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**Campaigns and Political Activity Policy**

1. **Introduction**
   1. This policy is based on the Charities Commission Guidance [Campaigning and political activity guidance for charities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities-cc9/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities#checklist)
   2. It outlines Harper Adams Students’ Union (HASU) approach to campaigning and political activity in regard to Charity Law and takes into consideration our charity aims and objectives.
2. **Definitions (taken from Charity Commission):**
   1. Campaigning: awareness-raising and for efforts to educate or involve the public by mobilising their support on a particular issue, or to influence or change public attitudes. Campaigning activity also aims to ensure that existing laws are observed.
   2. Political activity: political activity must only be undertaken by a charity in the context of supporting the delivery of its charitable purposes. It refers to activity by a charity which is aimed at securing, or opposing, any change in the law or in the policy or decisions of central government, local authorities or other public bodies, whether in this country or abroad. It includes activity to preserve an existing piece of legislation, where a charity opposes it being repealed or amended.
   3. Political activity might include some or all of:
      1. raising public support for such a change
      2. seeking to influence political parties or independent candidates, decision-makers, politicians or public servants on the charity’s position in various ways in support of the desired change; and responding to consultations carried out by political parties
3. **HASU - Campaigning & Political Activity:**
   1. More information can be found on the Charities Commission Guidance [Campaigning and political activity guidance for charities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities-cc9/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities#checklist) but the following provides a basic overview for HASU.
   2. HASU can become involved in campaigning and in political activity which further or support our charitable purposes.
   3. HASU can, in support of its charitable purposes, undertake a range of political activities. However, these cannot be the only activities that the charity carries out.
   4. HASU may carry out political activity for a change in the law if it supports their own charitable purpose.
   5. HASU can seek to influence government or other public bodies, providing it is in support of their charitable purposes.
   6. HASU may engage with a political party in ways that supports its own charitable purposes. In doing so, it must remain politically neutral and should consider working with other parties to help ensure public perceptions of neutrality.
   7. HASU can engage with individual politicians. In doing so, they must remain politically neutral and should consider working with other parties to help ensure public perceptions of neutrality.
   8. HASU must not give its support to any one political party. It may express support for particular policies which will contribute to the delivery of its own charitable purposes so long as its independence is maintained, and perceptions of its independence are not adversely affected.
4. **Guidance for Trustees:**
   1. As with any activity, campaigning and political activity will carry some opportunities and risks which trustees will need to identify and plan to manage. Trustees must be satisfied on reasonable grounds that the activities are likely be an effective means of furthering or supporting the purposes of the charity; and are able to justify the resources applied.
5. **Further guidance:**
   1. More information on areas such as questions for Trustees, marketing considerations can be found on the Charities Commission Guidance [Campaigning and political activity guidance for charities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities-cc9/speaking-out-guidance-on-campaigning-and-political-activity-by-charities#checklist)