

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY THE 22nd APRIL 2021 AT 6 PM
ZOOM

Present: As per sederunt

Apologies: Z Alshaber, L McBlain, M Clarke, I Korres, S Kirby

Attending: P Swinton, B Hay

1) Welcome, Apologies and Sederunt

L Brady thanked the members of Council who attended the SRC strategy consultation meeting and described how valuable their input is to planning for the next five years of the SRC.

2) Minute of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes of previous meeting approved.

3) Virtual Class Rep Forum & Forum 2.0 Reports – Grigoris Kokkinidis

D Henderson referred to heading 3 on p3 of the first report. He noted the wording of 'practical classes' and asked for clarity on this term.

G Kokkindis clarified that this refers to tutorials, seminars and labs. He said he would amend the wording from 'practical classes' to 'small-group activity' before sending these reports out in the coming weeks.

4) Council Reports:

a) SRC President: Liam Brady

Lady Rae has been elected the new rector of the University. L Brady feels this was a positive outcome of the election. A Facebook Live event was organised yesterday where the SRC president met with Lady Rae. She will assume the post on 30/04/2021 and L Brady encouraged next year's Council members to engage with her as he

feels she will be supportive of the SRC, with opportunities for the organisation and the rector to work closely together.

A meeting of the University Court took place on 14/04/2021. The SRC has been aware of student petitions for improved lighting in Kelvingrove park in order to make walking through the park safer in poorer light. At the meeting, L Brady asked Glasgow City Council's Susan Aitken about this matter, however, she said that when it gets dark, typically the park is closed and GCC do not want to encourage people to walk through the park at night. This is one of several unsatisfactory responses from GCC on this issue.

L Brady said that, while graduations originally due to take place in June have been postponed, students should be aware that these have not been cancelled and he has been assured that all students will be offered a graduation ceremony in the future.

The Student Finance Sub-Committee meeting took place on 15/04/2021. L Brady thanked B Hay and G Connor for their work in preparing the SRC's proposal for funding which, this year, included increased service delivery costs, a request for funding to support an additional member of staff for The Advice Centre and an online customer management system which, amongst other things, would enable the SRC to provide support for Clubs and Societies. Unfortunately, the University decided not to grant the SRC additional funding for these purposes, with its funding remaining the same as it was last year (adjusted for inflation). L Brady said this decision was disappointing. He said, despite difficulties, the SRC would continue to maximise use of its existing resources.

D Henderson asked if the other student bodies had also not been granted uplifts in funding, or if they had received an increase.

L Brady said all student bodies were granted the same uplift, which was due to inflation (1.5%).

E McCabe said she received an anonymous email yesterday, with a small number of students copied in, which advised of legal implications regarding how the University was applying its timed-exam policy and the denial of reasonable time adjustments for disabled students. E McCabe clarified, that, although the University has changed the timing of exams for all students, those that require extra time for exams can still request this from the Disability Service in addition to the changed exam timings.

C Hashimoto-Cullen asked if E McCabe knew how this information was being communicated.

E McCabe said she passed the email she received on to The Advice Centre. She said she only today received the communication with the previously discussed information, adding that the SRC would communicate this information to students ASAP.

C Hashimoto-Cullen said she appreciates that while the position is legal and lawful there may be students in her School who could be receiving support provisions for exams but are not aware that they are entitled to these. If that is the case then she needs to make her School aware of this so that any associated administrative work can be completed.

T Kleczkowski said he agrees with C Hashimoto-Cullen and that he would like to know what information to pass to his School on this matter as his School are not aware of what is happening either.

G Kokkinidis said he should have further clarity by tomorrow regarding whether all students are entitled to extra exam time in addition to the extra time already in place. He said he will communicate this information to Council when he has it.

S Wilson said that a significant number of people within his School have contacted the Head of Teaching with concerns over this matter and that he is unsure if everyone is clear on what measures are in place.

