Times

Passed SRC #6, 18th April 2018

Prosper	REDACTED
Secunder	REDACTED
SRC Notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Leaving Wednesday afternoons free from scheduled classes is something that is exercised at most universities across the U.K.2. This is done in order to allow university sports teams to schedule matches and compete against other universities.3. Abertay currently has a policy of not scheduling classes after 13:00 on Wednesday afternoons.4. There are many examples of classes still being scheduled after 13:00 on Wednesday afternoons.5. If an Abertay Sports team has an away fixture scheduled on the Wednesday afternoon substantial travel time is often required.6. Many Abertay Societies currently arrange their events for Wednesday afternoons.

SRC Believes

1. That while organising the timetables for all students is understandably a difficult task, that the 13:00 cut off is not currently being abided by which means a number of students are missing the opportunity to engage with sports teams or society events.
2. That a 13:00 cut off time doesn't allow enough time for students to make it to away pictures and that a move to 12:00 would be much more suitable to students.
3. That interaction with sports team can have a long lasting positive impact on students in many ways (including mental health, socialisation, health and retention).
4. That interaction with societies can also have a long lasting positive impact on students.
5. That we must value the university experience further than just what happens in the classroom and that involvement with sport and societies are not only important but can be a vital component in what people can gain from their time at university.
6. That timetable project currently underway in the university should take these factors into consideration.

SRC Resolves

1. That we should lobby the university to change its policy and move to a 12 o'clock end time on Wednesday afternoons that is strictly adhered to.
2. That we should work to ensure that Wednesday class times are an important factor in the current timetabling project at the University.
3. That we should provide the university with information on the ways in which this is having an impact on students.
4. That we should continue to promote student interaction with sports and societies and benefits that this can bring.
5. That we should argue that the only schedule classes after 12:00 on Wednesdays are classes that are duplicated elsewhere on the timetable (so to allow those involved in sports teams and societies to attend classes without missing on activities).