



**ROBERT GORDON  
UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN**

rgu:union

# Partnership at RGU



Every two years, Robert Gordon University (the University) and RGU:Union (the Union) agree a Student Partnership Agreement on behalf of students and staff, detailing how the organisations will work together to improve the student experience.





MIKE SMITH  
SECOND EDITION

FUNDAMENTALS OF  
MANAGEMENT

# Our Goal



RGU aims to provide students with an excellent experience that will enable them to raise their aspirations and thrive in their professional careers as global citizens.

RGU is proud to deliver a positive experience for our students and this is made possible by the work our community of staff and students do every day.

Through students and staff working together in partnership, we will foster a vibrant, inclusive RGU community.

# Approach to partnership at RGU

The culture of partnership at RGU is based on the empowerment and engagement of both the staff and students. The relationship is built on the core values of respect, transparency, trust, honesty, effective communication, and shared ownership.

Student partnership is the responsibility of all members of staff at the University, and every student will have the opportunity to engage with partnership activity.

**At the Union, student voice staff work with Student Presidents to ensure that students are engaged in partnership activity.**

**At the University, the Student Partnership team, under the direction of the Director of Student Life, is responsible for ensuring effective student partnership.**

Together, these teams also work to support key student voice and representation activity across all 11 academic schools and departments of the University.

# Core Values

RGU strives to offer the very best university experience by [working in partnership](#) with the student body to create a [vibrant learning community](#).

By working closely together, the University and the Union work to collect feedback directly from students, support the representative structures and ensure that students are involved in [shaping decisions](#) made by the University.

Individually, and collectively, staff and students continue to help shape and change the [student learning experience](#) and the [experience of students beyond the classroom](#).



Following extensive consultation with staff and students at the University, the Student Partnership Agreement is approved and signed on behalf of University and the Union, as follows:



## rgu:union



# Student Partnership Objective

Our approach to partnership centres on identifying shared priorities and working collectively to develop meaningful solutions. As a result of discussions between the University and the Union, the objective identified for this agreement cycle is:

*To foster an engaged  
and inclusive RGU community*

The University and the Union will achieve this objective by focusing on the following strands of activity:

**Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

**Extra-curricular Activities Beyond the Classroom**

**Identifying and Removing Barriers to Engagement**



## Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Activities that take place within the classroom, whether this be on campus or online. We will work with students to understand their experiences and views on the student learning community. We will also develop and champion class communities, and interactive teaching that reflects the needs of all students.

## Extra-curricular Activities Beyond the Classroom

We will work with students to further develop student led activities such as societies, sports clubs, student groups and networks, as well as improving the experiences of students in our RGU community. We will also work to understand the importance of teaching methods beyond the classroom and how we can build a sense of belonging, ensuring that all students - whether studying online or on campus - can experience our vibrant RGU community.

## Identifying and Removing Barriers to Engagement

This relates to factors that may stop students engaging in activities, whether these relate to teaching, learning and assessment, or extra curricular activities beyond the classroom. We will work with students to identify what barriers exist and how the University and the Union can drive the removal of these, allowing for increased engagement with activities.



# Student Partnership at RGU

The term 'partnership' is used to indicate collaborative working between students and staff at the University. This partnership is based on the values of openness; trust and honesty; agreed shared goals and values; and regular communication between staff and students.

Student & RGU:Union Roles	Partnership & Student Voice Mechanisms	Staff & University Roles
Student Governors	Board of Governors	Governors
Presidents, Vice Presidents, Union CEO	Executive & Leadership	Principal, Vice Principals & Directors
Union Staff & Student Activity Leaders	Student Activities & Support	Student Life & RGU SPORT Staff
Student School Officers	Academic Schools	Deans & Associate Deans
Student Representatives	School and Course Liaison	Course & Module Leaders
Student Equality Champions & Networks	Equality & Diversity Forum	Staff Equality Champions & Action Groups
Students	Informal Interaction	Staff

The wide range of partnership roles and mechanisms facilitate students and staff to actively participate in the continuing development of university life at RGU:

### **Presidents & Vice Presidents**

There are three elected paid Presidents and six voluntary Vice Presidents who form the Student Executive Committee. Each student has a different remit and works on projects to improve the student experience, ensuring the Union is run in line with the views of students, and aim to make university life better.

