



October 26, 2026, 18:00-20:00

ABERYSTWYTH STUDENT'S UNION

October 2026 SENEDD



Agenda

Welcome

1. Welcome and Apologies for any Absences.
2. Introductions
3. Electing a Deputy Chair
4. Learn Welsh
5. Officers Report
6. Lapsing Policy (For Information)

Ideas

7. Idea one: The Union should add housing Reps to the Senedd.
8. Idea Two: Senedd Members Should Have a Loss of Voting Privileges for Failure to Attend Two Meetings Without Apology

Policy Discussion

9. Union Priority discussion: Cost of Living

End of meeting comments

10. Any other Business.
11. Date of next meeting.
12. End of meeting.



The Union should add housing Reps to the Senedd.

Submitted by: Laura Young

Summary

The Senedd exists to ensure students have a voice in the decisions that shape and develop the Union. At present, however, there is no dedicated representative to advocate for students on housing matters.

Details:

Housing plays a fundamental role in the overall student experience. Access to safe, affordable, and good-quality accommodation is not only essential for students' physical health and wellbeing but also has a direct impact on their academic success, sense of belonging, and ability to participate fully in university life.

Poor housing conditions can contribute to increased stress, anxiety, and social isolation. Research has found that factors such as poor living environments and a lack of belonging within accommodation settings are associated with higher levels of depression, anxiety, and loneliness among students. Furthermore, the [House of Commons Library](#) notes that financial pressures and living circumstances are significant contributors to poor student mental health, which can in turn lead to reduced academic performance and student withdrawal from higher education.

The evidence suggests that housing issues remain a significant concern for students. In Aberystwyth Students' Union's Cost of Living Survey, housing emerged as the fourth most significant issue affecting students, behind food insecurity, opportunities for employment, and general anxieties. This reflects concerns that the Union has consistently heard from students over several years.

In addition, previous Students' Union accommodation campaigns highlighted numerous cases of students living in damp, mouldy, and poorly maintained accommodation. These concerns are reflected nationally. Research conducted by [SOS-UK](#) and Universities UK found that 54% of students living in the private rented sector had experienced damp or mould in their accommodation, while 59% reported feeling uncomfortably cold in their homes. Nearly half of those students stated that these conditions negatively affected their mental wellbeing.

Despite the importance of housing to student wellbeing and academic achievement, there is currently no dedicated housing representation structure within the Students' Union. Students experiencing accommodation issues often have no direct representative whose primary responsibility is to advocate for their interests and raise concerns within the Union's democratic structures.

This policy therefore proposes the creation of seven Housing Representative positions:

- Fferm Penglais Housing Representative



- Pantycelyn Housing Representative
- Rosser Housing Representative
- Trefloyne Housing Representative
- PJM Housing Representative
- Cwrt Mawr Housing Representative
- External University Accommodation Representative (e.g. students living in accommodation managed by providers such as Codi)
- Private Renting Student Representative X2

These representatives would be elected alongside other Senedd Representatives during the annual Autumn Elections. To ensure authentic representation, candidates must reside within the accommodation category they seek to represent.

Alongside their role within the Senedd, the Housing Representatives would form a Housing Advisory Board. This would mirror the successful structures already in place for Clubs, Societies, and Volunteering Representatives, who both sit on the Senedd and contribute to specialist advisory groups. The Housing Advisory Board would provide a dedicated forum for discussing accommodation-related issues, identifying emerging trends, and developing recommendations for action.

While introducing additional representatives would increase the number of members required to achieve quorum at Senedd meetings, this risk is considered minimal. Senedd meetings have consistently been quorate in recent years, and representatives are expected to fulfil the responsibilities of their elected positions by attending meetings.

The benefits of this proposal significantly outweigh the potential drawbacks. Establishing Housing Representatives would provide the Union with direct insight into accommodation issues affecting students across a variety of living environments. It would strengthen accountability, improve communication between residents and the Union, allow housing concerns to be identified earlier, and ensure that one of the most significant factors affecting student wellbeing has dedicated representation within the Union's democratic structures.

Ultimately, this policy would ensure that students have a stronger voice on housing matters and that the Students' Union is better equipped to advocate for safe, affordable, and high-quality accommodation for all students.

This idea would change schedule 1.2 which lays out memberships of the Senedd:
<https://www.abersu.co.uk/pageassets/aboutaber/constitution/Schedule-1.2-Membership-of-Senedd-EN..pdf>



Senedd Members Should Have a Loss of Voting Privileges for Failure to Attend Two Meetings Without Apology

Submitted by: Francesco Lanzi

Summary

Elected Senedd representatives have a responsibility to attend meetings and participate in the Union's decision-making processes. Representatives who repeatedly fail to attend meetings without providing apologies are not fulfilling this role. This policy proposes the removal of voting rights from representatives who have two or more unapproved absences, ensuring that voting power remains with active and engaged members.

Details:

Each year, students elect Senedd Representatives to represent their peers, debate important issues, and vote on policies that shape the direction of the Students' Union. These representatives play a vital role in ensuring that student voices are heard and that the Senedd can make decisions on matters that affect the wider student body.

For Senedd meetings to take place, they must be quorate, meaning that at least 50% + 1 of voting members are present. If attendance falls below this threshold, the Senedd is unable to conduct business, debate motions, or make decisions. This can delay or prevent positive changes from being implemented and may result in students being left without effective representation.

Since the Students' Union began publishing attendance records and voting information, it has become clear that a small number of elected representatives fail to attend any Senedd meetings throughout the year and do not submit apologies in advance. While these representatives retain their voting rights and count towards quorum requirements, they are not actively participating in the democratic processes for which they were elected.

This proposal seeks to strengthen accountability and ensure that the Senedd remains effective by introducing a consequence for repeated unexplained absences. Specifically, any voting member of the Senedd who records two unexplained absences from Senedd meetings within an academic year shall have their voting rights suspended for the remainder of that academic year unless reinstated by the Senedd Chair following exceptional circumstances.

This proposal would not apply to representatives who submit apologies before a meeting. The Students' Union recognises that students have academic, personal, employment, caring and health commitments that may occasionally prevent attendance. When apologies are received in advance, Union staff and officers can monitor attendance levels and where necessary, consider rescheduling meetings to maintain quorum and maximise participation.

There is already precedent within the Union for linking attendance to representative responsibilities. Student Trustees who fail to attend three meetings without providing



apologies may be removed from the Trustee Board in order to ensure that governance responsibilities can continue to be carried out effectively. The threshold is set at three rather than two because Student Trustees serve a two-year term, compared to Senedd Representatives who serve for a single academic year.

Similar attendance expectations are common across governing bodies, charities and representative organisations, where active participation is considered an essential part of holding elected office.

The proposal does not create a by-election or replacement process, as this would likely be impractical given the timing of Senedd meetings during the academic year. Instead, removing the voting rights of inactive representatives would reduce the number of voting members used to calculate quorum. This would help ensure that engaged and active representatives are able to continue making decisions on behalf of students, while also encouraging greater accountability among those elected to represent them.

Ultimately, this proposal aims to protect the effectiveness of the Senedd, improve accountability, and ensure that democratic decisions are made by representatives who actively participate in the role they were elected to undertake.