

Electronics Watch Policy Proposal

Contact details	
Your name (Proposer of the policy)	Lauren Fidler
The name of a person who supports the policy (Secunder of the policy)	Tim Herring

Student Impact	
Have you consulted students about your proposal? Please explain how many students you have engaged with and how.	<p>Yes, we engaged with students during the society fair, where we began our 'Sweatshop free' campaign, petitioning to get our university to join Electronics Watch (EW). Since then (21st September) we have received over 200 signatures supporting our campaign:</p> <p>https://act.peopleandplanet.org/petitions/plymouth-university-help-us-stop-sweatshops-sign-up-to-electronics-watch</p>
How does your proposal impact the students at the University of Plymouth, what difference will it make to students?	<p>The proposal doesn't directly impact students, by joining EW, the electronic usage of students would not be affected. But the proposal would allow for students to gain a sense of sustainable and social responsibility.</p> <p>By ensuring the support of the Students' Union to get the University to sign up to Electronics Watch this will ensure that the electronics that the University buys and the students use will come from factories where workers' rights are respected. This policy will ensure that students are using electronics from factories where there is active work to improve the working conditions and make them Sweatshop Free.</p>

Policy Proposal
<p>The Union Notes (Facts) This section should include facts, not reflection or opinions. Please provide references where possible.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the global electronics industry is a high-risk industry for modern slavery. 2. That the UK Modern Slavery Act (2015) seeks to address slavery, forced labour and human trafficking taking place today. On 29 October 2015, the transparency in supply chains provisions of the Act (section 54) came into force. The provisions

require commercial and public interest organisations, including universities, to publish a statement setting out steps the organisation has taken to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains and in any part of its own business, often referred to as an “anti-slavery statement”.

3. That, according to the International Labour Organization around 21 million men, women and children around the world are in a form of slavery and forced labour, estimated to generate a profit of \$150 billion every year.
4. That the electronics industry is a high-risk industry for modern slavery. Sadly, these conditions are common in the electronics and technology, mining and minerals and shipping industries.
5. That Electronics Watch (EW) is a European-wide labour rights monitoring organization, conducting investigations of working conditions in factories around the globe. Their primary focus is the labour practices of factories that make electronics goods.
6. That, since its formation in 2013, 9 UK Universities have affiliated to Electronics Watch.
7. This means that all electronics suppliers to those University affiliates are now monitored for labour rights practices in their supply chains.
8. That, while this is a great step forward, our University is also a major purchaser of electronics.

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

1. That our University should also monitor its supply chains.
2. The affiliation of universities to EW has enabled workers to have a number of major successes in defending their rights.
3. That EW is the only monitoring organisation that is credible with workers and their organisations, and is explicitly dedicated to monitoring university and public authority supply chains.
4. That more universities affiliating will lead to a greater collective weight of purchasers in dealing with labour rights abuses in the electronics sector.
5. That the University should affiliate to EW.

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

1. To mandate [the Officer with remit for sustainability] to assist People and Planet society lobby the University to affiliate to EW.

- ~~2. To mandate [the Officer with remit for sustainability] to request student representation on all of the University's purchasing committees.~~
3. To mandate student representatives who sit on ~~purchasing committees~~ the Sustainability Advisory Group to push affiliation to EW.
4. To mandate all student representatives who sit on the ~~purchasing committees~~ Sustainability Advisory Group to push for more ethical and more sustainable electronics from University procurement managers.

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

The University of Plymouth is a member of the Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium, which is a member of EW but this affiliation does not cover individual universities and their supply chains and electronics. Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium sent all its members a document (attached) stating the terms of its contact with EW, and encouraging members to also become affiliated with EW.

More information about EW can be found here;

- <https://peopleandplanet.org/system/files/resources/electronicswatchuniguide.pdf>
- <https://peopleandplanet.org/system/files/resources/Sweatshop%20Free%20Action%20Guide%20Final%20Draft%20for%20Proof%20with%20bleed%20marks.pdf>
- <http://electronicswatch.org/en>

To achieve point one, we are asking for the Officer with remit for sustainability to support EW in meetings with University staff, as well as have EW as a campaign on the UPSU website, where updates on progress both from said officer and student groups can be shown to the general student body.

To achieve point two/three/four, we would appreciate there being a presence of students on purchasing committees, if there isn't already, where they can lobby for more ethical and sustainable electronics, while also pushing for an affiliation with EW, who checks for such electronics, while also supporting movements to improve working conditions in sweat shops.

