

Student Rights Charter

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Preamble

We, the students of Europe, hold these universal rights to be unconcealed, self-evident and inalienable.

We believe that education is a human right, not a privilege and indispensable for the advancement of other human rights, that students are equal partners in education, and that education has a societal, personal, cultural and economic objective as well as a purpose in and of itself. Every student is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Charter, free from any form of discrimination, including, but not limited to discrimination on the basis of political conviction, religion, race, ethnic or cultural origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic standing, health (physical and mental), language or any disability they may have. Every student is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Charter without regard to their field, mode or level of study or methods of programme delivery.

The rights laid down in this Charter stem from the fundamental human right to education. These rights apply for all domains and ought to be implemented at all levels of student involvement within Higher Education with decision and policy-making powers: sub-institutional, institutional, regional, national,

transnational and international, including within alliances of Higher Education Institutions.

In this document, “students” refers to all those enrolled in Higher Education, and “access” in Higher Education refers to both physical and digital access that should be guaranteed independently of each other.

§ 1 – Social Dimension of Higher Education

1. Everyone has the right to access, progress and complete free, quality Higher Education.
2. All students have the right to full and equal participation in Higher Education, free from discrimination.
3. All students have the right to equal and free usage of Higher Education facilities and services.
4. All students have the right to conduct their studies with sufficient public financial support in the form of a grant.
5. Everyone has the right to inclusive and diverse admission to any Higher Education institution without any barriers, such as financial or bureaucratic restrictions.
6. All students have the right to affordable quality and suitable housing.
7. All students have the right to affordable, nutritious and sustainable food in consideration of their dietary requirements.
8. All students have the right to access free and good quality living necessities (including but not limited to technical equipment and support for studies and essential goods such as hygiene products).
9. All students have the right to free and adequate mechanisms in place to support their physical and mental wellbeing.
10. All students have the right to free issuance of study certificates and documents and those confirming their student status.
11. All students have the right to have access to quality healthcare and psychological counselling timely and free of charge.
12. All students have the right to physically and digitally access Higher Education and social spaces regardless of physical and mental disposition and any disability they may have.
13. All students have the right to have their physical and/or mental disabilities taken into account and to receive all necessary support when attending

classes or being assessed. Additionally, the infrastructure of Higher Education Institutions and all its bodies should be adapted to the specific needs of students with disabilities.

14. All students have the right to have study material, assignments, and exams adjusted to their accessibility requirements.
15. All students have the right to free access to all relevant educational resources, in both physical and open data digital formats.
16. All students have the right to attend social, cultural and recreational events, void of any barriers.
17. All students have the right to equal participation in Higher Education that does not interfere with their religious practices (including but not limited to lecture, seminar and exam timetabling).
18. All students with refugee and minority backgrounds have the right to full access, academic inclusion, equitable treatment, support services, opportunities for advancement, participation and completion of Higher Education.
19. Students speaking a minoritised native language should be able to participate in Higher Education in their native language.
20. All students have the right to self-express as an individual or as a group void of administrative and/or bureaucratic barriers, censorship or discrimination.
21. All students have the right to participate in Higher Education spaces with institutional staff who have undergone necessary training pertaining to non-discrimination and mental health wellbeing.
22. All students have the right to a free and fair appeal to an independent representative body against any act which they consider to be discriminatory.
23. All students have the right to independent and impartial advice regarding their access and participation in Higher Education through institutional, regional and/or national Student Ombud or similar solutions.
24. All students have access to free and, where possible sustainable transport methods, regardless of their age.
25. Every student has the right to receive the study grants or the scholarships for which they have applied and for which has been deemed entitled to, even when the allocation of additional government funding for higher education is required.
26. Every student has the right to freely change their field of study, without the fear of repercussions in their academic path, such as additional financial burdens.

§ 2 - Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, Public Responsibility and Academic Integrity

1. Public authorities have the responsibility to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from quality education free of charge¹.
2. All students have the right to study at public Higher Education Institutions that are fully core funded.
3. All students have the right to Higher Education free of commodification and independent from the labour market.
4. All students have the right to structural support to begin, progress through and complete their educational programme.
5. All students have the right to protection of their academic freedom², student's rights and academic integrity.
6. All students have the right to freely access specialised softwares for detecting plagiarism.
7. All students have the right to express their thoughts about their Higher Education process, Higher Education Institutions or any matter of students' interest, including the freedom to assemble and protest, without fear of persecution.
8. All students have the right to partake autonomously and meaningfully as full and equal members with all responsibilities and privileges, in Higher Education governing structures, decision making, implementation, and assessment processes for learning, teaching and research as well as for support services. Students should make up at least an equal amount compared to, academic, administrative and technical staff in all decision-making and relevant administrative bodies.
9. All students have the right to pursue their research, teaching, and learning autonomously and use their Higher Education Institutions facilities accordingly.

