

Proposer: Alison Simm
Seconder: Amelia Armit
Date: 03/04/2023



Motion Title: Push for the University to Pledge to the EmilyTest in 2023/24

Motion Resolves:

We at Reclaim Stirling want the Students' Union to commit to pushing for the University to pledge to take the EmilyTest¹. Whilst there is a good deal of resources put into providing counselling and support for those who have experienced Gender-based violence (GBV), there appears to be a gap between this attitude in support and the disciplinary process. In pledging to the EmilyTest there will be an effect on this, as the team works with the University to develop disciplinary processes and review the panel involved. Pledging to the EmilyTest will improve both short-term and long-term the student experience at Stirling and will have a lasting impact on GBV in decades to come. Whilst the Union is positively pushing for GBV changes, there is no formalised commitment to a strong campaign, such as this charter.

Therefore, we would urge that this motion is passed for **the Students' Union to actively push for the University to pledge to the EmilyTest in the academic year 2023/2024**, with a soft goal of having engaged and starting proceedings in the same academic year.

Financial Implications -

To pledge to the EmilyTest it would cost a University of Stirling's size a one-off cost of £2,000 for 6-12 months of work to 'lay the foundations'. After that, the cost to the University to 'take the test' would be £7,500 (a one-off assessment fee). Thereafter, £2,250 to maintain the award, being assessed to ensure standards remain at the level required. Therefore, if we look at a period of 6 years and take the average, it would cost £3,083 a year. This includes in-depth analysis of all policies, practices and procedures, coaching, training, advice on data collection, facilitation of student focus groups, joining the charter community etc. These price points were provided directly by the EmilyTest Organisation. These prices were reached and agreed upon through consultation with the higher education sector and are comparable in price to other charters, such as the Athena Swan charter which cost the University £3500 a year.

Motion Notes:

Scottish Government Support –

This video² features the following quote from former **First Minister Nicola Sturgeon**:

0.52-1.00 - "Emily's Test is, of course, an important initiative that the Government worked with Universities on and **encourages Universities to take very seriously.**" - First Minister Nicola Sturgeon.

Below is a video from the 2nd of February featuring **Shirley-Ann Somerville, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills**³:

¹ <http://emilytest.co.uk/>

² <https://fb.watch/jGDc-KV3wi/>

³ <https://twitter.com/i/status/1621204400785039360>

Proposer: Alison Simm
Seconder: Amelia Armit
Date: 03/04/2023



"The Scottish Government funds the EmilyTest charity to ensure that Universities and Colleges are not only taking the matter seriously but acting on it. **I recently wrote to all the Universities to encourage them strongly to join the EmilyTest charter**, if they have not done so already. I reiterate that again today because Pauline McNeill raises an exceptionally important point: we need to ensure that the issue is tackled and that everyone feels safe in their workplaces and places of education."

Reclaim Stirling also contacted the **Higher Education Secretary at the Scottish Government** for comment – below is relevant material from his response (Appendix 1):

Adam Randell, Higher Education Secretary: University Governance and Equalities, Scottish Government:

"It is imperative that **all institutions take actions to reduce the risk of GBV happening**, and that they are able to respond quickly, effectively and transparently if and when it does. **That is why we have supported Emily Test** to create its ground-breaking GBV Charter, the only initiative of its kind in the UK. It is also why the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills wrote to all university principals in Scotland on 26 January 2023, to **encourage them to engage with Emily Test** on this matter.

It would not be appropriate for the Scottish Government to comment on the motion which you have raised in your correspondence, or with regards to the actions of any individuals within the University. **However, Universities have a responsibility to care for their students and we would urge all Universities and Colleges in Scotland to consider signing up to the Charter** in order to ensure that our campuses are safe environments for our students."

Quotes from other Universities –

Dr Matt Ward, Student Support and Experience Manager, University of Dundee - "Often in life we are full of good intentions, we want the best for ourselves and our communities. We all want our Universities to be places where everyone is safe, where GBV doesn't happen, ultimately where students thrive. Unfortunately, that doesn't happen without hard work and commitment and sometimes we need to make ourselves accountable to make sure we carry through the good intentions. The EmilyTest is a way of creating that accountability and working with experts in the field of GBV to ensure our Universities are safe places for all."

