

MAY 2026 STUDENT EXECUTIVE AGENDA AND PAPERS

Friday 22nd May 2026, Hybrid between Teams and HWUnion meeting room 1.

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AGENDA

MEETING START (5MINS)

Approve minutes from the last meeting.

Any FTO updates.

STUDENT EXEC REVIEW (25MINS)

CF to provide update and open for discussion.

Time allocated for exec members to complete the survey.

UNION-RECOGNISED CAMPAIGNS (15MINS)

PLANT-BASED UNIVERSITIES

Please see the 'Plant-based universities application' further down this document.

Please also refer to the 'Union-recognised Campaign Guidance'.

Discussion and vote.

AFFILIATIONS (10MINS)

Student Executive alone cannot decide to withdraw from these affiliations. If Student Executive members would like to end these affiliations it will have to be decided by an all-student-vote following agreement of 90% of a quorate Student Executive team.

NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS UK

Discuss.

Currently HWUnion is affiliated to the National Union of Students (UK) with an annual fee for 2025/26 of £15,132.

CF to explain why we affiliate to the National Union of Students.

NATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS CHARITY

Discuss.

Currently HWUnion is affiliated to the National Union of Students Charity with an annual fee for 2025/26 of £4,488.

CF to explain why we affiliate to the National Union of Students Charity.

AOCB (10MINS)

Any Other Competent Business.

PLANT-BASED UNIVERSITIES

APPLICATION

Campaign Name:	Plant-based universities	Lead members:	Rosie Bristow, Wallace Kerner, Kenny Campbell, Freya Richards, Lorraine Aiken.
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Campaign overview

(include details about what the issue is, why a campaign is needed, and any data to back this up)

The central issue of the campaign is combatting climate change and the biodiversity crisis. One of the most effective ways of doing this is increasing the number of people adopting a plant-based (vegan) diet [1]. Large scale adoption of a vegan diet significantly (by around 76%) reduces the land usage of agriculture, freeing up land for rewilding [2, 3]. This holds true even when the fact that not all land can be used to grow crops is accounted for [2]. The majority of Scotland was originally forested, but most of the native forests were felled to make way for grouse moors and agriculture [4]. To reverse this deforestation, a large scale move to vegan diets would be required. Such a shift is likely to require institutional change. As thought-leaders, universities are a prime candidate for leading such a shift, by showing people that it is feasible to lead a plant-based life. and bringing large numbers of people in a community where plant-based eating is encouraged and destigmatised. We believe that simply adding plant-based options does not change behaviour as people are unlikely to try the plant-based options in the first place, due to the stigma attached to the taste and nutritional benefits of such products, with the latter being largely perpetuated by pseudoscience on social media and other media platforms. As such, creating a space where plant-based eating is the default is a necessary step to changing behaviour.

[1] Interactive: What is the climate impact of eating meat and dairy? | Carbon Brief

[2] Interactive: What is the climate impact of eating meat and dairy? | Carbon Brief

[3] Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers |

Science

[4] History of Scotland's woodlands | NatureScot

Campaign goal

(a one sentence summary of the overall aim of the campaign)

100% Plant Based Catering on campus - for a sustainable future.

Campaign objectives

(the individual goals that need to be achieved in order to bring about the overall campaign goal)

- Open one 100% plant-based catering outlet in 2027.
- Plant-based as the default option for all catering outlets in 2028.
- (stretch goal) All catering outlets 100% plant based by 2029.
- Incorporating plant-based catering in the university's sustainable plan, specifically in the Net Zero by 2035 plan.
- Hold regular outreach stall or events at the SU for communicating, awareness, explanations and community-building.

Does this campaign relate to mental health, sexual violence or other topics that may result in students disclosing sensitive or personal information?

NO

Are there any issues that need to be considered?

(include details of any resources required, policies and/or staff that are likely to be affected, equality issues that may have an impact, legal considerations, communication strategy etc)

Dietary requirements

Plant Based Catering will take into consideration food intolerances and allergies, and be a positive impact on students with dietary restrictions. For example, it will be more inclusive to Halal and Kosher diets and those with lactose intolerance. We are keen that if plant-based catering is taken on by one or all of the food outlets that allergies

are a key consideration when writing new menus, and full ingredient lists will be available.

Staff

Changing catering menus will impact the catering staff, who might need to learn to cook new dishes or prepare food in new ways, but this could be a positive impact.

Changing catering could involve changing some of the catering suppliers, which would involve some paperwork for the admin staff in procurement.

Communication Strategy

If the university committed to 100% plant-based catering this could help in lowering the Scope 3 carbon emissions and help to hit the universities Net Zero target for 2035. This success would be a great thing to communicate!

Heriot-Watt researchers are currently working on vegan cheese science, we could include this in the menu in the future, and this would make a good follow up story to this one: <https://www.hw.ac.uk/news/2026/scientists-are-fixing-the-big-fat-problem-with-vegan-cheese>

UNION-RECOGNISED CAMPAIGN GUIDANCE

OVERVIEW

It should be easy to become a union-recognised campaign.

This isn't a question on whether you personally agree with the campaign goal, but rather whether you think it is something that Heriot-Watt students care about, and the campaign has a clear direction/clarity of purpose.

CLEAR GOAL

The goal of the campaign should be able to be summarised in one sentence. It should be easy for other students to understand what the campaign overall is trying to achieve.

Prompt: Would a friend understand what the campaign is trying to achieve if you told them the goal?

POSITIVE CHANGE

Although this isn't a question of whether you personally agree, it is important to us the recognised campaigns are working towards changes that will make a positive impact to students.