

# Election Manifesto 2007

## Scottish Parliamentary and Local Government Elections



[www.glasgowstudent.net](http://www.glasgowstudent.net)

## **Introduction**

The Students' Representative Council (SRC) represents the 22,000 students who attend the University of Glasgow. We provide a number of services and participation opportunities for these students. Officers are elected to represent the student body within the university and beyond on any issue that is relevant to them.

We have put this manifesto together to call on officials to take action on issues that affect our students. The purpose is also to show students the kind of issues they could be questioning their council and government representatives on in order to make informed choices in the upcoming elections.

The Scottish Parliament and local government elections will be held on the 3rd of May. Voters will have the chance to elect their local constituency MSP, 7 regional list MSPs, and local Councillors. For more information on how to register (which must be done by 18th April), the voting systems that will be used and the candidates that are standing in your area go to [www.glasgowstudent.net](http://www.glasgowstudent.net) or [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk)

For further details and information about our manifesto issues please go to [www.glasgowstudent.net](http://www.glasgowstudent.net). Why not also question the candidates on the issues that matter to you? Any responses we receive from candidates will be posted on our website too.

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### **Register to vote by April 18th. In Glasgow, contact:**

The Electoral Registration Officer  
Charlotte House  
78 Queen Street  
GLASGOW  
G1 3DR  
Phone: 0141 287 7526  
E-mail: [voters.roll@fs.glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:voters.roll@fs.glasgow.gov.uk)

**For postal or proxy votes:** [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk)

**For info on the voting systems in these elections:** [www.votescotland.com](http://www.votescotland.com)

**For more info on this manifesto:**

email [president@src.gla.ac.uk](mailto:president@src.gla.ac.uk) or see [www.glasgowstudent.net](http://www.glasgowstudent.net)

## **Asylum seekers should qualify for home-level funding**

When children of asylum seeking families come to this country they have to learn the language and integrate into Scottish culture. For them to work hard to achieve the necessary qualifications to enter higher education but be faced with financial barriers which prevents them from doing so is unacceptable. These potential students should be charged home fees and not international fees.

## **Students should not be charged for prescriptions**

Charging for prescriptions can prevent some from being able to afford the medication they need. We recognise that all students under the age of 19 in full-time education are exempt but we argue that this should be extended to those over the age of 19, especially as many of them will have incurred more debt through being in university for longer.

## **Top-up fees should be kept out of Scottish universities**

Tuition fees prevent many from entering higher education and can mean large debt for those that do go to university. Students in The University of Glasgow are against top up fees. We ask that they are kept out of Scotland and that there is continued investment in the Scottish Higher Education system.

## **Spouses of international students should not pay Council Tax**

Glasgow City Council has recently reinterpreted the rules leading to international students' spouses having to pay council tax, despite usually being prevented from working or claiming benefits due to immigration conditions. GUSRC calls on the Scottish Executive to clarify the legislation to ensure that the spouses of international students are not forced to pay this tax.

## **Taught postgrad students should receive equal financial support**

Currently Scottish students on taught postgraduate programmes do not have the same access to fees or loan support as undergraduates – with the exception of postgraduate teacher trainees. GUSRC believes that to enhance the knowledge economy, to encourage postgraduate study, and to widen access to postgraduate courses, that Scottish students should get the same support in terms of fees payment, and loan and bursary entitlement, at both undergraduate and taught postgraduate level.

## **Stop Climate Chaos**

We call for the issues of climate change to be addressed on a Scottish level, taking responsibility for both reducing emissions and promoting positive environmental practice. We wish to see a Scottish Executive who will support the need for Universities to both educate students and carry out research to secure a sustainable Scotland.

## **Tenancy Deposit Schemes should be introduced**

England and Wales have seen the introduction of Tenancy Deposit Schemes, which allow for tenancy deposits to be paid into an independent account. This means a tenant's liability must be reviewed by a third party, and they are protected from unscrupulous landlords who illegally withhold deposits. GUSRC calls for the immediate introduction of this scheme to Scotland.

## **The HMO system needs to be revised**

The safety of students living in rented accommodation is paramount. House in Multiple Occupancy Licences (HMOs) should continue to be used solely as a tool for ensuring safe living standards, not a financial gain or for social engineering. Current HMO regulations have led to a widening gap in the private accommodation sector for students, with the number of available HMO properties simply not matching student demand. We wish to see this addressed, with minimal bureaucracy, so that students will have affordable, safe accommodation options.

## **Public transport should address the needs of students**

Students are often reliant on transport services to enable them to attend University, and this can be at significant cost. We wish to see individual wellbeing and safety taken into account, as well as concessionary rates introduced for students. Crucially, further subsidy of socially beneficial bus routes would ensure that the safety of students is not jeopardised by the lack of commercially viable services.

## **Contraception and GUM clinics should be easily accessible**

GUSRC call on NHS Greater Glasgow to reinstate the provision of free contraception to protect sexual health, while respecting the privacy of students.

The number of people affected by Sexually Transmitted Infections is increasing. GUM clinic's current waiting room target of 48 hours is not working. Opening hours that are more suitable for patients and more funding and staff to address what is a very real and current problem are needed now.