A point that may be raised is **'is this wanted by students?'**. At Reclaim Stirling we conducted a survey of students and staff which was published on social media and the Portal. I have attached the results below (Appendix 2) and would encourage all to read it - particularly some of the written responses are very powerful. The survey⁴ provided a link to the EmilyTest website and allowed participants to read the charter to be accurately informed - but it is worth noting that the survey was specifically designed to not lead participants either for or against the charter. Neutrality was key to us as we wanted to get a true reflection so that this had good evidential standing. Particularly worth noting is the table about support for the EmilyTest. After reading the document on the EmilyTest, 88.7% of respondents were in favour of the EmilyTest being implemented. 86.7% of those who had experienced GBV did not report it to the University. Whilst some may not have reported for their own valid reasons, from the responses in the next part of the survey - the written responses - it can be concluded that a significant proportion did not report as they did not trust the University to

⁴ [Preventing Gender Based Violence \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com)

Proposer: Alison Simm
Seconder: Amelia Armit
Date: 03/04/2023



act. This can be evidenced as 66.7% of those who did report did not feel that the support they received from the University was satisfactory. Additionally, a petition⁵ was published by Reclaim Stirling in April 2022, which called for changes to Stirling's GBV approach, including reporting, panel training and safeguarding – which are all covered by signing up to the EmilyTest. To date, this petition has 108 signatures. I would argue therefore that this means that the University needs a radical overhaul of its GBV approach. The EmilyTest I believe, after research, would provide this overhaul which is needed (and wanted).

Motion Believes:

The main reason for this motion is that GBV is a major problem within Scottish Universities but specifically at Stirling - from 2016-2020 Stirling University only upheld 33% of GBV cases reported. 10 cases of GBV have already been reported to the University since 2020⁶. This shows that there is a culture of GBV within Stirling and that the University needs to take a more hardline and wholesystems approach to tackling. Education should not come with risk of sexual violence. Without an overhaul of Stirling's approach to GBV, nothing will change.

⁵ [Petition · Tackle Reporting Related Trauma · Change.org](#)

⁶ Figures provided by University of Stirling via Freedom of Information request

Proposer: Alison Simm
Seconder: Amelia Armit
Date: 03/04/2023



Appendix 1:
The Higher Education Secretary at the Scottish Government full response for comment.

Our Reference: 202300346149

16 March 2023

Dear Alison Simm ,

Thank you for your email of 2 March 2023 addressed to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, in relation to the Emily Test Gender Based Violence (GBV) Charter and the University of Stirling. I am responding as I work in the area of Scottish Government responsible for matters relating to GBV in higher education.

The Scottish Government remains absolutely committed to eliminating violence against women and girls in all its forms. Scotland's universities should be places where students can live, study and research, safe from gender-based violence.

It is imperative that all institutions take actions to reduce the risk of GBV happening, and that they are able to respond quickly, effectively and transparently if and when it does. That is why we have supported Emily Test to create its ground-breaking [GBV Charter](#), the only initiative of its kind in the UK. It is also why the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills wrote to all university principals in Scotland on 26 January 2023, to encourage them to engage with Emily Test on this matter.

With regards to the University of Stirling's engagement with the Charter, Scottish universities are autonomous institutions and, as such, are responsible for all matters relating to the management of their institution. The Scottish Government and Scottish Ministers are unable to intervene in internal institutional matters, including decisions taken as to whether to engage with third sector partners.

It would, therefore, not be appropriate for the Scottish Government to comment on the motion which you have raised in your correspondence, or with regards to the actions of any individuals within the University.

However, universities have a responsibility to care for their students and we would urge all universities

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1
3DG
www.gov.scot



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Silver



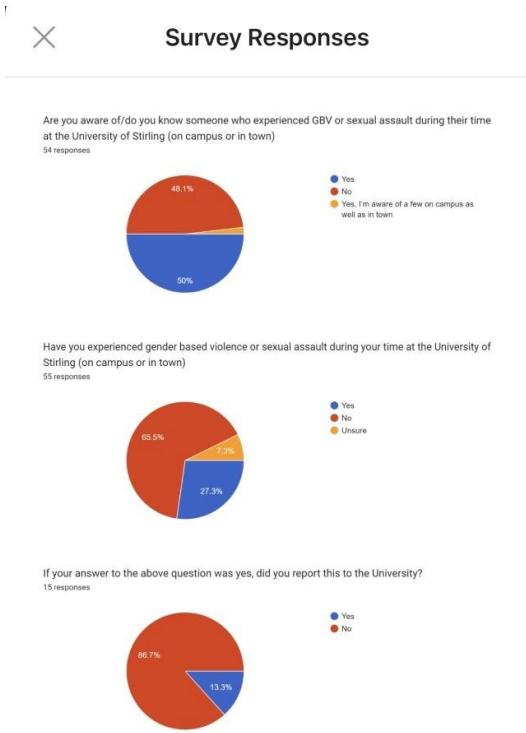
and colleges in Scotland to consider signing up to the Charter in order to ensure that our campuses are safe environments for our students.

I hope that you have found this information useful.

Yours sincerely

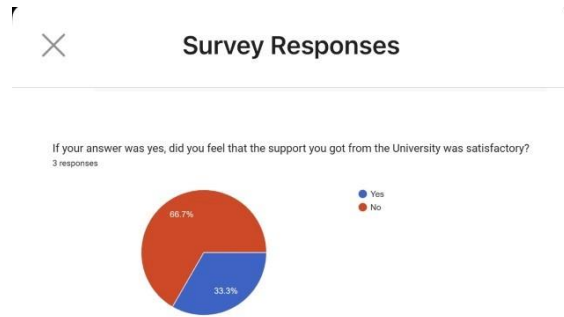
Adam Rendall
HES : University Governance and Equalities

Appendix 2:
 Responses from Preventing Gender-Based Violence Survey.