L Brady said he agreed with S Wilson, and that he believes there has been 'crossed wires' regarding this issue, particularly given that student concern over this matter has not yet been raised in any of the SRC's meetings with the Senate Office, suggesting that they are not aware of the concern among students. He said that the Sabbatical Officers will flag the issue with The Advice Centre tomorrow, with the view to putting out a communication which will clarify the matter for students. L Brady thanked C Hashimoto-Cullen for raising this issue.

b) VP Education: Grigoris Kokkinidis

The Student Teaching Awards 2021 virtual award ceremony took place on 25/03/2021. G Kokkinidis thanked all those involved in the organisation and delivery of the event and, in particular, the SRC Communications team, without whose help the awards could not have taken place.

Learning and Teaching principles have been sent to all academic members of staff regarding expectations for the next academic year. However it was highly likely that circumstances would change.

G Kokkinidis said there has been a considerable amount of discussion regarding fixed start-time exams for students in different time zones. It was posited that, as the number of students affected by this issue is so little (less than 10 students have been identified within the CoSE), the work involved in the formulation of an extra exam paper so that these students can sit a 24-hour exam would be unreasonable. Senate was open to the suggestion of a 24-hour exam for these students, however, this was conditional on an extra exam paper being written. As such, the specific University areas who have oversight of the students affected are giving these students as much advice and support as they can, however, there is recognition from Senate that asking these students to sit exams at times such as 1am is not fair. Consequently, if any students experience significant difficulty during an exam, they can submit a good cause claim explaining that they were unable to perform well during the exam due to its start-time and this claim will be considered.

G Kokkinidis said the Learning and Teaching principles were sent out around a week ago and that these included information on what will be possible and what will be restricted during the next academic year. He said that he believes the University's senior management are keen for departments to do as much as they can on campus, however, initially all areas are being asked to propose what activities they would like to do, with the plan then being for the University to assess what resources it has available to accommodate demand (in terms of locations and rooms).

D Henderson asked if, next year, students could be made aware of what courses would be taught online and what courses would be taught in-person by the time of enrolment at the latest. He said this would be useful to students when deciding classes, particularly for students who are not planning on coming to the UK to study and for students who prefer a certain teaching model. He suggested this information be clearly displayed next to each course on MyCampus.

G Kokkinidis said the hope is for information about each session to be clearly communicated to students during their registration.

c) VP Student Activities: Amy McKenzie Smith

Despite the University looking to remove the marquee outside the main building in order to accommodate filming, A McKenzie Smith has successfully secured its use for clubs and societies until the end of May.

A McKenzie Smith has been working on the Inclusivity Guide for clubs and societies. She thanked the Council members who have contributed their thoughts to the project and said this webpage will provide a useful resource for clubs and societies.

Work undertaken by the Home Students Working Group has been going well. The Home Students Survey has now been sent out and, as of two days ago, has received over 1200 responses. A McKenzie

Smith will shortly begin the process of writing a report which she will then submit to the Student Experience Committee.

d) VP Student Support: Ella McCabe

E McCabe encouraged Council members to share the De-Stress Native page as much as possible, so as to boost engagement for the planned events. She asked that Council members work to advertise the page as much as they can within their subject areas. She also encouraged Council members to attend the events that are planned for the De-Stress campaign. E McCabe also encouraged Council members to submit visual content for the campaign - such as videos with de-stress tips - for use on the SRC's social media channels.

The SRC have been concerned with how incidents at halls of residence have been handled, in light of the Glasgow Guardian story describing the case of the 'Murano 12.' E McCabe said the SRC is not privy to the intricacies of the case from the standpoint of the interactions with staff and students involved, however, in the aftermath the SRC were clear that those involved in communicating with the students should emphasise that The Advice Centre was there to approach for professional representation/support guidance. E McCabe and L Brady met with Anton Muscatelli, David Duncan and Jane Weir to discuss the SRC's concerns and its view that Security or whoever deals with complaints in halls should offer support in the first instance when matters such as gender-based violence or mental health issues form part of a case. The SRC wished to gain some reassurance on how matters would be dealt with going forward, as it currently seems that issues could be handled differently depending upon who is involved. E McCabe said the meeting with the aforementioned University staff was quite positive and that, going forward, meetings have been scheduled with Student Services and halls of residence in order for the SRC to receive a degree of oversight every couple of months as to what interaction is happening between halls and Student Services.

