

Committee Title	Student Voice					
Date of Meeting	Monday 21 st February 2022					
Item Number and Title/Subject	New affiliated societies and Sports Clubs					
Paper Presenter	Societies Council Chair					
Brief Summary of Issues/Topic	<p>This paper requests affiliation of the following societies:</p> <p><u>PENSA Glasgow Society</u></p> <p>The affiliation of this society was presented and rejected at the second meeting of Student Voice on 6th December 2021. Following this decision, the Trustee Board on 13th December 2021 discussed the issues raised by Student Voice and subsequently approved the PENSA Glasgow Society to continue to operate as a Starter Society and for its affiliation to be presented again to Student Voice. The rationale behind this decision is attached.</p> <p>Society Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To create a safe environment for all students from diverse backgrounds to come together and share their love for God. 2. Tackle different social issues that we face in University and how to deal with them in a Godly sense. 3. To see a transformation of our youth culture and the raising of world changers. 4. Equipping the youth with fluency in the language of the Kingdom of God. <p><u>Desi Society</u></p> <p>Society Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bring together South-Asian (desi) individuals at Glasgow Caledonian University. 2. Provide opportunities to make new friends. 3. Educate students about south Asian culture through events. 4. Allow individuals from outside the culture to experience it. 					
Recommendation(s)	Information		Discussion		Approval	X
	<p><i>Any member can ask a question by raising their voting card or virtual hand and be recognised by the Chair to speak.</i></p> <p>Student Voice is asked to approve the affiliated societies.</p>					
Who have you consulted when developing the paper?	Societies Council Trustee Board					
Staff/Student Protocol	Yes		No	X	N/A	
Will any decision approved directly affect the work of staff?	N/A					

Should the paper be submitted to any other committee following its consideration/approval at this meeting?

If yes, please state the committee and proposed date of submission.

PENSA Glasgow Society Affiliation

The PENSA Glasgow Society affiliation was not approved by Student Voice on 6th December 2021, with the substantive reason being that their aims are too similar to that of the Christian Union society. Other factors raised by members as an objection to its affiliation is that the society is affiliated to a national body (ie [The Church of Pentecost UK](#)) and that marriage within this religion can only be between a biological man and women as defined at birth and the implications for trans students.

The Trustee Board on 13th December 2022 discussed the issues raised at the Student Voice on the PENSA Glasgow Society affiliation:

national affiliation

Any funding from the Students' Association should be used for club and society activities, for our members (students) and not for direct donations to another organisation. Societies can however donate funds or resources to an external organisation (ie affiliate) if they receive something in return (ie they normally get advice, resources etc). For instance, both the Christian Union (CU) and Caledonian Islamic Students' Association (CISA) are affiliated to national bodies, ie Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF) and Federation Of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS). In the past the Amnesty International Society was affiliated to Amnesty International. Therefore, it would not be a valid reason to refuse affiliation for this reason.

similar aims

In the past the Societies Council and Student Voice have approved the affiliation of a Catholic Society, another Christian denomination. This was on the basis that different Christian denominations differ in what they use for the basis of their doctrines and beliefs. There therefore appears to be a precedence of approving affiliation of different religious groups. Within the Equality Act 2010 it may be perceived to be discriminatory to not allow the PENSA Glasgow Society to affiliate because they are a specific denomination or sect within a religion.

protected characteristics

Both gender reassignment and religion and belief are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Although some may disagree with a particular religious belief, that belief is protected under the Equality Act 2010. Where it may be problematic is if that belief – in this case, marriage must be between a biological man and woman as defined at birth – turns into active discrimination (as defined by the Equality Act) towards anyone who does not fit into that category. This could have a negative impact on trans people. Indeed, gay and lesbian people, in the context of same-sex relationships, could also be affected as sexual orientation is a protected characteristic. In other words, a religious belief does not give a right to discriminate against someone with another protected characteristic.

The Students' Association met with representatives from the PENSA Glasgow Society on 14th December 2021. The society confirmed that they are about celebrating its faith rather than setting out to discriminate against others and that the society is open to all GCU students to join. They confirmed that whilst they are affiliated to The Church of Pentecost UK they are an independent and autonomous group, where decision making is made at a local level.

next steps

The Trustee Board on 13th December 2021 has approved the PENSA Glasgow Society to continue to operate as a Starter Society and for its affiliation to be presented again to Student Voice.

The Students' Association is working on reviewing the mechanisms in place for societies to ensure that all societies are not setting out to actively discriminate against other through their aims or activities. This will form part of the annual affiliation process.

The Students' Association is also reviewing its Equality and Diversity Policy to become an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.