



University of St Andrews Students' Association Student Representative Council

Motion to practically support the Rector

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Consulted: Stella Maris, *Lord Rector University of St Andrews*

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This SRC notes:

- The existence of an elected Rector is a legal requirement, in ancient Scottish universities, under the Universities (Scotland) Act 1858.
- Stella Maris was elected Lord Rector on October 13, 2023, by the student body, with 1,394 votes.
- On November 21, 2023, Rector Maris released a statement to the student body calling for a ceasefire in the Gaza-Israel Conflict.
- In December 2023 the University Court launched an investigative process into Rector Maris, and was latterly conducted by Morag Ross KC, now Lady Ross.
 - The outcome of that process can be found here: See Post¹
- On August 01, 2024, the Senior Lay Member (Chair of the University Court) shared that the University Court had discharged the Rector, Stella Maris from the Court through a press statement shared with all staff and students.
- On the 01 August 2024, the Sabbatical Officers met to discuss the immediate response of the Students' Association. The Sabbatical Officers resolved:
 - That the Association President and Director of Education would release a statement via StASA's social media
 - That the non-Court Sabbatical Officers will release their own statement

¹ St Andrews University Court. December 2023. Independent Investigation. <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/assets/university/about/documents/governance/court/independent-investigation-29-july-2024.pdf>

- Both have been completed: See Students' Association News Article, "Updates Regarding the Rector" on 13 August 2024.²
- That the Sabbatical Officers shall explore with Senior Management and the Board how best to offer practical support to Rector Maris. This included:
 - exploring the allocation and provision of office space that can be used by the Rector to conduct their duties.
 - This point has been delivered.
 - the possibility of including the Rector on Student Representative Council (SRC); in a capacity to be determined by that Council.
 - This point shall be resolved through this motion.
- Within this the Sabbatical Officers shall open a dialogue with the Rector to determine what the role of the Rector will be within the Students' Association.
 - This point is ongoing.
- That the Sabbatical Officers, in consultation with key stakeholders will develop and signpost a resource outlining updates, outcomes, and next steps of the two SRC motions (Motion on Palestine: R-24-07; R-24-08: Motion on Combatting Antisemitism) for students to refer to.
 - This point has been updated via a Students' Association News article, "SRC motion on Palestine" on 01 October 2024.³
- That the process for recruiting a Rector's Assessor has been suspended by the University Court following the discharge of the Rector.
- That the Rector has a right to a Rector's Committee, as outlined in accordance with the Laws of the Association.

This SRC believes:

- That the Rector was elected by students to support students.
 - The Rector's role is to advocate for these students and represent the issues they raise by fostering an environment of ongoing collaboration.
 - The Committee would advise the Rector on the key student issues and concerns which would allow the Rector to appropriately advocate for students.
 - The Assessor would be responsible for convening and chairing the Committee.
- That all students are entitled and have the right to feel safe on campus.
- Without a place on the University Court, the Rector is restricted in channels to fulfil the duties of their office.

² St Andrews Students' Association. "Updates Regarding the Rector." August 13, 2024
<https://www.yourunion.net/news/article/7090/Updates-regarding-the-Rector/>

³ Students' Association, 01 October 2024, *SRC Motion on Palestine*:
<https://www.yourunion.net/news/article/7090/SRC-Motion-on-Palestine/>

- The Students' Association can fill the gap created by the loss of Rector Maris' Trustee status.
- That the legitimacy of student democracy is facing unprecedented risk.
- As the Rector was elected by students, the Students' Association must do what it can to support elected officials in the discharge of their duties.
- That the students of St Andrews, who elected Rector Maris, should be given the opportunity voice their opinion on the matter.
- That the role of Rector's Assessor has duties out with University Court such as working with the Rector to ensure that all students are fairly consulted in the decision-making processes.
- That the Rector's Committee should be convened to support the Rector to perform their duties.

This SRC resolves:

- To endorse the steps taken by the Sabbatical Officers in providing practical support to the Rector
- To adopt the proposed Constitution for the Rector's Committee (Appendix I)
- To begin the process of recruiting a Rector's Assessor.
 - Noting that no individual selected for the post will sit on the University Court.
 - The SRC gives approval to start the process of co-option or election, upon consultation with the Rector and Association staff.
- To request that the Association staff support the Rector in convening the Rector's Committee and recruiting a Rector's Assessor, in line with the Association Laws and Standing Orders.
 - That for this SRC, the Rector's Assessor will be a full voting member of the SRC.
- That the Sabbatical Officers will continue to meet with student groups to support them appropriately regarding their safety.
- To request that the Association Board considers and, where it can, grants additional means, that are necessary to support a Rector who is committed to being 'full-time;' such as, but not limited to, individual office space within the Association.

Appendix I

Rector's Committee Constitution

1. Aims and Objectives

1.1. The Rector's Committee exists to:

- Support the Rector's Assessor in fulfilling tasks delegated by the Rector.
- Publicise the role and activities of the Rector to the student body.
- Promote student engagement with the role of the Rector, the committee, and any relevant opportunities available to students.
- Advise the Rector on issues affecting students.

2. Membership

2.1. The Committee shall consist of:

- **Rector's Assessor** (Convenor and Chair)
 - Responsible for convening and chairing the committee.
- **Association President**
 - Serves as an ex-officio member.
- **Other Members** as determined by the Rector's Assessor.
 - The Rector's Assessor shall establish the membership structure of the committee annually, in consultation with the Rector and Association President, or at other times as required, and may include members as deemed necessary for fulfilling the committee's objectives.
 - While the Rector, and their Assessor may appoint individuals to serve as liaisons on specific remits, such appointees are not recognised as official representatives of the Students' Association or its subcommittees. These liaisons shall act solely as intermediaries between the Rector and the relevant remit, ensuring communication without infringing on the authority of elected Association officers.

2.2. The Rector's Assessor has the authority to revise and adjust the membership of the committee, in consultation with the Association President.

3. Remit

3.1. The Committee is tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Supporting the Rector's Assessor in executing tasks delegated by the Rector.
- Publicising the role, activities, and responsibilities of the Rector within the student community.
- Encouraging and facilitating student engagement with the Rector, the Committee, and any relevant initiatives or opportunities.
- Advising the Rector on key student issues and concerns.

4. Meetings

4.1. The Committee shall meet:

- At the discretion of the Rector, or in their absence, at the discretion of the Rector's Assessor.
- Additional meetings may be convened as necessary to address pressing issues or opportunities.

4.2. The Chair (Rector's Assessor) will be responsible for setting the agenda and ensuring that meetings are conducted in accordance with the Laws of the Association.