

The University and AberSU should suspend their banking with fossil fuel investment banks and switch to a more ethical, green bank instead

Passed by: Senedd

Passed on: 26/04/2023

Policy lapses: **24/04/2026**

Summary

Aberystwyth University and AberSU need to stop banking with Barclays, HSBC or any other banks which are affiliated with fossil fuel extracting corporations, and, as soon as possible, transfer all funds to a bank which has clearly laid out terms of ethical and sustainable investments.

Details

Aberystwyth University and AberSU need to stop banking with Barclays, HSBC or any other banks which are affiliated with fossil fuel extracting corporations, and, as soon as possible, transfer all funds to a bank which has clearly laid out terms of ethical and sustainable investments.

The University and SU have ownership of substantial sums of money, including tuition paid by (or on behalf of) every student. These sums are currently placed with and controlled by Barclays and HSBC, two of the largest banks in the UK. Barclays, the nationally most used bank with administration of 16% of all UK current accounts, is Europe's largest investor in fossil fuels, and has financed the fossil fuel industry with an estimate of \$20bn. I

Meanwhile, HSBC, which also invests in fossil fuel corporations, has made declarations of discontinuing any finances to deforestation-linked businesses, but has failed to adhere to its promises. Instead, HSBC was estimated to receive over \$20mio in 2021 from deforestation-linked businesses. This shows that while the climate impacts of banking are less visible, they are among the most significant. Considering the industries which are supported by the University's and SU's finances is a necessary step in the development towards becoming a greener University. As a University which prides itself on its ecology- and environment-based research and courses offered, it is inappropriate for Aberystwyth University and AberSU to be even indirectly affiliated with the fossil fuel industry. We therefore demand that, past expiration of Aberystwyth University's contract with Barclays in April 2024, Aberystwyth University as well as AberSU transfer their funds to a bank which has declared clear terms negating affiliations with any unethical or fossil fuel extracting corporations, such as Co-op.

Gaining the SU's support in this request would significantly increase our chances of implementing this with the University and encourage a powerful step towards becoming a more sustainable University.

Submitted by: Luzie Volckers

Updates

Actions	Name and Role	Date
We have been having conversations with the University regarding this and believe to be making positive progress. We are aware the Universities contract with Barclays ends in April and so we will update students soon as we are made aware of any changes.	N/A	N/A
The University has initiated a tender process to select a new bank, with the closing date set for July 15th.	Bayanda (Union President 2023-2025)	June 2024