

# ISSU Charter for Student Voice

## "ISSU Féidir Linn"

Recalling **Article 12** of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that "State Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."

and **Article 13:**

"The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice."

and **Article 14:**

"States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion."

And **Article 15:**

- 1.** States Parties recognise the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.
- 2.** No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others."

*and recognising:*

- 1.1** That this includes views on schooling and education and that students that are given the opportunity to contribute to and engage in decisions concerning their education and to take ownership of their own learning generally view

learning with a more positive outlook thus will work harder to achieve their full potential academically,

- 1.2** That second-level students are capable of articulating their views and opinions and that experiencing the education system on a daily basis means that students are best placed to provide insightful feedback into curricula, the assessment system and other education matters,

*ISSU affirms:*

- 1.1** That legislation should provide for student councils to nominate a representative in conjunction with school management to represent the views of their peers as associate members of school boards of management
- 1.2** That students should be recognised as an official partner in the Irish education system with the Irish Second-level Students' Union formally recognised by the Department of Education and Skills as the national representative body for second-level students and thus through ISSU's structure as a national umbrella body for school student councils.

*and commits to:*

- 1.1** Working with the other stakeholders and partners within the Irish education system to ensure students have an equal say, but most importantly not only to ensure that this voice is heard – but is listened to and respected;
- 1.2** Invest in the development of the national and regional networks of the ISSU to support student voice;
- 1.3** Develop strategy and policy in furtherance to the main aims of the ISSU and issues affecting students;
- 1.4** To be a modern, transparent, reliable and democratic organisation.

### **Vision Statement**

*“The Irish Second-Level Students’ Union shall work towards an education system in which the views, opinions and contributions of students are respected and in which students are recognised as an official partner in creating an education that is centred around and caters best for students”*

### **Mission Statement**

*“The Irish Second-level Students’ Union will be an agent and a catalyst for change in the Irish Education system seeking to advance education by involving young people actively in all aspects of their education, and thus empowering young people to realise their voice.”*

### **Values and Commitments - The ISSU is committed to:**

- a. To develop policies and strategies on issues which affect Irish second-level students and bring the needs and rights of those students to the relevant authorities.
- b. To provide a transparent, democratic and reliable organisation.
- c. To provide training and assist in the development of second-level school student councils.
- d. To work closely with education, youth policy makers as well as our partners in the education and youth sector to continually develop a transparent, fair and modern education system.
- e. To work in collaboration with Government agencies and other educational institutions both in Ireland and in Europe.
- f. And most importantly, to give students a structured platform through which the voice of the Irish Second-Level Student can be heard.

### **These commitments are reflected in the following mottoes:-**

*“Youth infusion. We have the power to influence change. ISSU féidir linn”*

&

*“Connecting Students”*

&

*“Giving students a voice in their education and in issues affecting them”*