¹ As affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

²As described in the Annex 1 to the Rome Communiqué https://ehea.info/Upload/Rome_Ministerial_Communique_Annex_1.pdf

10. All students have the right to the protection of their intellectual property and the recognition of their intellectual contribution.
11. All students have the right to free access to relevant information and sources in accordance with the stipulations laid out by the Open Science Movement³.
12. All students have the right to transparent Higher Education and study programs, both in the national and international context.
13. All students have the right to the proper protection of their personal data and information⁴.
14. All HEI administration processes should be transparent and all students have the right to understand how Higher Education Institutions and public authorities use automatic or technology assisted processes (including but not limited to AI) to make decisions and impact their learning processes.
15. All students have the right to discrimination and bias free education, including the deployment of AI and digital tools in education embedded in a human rights approach, following principles of proportionality of the usage of such tools vis-à-vis students' privacy, IT-security, anti-discriminatory and other fundamental rights⁵.
16. All students have the right to lifelong learning being included as a paradigm in their Higher Education according to the whole education approach.
17. All students have the right to a healthy living, studying and working environment supporting physical and mental wellbeing.
18. All students have the right to mobilise peacefully regarding issues inside or outside of academic institutions without fear of any form of repercussions pertaining to their education.
19. All students have the right to a higher education environment that safeguards and promotes common and democratic values, active citizenship, personal development, tolerance and a sense of civic responsibility especially under consideration of the socially and ecologically just transition of society.

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<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/portals-and-platforms/goap/open-science-movement/?fbclid>

⁴ In line with “the Regulation in EU law in Data Protection and Privacy in the EU & EEA” (Council of Europe Convention 108 +)

⁵ <https://esu-online.org/policies/statement-on-artificial-intelligence-bm85/>

20. All students have the right to fair assessment and attendance policies that take into account individual and unforeseen circumstances.
21. In case of infringement of their rights, all students have the right to access processes of remedy, which are to operate in reasonable time through independent and impartial structures.

§ 3 – Internationalisation and Mobility

1. All students have the right to partake in a physical mobility period regardless of their disability, socio-economic background or their academic situation.
2. All students have the right to full funding of their international mobility period, covering all related costs of study, living and travel, and to be informed about mobility grants.
3. All students have the right to have one's cultural background recognised and respected.
4. All students have the right to move freely outside of their host higher education institution.
5. All students have the right to gain intercultural competencies as part of their education during their course of studies.
6. All students have the right to a fair, costless, easy, non-bureaucratic and timely assessment and recognition process of the learning outcomes, including from non-formal and informal learning, obtained in another country. This should be available for both continuing education and entering the labour market.
7. All students have the right to quality, internationalised higher education, including but not limited to through virtual cooperation and internationalisation-at-home opportunities.
8. International and mobile students have the right to participate in student representation and student activities to the same extent as local students.
9. All students have the right to participate in all of the activities, local, national and international, at the Higher Education Institution they are attending abroad, and to be supported in their integration into the local and academic community.
10. International Students have the right to organise autonomously and represent themselves and receive sufficient support for these objectives.

11. Democratic student organisations have the right to collaborate with their counterparts in other campuses, countries, and continents.

§ 4 – Quality Education

1. All students have the right to be evaluated or graded solely on their academic performance as part of their academic programme.
2. All students have the right to learning, teaching, assessment and internship environments that support and encourage the development of student-centred, autonomous learning. This also includes the development of transversal skills such as critical and creative thinking.
3. All students have the right to receive constructive feedback on their academic activities and performance.
4. Students have the right to be active partners in both the internal and external quality assurance systems at all levels, ensuring their inclusion and meaningful involvement alongside national and international QA agencies, Higher Education Institutions and other relevant stakeholders.
5. All students have the right to participate, as equal partners, in the continuous assessment and improvement of their study programmes and institutions.
6. All students have the right to a flexible and customisable study program, as well as the required support services in place to progress in the study program, including academic and career counselling.
7. All students have the right to diverse, interactive and qualitative teaching and evaluation methods aligned with their learning objectives.
8. All students have a right to be critically educated in artificial intelligence (AI) and data literacy, keeping in mind both the limitations and possibilities of AI in education and research.
9. All students have the right to have access to quality, adequately paid and compensated curricular and extracurricular traineeships and internships without any type of discrimination. These traineeship and internship opportunities must also provide all students with a safe work environment.
10. All students have the right to continuously reviewed, assessed, updated and developed programmes, ensuring that all types of education provision, including microcredentials, digital badges etc comply with the same standards of quality, accessibility and student-centredness.

