



KEEP WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS FREE POLICY

Title:	Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free	Date of Student Council:	05/12/2017
Proposer name:	Laura Douds	Role:	Vice President (Science and Technology)
Seconder name:	Johanna Korhonen	Role:	Vice President (Arts, Law and Social Sciences)

Union Notes:

1. Students attend Anglia Ruskin University to enhance themselves academically through a certificate, a degree, masters or PHD. However, the importance of students gaining additional skills through extra and co-curricular activities is widely agreed.
2. Over 7000 students participated in volunteering, societies or representation within the Students' Union last academic year. Currently we have 2059 volunteers, 1547 society members and 484 reps.
3. According to a recent study into students' mental health, extra/co-curricular activities have proven to improve mental health in students and increase how worthwhile students rate their lives. These should be encouraged by Higher Education Institutions. - "The invisible problem? Improving students' mental health" - Higher Education Policy Institute, 2016
4. Anglia Ruskin University was recognised as the Entrepreneurial University of the Year (2014) and it is this focus among others on the value of extra/co-curricular activities that have shown a significant growth in student numbers.
5. BUCS matches and sports training frequently occurs on Wednesday afternoons and evenings.

Union Believes:

1. Wednesday afternoons should be free for the entire student body to get involved in not only extra/co-curricular activities, but also catching up on assignments, practice good self-care or spending time with their family.
2. Academic and personal commitments such as part-time employment mean that students are either unable to participate in extra/co-curricular activities **or** are forced to miss these commitments to attend.
3. The University and Union has shown dedication to developing enterprising transferable skills in their members, and every student has the right to take advantage of these opportunities.
4. With fewer lectures scheduled on a Wednesday afternoon, it would allow for the university to also focus their extra/co-curricular activities at this time, such as employability programmes and counselling & wellbeing services. It would also allow time for academics to use this time for team meetings for example.

Union Resolves:

1. We will continue to lobby the University to make an ongoing commitment to avoid the scheduling of lectures for all courses after 12pm on a Wednesday.
2. We will lobby the University to commit to support students to change teaching times and assessed sessions after 12pm on a Wednesday where possible and provide alternative methods for affected students to access materials or resources.
3. We will ask students on courses which do have teaching or other academic obligations beyond 12pm on a Wednesday about how it is affecting them. If necessary we will report to the university on our findings.
4. We will ensure students are informed of their responsibility, where lectures are still in place, to receive permission to be absent from their Course Leader as early as possible.