E McCabe said, in addition to the above, herself and L Brady have now been invited to the bi-weekly residences meetings, which they

have attended over the last couple of weeks and which have provided a valuable insight into how things are being dealt with 'on the ground.' She added that the SRC has also been reassured that the discipline policy for halls of residence, which is separate to the code of conduct, would be reviewed soon. E McCabe believes that an external consultant has also now provided recommendations on this policy. She added that an impact assessment framework has now been formulated for halls which provides physical guidance and outlines in each step how those responding to incidents in halls should respond, so as to standardise the approach for security members handling incidents. The SRC has also received reassurance that students will always be referred to The Advice Centre for representation if they are being called to a disciplinary meeting. E McCabe said halls of residence are also open to a larger SRC presence being promoted at halls so that students can be made aware of the services offered by the SRC.

Filming for the flathunting guidance video involving TAC has now been completed, with the video due to be released in the next week. E McCabe encouraged Council members to share the video when it is released.

K Craig asked if the bi-weekly residences meetings include students or are attended by staff only.

E McCabe said these meetings are attended by staff from halls of residences and act as a means of oversight for staff regarding incidents which take place across different halls of residence. As an invite to these meetings has now been extended to L Brady and E McCabe, one of them will look to attend these meetings going forward to gain insight on what is happening in halls.

e) PG Arts Convenor: Kevin Leomo –

K Leomo expressed thanks for being awarded 'Best GTA' in the recent STAs and congratulated Council members on their work this year.

f) UG Arts Convenor: Emma Lindquist –

E Lindquist wished those sitting exams good luck and said she has been happy to be on Council this year with her fellow members.

g) UG MVLS Convenor: Lewis O'Connor –

L O'Connor recently met with the Scottish Government and, although he attended this meeting in his capacity as BMA SMSC Chair, he said this was a valuable opportunity to speak to the government and let them know about the failings of mental health across the country. L O'Connor said it remains to be seen what action the government may take to address mental health concerns, but that it took on board the suggestion of liaising with student councils on how effective they think mental health services are at university. He said, currently, the Scottish Government works on a reporting system where universities submit reports which inform the government's views on the effectiveness of mental health support. L O'Connor believes, however, that the government should speak to students themselves about their views on mental health support at universities, as their opinions would contrast with the information in the reports the government receives from universities. He added that he does not know if the Scottish Government will contact the SRC anytime soon, however, the organisation should look out for correspondence from them on this issue. L O'Connor said the SRC should also advocate for 'mental health standards' to be adopted by universities, as there are currently no standards for mental health currently in place across universities. He said that this idea was put to the government during the meeting so the hope is that such standards may be implemented over the next few years.

E McCabe said representatives from the University will soon be meeting with members of the Scottish Government to raise a range of issues. She said the SRC have highlighted mental health provisions as an issue of concern to be raised here as, while there are areas within the University's own service which need to be fixed,

students who need to be referred to the NHS are experiencing issues with the backlog there, which is resulting in these students becoming stuck in a holding pattern within the University's CaPS. E McCabe said the SRC would like acknowledgement from the Scottish Government regarding these concerns if they are reviewing their mental health action plan, and that she is planning to speak about this with the representatives from the University who are to meet with the government. E McCabe said if L O'Connor had any other thoughts on this subject he should email her.

h) UG Science and Engineering Convenor: Jenny Newton – n/a

i) UG Social Sciences Convenor: Duncan Henderson –

D Henderson said he has enjoyed working with his fellow Council members and that he feels the SRC has undertaken important work over the year. He added that it is a shame that Council members have not had the opportunity to meet together in person this year. He congratulated the Sabbatical Officers for their work over the year and wished each Officer good luck for the future.

j) Computing School Rep: Scott Wilson – n/a

k) Geographical and Earth Science School Rep: Sam Malis – n/a

l) Life Sciences School Rep: Smilla Huzell

S Huzell met with G Kokkinidis to discuss feedback from students in Level 2 regarding waiting-times for feedback from staff. G Kokkinidis raised this issue with M Fischbacher-Smith, which was a positive step, however, S Huzell also had a thorough look into the communications which staff had issued to students regarding feedback. While she understands the frustration of students who had to wait 8+ weeks for feedback, she believes that students have been slightly unfair in their reactions, considering the fact that staff kept students updated throughout this waiting-period as to why there were delays in returning feedback. She added that she believes the SRC has done what it can regarding this issue for now and that she has not actioned anything else on this issue, other than

flagging the matter to G Kokkinidis, as she did not feel it would be practical to pursue the issue further.