### **Student School Officers**

In each Academic School, one or two 'lead reps' are appointed. Their role is to work with the management of their Academic School, the Union and student reps to enhance the student experience within their School.

### **Equality Champions**

These representatives collaborate with the elected officers at the Union to raise the views and feedback for liberation groups. These students sit on Union and University equality committees and ensure that the activities of both organisations are providing equal opportunities for all.

### **Student Representatives**

Student Representatives (student reps) are elected to share the views of their classmates. These students gather feedback from their peers, attend meetings with lecturers and course leaders in their Academic School to provide feedback, and regularly work with others in the University and Union to collaborate with staff to make improvements at RGU.

### **Student Activity Leaders**

There are a range of different sports clubs, societies, student groups and networks affiliated with RGU:Union. The presidents and vice presidents of these groups are regularly asked to provide feedback on behalf of members.

# Achieved in Partnership

Each year, there are many enhancements made to the experience of students as a result of partnership between the University and the Union, thanks to the amazing work of our staff and students working in collaboration.

The University and the Union are committed to listening to the views of staff and students, as well as working to make changes that enhance the experience of all members of our community. On occasion, where making a particular change isn't possible, we will provide an explanation for this.

Examples of enhancements achieved in partnership include:

Free gym membership, available to all students at the University. Giving students unlimited access to the RGU SPORT gym, swimming pool and group exercise classes, as well as discounts on their climbing wall and bouldering room, and sports hall activities.



Launch of new RGU:Union spaces in the Riverside Building, providing a dedicated facility for student activities including social and gaming spaces, informal study areas, bookable activity rooms, and a home for student-led projects such as RGU Go Green's second-hand clothing and homeware shop.



Breakfast club every Tuesday, providing all staff and students with access to a free breakfast, as well as the opportunity to meet, connect, and socialise in a warm and relaxed environment.



Increased number of parking permits for students and improved pricing structures, offering day or monthly prices



Commitment by the University to divest from fossil fuels.



Increased number of busses provided by First Bus at peak times.



We're aware that there are so many more examples here, and enhancements are made in all aspects of the University. If you'd like to share any, please email [partnership@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:partnership@rgu.ac.uk).

# Student Voice and Representation at RGU



Student Voice is the umbrella term for key student representative and feedback activities that take place at the University. Students and staff work together to share feedback, engage in decision-making, and contribute to making changes and enhancements. There are a number of formal and informal opportunities for students and staff to work together with the University and Union. These may include Student Voice Surveys, student representatives attending committees, reps sharing feedback with lecturers or students attending the Union's Student Voice Forums.

# Student Voice Mechanisms



Through building these core mechanisms, students and staff can directly contribute to student partnership activities. Methods of engagement between staff and students include:

### **Informal Communication**

Along with more formal opportunities, students are also able to share their feedback through social media, conversations, Campus Moodle, and other resources. Students and staff across the University have a strong working relationship where feedback is gathered every day from students and all student views are taken as a core part of improvements at RGU.

### **Discussions with Staff**

All students have opportunities to engage with staff to provide feedback on issues which matter to them. These may be with all students or specific discussions with student reps. Staff may run forums, discussions in class, feedback sessions or activities to allow students at all stages to discuss with staff.

### **Forums, Surveys & Focus Groups**

Throughout the year, all students are provided with formal opportunities to voice their views and contribute to partnership activities. There are key surveys such as the National Student Survey, Student Voice Surveys, and topic-specific surveys that provide the University and Union with feedback from all students. There are also various focus groups and opportunities where all students can influence key decisions and have their say.

# Get involved

Engagement with students and staff across the University is crucial to achieving the Student Partnership Objective. Whether you'd like to propose activities, engage in wider student partnership and representation activities, or directly contribute to enhancement projects, we'd love to hear from you.

**To find out more about how you can get involved:**



**Visit** [www.rgu.ac.uk/studentpartnership](http://www.rgu.ac.uk/studentpartnership) or [www.rguunion.co.uk/partnership](http://www.rguunion.co.uk/partnership)



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