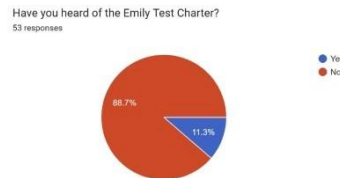
If your answer to the above question was no, please state why
 16 responses

- I didn't report it because I didn't know how, I didn't know if anyone would believe me. I didn't know who to contact, and any support available. I still see the person on a regular basis, but I know if I reported them it's been that long that there's very little evidence.
- based on past experience of others the uni

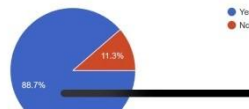


If you feel comfortable, please detail below what kind of support you got from the University and how you feel about its responses

- N/A
- I obtained a disclosure from a student and followed due process confidentially
- There was minimal support as counselling sessions are on a one off basis and they clearly said that it wasn't the place to discuss SA as they wouldn't be able to offer enough sessions to help
- n/a



Please read the short one page description of the Emily Test Charter, linked here: <http://emilytest.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/0...ng> that should be implemented in the University?
 53 responses



Proposer: Alison Simm
Seconder: Amelia Armit
Date: 03/04/2023



Survey Responses

- I think it would help give victims of GBV a voice and understand that it is not something that acceptable with in society or our institution.
- I think any additional awareness is good but there need to be clearly defined prevention measures and serious consequences for anyone found to be partaking in GBV. A plan to simply respond to instances is not as beneficial as putting the effort towards ensuring all students feel safe in the first place.
- GBV and coercive control have somehow become normalised as passionate relationships. Anything we can do to break down this image and protect the lives and mental health of our young people then I think we should whole heartedly embrace it
- to stop history from repeating itself and prevent suicide
- Anything that can help to lessen the impact of GBV and protect students and staff should be implemented.
- This or an equivalent, of course no one should suffer from or through GBV
- The university needs to take further steps to prevent the kind of behaviour we are seeing both on and off of campus. The Emily Test Charter would ideally be just the beginning, as the charter itself describes it as being the minimum standard required.
- takes steps to ensure the prevention of gender based violence
- good to have a foundation and guidance to work with and seen as shared across Scotland
- everything should be done to prevent GBV
- Anything to further protections against GBV are worth considering

Survey Responses

Please explain your answer to the above question40 responses

From the above description the Emily Test would be an invaluable addition to the University

- I believe the Emily test charter is a lot more applicable
- The uni does not appropriately address gbv sufficiently especially the perpetrators
- I think it's important that the university should take stuff like this seriously and make sure that any GBV is minimised if not eradicated among our student community. It sounds like the EmilyTest Charter would be a step towards that direction.
- the uni's behaviour towards victims is poor and needs improvement desperately
- I think it would be a good start to helping reduce GBV and SA, as well as giving victims and survivors more support. In my opinion, educating people is key to reducing these cases
- The link leads to a unsafe site so I don't know how trustworthy the site is. Not heard much about it either and I feel that the one pager doesn't explain enough what exactly the university will be doing
- A lot of people don't understand why GBV is such a big deal and women should just "deal" with it, I think education is vital to help those who have experienced it and individuals who could become perpetrators to stand against those who have committed GBV. GBV doesn't just happen on its own and doesnt just impact 1 person (As Emily's case showed.)
- The University already has a GBV strategy and

Proposer: Alison Simm
Seconder: Amelia Armit
Date: 03/04/2023



Survey Responses

worth considering

- I do not believe adequate support is provided for those who report GBV at the university. Work needs to be done to ensure the university has a solid framework to prevent a continuing culture of violence and abuse
- More needs done to support female students
- It would force the institution to do more to help female students who are victims of gender based violence/assault
- Always good to have a system in place to hold institutions accountable. Anyone can say 'we are inclusive and supportive' or 'we have zero tolerance' but it's really just their word against another's.
- taking emily test as the be all and end all of gbv is wrong when Emily can't even speak for herself even in death she has been commodified.
- seems like a load of committee-based jargon. it is a box-ticking exercise which does nothing to address the deeper problems of GBV
- I think it is essential that every university should pass the Emily test, it is the bare minimum that students should be safe and feel safe in education.
- It seems like a way to bring lasting change instead of just a short campaign that works for a while and is then forgotten about as these things often are.
- because it would help schools put themselves on a scale
- Throughout my time here, it seems that GBV is not equal or inclusive. If the Emily Test Charter was in place, I think that men or LGBT+ individuals would be more open to reporting GBV and sexual assault.
- If anything can be done to save lives, it should at