



**University of St Andrews
Students' Association
Students' Representative Council
Student Services Council**

AGENDA

Tuesday, 15 September 2015 - Committee Room - 6.00pm

- 1. Adoption of the Agenda**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Reports of Sabbatical Officers**
 - 3.1. Report of the Association President
 - 3.2. Report of the Association Director of Events & Services
 - 3.3. Report of the Association Director of Student Development & Activities
 - 3.4. Report of the Association Director of Representation
- 4. New General Joint Business**
 - 4.1. J.15-12 Petition to the Elections Committee for Open Elections for All Students
- 5. New General SRC Business**
- 6. New General SSC Business**
- 7. Any Other Competent Business**

J.15-12

Petition to the Elections Committee for Open Elections for All Students

We, the undersigned, believe in the three basic principles approved by joint councils, the first of which is this: that our elections should be open to all students on an equal basis.

The legislation recently passed ensures that we no longer "foster an...inclusive community". Our stated values that are "democratic, [where] every student is eligible to...stand for election" and wholly "Inclusive" with a commitment to equal opportunities are not only threatened by this motion but are an utterly extirpated, standing in direct conflict with the beliefs that form the heart of our Association.

If we value being democratic, then why are we restricting the way that students vote? We believe in giving students the ability to decide for themselves who they elect to office, and placing limitations on who can and cannot stand for election fundamentally violates our democratic right to self-determination.

We have created an Association that holds three main areas at its core: representation, activities, and places/facilities. Our strategic plan states that "it is vital that we offer the best possible service", but we cannot possibly offer the best possible service if we bar our most experienced and knowledgeable students from running in elections. In our Students' Association, it is the "fantastic work carried out by our students" which allows it and us to "improve and grow" and to create an institution "where all students are involved and supported".

Our Association promises to uphold a "student-led and student-run philosophy of democratic engagement" which we believe is violated by recent legislation. Our Association also believes that our "outstanding accomplishments are only achieved through the ambition, talent, and hard work of our amazing students who volunteer their time and abilities year on year to plan, organise, and work towards an even better Association". It is our understanding that the largest contributions made to student life are best achieved through due diligence and careful planning, and these contributions may take years of development and require continuity in order to be brought to fruition. Again, we believe that this legislation fundamentally inhibits the largest and most ambitious contributions to student life which serves us, as students, the most benefit.

Beyond violating our democratic right to choose our officers, we have forsaken our dedication and commitment to equal opportunities. Our Laws state that our Association ensures that "all individuals...will not be subjected to unfair discrimination in any respect of the Association's activities" and that we will "not tolerate unfair discrimination on any grounds" and that these grounds shall include "union activity". When these principles are abandoned, our own Laws require that we "campaign against discrimination" on these very grounds. We expect our members and societies to adhere to these rules, so why not our elected officials and the bodies they sit on? The regulation passed in recent days is nothing short of discrimination.

How can we be "inclusive" and free from discrimination when we segregate our most dedicated students from running for election? How can we be "democratic" when we are stripped of our ability to choose our officers for ourselves?

The councils have delegated authority to the Elections Committee, which shall have the power to make changes to the Rules and Regulations for the 2015 elections. We urge the elections committee to see the inherent reason in our argument and completely reverse this legislation immediately.

As such, we, the undersigned, petition the Elections Committee to strike §1.3.6 of Chapter Six of the Laws to allow for any student to be elected to any position and to consider and hold a vote on this motion within 24 hours of reception and advertise accordingly.

***Please note that the public copy of the Laws (linked below) is out of date. Chapter 6 (as indicated above) has been re-written and is included in the "legislation" link (motion J 15-8, p. 14). The amendment in question may be found on p. 31 of the legislation link. Unless otherwise stated, the quotes above are taken directly from the Strategic Plan which includes the Students' Association's Mission Statement, Values, and Goals (as well as an introduction from the President and Chair of the Board).

At the current point in time (24 February 2015, 8pm), no copy of the minutes of the meetings of either Council are electronically available.

For a copy of the Strategic Plan, click here: <http://bit.ly/1yUy6n4>

For a copy of the legislation, click here: <http://bit.ly/1EN4bBI>

For a copy of the Laws, click here (equal opportunities: Ch. 24, notably §1-2 inclusive): <http://bit.ly/1a9yCsG>

First signatory: Courtney Lewis

62 further signatories.

Details of the further signatories and the text of the petition can be found here: <https://www.change.org/p/a-petition-for-open-elections-for-all-students>

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The Elections Committee for the Students' Association Elections 2015 asks the SRC and SSC to consider whether to strike §1.3.6 of Chapter 6 of the Laws that reads: "No student may hold the same elected position on the SRC or SSC for more than two consecutive years."