

RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN
WREXHAM GLYNDŴR UNIVERSITY
AND
WREXHAM GLYNDŴR STUDENTS' UNION

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Author	Clerk to the Board of Governors/Students' Union		
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1. Introduction and Context

- 1.1 This relationship agreement aims to provide a clear reference for both the University and the Students' Union, and outlines the basis for the relationship between the two and the principles under which they both will operate.
- 1.2 The relationship agreement takes into account the Governing Body's legal requirement under the Education Act 1994 to ensure that a Students' Union should be established that '*operates in a fair and democratic matter and is accountable for its finances*'. It draws upon the March 2011 NUS 'Good Governance' project which identified key principles that underpin excellent working relationships between Students' unions and higher education institutions which were endorsed by Universities UK, the Committee of University Chairs and GuildHE; and HEFCW Circular W14/06HE *Revised guidance on good practice in funding of effective, democratic student union, and student representation*.
- 1.3 The University recognises that the Students' Union is an important partner and plays a key role in enhancing the student experience.

2. Background

- 2.1 Wrexham Glyndŵr Students' Union was incorporated on 1st August 2016 establishing a new charitable body whose objects are the advancement of education of students at Wrexham Glyndŵr University for the public benefit by:
 - i. promoting the interests and welfare of students at Glyndŵr University during their course of study and representing, supporting and advising students;
 - ii. being the recognised representative channel between students and Glyndŵr University and any other external bodies; and
 - iii. providing social, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and forums for discussions and debate for the personal development of its students.
- 2.2 This relationship agreement is supported by the following:
 - i. a Students' Union Constitution which is to be reviewed by them at least every five years and endorsed by the Board of Governors;
 - ii. a code of practice, issued by the Board of Governors, which sets out the manner in which the requirements of the Education Act are to be carried into effect in relation to the SU's operation, financial matters, affiliations and complaints;
 - iii. a memorandum of agreement between the University and the SU setting out the responsibilities and commitments of each of the Students' Union and the University, the financial relationship and channels of communication;

- iv. a Student Charter which is written and reviewed jointly between the University and the Students' Union on an annual basis and shared with the Board of Governors, and which includes
 - a. information about students' studies (e.g. the Active Learning Framework), communication with one another, Welsh Language, support and wellbeing, representation and voicing concerns
 - b. our commitment to working in partnership to ensure the best possible university and student experience and as such, work together to actively review, support and challenge each other in the creation of the best possible strategy for the University and the Students' Union.
 - c. our joint vision for the Students' Union that it is the 'beating heart' of a thriving Glyndŵr student community.

3. PRINCIPLES

We agree to adopt the following principles which underpin and enhance the working relationship between the two bodies:

3.1 Strategic Partnership and Engagement

A spirit of partnership between the University and the Students' Union informing the strategic direction of both parties and informing service agreements.

Informed engagement of the Students' Union representatives in key institutional decision-making bodies which include, but are not limited to:

- Regular meetings between the SU President and University Vice Chancellor
- Regular meetings between the SU and Deputy Vice Chancellor for academic matters and student experience
- Regular meetings between the SU and the Executive Director of Operations for operational matters and student experience
- Regular catch-up meetings with the Associate Deans for the Student Experience
- Membership of:
 - Board of Governors and relevant Board Committees
 - Academic Board and relevant Academic Board committees
 - Vice Chancellor's Board
 - Key task and finish and network groups set up to take forward improvements in the student academic and personal experience in areas such as: digital enhancement; equality, diversity and inclusion; academic partnership working; environmental sustainability; Welsh language; mental health and wellbeing.

3.2 Student Centred

A shared commitment to developing and improving students' experience of academic and extra-curricular aspects of their lives.

3.3 Student Voice

Acknowledgement by the University that the Students' Union is a major stakeholder and primary body representing the student voice.

We will work collaboratively to recognise the student voice through a range of methods, to ensure that students are partners at every level of the University. We will work together to ensure the Student Representative System is effectively delivered, with a particular focus on:

- Recruitment and selection
- Learning and development, including an advocacy module
- Undertaking the role, including the provision of the Unitu Student Voice module
- Reward and recognition, including the student and staff awards.
- Liaising with Student Council and Course Reps to identify key issues affecting the student experience
- An annual review of Student Council positions to ensure that they remain relevant in adequately representing all student groups.

3.4 Respect and Understanding

Clarity about, and mutual understanding of, the distinct roles of the University and the Students' Union and the value that each party brings to the relationship.

3.5 Openness and Trust and Reputation

Full, open regular communication on relevant issues, in particular issues likely to have an impact on the other party, the student population and/or other joint stakeholders, and work to ensure the reputation of each other is considered deeply in their actions.

3.6 Mutual Support and Commitment

Constructive interactions. Demonstrable commitment to making the relationship work through investment of time and resources.

3.7 Independence

Recognition of the value of a strong, student-led Students' Union empowered to determine and manage its own affairs. Recognition of the need for the University to balance the interests of a range of stakeholders within an increasingly challenging external context.

3.8 Accountability

Accountability of the Students' Union to the University as a supervisor (under the 1994 Higher Education Act) and principal funder, within a mutually agreed framework which is robust, effective, efficient and compatible with the reporting requirements of other regulators, such as the Charity Commission and /or companies house.

3.9 Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion¹ and Equality (DICE)

A shared commitment and active consideration of the diversity, inclusion, cohesion and equality needs of the student and university community

3.10 Funding

We will consider the core and additional functions of the Students' Union and agree appropriate funding.

We will work together to ensure that adequate access and participation plans are adopted and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the barriers to participation in higher education are actively considered, addressed and broken down, with appropriate activities and resource shared between our organisations.

¹ Cohesion in this sense refers to the development and maintenance of strong positive relationship between people from different backgrounds, with a common vision and sense of belonging for all

3.11 Data Protection

We will work together to ensure that our students enjoy a seamless experience in accessing the benefits of membership of both organisations whilst respecting the requirements of GDPR and relevant data protection laws.

3.12 Freedom of Speech

We will work together to ensure that our obligation in promoting freedom of speech and working within the law in providing safe education experiences are observed.

4. Working Relationship

The principles outlined above will apply to all interactions between the Students' Union and the University and are particularly important where there are formal meetings held between both bodies.

5. Review

This Relationship Agreement will be reviewed an annual basis jointly with the Students' Union and presented to the Board of Governors at the final meeting in each academic year.

Endorsed by:

5.1 Board of Governors

Signed:



Date:

15/7/22

Dr Leigh Griffin
Chair of the Board of Governors

5.2 Vice Chancellor's Board

Signed:



Date:

15/7/22

Professor Maria Hinfelaar
Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive

5.3 Wrexham Glyndŵr University Students' Union

Signed:



Date:

15/7/22

Lauren Hole
President of Wrexham Glyndŵr Students' Union 2022/23