

## Political document on student welfare

The political document on student welfare deals with the Student Organization of Agder's (STA) policies concerning the students' welfare rights at the University of Agder (UiA). The work on welfare policies is done in close correlation with other actors on welfare policies in Agder. This document portrays guidelines STA believes are important for students welfare at the university, and is divided into four parts: students' welfare rights, campus development, the Student Welfare Organization in Agder's (SiA) services, and student participation in urban and regional development.

## Table of contents

### **1.1 Study support**

#### 1.2 Accommodation

##### 1.2.1 Organising accommodation

##### 1.2.2 Decentralized education

#### 1.3 Studies with support (Mangfold)

#### 1.4 Opening hours at UiA

#### 1.5 Activities

#### 1.6 National legislation (LM)

### **2. Campus development**

#### 2.1 Library

#### 2.2 Meeting places?

### **3. The Student Welfare Organization in Agder's (SiA) services**

#### 3.1 Information

#### 3.2 Students with children

#### 3.3 Student housing

#### 3.4 Goods and services

#### 3.5 Cantina

##### 3.5.1 Food waste

#### 3.6 Student's health

##### 3.6.1 Dental health

##### 3.6.2 Sanitary products

##### 3.6.3 Training facilities

#### 3.7 Book store (bærekraft)

#### 3.8 Parking and charging stations (bærekraft)

### **4. The student towns in Agder**

#### 4.1 Cooperation between the student towns

#### 4.2 Areal regulation for student housing

#### 4.3 Rental agent (ombuds person)

#### 4.4 Student discounts

#### 4.5 Signs to show roads between town, campus and nature areas (bærekraft)

#### 4.6 The student voice in processes (bøæreka)

## **1.1 Study support**

The study support must be connected to 1.5 G and be distributed over 11 months to ensure good living conditions and that the students can study full time. Receiving study support shall not exclude the student from other social schemes, such as unemployment benefits.

UiA must facilitate for good arrangements for combining work and studies for all students. Digital teaching can be used to achieve this but must not be seen as the only solution.

UiA shall facilitate students who want to study part-time. Students who are employed are valuable to fellow students and the teaching situation itself at the university. These are students who contribute relevant experience and knowledge from working life into their studies.

## **1.2 Accommodation**

UiA must have good offers to accommodate students with disabilities, invisible illnesses and additional needs. UiA is obligated to inform all students about these offers upon admission as a student at UiA.

Students with the need for accommodation shall only have to apply and document this one time during the course of studies. When a student asks for accommodation, a formal decision shall be made concerning the offer for facilitation from the university. It shall be possible for the student to complain on the decision.

The Office for Students with Disabilities shall offer information on accommodation and support services. The Office for Students with Disabilities shall have counsellors with expertise on counselling and accommodation.

UiA PULS shall offer services and courses that can give the students good study habits and ease their meeting with higher education. This offer shall be given as a part of the studies.

### **1.2.1 Organising accommodation**

Information about opportunities and rights for accommodation must be easily accessible to any student at UiA. Employees at the university must be familiar with the Resource Centre and be able to refer students there if there are any questions or needs.

UiA must develop systems that exempt students from coordination and dissemination internally at the institution about the accommodation that has been granted. In order for the facilitation that already exists to be useful, it is important that those who use these tools, both employees and students, have sufficient knowledge to use them.

Students shall have the opportunity to evaluate the accommodation at UiA as they evaluate modules.

### **1.2.2 Decentralized education**

The university shall facilitate for students with a lower possibility for mobility can study close to their home. Decentralized educational offers can have other enrolment systems than ordinary studies.

Regional affiliation can be one of the admission requirements. At the same time, it must be ensured the same access to studies as possible. These studies shall be financed outside of the ordinary study place financing.

### **1.3 Studies with support**

UiA must have a good support offer for students with mental illnesses. The support offer shall include individual follow-ups and counselling and be adapted to the specific student.

UiA shall facilitate for the work Studies with support (SMS) do.

UiA shall also further develop the offer, which today provides extra support and guidance to students who need it. SMS shall not undertake an academic employee role in accommodating for students, but be a supplement for students who need more support than what is currently in an employee's work portfolio.

### **1.4 Opening hours at UiA**

The students shall have access to the facilities at UiA around the clock. This means both common areas, reading areas, group study rooms, practical rehearsal rooms and labs. The university must therefore have flexible opening hours, the opportunity to buy food and beverage in the evening and good air quality. It is important that UiA facilitates students with extended opening hours in exam periods.

