



*Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024, 18:00-20:00*

ABERYSTWYTH STUDENT'S UNION

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**BIG MEETING 2024**





## Agenda:

- Welcome and Opening Remarks
- Receive report of trustees - ([full report is included](#))
- Receive the annual accounts.
- Appointment of the auditors: TBC After Trustee Board on the 29<sup>th</sup>
- Approving the list of affiliations (affiliations for July 2024-2025):
  - NUS UK £17,400, NUS Charity =£4350 - total = £21,750
  - British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) = £6400 (est) plus transport, facilities and team entry costs totaling around £63,000 expenditure)
  - Advice UK Membership = £280.00
  - Real Living Wage: £150
- Free affiliations or schemes joined:
  - Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)= don't pay currently
  - HALO
  - Mindful employer
  - Tourettes Friendly Employer and Organization (Tourette's Action)
- Your Ideas
  - Should Aberystwyth Students' Union change its name and be recognized as Undeb Aberystwyth?
  - Vote of no confidence should be available for student group committee members.
  - Petition for free laundry services for full-time residents.
- Any Other Business
- Next Senedd Meeting date (29<sup>th</sup> April 2024- 18:00-20:00 SU Picturehouse)

**Should Aberystwyth Students' Union change its name and be**



## recognized as Undeb Aberystwyth?

Show that we love the Welsh language by using the Welsh name for the Union here in Aberystwyth.

Should Aberystwyth Students' Union change its name and be recognized as Undeb Aberystwyth? Here is my question for you. In my opinion there is a tendency to use the English name, Aberystwyth Students Union more often than the Welsh and this does not reflect the Welsh identity of the Union.

Since being in my position as Welsh Culture and UMCA President, I have had several people claim that Bangor is the 'University of Welsh' in Wales, and although I obviously disagree completely with this there is one thing stands out to me, namely their monolingual Welsh name for the Union. The decision was an internal one in Bangor, but I think it is important to take into account the voice of the students in a decision like this, also considering that there will be a small cost as a result of the change.

In addition, one of our values here at the Union is to CARU'R GYMRAEG and what better way to convey that than by changing the Unions name to Undeb Aberystwyth, which is a bit less of a mouthful than the Aberystwyth Students Union.

There is also a tendency for some to refer to the Students' Union as the English Union and then UMCA as the Welsh Union, and my hope by changing the name is to highlight the Union's commitment towards the Welsh language. This change will also show the University that the status of the Welsh language is important to students.

There are several examples of where using the Welsh name has made a difference for example: FAW Cymru, Bannau Brycheiniog a'r Wyddfa.

This is an opportunity to ensure that people use the Welsh language not only here in Aberystwyth but also internationally.

Submitted By: Elain Gwynedd

**Votes of no confidence should be available for student group**



## **committee members.**

At the moment, we have a vote of no-confidence policy for academic reps and student groups committee members which simply does not work for smaller groups, because it only requires 10% of a committee to do it. For a three-person committee, this is less than a person.

After doing research into student group votes of no confidence in other student unions across the UK, here is an updated policy: If an elected member of a committee is not performing the standards required of the committee, the following steps should be taken: Other committee members should have an informal meeting with the individual to ask if they are struggling with the role and what can be done to help. Efforts to resolve the situation within the group should take place before any attempt to make a vote of no confidence.

If the issue has not been resolved after the individual has been given opportunities to fix it, then the committee should contact the Opportunities Officer ([suopportunities@aber.ac.uk](mailto:suopportunities@aber.ac.uk)) and/or their relevant co-ordinator ([suclubs@aber.ac.uk](mailto:suclubs@aber.ac.uk) [susocieties@aber.ac.uk](mailto:susocieties@aber.ac.uk)) to arrange a mediation meeting. The officer and staff will play a neutral role, and they will facilitate the meeting with the aim to resolve the dispute.

