

Student Parliament 4 Minutes

Tuesday 26th January 2021 – 17:00 – 19:00

Chair: Kyle McGettigan (Democracy Convenor)

Officers In Attendance: Anna McKinley (International Students Rep), Adanna Onu (BAME Rep), Andrew Merchant (Faculty Rep Science), Benn Rapson (VP Welfare), Eilidh Sneddon (VP Sport), Emily McIlhatton (Faculty Rep HaSS), Jenna Gilmartin (Mature Students Rep), Liam Mosson (Interfaith Rep), Rachel Cairns (VP Inclusion), Vinny Williamson (LGBT+ Rep), Zoe MacPherson (Women's Rep), Aspen Lynch (Disabled Students' Rep), Victoria Welsh (Faculty Rep Business), Sean Jamieson (Part-Time Students Rep), Kayla-Megan Burns (President), Chelbi Hillan (VP Education) Ru Wallace (VP Community), Marc Schachtsiek (Faculty Rep Engineering)

Apologies: Dorothea Hinrichs (Postgraduate Students' Rep)

Absent: Saul Porter (Halls Rep)

Ailidh Hamilton, Sean Clarke, Kat Chan, Kai Green in attendance.

Staff support: Adam Crawley (Policy & Campaigns Co-ordinator), Leo Howes (Head of Student Engagement)

1. Welcome and approval of previous minutes

a. 17th September

Democracy Convenor (DC) welcomes all reps to the meeting and explains procedure for how to get vote and get involved in the discussion. Vinny raises the code of conduct for Student Parliament and DC summarises the code of conduct with a copy displayed to attendees.

DC welcomes comments on Student Parliament minutes. Kayla has submitted some edits to the minutes. These minutes are **approved**.

b. Exec Committee Minutes Consolidated – October to November

DC explains that Exec Minutes are for information and passes to the Exec for updates.

2. Executive Updates & Questions

Kayla: Back for 3 weeks, Exec have been working flat out. Main items – no detriment policy – students have been reporting lots of concerns. A major update should be released tomorrow. New January start students have been welcomed to campus; however, they have been asked to pay full fees by May - working on this issue.

Private accommodation - advocating on behalf of students in private halls for students to be released from contracts and receive rebates for unused accommodation. There has been significant funding for students released by Scot Gov today following lobbying, £10mill to support students in accommodation.

Working on combatting oppressive cultures at Strathclyde, to support students to thrive. Met with Keep Scotland Beautiful to discuss a sustainability strategy for Strathclyde. Noted the death of Campbell Hunter, an absolute tragedy. Challenging the University to ensure this area is secured and something like this can't happen again.

Benn: Talking to University about rent rebates. Changing responses so far and continuing to advocate for PG students to receive rebates. Greater Glasgow Student Tenants Union –

looking at hardship funds available at institutions across Scotland. £10million additional student hardship funding.

Wrote to the Principal on tuition fees – response so far that there will be no reduction. Raised suggestions including food poverty payments, no detriment policy. Implemented an email blast to the Principal and senior managers, so far over 100 students have emailed. Hoping for a meeting to discuss further. Student Experience Committee endorsed creation of proposal for bursaries and scholarships to support students from estranged and care-experienced backgrounds.

Ru: Charities month, incentives to clubs and socs to raise funds and collaborate. Working with Sustainable Strathclyde, setting up carbon literacy training for reps and staff across the Uni. Refreshers Fair went well – great to see and engage new faces. Thanks to welcome teamers for support

Volunteers Week – creating a week to increase focus and recognition of volunteering. Also aiming to recognise achievements at the STAR Awards – nominate through the Strath Union website.

Eilidh: (Update through the chat)

- Half marathon training program, strava challenges, Sports Union Bingo event
- Buddy support system for clubs set up
- Focus on how we can support our volunteers: going to be putting on CPD/employability - how to include sport in your CV; potential career routes within sport etc
- Wellbeing resource hub on the Sports Union website
- Working with university committees to implement the findings of the BUCS Paper on the importance of physical activity: <https://www.bucs.org.uk/resources-page/the-value-of-university-sport-and-physical-activity-pdf.html>
- Inter-club blood drive competition and work with Anthony Nolan foundation
Work in prep for LGBT+ history month

Chelbi: if you hear of any students with challenging circumstances please speak to Chelbi and the Exec so these can be included in the no detriment policy. Aware of issues for students who aren't able to access campus – pushing for more safe to use spaces on campus. StrathReps – programme rep nominations open this week. Great opportunity to get involved.

Academic Rep Conference – collaborative event for reps upcoming, will consider important student issues. Upcoming elections – we have new Faculty Rep roles at UG, PGR and PGT levels to enhance representation. Students studying into the summer can apply to SAAS for additional funding.

Rachel: AGM was great, particularly seeing new faces participating. Excited to take forward policy on NDAs to NUS Scotland and National Conferences. Keen to take forward proposals around gender based violence.