L Schorrlepp said, in reference to S Huzell's point, that in the School of Psychology, situations when any unfair accusations against staff come up have been diffused after Class Representatives are asked to remind their peers that staff are in the same situation as themselves.

L Brady encouraged Council members to pass any important communications on to their Class Representatives, so that they can then pass this information to students. He said this would help keep students informed and avoid situations where students might miss communications distributed via other channels.

m) Mathematics and Statistics School Rep: Chloé Hashimoto Cullen

C Hashimoto-Cullen has sent out a survey to students to gain feedback on current feelings of disabled students at the University. She said that a student was turned away from the Disability Service so, leading on from this, she plans to meet with students after the upcoming exam diet to speak with them and see what can be updated, noting in particular that there are certain regulations within Mathematics exams which are possibly outdated and could be revised. C Hashimoto-Cullen said she would feedback to Council after she has undertaken this work.

C Hashimoto-Cullen said she may contact L Brady regarding the issue.

- n) Psychology School Rep: Leonie Schorrlepp – n/a
- o) Social and Political Sciences School Rep: Matilda Franz – n/a
- p) Environmental Officer: Alvaro Perez Guardiola – n/a
- q) International Students Officer: Patrick Aasen –

P Aasen thanked Council members for a good year on Council. He said he has been involved with the SRC since his first semester of university and that he will be sad to move on. He added that he has

high hopes for the next ISO and that he is glad that a Chinese student is assuming the role.

L Brady thanked P Aasen for all his work on SRC Council and commended him for being the longest-serving Council member on Council.

r) LGBTQ+ Officer: Indigo Korres Nte Paoula – n/a

s) General Rep: Bailey Camack –

B Camack said several societies' AGMs are approaching and that he will be monitoring any issues which occur with these. He said that issues regarding society membership have materialised in regards to non-Glasgow University members, and that he will be looking to see what comes out of the AGMs on this subject.

B Camack thanked his fellow Council members for a good year.

t) General Rep: Mia Clarke – n/a

u) General Rep: Eva Simmons –

E Simmons asked if L Brady was able to provide an update on whether the University would be able to store belongings over summer for international students who cannot return to Glasgow or students whose tenancies end.

L Brady said the University has been referring students to a storage company and that this has been communicated to students in halls. PBSAs have been made aware of the company and encouraged to do the same with students in their residences. L Brady said he believes this service is only currently being offered to students in halls, but that he and A McKenzie Smith have a meeting on Monday with Robert Garnish from Commercial Services so they will follow up then to check if the service has been communicated out to students and if it is being utilised.

v) First Year Rep: Kirsty Craig –

K Craig thanked her fellow Council members and said it has been a pleasure working with them.

5) AOCB

T Kleczkowski said it has been great working with his fellow Council members and thanked them for an enjoyable year together. He said he hopes to meet some of the Council members in person at some stage.

On behalf of the Sabbatical Officers, L Brady thanked the members of Council for all their work during what was a difficult year. He extended a special message of thanks to A McKenzie Smith, E McCabe and G Kokkinidis for all the work they put in during the year and wished good luck to E McCabe, M Clarke, E Simmons and S Malis with their Sabbatical Officer positions in the next academic year.

E McCabe thanked her fellow Sabbatical Officers and, on behalf of all members of Council, extended a special message of thanks to L Brady for his leadership and contribution to Council over the last few years.

L Brady said a social activity for council members, restrictions-permitting, would be organised in due course, with the plan being that this would happen before Council members finish their positions in June.

L Brady said that if Council members have any matters they would like to refer to the Sabbatical Officers between now and the end of June then they should not hesitate to contact them.

L Brady wished good luck to everyone sitting exams and assessments.

6) Date of Next Meeting – 28th October 2021