If no compromise is reached, then a Vote of No Confidence (VONC) may be initiated to remove the committee member. VONCs can be upsetting for everyone involved and it is the last step. It should only happen if no compromise has been reached after mediation attempts have been made.

**VONC Process:** To call a VONC, a petition must be signed by 15% of standard members in a student group OR 10 standard members (whichever is larger). This petition will be sent to the Opportunities Officer and the relevant coordinator to approval. This is just to confirm necessary steps have been taken before calling a VONC.

Once approved, an all-standard member online VONC administered by the Student's Union will be called, and in order for the VONC motion to be carried, it must be supported by two-thirds of those voting.

Only members of the student group may vote and all EGM regulations apply. Therefore, only standard members may vote. If the VONC motion is successful, a by-election, as outlined constitutionally, for the role will follow.

Submitted by: Tiff McWilliams

**Petition for Free Laundry Services for Full-Time Residents**



This appeal requests Aberystwyth University's University Council to make laundry services free for on-campus residents, emphasizing the impact on student wellbeing, financial strain, and the university's commitment to inclusivity and student satisfaction.

Aberystwyth University has rightfully earned a reputation for being a student-first institution, consistently ranking number one in student satisfaction. However, we, the undersigned students, have observed setbacks in addressing student concerns, particularly related to living conditions. We are proud to be members of this institution and would like to reinforce the university's commitment to student wellbeing and satisfaction, but believe it or not, laundry services on campus is standing in the way of that.

In order to preserve a supporting living environment, we ask that laundry services be made free. Being residents on campus, we should be entitled to free laundry as part of our accommodation fees. The current fees are grossly higher than what you find in town or in other universities. In fact, a lot of other universities have free laundry for their students anyway.

This erases the burden it has on students from low-income families, or those dependent on scholarships and financial aid to study. Financial integrity falls under the category of inclusivity that Aberystwyth University is constantly promoting, and changing the laundry services would count as meeting the students' needs.

To showcase just how important laundry is, consider how it affects a student's day to day wellbeing. Students have often found themselves skipping meals and/or cancelling social plans in order to schedule laundry in because of its expenses, or drag out how long they can keep on wearing dirty clothes; this burden would be cut down immensely if one felt that they could do laundry anytime because it was free.

Clean clothes is integral to a student's sense of dignity and self-worth. It shouldn't have to control when they can eat, socialise, and engage in various activities based on the availability of clean clothes and the financial resources to cover laundry costs. Making laundry free should be considered as an investment in the mental, emotional, and social wellbeing of the student body.

We respectfully request your consideration of this proposal and hope that Aberystwyth University continues to lead by example in placing students at the forefront of its priorities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Amendment:

If the Aberystwyth University's University Council fails to agree to implement Free Laundry Services for Full-Time Residents, the Student Union should lobby that Circuit Laundry, as the main provider of laundry services, be changed to a more ethical and low-cost (but good quality) option for students.



The University is under considerable financial strain and will have to find savings in many areas of University life. There could be unintended consequences of implementing free laundry services on campus, and this might include raising accommodation costs putting even more financial hardship on students.

Therefore I propose as a compromise that Circuit Launderette Services LTD should be discontinued as the provider of laundry services at Aberystwyth University. And instead, a more ethical and low-cost (but good quality) launderette service should be introduced.

Anyone who has lived in student accommodation on campus has experienced the bad quality of service that Circuit Laundry 'provides'. These range from clothes not being washed properly, clothes not being dried properly or the complexity and failure of the Laundry card or app! In addition, as the idea mentions, the cost of washing and drying is extreme. The customer service is terrible. And don't try to get your money back as refunds on unused credit on top-up cards cost a £3 admin fee, and you can't get anything back if it's under £5.

These issues are not unique to Aberystwyth and many Universities across the UK are turning the tide on Circuit and switching to a better system. Let's make sure that we get the best quality service that we deserve here in Aberystwyth and that this service is either free or as low-cost as possible.

Submitted by: Nadia Benjelloun