11. All students have the right to free access to comprehensive and objective information on the quality of the programme and institution in which they wish to study or are already studying.
12. All students have the right to transparent and well-communicated quality assurance processes that lead to significant follow-up and ensure meaningful student participation at all levels.
13. All students have the right to quality didactic and pedagogical teaching. This must be ensured by continuous professional development of academic staff.
14. All students have the right to assess and give feedback on the quality of teaching they receive, through course feedback questionnaires, and participation in quality assurance procedures and other in decision making and relevant administrative bodies.
15. All students have the right to fair recognition of qualifications as well as automatic recognition of qualifications and learning periods abroad in the European Higher Education Area.
16. All students have the right to fair and free recognition of their academic work.
17. All students have the right to free and timely access to their academic situation and to the release of their diplomas and other documents regarding their status.
18. All students have the right to have the grading of their academic work re-evaluated by an external examiner.
19. All students have the right to a free and fair appeal against any decision related to their studies to an independent body.
20. All students have the right to critical human oversight in situations where technology assisted decision making is being used. All students have the right to access what information and technology tools are being used in making such decisions.
21. All students have the right to gain practical knowledge directly related to the labour market; this includes the right to vocational counselling.
22. All students have the right to quality extracurricular opportunities that allow for learning beyond the confines of the curriculum.
23. All students have the right to recognition and valorisation of their prior non-formal and informal learning, for both access in and progress through higher education. Students must have adequate guidance for the

recognition process. The validated learning outcomes should also be included in the Diploma Supplement.

24. All students have the right to access appropriate educational opportunities to support their continued learning and development, regardless of their current academic performance.
25. All students have the right to modern, up-to-date and accessible academic infrastructures, whether physical or digital, including all those facilities belonging to internship and traineeship partners, linked to the requirements of the study programme, including free subscription and unconditional access to quality digital instruments such as softwares, hardware components and AI tools.

§ 5 – Student participation and representation in higher education governance

General

1. All students have the right to organise autonomously.
2. All students have the right (directly or through democratic representation) to co-governance in all decision preparatory commissions and decision-making bodies relevant to their student life. Students must have at least the same power and representation in these decision-making bodies as the academic, administrative and technical staff of the higher education community. Students must not suffer academic, financial or politically motivated legal consequences stemming from such involvement.
3. All students have the right to transparent access to the regulations, resolutions, decisions, minutes, and other institutional documents of their higher education institution.
2. All students have the right to run and be elected as student's representatives in open, free and fair elections and without discrimination. They have the right to participate in the work, policy-making, and decision-making process of different Higher Education institutions or other relevant stakeholders in Higher Education. Student representatives should be elected, replaced, and dismissed only by students.

3. The right to be active as a student representative must not be restricted or made subject to conditions based on other factors (such as academic performance or attendance policies).
4. All students have the right to have their opinion considered as that of all stakeholders on equal footing in Higher Education, following the principles of partnership and collegiality.
5. All students and student organisations have the right to freely express themselves, not limited to academic matters.
6. Students have the right to be informed about all Higher Education affairs in a transparent and timely manner.
7. All students have the right to be represented by themselves through democratically elected representatives at all levels of governance. All students of a higher education institution have the right to form a students' union both at institutional and sub-institutional level. All students have the right to be meaningfully represented via democratically elected student representatives in regional, national, transnational and international umbrella unions.
8. All students should be able to freely exercise their right to vote even when they are away from their municipality of residence without being forced to face financial burdens or having to travel back to their electoral district, in all elections, including European, national, local ones and referenda.

Student Unions

1. Student unions have the right to political independence, to financial autonomy and to manage and administer their own affairs.
2. All organisations representing students have the right to be recognised, financially supported, and be provided dedicated spaces by their Higher Education Institutions.
3. Student unions have the right
 - To represent and safeguard the professional, political, economic, social, ecological and cultural interests of its members, taking into account the special interests of students belonging to minorities and marginalised groups.

- To promote common and democratic values, active citizenship, personal development, political education, tolerance and a sense of civic responsibility especially under consideration of the socially and ecologically just transition of society.
- To maintain sub-institutional, institutional, regional, national, transnational and international relations, including the formation of and membership in umbrella organisations.
- To be duly consulted on issues concerning the governance and further development of higher education institutions and/or the relevant higher education system.
- To represent and safeguard the interests of its members (directly or through democratic representation) on regional, national, transnational, European and international governance levels.