STA believes that UiA must use part time employed students at a larger degree to ensure more flexible opening hours.

### **1.5 Activities**

Student engagement must be promoted, and it shall be facilitated for academic, cultural, sporty, and social activities for the students at UiA. STA believes that this also shall be facilitated outside of the ordinary opening hours at UiA.

The student activities are a resource for UiA. The faculties and teacher education unit must ensure that student activities are included in the work to create meeting places between students.

Student activities must be secured economic support to be able to arrange different events that gather student groups to socialize in a community.

UiA must facilitate for areas on campus to be used by student activities. This must be seen in correlation with an increased student body.

### **1.6 National legislation**

UiA and STA shall be a driving force for a national legislation that closes the gaps concerning students' security under the law.

## **2. Campus development**

When campus is further developed, students shall always be included in the start-up phase, planning work, project groups and user participation.

In campus development, UiA shall also facilitate for students to get the area they need, based on the number of students. If the student body increases, the area must also be further developed.

Students must be ensured a sufficient number of places to read, both in the library and in reading halls. Semester registered students at UiA must always have the first right to these places in lecture rooms, group study rooms and reading halls.

### **2.1 Library**

The university library has become smaller while the student body has become bigger. The area must be developed in line with the student body, and older penum literature must be available for loan.

It is also important that the library continuously expands the capacity for places students can read.

The university library shall be open for students around the clock.

### **2.2 Meeting places**

It is important that the university establishes meeting places, such as the Global Lounge, where students and employees can meet to exchange thoughts, ideas, opinions and build social and professional relations outside of normal teaching hours.

*Skravlesoner* (chatter zones) are to work as an arena that invites for low-threshold socializing and inclusion across the student body at UiA. This is a concrete measure in cooperation with *Skravlekopp*. Chatter zones must be maintained and be an open, inclusive arena where different types of students can meet.

## **3. The Student Welfare Organization in Agder's (SiA) services**

Part of SiA's funding comes from students, and thus it is important that the students' interests are being heard and looked after. As a service that is made for and run by students, it is important that they are future oriented and sustainable. To get fair access to SiA's services, language is very important. Information and communication about the services must therefore be offered in English as well as Norwegian.

### **3.1 Information**

Information from the SiA-health team and the health services from the municipality must be visible and available both digitally and on campus at all times.

### **3.2 Students with children**

Students with children must have the same prerequisites as students without children when it comes to attending lectures and finishing their degree. This requires some customization from the university and SiA.

The number of places in kindergarten for students' children must mirror the number of students with children.

### **3.3 Student housing**

There must at any time be at least s 20 % coverage when it comes to student housing at the University of Agder. The prices must always be reflected by the students' financial situation and not contribute to an increase in the private market.

When SiA constructs and builds new student housing, they must ensure that they are made as plus buildings. Existing buildings must be made into buildings with zero emission. When renovation of buildings is possible and more environmentally friendly than to build new housing, this shall be chosen and carried out. It shall be facilitated to make it easy for the tenants in the student houses to sort their waste, including special waste.

### **3.4 Goods and services**

The pricing of goods and services on both campuses must be the same and reflect the students' financial situation.

### **3.5 Cantina**

The cantinas should strive to have opening hours that reflects the students' general teaching hours, and the prices should reflect the students' financial situation and not exceed prices in grocery stores.

Information on adjustments of the opening hours must be given at least 14 days before it is implemented.

The cantinas shall always offer a versatile food offer that fits the students' diets, allergies, intolerances and requirements. This means that the cantinas must always serve food like halal, kosher, vegetarian and vegan options. The student cantinas shall give financial advantages if one chooses the vegetarian or vegan option by clearly differentiate the prices between plant-based food and animal food by reducing costs on plant-based options.

All food shall be marked with allergies, intolerances, nutritional content and ingredients, and be clearly communicated.

#### **3.5.1 Food waste**

Food waste shall be reduced to a bare minimum. Goods that are closing in on the expiration date and goods that according to other reasons cannot be sold the next day, shall be sold at reduced prices in the cantina or at the app Too Good to Go. This system should be improved.

