



University of the West of Scotland (UWS)

and

UWS Students' Union

Student Partnership Agreement

2026/27–2029/30

1. Purpose and Status of the Agreement

This Agreement outlines how all members of the UWS community (students and staff) work together to shape the university experience. It recognises that students are active partners with valuable insight, experience, and leadership.

This Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) sets out the framework through which the **University of the West of Scotland (UWS)** and **students**, represented by **UWS Students' Union**, work together in partnership over the period **2026/27–2029/30**.

The purpose of the SPA is to articulate **how** the University and the Students' Union work together to support student success and enhance the student experience. It recognises the distinct roles, responsibilities, strategies, and values of each organisation and provides a shared foundation for partnership working, mutual accountability, and constructive challenge.

The SPA does not replace or restate existing institutional or Students' Union strategies, policies, or governance arrangements, such as the Code of Practice. Instead, it provides an overarching strategic framework that is implemented through **jointly agreed annual operational partnership plans**.

2. The Partners

2.1 University of the West of Scotland (UWS)

For the purposes of this Agreement, "UWS" refers to the University: its senior leadership, academic faculties, directorates, and governance bodies, acting within their respective responsibilities and delegated authorities.

2.2 UWS Students' Union

"UWS Students' Union" refers to the independent, democratic organisation led by students, representing the collective voice and interests of UWS students. It includes elected officers, student representatives, society leaders and its professional staff, and operates separately from the University to ensure students have an independent voice.

3. Background and Principles for Partnership Working

This Student Partnership Agreement has been informed by:

- A sub-group of the Student Experience Committee, including student representatives, Students' Union staff, and UWS academic and professional services colleagues;
- Consultation with members of the Vice Chancellors Executive;
- Internal discussions and facilitated workshops on student engagement and partnership practice;
- Relevant sector frameworks (e.g. TQEF, sparqs partnership and engagement frameworks) – intended to inform rather than prescribe the Agreement;
- A review of sectoral practice and examples of SPAs from other institutions.

Partnership under this Agreement is guided by principles that describe **how the partners work together**. The principles echo the values of both partners:

- **Mutual Respect**
Recognising the legitimacy, independence, and responsibilities of both partners.
- **Student-Led Engagement**
Ensuring students are valued as active partners with meaningful and timely influence over decisions, priorities, and outcomes.
- **Transparency and Responsibility**
Being clear about decisions, constraints, and outcomes, and taking responsibility for actions and their impact on students.
- **Inclusivity and Equity**
Actively working to ensure the partnership reflects the diversity of the student body.
- **Constructive Challenge**
Creating safe and respectful spaces for open dialogue, challenge, and disagreement.
- **Resourcing and Support**
Ensuring partnership working is appropriately resourced, recognising the time, training, and support required for students and staff to participate meaningfully.
- **Communication**
Communicating in a consistent, accessible, timely, and compassionate manner. Ensuring information is shared clearly and appropriately, and that feedback is actively sought, responded to, and followed up in a meaningful way.

4. Partnership Vision for 2030

Our shared partnership vision is that:

UWS and UWS Students' Union will work in purposeful, student-centred partnership, ensuring students are meaningfully involved in shaping decisions that affect their learning and wider university experience.

5. Strategic Aims for 2026/27–2029/30

Partnership working enables:

Flexible and Accessible Partnership Engagement

Partnership opportunities are designed to be accessible and responsive to students' diverse lives and modes of study, enabling wide participation.

Indicative characteristics of success include:

- Multiple routes for engagement;
- Increased use of paid, digital, or time-limited opportunities;
- Clear choice for students in how they engage.

An Inclusive and Representative Student Voice

All students, including those from under-represented and less visible groups, have meaningful influence in the partnership.

Indicative characteristics of success include:

- Improved representation and participation across engagement mechanisms;
- Targeted approaches for different campuses or cohorts;
- Strategies to intentionally and proactively encourage a wide diversity of voices and input.

Transparent and Trust-Building Feedback Loops

Students clearly understand how their input informs decisions and why change may or may not be possible.

Indicative characteristics of success include:

- Consistent “you said, we did / were unable to because” communications;
- Clear feedback loops at programme, module, directorate, faculty, and institutional levels;
- Increased student confidence in decision-making processes.

Co-creation Across the Whole Student Experience

Partnership working is embedded across education, services, digital environments, and campus life. It goes beyond formal committees and structures and includes everyday interactions, campaigns, classroom practice, and student-led activity across all campuses.

Indicative characteristics of success include:

- Co-designed initiatives, services, and spaces;
- Regular partnership-led enhancement activity;
- Recognition and support for staff and student partnership work.

6. Annual Operational Partnership Plans

This Agreement is implemented through **annual operational partnership plans**, which:

- Are co-developed by UWS and UWS Students' Union;
- Include evidence-based priorities that are informed by student insight, including surveys, representative feedback, and engagement activity across all campuses;
- Identify shared priorities and partnership activity for each academic year;
- Set out actions, responsibilities, timescales, and measures of success;
- Align with academic and planning cycles;
- Are monitored via the Student Partnership Forum with oversight via Student Experience Committee;
- Are reported annually to Senate via the Student Experience Committee.

The annual operational partnership plan is confirmed at the June meeting of Senate each academic year, following confirmation of the 2026/27 plan in December 2026.

7. Governance, Oversight, and Review

7.1 Governance and Accountability

The SPA is:

- Approved through appropriate University governance structures, including Senate;
- Approved through the governance structures of UWS Students' Union.

Delivery of the Agreement is overseen through:

- Annual reporting via established University and Students' Union committees;
- Joint monitoring through partnership forums;
- Students' Union student voice structures, such as Campus Assemblies, Faculty Forums, Societies Council and Executive Committee, to ensure accountability to students.

Governance arrangements are transparent, with clarity regarding:

- Where decisions are made;
- How students influence those decisions;
- How outcomes are communicated.

7.2 Review

- The SPA is reviewed annually through evaluation of the operational partnership plans;
- A full review is carried out in the final year of the Agreement to inform future partnership arrangements.

8. Duration and Amendment

This Agreement applies from **Academic Year 2026/27 to 2029/30**.

The Agreement may be amended at any time through partnership and mutual consent of both partners.