Facts to consider:

- Each year, at least 12.3 million people are working in forced slave labour at any given time.
(<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=22009#.WgWOkmi0Pn1>)
- Because women make up 85 to 90% of sweatshop workers, some employers force them to take birth control and routine pregnancy tests to avoid supporting maternity leave or providing appropriate health benefits. (Clarren, Rebecca. "Paradise Lost: Greed, Sex Slavery, Forced Abortions and Right-Wing Moralists." Ms. Magazine, 2006.)

Terms of SUPC affiliation:

- The affiliation fee is £10,000 for a 12-month period.
- SUPC makes a 12-month commitment after which SUPC will review the possibility of continued affiliation.
- SUPC incorporates the Electronics Watch contract clauses or equivalent clauses in the National Servers and Storage Agreement and other applicable framework agreements.
- SUPC enjoys all affiliation benefits, including access to monitoring reports, support for engagement with contractors, and recognition as an affiliate on the Electronics Watch website. SUPC will have access to the Electronics Watch affiliate log-in website which includes all monitoring reports, contract clauses, procurement tools and studies, and receive invitations to webinars and meetings with monitoring organisations and public procurement colleagues.
- These benefits do not extend to SUPC members that are not affiliates to Electronics Watch. However, SUPC is encouraged to engage with contractors on the basis of Electronics Watch reports, and to report on this engagement, and on Electronics Watch engagement with industry, to its members, while keeping Electronics Watch monitoring reports confidential to SUPC.
- SUPC communicates to its members that SUPC affiliation is only for SUPC itself and does not cover its members. That means Electronics Watch can take no action to monitor factories specifically on the basis of a call-off contract of a SUPC member who is not also affiliated to Electronics Watch.

Extract of meeting minutes - 30th November 2017

Electronics Watch – (see appendix 1)
<p>Lauren Fidler, the proposer of the policy, gave an overview of the proposal.</p> <p>Alex Doyle – VP Activities, pointed out that the resolves point 2; “To mandate [the Officer with remit for sustainability] to request student representation on all of the University's purchasing committees.” is not really realistic.</p> <p>Alex explained that Sabbatical Officers sit on hundreds of committees already and it would be unfair to expect them to attend even more. Maja Smith – VP Education, added that it would also be unfair to ask a Part-Time Officer or School Rep to attend so many meetings.</p> <p>Lowri Jones – President, proposed that resolves point 2 be removed and resolves point 3 be amended for representatives to raise it at the Sustainability Advisory Group (SAG) meeting. Lowri further suggested an amendment to resolves point 4: “To mandate all student representatives who sit on the purchasing committees to push for more ethical and more sustainable electronics from University procurement managers.” To amend purchasing committees to Sustainability Advisory Group.</p>

The proposer accepted the amendments

Ryan Skidmore – School Rep for Computing, Electronics and Mathematics, asked what the university spends each year on electronics.

Lauren Fidler, proposer of the policy noted that they are in the process of submitting a Freedom of Information request to the university to disclose that figure. Lauren added that the affiliation cost is proportionate to the spend but thought the costs would be no more than £45K.

Lauren looked online at the People and Planet UK website and explained that the cost for organisations spending up to €5,000,000 is either 1% or €5,000, whichever is lower.

Ryan noted that he had looked at the website detailing the costs and explained that his understanding was that the affiliation cost did depend on annual spend but that it was tiered and €5,000 was not the maximum. Ryan expressed concerns that it could end up being hundreds of thousands of pounds.

James Warren – VP Welfare, asked for clarity on cost. Lauren reiterated that as far as they were aware it would be €5,000.

The Chair reminded the proposer that they could defer the motion pending clarification on cost, or vote today and accept that the motion cannot be reconsidered for two years.

Lauren waived the summation and the Chair called for the vote

For: 16

Against: 3

Abstention: 7

The proposal regarding lobby the university to affiliate to Electronics Watch passed

James Warren reported that the costs is €60,000 for those organisations spending over €5,000,000.

Charles Markham – School of Medicine Rep, asked what the estimated annual spend of the university was. Ryan Skidmore replied that he thought it was £5,000,000 on IT, not including electronics. Charles noted that the Electronics Watch website states that for the maximum affiliation to be €60,000, annual spend could be up to €100,000,000

The Chair pointed out that the motion has been voted on and further debate will not overturn the decision at this point. Any clarification should have been sought prior to the vote or deferred.

Lauren explained that much of the equipment purchased by the university is via a consortium that does already affiliate to Electronics Watch so has already been accounted for.

The Chair reiterated to all members that if they would like to keep on debating a proposal, they need to articulate that clearly to the Chair, prior to the vote.

