

Minutes

2nd Student Parliament

Tuesday 20 November 2025

Level 8 Open Space, Strathclyde Student Union

Attendees: President, VP Community, VP Education, Business PGT Faculty Rep, Business PGR Faculty Rep, Engineering UG Faculty Rep, Engineering PGT Faculty Rep, Engineering PGR Faculty Rep, Science UG Faculty Rep, Science PGT Faculty Rep, HaSS UG Faculty Rep, HaSS PGT Faculty Rep, HaSS PGR Faculty Rep, Women's Rep, BAME Rep, Disabled Students' Rep, LGBT+ Rep, Democracy Convenor, Interfaith Rep, Halls Rep

Apologies: VP Inclusion, VP Sport, Business UG Faculty Rep, Science PGR Faculty Rep, International Student Rep,

Absentees: Mature Students' Rep

Staff: Alison McNaughton, Morna Simpkins, Rudela Zaman

1) Welcome and Call to Order

Democracy Convener

- Members Present
- Apologies
- Declarations of Interest (if any)
 - i) HaSS PGR Faculty Rep raised conflict of interest as she is also the Democracy Assistant, working on Democracy Review
- Minutes and Matters Arising

2) Reports

Exec

a) President

See attached report

b) Vice-President Community

See attached report

c) Vice-President Education

See attached report

d) Vice-President Inclusion

See attached report

e) Vice-President Sport

See attached report

3) Democracy Review – Proposal and Initial Discussion

Democracy Assistant

- In the works with the Union since February, welcoming questions and feedback.
- Democracy Assistant (Phyllis), Voice Manager (Alison) and Head of Membership (Leo) worked to design data collection method, data was collected from student unions similar to Strath Union.
- Strong and robust democracy at Strath Union:
 - i) Well-balanced democracy structure with not too many gaps
 - ii) Selection and diversity of roles much more developed than similar unions

- Need areas identified:
 - i) Members' awareness: some members don't understand procedures or how to contact reps or the overall democratic structure of the Union
 - ii) More consistency and efficacy needed in quality of rep roles
- Proposed changes:
 - i) Flatten executive structure (replace Union President and VPs with five Presidents of their remits)
 - ii) Formalise each executive's remit to include committee structure and make them responsible for their own democracy
 - iii) Reframe Non-Executive reps for underrepresented students as "Equality Officers" to explicitly connect them to Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice
 - iv) Eliminate Mature Students, Part-Time Students, Interfaith, and Halls rep roles as effectiveness of these roles are unclear and experience low turnouts and participation
 - v) Change Democracy Convenor role from elected position to student-staff role but keep reps involved in the hiring process
 - vi) No change to International Students' rep and Faculty reps' positions
- Discussion:
 - i) President (Fraser): President does not have representational link externally and internally.
 - President should stick in the middle to interact with all other roles and remits in the flattened structure. Wants president role to be more mandatable and accountable.
 - Proposed Parliament accountability mechanism for all roles.
 - Phyllis: Implementational level, certainly within plan.
 - ii) BAME Rep: Wondering what reframing into Equality Officers entails
 - Democracy Assistant: Is a name change that represents structural shift. Will form an inclusion committee to work with Inclusion Officer to work on inclusion, equality and justice.
 - iii) LGBT+ Rep & CEO: Question about proposed removal of Mature Students' Rep role
 - Democracy Assistant: 'Mature student' definition too broad and involves too big a remit for role to handle. Role's position in democracy structure also unclear, as it does not link with the Mature Students' Association.
 - iv) Democracy Convener: wondering where proposed eliminated reps' roles are moving and having more impact. Secondly, Democracy Convenor's role is only during Parliament, unsure if this is enough to be a separate student-staff role.
 - Democracy Assistant: will have series of charts made available to visually explain how this would work. Proposals still in discussion phase, more comprehensive report will be available for next meeting.
 - Voice Manager: Facilitation is a big role and can be made student-staff but needs work and discussion of what else can be incorporated into this role.
 - v) VP Education: Suggested taking pictures of reps comfortable with their photos on Union website to increase visibility, accepting submissions.
 - vi) Halls' Rep: Curious about how students in halls would be represented. Not much advocacy for students in university halls and even less in private student accommodations.
 - Voice Manager: Union has struggled with engagement for Halls rep role, no consistent Halls' rep in past few years partly due to unclear responsibilities and lack of any particular campaign (about housing, rent, etc.) as most are done by Executives. Looking to represent marginalised groups but Halls does not fall into that structure as much. Will catch up in 2 weeks to discuss further.

4) Any Other Competent Business (AOCB) :

- Vice President Education: “Dogs on Campus” policy
Proposed “Dogs on Campus” policy on behalf of a PGR. Proposal entails having more dogs that you train on your own as Therapets to improve mental health as it is difficult to randomly bring a dog to campus.
 - Democracy Convenor: Similar to a proposal discussed at mock parliament session. Proposal is going to Student Experience committee, not passing through Parliament. Also unsure of the need for Therapets, they are different from service animals.
 - (a) VP Education: Other universities have dog-friendly policies, and Therapets are regulated animals to facilitate mental health support.
 - HaSS PGR Rep: Costs associated with certification?
 - (a) Lucia: Doesn’t recall having seen related cost.
 - BAME Rep: How are people allergic to dogs etc. being considered in this decision? Is there a dedicated space recommended for this?
 - (a) Lucia: Other committees need to approve of this proposal for the proposal to pass, students can only endorse. Other committees will run risk assessments. Original proposer has seen dog-friendly spaces in other universities that are restricted to certain times and spaces. Could start with something that is far more regulated.
 - Democracy Convenor: Everyone has their own definition of Therapets. And wouldn’t venue for this have to be the Union since that’s the only place ALL students can access?
 - (a) VP Education: Student Experience does not have power to approve this but can pass it on and guide us, implementation will take a long time.
 - (b) CEO: Permission needed from University to bring pets into Union as we are their tenants, could be requested but not within our remit to make this happen on our own, even if Student Experience approves.
 - (c) President: Thinks this is a good example, see what Student Experience says and bring it back to Parliament.
 - President: Who is regulating this? Feels that this benefits those who have Therapets but not too many others, also disadvantages those who don’t want pets on campus.
 - (i) HaSS PGR Rep: Agrees, thinks this proposal favours those who have the resources for Therapets, makes privilege visible that you can afford to train and bring your pet into campus.
 - (ii) VP Education: Therapets will not only be for those with pets, dog to be shared by the community.
 - VP Community: Therapets sessions at the Union have been very successful and often sell out fast.
 - (a) Lateefah: Thinks the engagement could be attributed to the fact that it only happens occasionally.

5) Adjournment

Democracy Convener

- Question about fundraising link by PGT Rep to be sent out to share with Reps.
 - i) Faculty Reps OK to share but not Executive officers.
- Fight For the Night next Thursday 27 November 2025, volunteers and attendees welcome.
- Careers’ Week happening next semester, help welcome.

- President: 12 hours of Christmas
- BAME Rep: Cultural Gala and Week next year