

Contact details	
Your name (Proposer of the policy)	Vivian Hocking
Your email	vivian.hocking@students.plymouth.ac.uk
The name of a person who supports the policy (Seconder of the policy)	Neve Peat Katherine Collins Jean-Michel Evelyn Owain Gullam
Seconder's email	neve.peat@students.plymouth.ac.uk katherine.collins-7@students.plymouth.ac.uk jean-michel.evelyn@students.plymouth.ac.uk owain.gullam@students.plymouth.ac.uk
Student Impact	
Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how.	In seeking to present this policy, the proposer has consulted with other elected members of the Union Council, the VP Activities, the VP Education and both the Student Voice and Volunteering departments of the Union.
How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students?	The policy aims to reaffirm and support the work that has recently been undertaken by the Volunteering department to refresh the UPSU recognition scheme.  The policy aims to enable the volunteering department to lead on a recognition refresh that would restore both staff and volunteer faith in the recognition scheme.
Policy Proposal	
<b>The Union Notes (Facts)</b> This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible.	
1.	

2. The prior UPSU Student recognition scheme was operated independently by each of the UPSU departments – enabling recognition that was catered to the student roles of each department.
3. The prior recognition scheme focused on staff members having informal conversations with volunteers about their volunteering journey and to gain feedback about what drives volunteers to succeed.
4. The prior UPSU recognition scheme, which awarded bronze, silver and gold certificates in different branches, was replaced with a single-track recognition scheme.
5. In addition to certificates, the prior recognition scheme awarded students with branded UPSU merchandise as a token of appreciation.
6. The single-track recognition was introduced in response to the University engaging with the HEAR (Higher Education Achievement Record) scheme and a desire to provide an employability-based recognition scheme.
7. The University has since withdrawn from the HEAR scheme so student volunteers no longer receive an employability record when they graduate.
8. The single-track recognition scheme produces automatically generated and poorly formatted certificates.
9. The single-track recognition scheme does not award gifts to students.
10. The single-track recognition scheme operates interviews upon attainment of set hours logged by a volunteer that replaced the informal catch-ups.
11. Recognition interviews take a formal format where staff are required to ask volunteers questions that had been chosen with the employability focus in-mind.
12. The formal interview process does not benefit volunteers and does not provide UPSU staff with valuable feedback about what volunteers are enjoying or what volunteers are not enjoying.

**The Union Believes (Opinions/Beliefs)** This section requires reflection on the facts stated in 'The Union Notes'

1. Student volunteers and student activity are and is an essential part of maintaining a sense of community.
2. Student extra-curricular achievements and contributions should be celebrated by UPSU.

3. Student volunteers are driving forces for change and feedback within the representation structure.
4. Student volunteers should feel empowered through recognition and should be able to enjoy engaging with a recognition scheme.

**The Union Resolves (Actions)** Here you will describe the action you want to be taken, be specific.

1. Affirm the need for a recognition scheme that encourages and rewards student engagement.
2. Proceed with the recently undertaken review and refresh of the single-track recognition scheme, taking on board feedback from current volunteers about how the scheme should evolve.
3. Ensure that the current UPSU recognition scheme and any replacement or renewed scheme are actively promoted to student volunteers across all branches of the Union.
4. Ensure that any outstanding staff reviews of hours logged by students are resolved and associated certificates can be obtained by those that have earned them.
5. Stop using automatically generated certificates and return to using printed personalised certificates.
6. Enable the different departments of UPSU to have control over their specific departmental output around their volunteers.

**Appendices/supporting information** Please include any supporting information relevant to your motion, this could include; consideration of how you would achieve any points in 'The Union Resolves', links to news articles or online publications

1. The use of automatically generated certificates in the single-track recognition scheme devalues the certificates. These documents could easily be replicated by an individual with sufficient knowledge of word-processing.
2. The automatically generated certificates are not maintained in a suitable format – they are often generated on an A4 PDF document but do not correctly fill the document page.
3. The automatically generated certificates have the former CEOs signature on them at the time of writing this policy.

**the SU  
volunteering  
award**

This is to certify that

**Vivian Hocking**

has been recognised as a

**Dedicated Student Volunteer**

having completed 100 hours of supporting fellow students and/or charitable activities.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the Students' Union this academic year.

03/03/2021



**Chukwadi Kosi Ezemili**  
LPSU President, 2020 - 2021



**Sarah Gibson**  
LPSU Chief Executive

**upsu**  
UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD STUDENTS' UNION

Figure 1 - Example of the automatically generated certificates – generated 3/3/21.

**the SU**  
**volunteering**  
**award**

This is to certify that

**Queen Elizabeth II**

has been recognised as a

**Dedicated Student Volunteer**

having completed 100 hours of supporting fellow students and/or charitable activities

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the Students' Union this academic year.

99/99/2371



**Chukwudi Kosi Ezenyi**  
UPSU President, 2020 - 2021



**Sarah Gibson**  
UPSU Chief Executive

**upsu**  
UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX STUDENTS' UNION

*Figure 2 - An example of how easily these automatically generated certificates can be manipulated.*

## Excerpt of minutes 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021

### Volunteer Recognition Refresh Policy Proposal

Viv Hocking - School of Computing, Engineering and Maths Rep and Accountability Board Member gave an overview of the proposal. Viv explained that previously each SU department had its own recognition scheme which had varying levels of attainment and students were given a small token at each level, such as a pin badge or travel mug. These tokens promoted the Student Voice brand and were appreciated by students.

Viv Hocking added that over the past two years, these individual schemes were merged into one with waypoints of 25, 50, 100 and 200 hours, the higher end of which is seen as unachievable by many students. This has resulted in less engagement in the scheme and students feeling less valued for their contribution.

Viv also added that the certificates are automatic, do not fill a full page, have the signature of the previous CEO and can be easily amended.

Verity Lemm – VP Activities noted that she has spoken to Viv Hocking about the review that UPSU has already undertaken as there is awareness of the shortcomings of the current scheme. Verity commented that the SU wants the scheme to be the best it can be for students.

Will Styles - Part-time Postgraduate Officer requested that the recognition for 100 and 200 hours not be removed as students do reach it and it is appreciated.

Viv Hocking noted that it was not the specific objective of the proposal to take things away but to support what students want as the current 'one size fits all' approach doesn't work.

The Chair called for a vote

For: 23

Against: 0

Abstentions: 2

The proposal passed