Pushing feedback around the Kevin O’Gorman case via Senate. Persistent inequalities workshop – working with SFC. Implementing working group around physical and digital accessibility of learning. LGBT+ History Month is in February – meeting Vinny and Andrew to take forward planning

Race Equality Working Group – taking forward feedback about how to make the University more inclusive. Opportunities to sign up for workshops if anyone is interested.

3. Policy Proposals

a. Zero Tolerance for Sexual Assault and Harassment

Rachel: established that we don't currently have a zero tolerance policy. We will look how this can be incorporated into our policies and procedures. Amazing how few institutions have a zero tolerance policy in place.

Vinny: Feel this is extremely important and we should join the minority of Student Unions who have this.

Benn: looked across the sector, feel this is an important motion.

Rachel: In closing, thanks for the support in writing this and please approve.

DC moves to vote on this policy.

19 votes in favour, 1 vote against, 0 abstentions. This policy passes.

b. Time Zone Awareness Bill

Liam: raised issue at Strath Union AGM. Some international students are facing time zone differences of up to 8 hours and others have child care responsibilities. Want the University to offer multiple opportunities for students to attend or engage with classes. Open to input from others on this policy, feel this is a time-sensitive issue.

Marc: As home schooling is included in addition to the time zone issue, do you wish to change the title? In notes, feel there should be more emphasis on recorded lectures and other realistic solutions to the issues.

Chelbi: an important issue, particularly as we have been back in lockdown and some students haven't been able to travel. Planning to raise this at Academic Rep Conference and hope to push for more recordings of lectures and tutorials to assist flexible learning.

Anna: As International Student Rep, great to see this issue recognised by another Rep. Visa requirements can depend on attendance at sessions and can be a major issue via online learning for issue outwith students' control such as faulty wifi. Additional time-zones make this a tricky issue and this policy helps, particularly point 4.

Liam: in response, the title doesn't include this. Recognising the issues raised now, it would be worth passing the policy now to get the campaign started and take this forward. Look for alternatives that students are not punished as mentioned by Anna and Chelbi. Evening and early morning classes have benefitted flexible learners. We should do as much as we can to make life a little bit easier for students.

Marc: thanks Liam for answering questions and Anna for raising visa issue. If a class doesn't have mandatory tutorials is it up to the University what level of engagement is required for visa commitments?

Anna: I'll look into it- but I'm not sure. shouldn't effect visa if it's not mandatory.

Liam: In closing, University issue to clarify which classes are mandatory and the rules regarding different visas. Recognise the bill isn't perfect but believe it provides a good starting point for the Union to take this forward and will hopefully result in students not having to get up at 3am to attend classes.

DC moves to vote on this policy

17 votes in favour. This policy passes.

4. Results of Sexual Health Survey

Benn: was planning to present results at SEC but wasn't able to.

- 600+ respondents
- 400+ completed surveys

Focus today on Sex and Relationship Education. 87% of those surveyed had experienced some form of education. Feeling that education received was quite old fashioned and varied depending on where students are from

65% of students felt that the education received at school prepared them for relationships

Men more likely to feel they have a comprehensive understanding of consent than women.

79% of LGBT+ students felt school education did not provide info relevant to gender identity.

Common themes that education is basic and has a focus on STDs and pregnancy. Lots of comments about how school education could be improved, including covering more topics and being less afraid of these. In particular, more focus on consent is needed.

88% of students have not undergone consent training.

60% of students in the sample say they have never been tested for STIs/STDs. 12% say they get tested after each new sexual partner.

Comments that there are long waiting times for sexual health services in Glasgow and for some international students, appointments are scheduled when they are out of the country. Feedback generally was negative.

Looking for comments and ideas on how we can take this forward.

Vinny: Looking for clarity on why the stats were split by male and female but didn't include non-binary?

Benn: I believe that it was because it didn't make a large difference to the outcomes but will double check and follow up.

Zoe: What's the difference between students living in Glasgow and those who don't? No clinic available in East Ayrshire.

Liam: worrisome to see some of the stats coming from the research. Would it be useful to have a working group to consider this?

Benn: Good idea, potentially a Forum on student sexual health.

Chelbi: this has been a long time in the making. It would be great to campaign for the University to set something up such as a sexual health clinic on campus. Heard waiting times of 3 months for Sandyford services and this could be a great service for students.

Liam: Strathclyde Uni financial reports show the Uni has increased financial reserves by 20% to £325million. Must do more to help students based on the issues identified.

Benn: taking forward a campaign started by last year's Women's Rep. Will follow up with an update on the data in the report following Vinny's questions. Will look at setting up a forum or working group to take this forward.



5. Any Other Competent Business

Liam: Would like to raise discussion around how Strathclyde will contribute to global recovery from Covid-19. Are there any plans for Strath Union to engage with charities and organisations to support those most vulnerable as we move through and beyond the pandemic?

DC notes Liam's point and asks that people can get in touch with him if they want to do more work on this.

DC thanks everybody for attending and closes the meeting.