



University of Dundee Student Partnership Agreement 2017-18

The University of Dundee and the Dundee University Students' Association (DUSA) work together to develop an annual Student Partnership Agreement (SPA) with the purpose of enhancing student engagement and improving the experience of our students. The SPA details agreed priorities for each academic year.

The priorities identified for AY 2017-18 are set out below. Certain key themes have been carried over from previous years in recognition of the need for continuous improvement in those important areas.

1. Student representation and closing the feedback loop

The results of the 2017 National Student Survey (NSS) suggest that there is considerable work to be done on ensuring that student feedback is listened to properly and that responses to feedback are considered and acted upon through a partnership approach. Less than 60% of our students agree with the statement 'It is clear how students' feedback on the course has been acted on' in the new Student Voice section of the survey.

We will tackle this issue through further strengthening our approach to student representation. We will continue to take a proactive approach to encourage more of our students to engage with representation and improve representation for students who are not campus-based. We will also continue to improve training and support for student representatives and ensure that engagement with training and good performance is appropriately recognised (e.g. through open badges and Dundee Plus awards).

We will establish a representatives' reporting structure to capture issues and good practice that have been identified during the academic year. This will facilitate the further development of mechanisms to inform students about how their feedback has been acted upon. It will also inform the development of School-level Student Partnership Action Plans (see Section 2 below).

We will work together to promote a consistent and effective approach to the operation of Student-Staff Liaison Committees (SSLCs) as well as developing formal mechanisms through which student feedback on modules is shared and responded to.

Performance indicators:

- open badges ready for full rollout in AY 2018-19;
- stronger performance in the new NSS section on the student voice;
- improved student engagement (nominations and votes) with DUSA elections; and
- positive feedback from School Presidents, Vice-Presidents and Class Representatives on the effectiveness of School Student-Staff Liaison Committees.

2. Enhancing the approach to partnership

In order to ensure that our annual SPAs have resonance with the student body and are meaningful drivers of enhancement, we will work with Schools on the development of School-level Student Partnership Action Plans. The Action Plans will be drawn up annually by School staff and student representatives to reflect agreed priorities for the academic year. They will be aligned with the SPA but may include School-specific initiatives for enhancement of the student experience. The Action Plans will include performance indicators and will be reviewed annually by School staff and student representatives for their impact and effectiveness.

Performance indicators:

- the production of School Student Partnership Action Plans; and
- stronger performance in the new NSS section on the student voice.

3. Strengthening the academic adviser system

Our policy on Academic Advisers was developed in 2014 prior to the University restructuring. Feedback (including the NSS optional question B14.1 'My Advisor of Studies provided me with adequate support') suggests that there are some areas of the University where the system is not working as well as it should be and it is now timely to revisit our approach to ensure that all students benefit from support from Academic Advisers. We will review the policy and ensure that the expectations of the role are clearer. We will also develop a handbook for Academic Advisers as well as promoting training opportunities about dealing with students with mental health problems.

Performance indicators:

- the production of a revised policy;
- the production of a handbook for Academic Advisers; and
- improved and more consistent scores for the NSS optional question on Advisers of Studies.

4. Extracurricular student support

The University and DUSA provide a broad range of support services for students. The recent Student Matters survey showed that there was a good awareness of many, but not all, of our services. In order to improve our approach to student welfare we will produce a University-wide student handbook (or equivalent) which will be available to students through the DUSA website, the University website and the virtual learning environment. The handbook will contain clear signposting to academic and pastoral support resources and will be aligned with the content in the handbook for Academic Advisers.

Performance indicators

- the production of a University-wide student handbook (or equivalent).¹

A key component of our annual partnership agreement between students and staff of the University is a commitment from the University and DUSA to work together to address student feedback as required throughout the year. The University agrees to ensure that DUSA has the support required to fulfil its role, and DUSA agrees to ensure that it fulfils this role responsibly in making the student voice heard.

The University and DUSA are committed to the continual development of this partnership agreement which is reviewed jointly on an annual basis.

Signed on behalf of the University



Professor Sir Pete Downes

University Principal and Vice-Chancellor

Signed on behalf of DUSA



Sean O'Connor

DUSA President

Date: 8/11/17

¹ Development of the handbook may take some time so we may not see a positive impact during the current academic year.