UiA and SiA must create a cooperation concerning garbage disposal on campus. One must strive for the least possible waste and the positive consequences of correct recycling and other environmentally measurements must be made visible. It must be clearly informed about how many kilos of food that are being thrown away every day in the cantinas. This will increase an awareness around food waste.

### **3.6 Student's health**

The student health services from SiA must be located at UiA's campuses. The offers shall be a supplement for students at the university where the main part of the offers aimed at student health is provided by the municipal health service.

UiA shall contribute to the financing of the student health services. It is important that the university and SiA keeps a close dialogue with the host municipalities to attain a better cooperation concerning the student health services.

UiA shall be a driving force for the establishment of a medical centre on Grimstad campus. The medical centres at both campuses shall offer good student discounts. In addition, the university shall work to give more positions in SiA Health to help students with their various health challenges and make sure the health services are equal on both campuses.

### **3.6.1 Dental health**

STA believes that dental treatment for students at UiA should be a part of the public dental health services, and to a far greater extent take the students financial situation into consideration. This implies that students should receive a 75 % discount on dental health services, the same as youths between the age of 19 and 20. The discount must be the same regardless of age and places of living and study.

### **3.6.2 Sanitary products**

UiA shall offer free sanitary products for all students who need it. The products shall be easily accessible on both campuses.

### **3.6.3 Training facilities**

The students shall have access to good and reasonable training facilities on both campuses facilitated by SiA. The prices shall be reflected by the students' financial situation and match prices with other training facilities run by student welfare organizations in Norway.

SiA shall work for equal training facilities for students in Grimstad and Kristiansand.

### **3.7 Book store**

SiA's book shop, *SiA Bok*, must create a sustainable system for selling books where the students can sell their used books to SiA who sell the books to other students at a cheap price. *SiA Bok* must also investigate and implement good digital solutions.

SiA shall facilitate that the literature can be purchased at discounted prices in book form. Digital literature shall be free. There must be good loan and purchase agreements for e-book devices at the university library and *SiA Bok*.

### **3.8 Parking and charging stations**

Parking at the student houses shall not be taxed. SiA shall offer a sufficient amount of charging stations for electrical cars on parking spaces connected to the student houses. The parking spaces shall be accessible for students, and students with children shall be prioritised when assigning parking spaces.

## **4. The student towns in Agder**

The host towns and region must continually involve the students and the university in

their work on plans and strategy. The sustainability goals must be visible in the plans and academia must be an important contributor in reaching these goals.

Through the *Universitetsbystrategiene* in Kristiansand and Grimstad, UiA shall stimulate demands on a sustainable partnership. In addition to this, the university shall ensure focus on sustainability and environment in all deals made with companies, other municipalities, and other actors the university cooperate with.

The students shall be represented in all forums with cooperation between the university, the public and the business life.

The student towns must ensure that students are able to go to the doctor outside of the emergency room when it is necessary if they do not have a general practitioner in town. The student towns must establish communal medical centres where it is possible to have drop-in for students.

#### **4.1 Cooperation between the student towns**

The municipalities shall create positions that work specifically with student well-being and the development of the student towns. These will collaborate in permanent working groups with STA, VT, UiA, SiA and the Student Councils.

#### **4.2 Areal regulation for student housing**

The municipalities must actively regulate more areas for student housing. This must be done in close dialogue with SiA. It is important that the area being regulated is close to the town centre.

#### **4.3 Rental agent (ombuds person)**

Most students live in the private rental market and thus provide the population and region with a lot of funds. A rental agent (ombuds person) who ensures that students live in proper conditions must be established.

The municipalities must also create a website with information and requirements for residents who intend to or already rent to students. This will ensure that students live under proper conditions.

#### **4.4 Student discounts**

Private and public parties alike must offer student discount in line with the *Universitybysatsningene*. Information about the discounts must be easy assessable for the students.

#### **4.5 Signs to show roads between town, campus and nature areas**

It shall be easy to understand and see that one is closing in on the university. Shortcuts by walking and cycling shall be clearly marked for more frequent use. It is important to connect town and nature areas that are close to one another. There must be signs to communicate this so that they are used frequently by both the students, employees at UiA and the population in general.

#### **4.6 The student voice in processes**

The students shall be consulted regarding all changes in society that concerns them. There shall be a student council (*Studentråd*) in both municipalities, that are the



official student organ for the municipality. In addition to his, is shall be facilitated for more students to be involved in processes so that the decisions made are made with the best possible basis and decisions.